

Muslim Brotherhood speak out against military trials for civilians

For the first time, the Brotherhood voices its opposition to the principle of trying citizens in military courts, the fate of more than 10,000 Egyptians

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Deputy Supreme Guide of Muslim Brotherhood Mahmoud Ezzat (Reuters)

The Deputy Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mahmoud Ezzat, has stated, according to the organisation's official website, that the MB opposes the military trials of civilians, arguing that it is unconstitutional and violates the United Nation's declaration of human rights.

Ezzat said that the Brotherhood have been those most harmed in the past by the military trials of civilians and that hundreds of its members have been put in prison as a result. He added that after the revolution, such trials should no longer exist.

Ezzat stated that the Brotherhood are disturbed by the fact that more than ten thousand civilians have received prison sentences by military prosecution within the past six months. Those sentenced by the military should be referred to civil prosecution, he added, especially seeing as those who have robbed and destroyed the country are being tried in civil courts.

The Brotherhood's statement said that the military's role as protector of the nation is much appreciated and that its role as the country's transitional ruler should be carried out in the appropriate political manner; which is based on dialogue, tolerance of criticism and respect of liberties.

Islamist groups have, to a large extent, been silent regarding the military trials of civilians, while other political groups and public figures have been critical. However, on Tuesday, Islamist presidential hopeful, Sheikh Hazem Abu Ismail, expressed his anger at the charges faced by activist, Asmaa Mahfouz, who is receiving military prosecution. He condemned the military trials of civilians in general.

This is the first time the Muslim Brotherhood has publicly announced its objection to the military trials of civilians.

Mahfouz, who is currently facing charges of insulting members of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and inciting violence against the military, says she received a call from the presidential hopeful and former Muslim Brotherhood member, Abdel Moneim Aboul-Fotouh, to express his solidarity.