

Egypt: Civil Society Organizations Call for End of Judicial Harassment of Cartoonist Ashraf Omar

Kennedy Human Rights Center, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Cartoonists Rights, Cartooning for Peace, and Freedom Cartoonists Foundation condemn the continued detention of Egyptian cartoonist [Ashraf Omar](#) and call on the Egyptian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release him and provide full reparations.

On November 15, 2025, Egypt's Supreme State Security Prosecution [referred](#) Mr. Omar's case to the Cairo Criminal Court. His family learned of the referral only on November 22, when his wife, Nada Mogheeth, visited him in prison.

Despite the referral, judicial authorities have not set a trial date nor granted Mr. Omar and his defence team access to his case files, undermining his right to prepare his defense and further prolonging his pretrial detention. The lack of transparency has left Omar and his family in prolonged uncertainty and highlights the arbitrary nature of his detention.

Mr. Omar, a journalist, translator, and cartoonist, has contributed to the independent Egyptian news outlets Al-Manassa and Mada Masr media. Following the publication of several of his cartoons criticizing the sale of state assets and the power cut crisis in Egypt, Egyptian police [arrested](#) Mr. Omar at his home on July 22, 2024.

Authorities held Mr. Omar incommunicado for two days, during which he was [subjected](#) to different forms of mistreatment, such as beatings and threats of electric shock. Mr. Omar was then brought before the Supreme State Security Prosecution on charges of joining a terrorist group, publishing false news, and misusing social media.

Since July 24, 2024, courts have repeatedly renewed Mr. Omar's pre-trial detention, limiting his access to legal counsel. United Nations human rights experts have previously [expressed](#) deep concern over his detention, calling it "arbitrary and unlawful."

Mr. Omar's case reflects Egypt's broader pattern of using counter-terrorism legislation to silence journalists, human rights defenders, and artists. Egypt continues to rank among the world's worst jailers of journalists globally, according to CPJ's 2025 annual [prison census](#), with [18 journalists](#) who are still behind bars.

Egyptian authorities must end the misuse of pretrial detention and counterterrorism laws to suppress peaceful expression and ensure that journalists and artists can work without fear of reprisal. Releasing Ashraf Omar would be an essential first step.