



IPA Defends Egyptian Publishers against Accusations from Egyptian Military Government

Geneva, 22 December 2011 - For immediate release

The International Publishers Association calls the government of Egypt to stop attacking Egyptian publishers that are exercising their civil rights.

In a recent press conference the Egyptian military rulers have accused the publisher and member of the Egyptian Publishers Association (EPA), Mohamed Hashem of the publishing house Dar Merit, of unlawfully supporting demonstrators on Tahrir square. Since then a number of organisations within and outside of Egypt have expressed their support for the publisher.

The International Publishers Association (IPA) would like to remind the transitional government of Egypt of the values that the international publishing community shares with EPA and its members, including Mohamed Hashem, and that are included in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the joint IPA-EPA freedom to publish declaration of 10 February 2011¹:

- Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- Everyone has the right to support others that are exercising these rights.

In their 10 February joint declaration, IPA and EPA urged the Egyptian transitional authorities to “protect Egyptian and foreign journalists, photographers, writers and publishers and publishing houses in the exercise of their work”.

Says IPA Secretary General Jens Bammel: “IPA stands in solidarity with the Egyptian Publishers Association in condemning the way the publishers Mohamed Hashem is being attacked and calls on the Egyptian transitional authorities to respect its international obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)”.

“IPA condemns any government accusations that imply wrongdoing where a publisher, through his publishing activities or otherwise, contributes peacefully to the democratic process in his country.”

¹ www.internationalpublishers.org/images/stories/FtP/epa%20ipa%20joint%20declaration_10_02_11.pdf

International Publishers Association

“The rule of law requires that public authorities refrain from using press conferences as a substitute for the independent legal process that is the only process to address alleged wrongdoings by citizens.”

Notes for Editors:

The Egyptian newspaper Al Ahram writes: “Egyptian publisher Mohamed Hashem, owner of the Merit Publishing House, was amongst those singled out during a press conference held by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) on Monday. The SCAF screened video footage of detained children claiming they saw Hashem handing out helmets and gas masks to protesters.

(For the full story see: <http://english.ahram.org/~NewsContent/1/64/29733/Egypt/Politics-/I-wont-stop-aiding-revolutionaries,-Egyptian-publi.aspx>)”

More about IPA:

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is an international industry federation representing all aspects of book and journal publishing. Established in 1896, IPA's mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness for publishing as a force for economic, cultural and political development. Around the world IPA actively fights against censorship and promotes copyright, literacy and freedom to publish.

For further information, please contact:

Alexis Krikorian
International Publishers Association
3, avenue de Miremont
CH - 1206 Geneva
Tel: +41 22 704 1820
Fax: +41 22 74 1821
krikorian@internationalpublishers.org
www.internationalpublishers.org