

## **Statement regarding the closure of the Nadim center and clinic**

This statement is released by the two Nadim teams (the organization and the clinic) which the state insists are one and the same thing, while we insist, backed by facts and documents, are two separate entities joined by a common policy and attitude against the crimes of torture and violence, all forms of violence.



Yesterday, Thursday 9 February 2017, the clinic and the center have been sealed by a huge police force. We are told they have been accompanied by a woman and a man from the ministry of health and the Azbakeya local council.

We cannot accurately determine at what time the closure took place, since the state, as usual, arrived with a group of 15 men in uniform and as many - including women - individuals in plain clothes in addition to the informers who are constantly present in front of our building. The closure took place on a Thursday, which is our weekly day off, and before any of the team members had arrived to our location at 3 A Soliman el Halabi street, i.e. before noon.

The first scene was that of a depressing gathering of police force moving away from the building towards the Azbakeya police station, taking along the porter of the building to question him, according to what they said. The team member present at that moment tried to talk some of the policemen out of taking him along, since the matter concerned the center and not the porter. However, a man in plain clothes explained that the porter was the one who "informed" the police. Our porter was not an informer. He was tricked by the woman doctor who arrived earlier and asked about us. Thinking she was a colleague the porter told her where our office was, making it clear that today is the center's day off. Then the police arrived, determined to carry out their mission in the absence of the owners of the place. Fortunately by then our lawyer Mr. Taher Abul Nasr arrived and escorted the porter to the police station. An hour later the porter returned, while Mr. Taher remained at the police station trying to file a complaint. The police station refused, so he and lawyer Ms. Maha Yucef filed the complaint with the prosecution!

### **Why the complaint?**

Because what has been sealed with red wax are both the clinic and the offices of the organization, although the closing order by the ministry of health only mentions the clinic. Closing the offices of the organization (company) is an act of thuggery and not based on the MOH decision - dictated by the cabinet - but probably a decision by another entity, the identity of which we can easily guess.

### **Closure before the court sentence**

Those of you who have been following the Nadim case know that we had appealed the closing order by the ministry of health in February 2016. The court sessions extended from then until December 2016 during which the state attorney had not

provided any documents upon which the closure was ordered, despite repeated requests by the judge. In December the court referred the case to a committee of experts to prepare their report. The final court decision was expected this month, according to our lawyers. However, the ministry of interior decided not to wait for the court decision and to execute its own decisions and not those of the ministry of health.

### **Note**

The clinic and the organization have been sealed in our absence. We did not oversee the closure or the giving over of the place, which should have entailed a list signed by us of all the contents of the place. We think it is highly probable that the same authorities who sealed the flats could reopen them, take whatever they want and then seal it again. We are concerned that the contents of the flats might be subject to theft.

### **Finally**

El Nadim clinic is a place that is being sought by survivors of violence and torture, where they receive help and support from a team of psychiatrists, who made a choice that extended over many years, and continued to do so despite difficulties and obstacles, responding to a real need in Egyptian society linked to the state's insistence and persistence in using force, violence and torture in dealing with those who differ in their views from the official one. Closing the office does not change the commitment of those therapists, nor does it negate the facts of the widespread use of torture in Egypt nor the need for help by its survivors. It may take us a week or a month, but ultimately survivors will receive from us what they need. This is a promise.

As for disclosing torture crimes, this too will persist as long as the crimes persist.

We wish to express our gratitude to all who expressed their solidarity with El Nadim, friends, local, regional and international organizations.

El Nadim is an idea. Ideas are not subject to closure.

Friday 10 February 2014