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News Flash

Concerns about the arrest of Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim

Amnesty International wrote today to the Egyptian Government expressing concern about the arrest of the human rights defender Dr Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies and lecturer at the American University in Cairo (AUC), on 1 July 2000.

The human rights organization is concerned at reports that Dr Saad Eddin Ibrahim is accused, among other charges, of receiving funds from and collaborating with foreign parties on projects aimed at tarnishing Egypt's reputation, charges similar to those previously brought against other human rights defenders.

In recent months and years Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have raised concerns about repeated attempts by the Egyptian authorities to muzzle and intimidate human rights defenders by levelling at them such charges.

Background

A new law regulating the functioning of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which came into force in 1999, imposed a wide range of restrictive conditions, including a requirement that NGOs seek prior approval from the authorities for various activities at the international and local levels. The law and the possible implications of its application sparked controversy and alarmed human rights activists who feared that it might be used to curb and limit their activities.

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