



**Statement issued by the Arab NGO Network for Development<sup>1</sup>  
in solidarity with the "Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights"**

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Beirut on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Today's dawn in Cairo had witnessed an abusive raid against the headquarters of "the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights" by the Egyptian police. The assaulters have kidnapped a photographer and two volunteers, tampered with the contents of the center, and seized some computers and documents. The kidnapped were taken to an unknown location. Up until the late hours of morning, the Egyptian center's lawyers were still searching for the kidnapped to commence the necessary legal procedures for their release.

The volunteers were preparing for a press conference called for by the Centre, to defend the rights of the workers of the "Iron and Steel Company" in Helwan, the "Swedish Cables" in Giza, "Santamora of blankets Tenth of Ramadan" and the Egyptian General Company for Tourism and Hotels" EGOH "Shepherd".

Right after the incident, the Center asserted that the press conference will be held, and that the workers' representatives will present the latest developments in the negotiation between the government and the steelworkers while continuing their sit-in; the problem of the profits incurred by Santamora company that were not dispersed to company workers since 1992; the attempt to liquidate the Swedish company for cables and to relocate its workers from their areas of residence to remote places without compensating them for it; and the shutdown of the Shepherd Hotel management based in the Nile Corniche that will result in laying off 118 workers.

ANND denounces such practices carried out by the police. Moreover, the Network expresses its deep concerns over the incident, and warns from the restoration of the preJanuary 25<sup>th</sup> state of affairs, where the suppression of freedoms and the interference of the security forces in public and private lives as well as the continued violation of the rights of citizens, especially the workers, peasants and small producers, has resulted in the revolt of the Egyptian people claiming their rights, freedom and dignity. The legitimate defense for the rights of workers and various public groups falls within the center's core mandate that is guaranteed by all international conventions and human rights charters and principles.

Hence, ANND expresses its full solidarity with the "Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights"; one of the most active members in Egypt. ANND urgently requests the Egyptian authorities to immediately release the detainees and to put an end to such practices that suppress public freedoms and represent blatant violations of human rights as well as contradict the basic principles of the January 25<sup>th</sup> people's revolution. ANND calls upon the Egyptian and the Arab organizations and the international community to start a large campaign in solidarity with the center and the Egyptian society as a whole to protect political and civil liberties and the respect of the economic, social and cultural rights, especially the right to assembly and the freedom of civic associations.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Arab NGO Network for Development \(ANND\)](#) is a regional network, working in 12 Arab countries with seven national networks (with an extended membership of 200 CSOs from different backgrounds) and 23 NGO members.