



Egyptian Man Imprisoned on Charges of Proselytizing Christianity in Libya

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In an embarrassing situation, the Libyan authorities arrested the Copt Gergis Massoud Hanna, 41 years old, accusing him of proselytizing and detained him in prison.

According to Dr. Naguib Gibraeel, President of Egyptian Union of Human Rights Organization EUHRO, an attorney and a Copt himself, Mr. Hanna was publishing purely Christian spiritual contents on his electronic website, which the Libyan authorities considered to be "Proselytizing Christianity in Libya".

"Hanna has not been proselytizing Christianity on his website, the matter is simply that a Muslim Egyptian named Saad el-Din Saad, who is the detainee's partner in a small business for recycling used manufacturing oil, denounced him to the Libyan External State Security. The Muslim partner wanted to get rid of him by being sent back to Egypt, so that he can put his hand on the whole business" Gibraeel commented.

This human rights abuse against Mr. Hanna was reported by the EUHRO to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Ambassador in Lybia to resolve this matter and free the Coptic man "as he is an Egyptian citizen regardless of his religion!" he added.

He also appealed to President Gaddafi of Libya to interfere in order to secure the release of the detained innocent Copt.

Dr.Gibraeel considers this detainment of the Copt on charges of proselytization as a very serious issue which seriously infringes freedom of faith, since what Hanna was publishing was spiritual matters, "besides, just for argument's sake, even if the Copt was actually proselytizing, there is no law which criminalizes proselytization", he said.

"This case is a blatant violation of international covenants and agreements signed by Libya and to which it became a partner. However, the organization intends to escalate this issue internationally should this Coptic man remains in detention".stressed Gibraeel.

An EUHRO delegation intends to visit Lybia to secure the release of Mr.Hanna within the coming few days, should the efforts of the Egyptian Foreign ministry fail.

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