Turkey: Release stateless activist Ghada Naguib and refrain from deporting her to Egypt

Joint Statements · Diaspora & Exile · Egypt · 10 October 2023

The undersigned human rights organizations condemn the detention of political activist Ghada Naguib by Turkish authorities, the wife of opposition figure Hisham Abdullah. We call for her immediate and unconditional release, urging the Turkish authorities to immediately refrain from deporting her to Egypt. The organizations emphasize that any improvement in relations between Egypt and Turkey should not come at the expense of human rights. The organizations urge the Turkish authorities to abide by international law, which stipulates that stateless people can not be deported.

On 2 October 2023, Turkish security agents dressed in civilian clothing apprehended Ghada Naguib from her residence in Istanbul, based on accounts provided by witnesses who were present during her arrest. The witnesses reported that the female security officer who participated in arresting her was overheard shouting at her in Turkish. Subsequently, she was transported to the Basakshehir detention center, and later transferred to the Silivri prison, both located within Istanbul. Eventually, Naguib was moved to a more distant detention center in Malatya. Naguib began a hunger strike on that same day, 2 October, protesting Turkish authorities' intimidation and pressure to close her social media accounts. Naguib's husband, opposition figure Hisham Abdullah, reported on 6 October that he was denied access to her in the Malatya detention center and was told that her health deteriorated and that she was moved to a medical facility. Then, after submitting a complaint to the prosecutor, he was informed that she was being transferred to another detention center in Erzurum.

According to her family, her arrest was preceded by threats from the Turkish intelligence agency, pressuring her to stop criticizing the Egyptian government on her social media accounts. Naguib, alongside her husband and their four children, had left Egypt for Turkey on 16 December 2015, where they obtained tourism residence. It is worth mentioning that Naguib and Abdullah were sentenced in absentia by the Egyptian authorities on 31 January 2019, to five years in prison in case number 1102 of 2017 for "spreading false news to incite people against the regime and undermine Egypt's national security".

Furthermore, Naguib was rendered stateless in December 2020 by Egyptian authorities, who stripped her of her Egyptian nationality, citing her alleged "endangerment of national security from abroad".

In 2018, Egyptian security forces conducted raids on the residences of Naguib's brothers in three different areas in Egypt, leading to the arrest of all three siblings. They were held incommunicado

for a duration ranging from four to five days before appearing before the prosecutor. After three months, one of Naguib's brothers was released, while the other brother and brother-in-law were transferred to Tora and Wadi al-Natron prisons, respectively. In addition, since 2018, Egyptian authorities imposed a travel ban on Naguib's older sister, preventing her from leaving Egypt. Five of Hisham Abdallah's relatives have also been arbitrarily arrested and accused before the State Security Prosecution under Case no. 1018 of 2020 on charges of "joining and funding a terrorist group".

The undersigned organizations urge Turkish authorities to refrain from targeting political activists and human rights defenders who have sought refuge in Turkey from the repressive practices and security threats of the Egyptian government. The organizations are deeply concerned about the potential deportation of Naguib to Egypt, where she would face imminent danger to her safety and freedom, constituting a direct violation of Turkey's international commitments regarding the principle of non-refoulement. As a signatory to the international principle of non-refoulement, Turkey is obligated to refrain from returning individuals to territories where they may be at risk of torture and other severe human rights violations.

Signatory organizations:

– Egyptian Front for Human Rights (EFHR)

– Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)

– El Nadeem Center

– HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement

– Law and democracy support foundation

– EgyptWide for Human Rights

– The Freedom Initiative

– Sinai Foundation for Human Rights

– Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms

– Refugees platform in egypt (RPE)

– Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)

– Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)

– Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)

– Virtual activism

– Women for Justice Foundation

– Cairo Insititute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

– Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE)

– The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)

Published at https://humena.org/turkey-release-stateless-activist-ghada-naguib-and-refrain-from-deporting-her-to-egypt/
HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement · info@humena.org