

## A decisive week for the freedom of expression in Egypt



The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information said today that this week is full of trails that will have a great effect on the freedom of opinion, expression and press in Egypt.

Yesterday, Saturday, the state council court " the administrative judiciary" decided to adjourn the case filed by Judge Abdelfattah Murad against the Egyptian government , demanding the government to shut down 51 blogs, news and human rights websites that uncovered the plagiarism he committed against the intellectual property of the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information. Murad copied the Network's report on the freedom of the internet in the Arab world and published it in a book he wrote to be sold in the market. He claims in his case that those websites cause harm to Egypt's reputation. The court decided to give its decision on December 8, just two days before the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In a northern Cairo court and after a long day of anticipation, judge Mahmoud Hamza decided to drop the appeal case filed by Huwaida Taha a producer journalist in Aljazeera who was sentenced last may, after an unjust trail, to 6 months in jail and 20,000 pounds fine, the bond was set at 10,000 pounds. She was accused of producing news material of a detrimental nature to the reputation of Egypt.

Another session shall be held before another judge to continue Huwaida Taha's appeal.

– This week will also see Ibrahim Essa ,a well-known journalist and the editor in chief of the independent Al Dostur, standing 9 trials , the cases against Essa were filed by Lawyers from the ruling National Party and other loyal lawyers.

Names mentioned in this statement:

Huwaida Taha: a producer journalist in Aljazeera, produced a documentary about torture in Egypt, she was accused by the security services of publicizing false information detrimental to the country's reputation. She was sentenced on May 2007 to 6 months in jail and 10,000 pound bail and 20,000 pound fine. Her laptop, cellular phone and videotapes were confiscated.

Judge Abdelfattah Murad: a judge in Alexandria court of appeal, copied without permission tens of pages from a report <http://www.hrinfo.net/reports/net2006/> belongs to the Arabic Network for Human Rights information. When the incident was uncovered, he filed a number of lawsuits against the Arabic Network, news websites and other blogs, also uncovered the incident, for causing harm to Egypt's reputation in his attempt to hide his assault on the intellectual property.

Ibrahim Essa: an Egyptian journalist and the editor in chief of the independent Aldostur. Essa is well-known for defending the freedom of expression and practicing his right to political criticism. Security services fabricated cases against him; the last case was about publishing rumors about the president's health and caused damage to the economic interests in addition to 8 cases filed by lawyers accusing Essa of publishing false news.

Judge Mahmoud Hamza: an Egyptian judge who suffered a violent physical assault launched by the security services in 2006 during the movement of the Egyptian judges backed by the public, and who demand the independence of the judicial authority in Egypt. The police officers who are accused of committing that assault are under the protection of the Egyptian government.

<http://www.hrinfo.net/en/reports/2007/pr1021.shtml>