

Press Release

Carter-Ruck

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Carter-Ruck Solicitors

6 St Andrew Street
London EC4A 3AE

T +44 (0) 20 7353 5005
F +44 (0) 20 7353 5553
DX 333 Chancery Lane
www.carter-ruck.com

Rached Ghannouchi secures takedown of four publications by Al Arab and Middle East Online

Rached Ghannouchi (the leader of the Tunisian Ennahdha Party and Speaker of the Tunisian Parliament) has secured the take down of three articles and a video published on various dates in April and May 2020 by Al Arab and Middle East Online.

The takedown of these materials follows Mr Ghannouchi's win in his libel action against Middle East Online Limited in the English High Court in 2020 (dealt with in two press releases available [here](#) and [here](#)), and the subsequent settlement of separate libel proceedings which he had brought against Al Arab Publishing House Limited in respect of a substantially similar article to that which was the subject-matter of the proceedings against Middle East Online Limited (for further background, see the press release [here](#)).

Mr Ghannouchi complained of four publications that contained false and defamatory claims about him, namely that he amassed excessive wealth, including from corruption and illicit funds provided by foreign sources purportedly for charitable work. Upon enquiry, the publishers produced evidence that very few people had read the articles or watched the video in the UK. In the light of this, Mr Ghannouchi decided to accept a settlement offer from the publishers, who agreed to take down the materials and make a contribution to his legal costs.

The publishers' agreement to contribute to Mr Ghannouchi's legal costs reflects their failure to engage with Mr Ghannouchi's complaint promptly, and the fact that they provided changing sets of publication figures, leading to an unnecessary increase in costs at the pre-action stage.

Mr Ghannouchi wishes to reiterate his commitment to the democratic process, and to the establishment in Tunisia of a democratic system based on pluralism and the sharing and peaceful alternation of power. This is a cause to which he has long been, and continues to be, entirely devoted.

For further information, please contact Nigel Tait (Nigel.Tait@carter-ruck.com) or Mathilde Groppo (Mathilde.Groppo@carter-ruck.com).

Partners
Alasdair Pepper
Guy Martin
Nigel Tait
Cameron Doley
Claire Gill
Adam Tudor
Matthew Wescott
Antonia Foster
Miranda Rushton
Rebecca Toman

Partnership Secretary
Alison Phillips

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