

[HRC44 | Egypt: Release Solafa Magdy, Esraa Abdelfattah, Sanaa Seif and all defenders now!](#)

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ISHR together with the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Nazra for Feminist Studies and the Egyptian Front for Human Rights urged Egypt to immediately and unconditionally release all those detained for exercising their human rights, to stop using pre-trial detention as a punishment; and until then, allow them to communicate regularly with their families.



On 23 June 2020, woman human rights defender Sanaa Seif, sister of detained human rights defender [Alaa AbdelFattah](#), was [abducted](#) by plainclothes police officers as she was approaching the Public Prosecutor's Office. Sanaa, who was bruised and battered as she had been beaten on her back and head, was going to file a report about the assault against her and her family the previous day. On June 22nd, in front of Tora prison, a group of women [physically assaulted](#) Sanaa, her mother Dr. Laila Soueif and sister Mona Seif and stole their belongings while the prison authorities watched. They were sleeping in front of Tora prison demanding the prison authorities give them a letter from Alaa, who they have been unable to visit since all prison visits were suspended four months ago in response to COVID-19.

"Sanaa's abduction in front of the Prosecutor's office sets a dangerous precedent and further demonstrates the complicity of the Egyptian judicial authorities in the crackdown against human rights defenders", said Salma Elhosseiny, ISHR's Human Rights Council Programme Manager.

Detained [human rights defenders in Egypt](#) have been unable to communicate with their families for over fourth months. Defenders have [no legal channels](#) to challenge their detention or the detention conditions that [amount](#) to torture and ill-treatment in and of themselves.

Egyptian journalist and woman human rights defender [Solafa Magdy](#) was campaigning online for the release of her friend, Egyptian journalist and women human rights defender [Esraa Abdelfattah](#). Esraa was abducted and tortured by the Egyptian State in October 2019. In response to her social media [posts](#), police arrested Solafa and journalists [Hossam el-Sayed and Mohamed Salah](#). Solafa's mother [pleaded](#) for help, to allow Solafa to communicate with her and her child.

"Defenders should not be in prison in the first place. Until they are released, we urge Egypt to allow them to contact their families on a regular and continuous basis by phone, and to ease sending and receiving letters, food and medical supplies to them", added Elhosseiny.

The organisations recalled in the joint statement delivered at the 44th of the UN Human Rights Council that all of the defenders that the Special Procedures and the High Commissioner called for their release since September 2019 are still in pre-trial detention, such as [Ibrahim Metwally](#), [Mohamed El-Baqer and Esraa Abdel Fattah](#), [Ramy Kamel](#), [Alaa Abdel-Fattah](#), [Patrick Zaky](#), [Ramy Shaat](#), [Eman Al-Helw](#), [Solafa Magdy and Hossam El-Sayed](#). They urged the High Commissioner and Special Procedures to continuing calling publicly on Egypt to release them.

Read the full statement [here](#).

Photo: Nazra for Feminist Studies and Cairo Institute for Human Rights (modified by ISHR)