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## **Crackdown by Egyptian security forces condemned**

Amnesty International has condemned a sweeping crackdown by Egyptian security forces today that saw activists and journalists harassed and two Amnesty International staff members detained along with dozens others.

The two Amnesty International delegates were among about 30 detained during a raid by security forces on the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre (HMLC) in Cairo earlier today. They also include human rights activist Ahmed Seif Al Islam and Khaled Ali, director of the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR).

“The Egyptian authorities appear to be attempting to suppress the wave of popular protest that has swept the country by targeting those reporting on it, including human rights activists, journalists and others,” said Claudio Cordone, Senior Director at Amnesty International.

“Amnesty International staff must be allowed to carry out their work in Egypt without fear of harassment or unlawful detention. We call for their immediate and safe release.”

A delegate from Human Rights Watch was also detained in the raid on the HMLC.

Staff of the HMLC had been representing protestors arrested during the demonstrations.

Other staff members of the neighbouring ECESR were also reportedly arrested.

The ECESR had also been supporting an impromptu medical centre in a mosque near Tahrir Square to treat those injured in the protests.

Some journalists have reported being attacked by pro-government supporters. Others have reportedly been detained by the security forces. A journalist for CNN-IBN, Rajesh Bhardwaj, arrested and then released some hours later, reports say.

The crackdown follows a wave of mass protests by Egyptians calling for political reform and increased living standards.