

Rights organizations call on Egypt to end transnational repression against exiled journalist Basma Mostafa

We, the undersigned organizations, call on the Egyptian government to immediately end its campaign of transnational repression targeting exiled Egyptian journalists. We specifically urge the government to respond to the [UN report](#) detailing the harassment and surveillance of Egyptian investigative journalist Basma Mostafa, currently residing in Germany. We further urge German authorities to ensure her safety and uphold their international obligations to protect freedom of expression.

Despite seeking safety in exile, Mostafa continues to face threats, surveillance, harassment, and [online gender-based violence](#) across multiple countries—including Germany, Switzerland, Kenya, and Lebanon—simply for doing her work. These acts are detailed in a joint communication from UN Special Rapporteurs [\(AL EGY 6/2024\)](#), which documents a disturbing pattern of cross-border intimidation carried out by or with the acquiescence of Egyptian authorities.

Germany's former Human Rights Commissioner, Luise Amtsberg, has publicly [condemned](#) Egypt's transnational repression and urged the Egyptian government to address findings outlined in the UN report. The Egyptian authorities have yet to issue an official response. The silence is telling.

Mostafa is a prominent investigative journalist known for reporting on human rights abuses in Egypt, including [torture](#) and [extrajudicial killings](#). She was arrested in [2016](#) while covering protests, and again [twice](#) in [2020](#) while reporting on a police raid in southern Egypt. After facing charges of spreading false news and joining a terrorist organization, she was [released](#) on bail and forced into exile.

Her case is not isolated; Egypt is among the world's [top perpetrators](#) of transnational repression, using tactics such as [arresting](#) journalists' family members, [blocking](#) access to exile-based media, [targeting](#) journalists with spyware, and [denying](#) consular services and identity documents for those living abroad and their family members, including children. In another notable case, a Berlin court [convicted](#) a man for charges related to spying for the Egyptian regime, including on Egyptian exiles while working in the press office of former Chancellor Angela Merkel, where he [had access](#) to data on exiled Egyptian journalists accredited with the Federal Press Office.

We call on the Egyptian authorities to immediately respond to [UN communication AL EGY 6/2024](#) and end all forms of transnational repression against Egyptian journalists and critics in exile. Egypt must stop targeting journalists abroad and ensure independent, transparent investigations to hold perpetrators accountable.

We also urge the German authorities to protect exiled journalists and critics from intimidation tactics by foreign governments and those working on their behalf, in line with their International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) obligations and the [2023 Declaration of Principles to Combat Transnational Repression](#). Germany must provide full protection to Basma Mostafa, ensure accountability for her assault, investigate all attacks, harassment, and surveillance on its soil, and use its influence to demand that Egypt end its campaign of transnational repression.

Signed by:

1. Access Now
2. ARTICLE 19
3. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
4. Cartoonists Rights
5. Committee for Justice (CFJ)
6. Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
7. Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF)
8. Egyptian Front for Human Rights (EFHR)
9. Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)
10. EuroMed Rights
11. EuroMed Rights Network
12. Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
13. HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement
14. Human Rights Watch
15. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
16. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
17. Intersection Association for Rights and Freedoms

18. Law and Democracy Support Foundation (LDSF)
19. MENA Rights Group
20. Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
21. PEN America
22. PEN Berlin
23. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
24. Samir Kassir Foundation (SKF)
25. The Regional Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders in South West Asia and North Africa (WHRDMENA)
26. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

