

Paris, July 22, 2026

Call for the Immediate Release of Egyptian Editorial Cartoonist Ashraf Omar, Who Has Been Arbitrarily Detained for Two Years

July 22, 2026, will mark the second anniversary of the unlawful pretrial detention of Egyptian political cartoonist [Ashraf Omar](#), a contributor to the independent media outlet Al Manassa. On this occasion, our organizations, which have mobilized in his support, reiterate their call for his immediate release.

On November 15, 2025, the State Security Prosecution [referred](#) the case to the Cairo Criminal Court, charging Ashraf Omar and eleven other co-defendants with “*financing terrorism for the benefit of a terrorist group*” and “*participation in a terrorist group in pursuit of its objectives.*” The trial, which was scheduled to begin before the Cairo Criminal Court first on May 10 and then on July 13, 2026, has been [postponed](#) to October 12, 2026.

Our organizations are alarmed by the length of time that has elapsed since Ashraf Omar was abducted by Egyptian security forces from his home on July 22, 2024, and cannot accept that he remains arbitrarily detained for his cartoons, awaiting a trial that exploits anti-terrorism legislation for repressive purposes.

Ashraf Omar must be released immediately because “*his detention is arbitrary and illegal. It violates Egypt’s obligations under international human rights law to protect freedom of opinion and expression—including artistic expression—cultural rights, liberty and security of the person, as well as the right to a fair trial and due process.*”, UN experts said.

It is with these words that UN human rights experts addressed the Egyptian authorities in [a statement dated September 22, 2025](#), urging them “*to immediately release Ashraf Omar and ensure that he is afforded all the guarantees of a fair trial,*” while calling on Egypt “*to bring its counterterrorism legislation into full compliance with international standards*” and to cease “*using pretrial detention as a tool of repression.*”



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The cartoonist's wife, Nada Mougheeth, who has consistently advocated for her husband's release, is also being targeted. [Arrested](#) at her home on January 16, 2025, by men claiming to belong to the Egyptian State Security Prosecution, and later released on bail, she is accused of "membership in a terrorist group" and "spreading false news."

Our organizations express their solidarity with Ashraf Omar, his wife, and their loved ones, and urge that this appeal be conveyed at the highest level to the Egyptian authorities, both by democratic states and by European and international bodies capable of exerting influence to put an end to this injustice.



Placide (France)



Emad Hajjaj (Jordan)

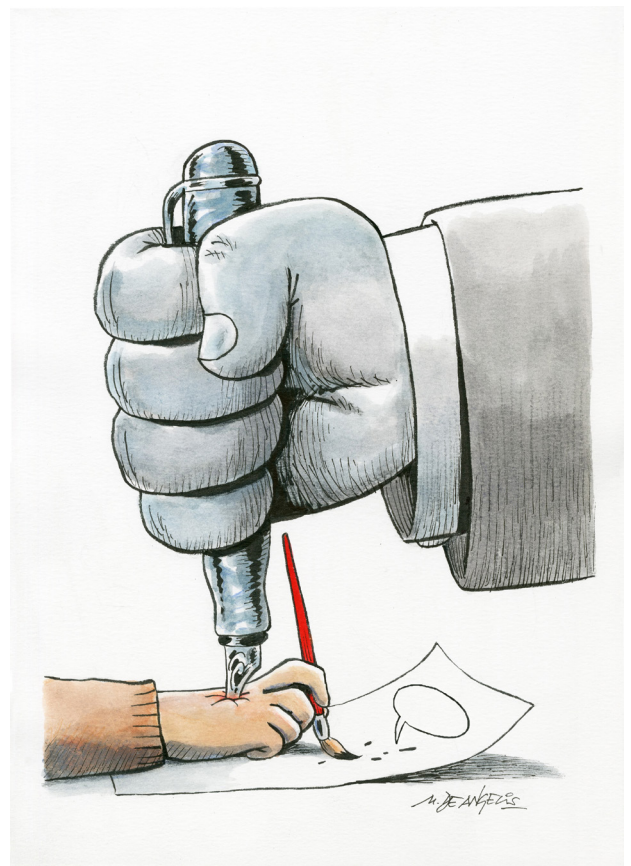
Signatories :

- ARC - Artists at Risk Connection
- Australian Cartoonists Association
- Cagle Cartoons, Inc
- Cartooning for Peace
- Cartoonists Rights
- Cartoonists United
- Columbia Global Freedom of Expression
- Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
- European Cartoon Award
- Forum for Humor and the Law (ForHum)
- Freemuse
- Freedom Cartoonists
- Index on Censorship
- Professional Cartoonists' Organisation (PCO)
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
- Robert & Ethel Kennedy Human Rights Center

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