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## Egypt – Human rights Lawyer Negad El-Borai banned from travelling

On 26 January, Egyptian authorities banned human rights lawyer Mr **Negad El-Borai** from travelling out of Cairo International Airport, preventing him from boarding his flight to Jordan, on the basis of his involvement in the “foreign funding” case.

[Negad El-Borai](#) is a well-known figure in Egypt's human rights movement. He is a lawyer and the head of the legal unit at **United Group**. The United Group is a law firm that has historically worked on crucial initiatives, such as the respect for individual freedoms and property. He was also a columnist for Al-Shorouk newspaper and has advocated for freedom of expression, assembly and association. In January 2014, Negad El Borai resigned from Egypt's National Council for Human Rights (NCHR), protesting its politicised and inconsistent position on human rights abuses in Egypt. The human rights defender was also the founder and president of Group for Democratic Development and the Secretary General of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights.

Egyptian airport security prevented Negad El-Borai from boarding his flight to Jordan on 26 January after his name appeared on a list that includes several other human rights defenders who are banned from travelling. The order has come from the Egyptian investigating magistrate and General Prosecutor in relation to the “foreign funding” case – also known as Case No. 173, and, over the past year, has led to several travel bans. More than 37 Egyptian rights organisations and their leaders and staff members have thus far faced charges of inter alia “illegal receipt of foreign funding” and “working without legal permission”.

Negad El-Borai has previously been targeted by the Egyptian authorities for his work on combating the use of torture in Egypt. On [17 May 2016](#), the human rights defender was called for a fifth round of interrogation by Egyptian authorities in relation to the drafting of a new anti-torture law. Negad El-Borai has also been called in for questioning on [3 March 2016](#) when he was charged with inter alia “receiving illegal foreign funding” and “working without legal permission”. A year earlier on [21 May 2015](#), Negad El-Borai was interrogated by an investigative judge in North Giza Court also for drafting the anti-torture law.

Travel bans have become common practice in the crackdown against human rights defenders in Egypt in the last year. Egyptian authorities have repeatedly used travel bans to intimidate and silence critical human rights defenders. Most recently, Egyptian authorities banned prominent human rights defender [Aida Seif](#) from travelling to Tunisia in connection with the “foreign funding case”. Several other HRDs were issued travel bans in connection with the “foreign funding” case, including [Mozn Hassan](#), [Hossam Eldin Ali](#), [Ahmed Ghonim](#), [Bassim Samir](#), [Esraa Abdel Fattah](#), [Hoda Abdelwahab](#), [Nasser Amin](#) and [Ahmed Ragheb](#). In 2016 several travel bans have also been imposed on human rights defenders in Egypt outside of the “foreign funding” case including [Malek Adly](#), [Omar Hazek](#), [Reda Al Danbouki](#), and [Mohamed Lotfy](#) solely for the reason of being active human rights defenders.

Front Line Defenders condemns the travel ban imposed on Negad El-Borai as it believes it to be in

retaliation to his legitimate and peaceful human rights activities.

**Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Egypt to:**

1. Immediately and unconditionally remove the travel ban imposed against Naged El-Borai and all other human rights defenders facing travel restrictions in Egypt, as Front Line Defenders believes that they are being restricted solely as a result of their legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Egypt are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.