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Urgent Campaign

Freedom for Haitham Mohamedain - Stop the repression in Egypt

- News from around the world -

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Early on Friday 18 May, Egyptian security forces stormed the house of labour lawyer and socialist activist Haitham Mohamedain, taking him away to an unknown destination.

Haitham is a well-known defender of workers' rights, and has worked tirelessly to support independent trade unionists facing state persecution for demanding better working conditions and the right to organise and strike. In addition, as Amnesty International notes, he "has been persecuted by the Egyptian authorities for his human rights work", playing a crucial role in defending the El Nadeem Centre - which supports victims of torture and violence - from harassment and persecution by the authorities.

On Saturday 19 May, Haitham appeared in court and was remanded in custody for 15 days. According to reports from human rights activists in Egypt, he is being interrogated in relation to "incitement to protest over the price of Metro tickets."

Some who allegedly protested over a recent abrupt rise in fares have been arrested and some subsequently released: others are still being held. It appears that Egypt's security services have used the opportunity to seize Haitham Mohamedain: we believe that his arrest is designed, once again, to silence voices critical of the current military regime.

We are deeply concerned for Haitham's well-being, given the well-documented pattern of abuse and torture of detainees by Egyptian security forces. We are appalled that anyone should face detention and prosecution on charges of speaking out for basic human rights. We call on the Egyptian authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally and for any charges against him to be dropped.

Initial signatories

Noam Chomsky, Institute Professor Emeritus, MIT, USA

Elias Khoury, Novelist and Academic, Lebanon

Professor Clément Mouhot, University of Cambridge

Ian Hodson, National President, Bakers', Food & Allied Workers Union (UK)

Professor Gilbert Achcar, SOAS University of London, UK

Professor James Dickins, University of Leeds

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Gerry Carroll, People Before Profit MLA, Belfast

Eamonn McCann, Journalist and author, Derry

Dr Peadar O'Grady, Consultant Child Psychiatrist, Dublin

Cllr Matt Collins, People Before Profit , Belfast City Council

Cllr Tina MacVeigh, People Before Profit, Dublin City Council

Cllr John Lyons, People Before Profit, Dublin City Council

Cllr Emma Hendrick, People Before Profit, South Dublin County Council.

Dr John Molyneux, retired lecturer and author

Dr Anne Alexander, University of Cambridge

Kieran Allen, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, UCD and author.

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Alan Wald, H. Chandler Davis Collegiate Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan, USA

Dr. Bashir Abu-Manneh, Reader in Postcolonial Literature, University of Kent

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Professor Ziad Elmarsafy, King's College London

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