



**Middle
East
Studies
Association**
of North America, inc

Headquarters & Secretariat

3700 O St. NW, ICC STE 241
Washington DC 20057

Phone 520-333-2577
Fax 520-207-3166
secretariat@mesana.org
mesana.org

24 July 2024

The Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) strongly endorses the [statement](#) issued by our sister association, La Société des études sur le Moyen-Orient et les Mondes musulmans (SEMOMM), regarding the recent arrest and interrogation of the world-renowned scholar François Burgat.

MESA was founded in 1966 to promote scholarship and teaching on the Middle East and North Africa. It has close to 2800 members worldwide and is committed to ensuring academic freedom and the freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region in North America and elsewhere.

The arrest and interrogation of François Burgat for alleged “advocacy of terrorism” is an extremely disturbing development as it comes in the context of increasing threats to freedom of expression of those critical of the current Israeli war on Gaza.

We therefore strongly support SEMOMM’s call both for clarification regarding the charges against Prof. Burgat, and for French universities to firmly support their faculty members’ right to freedom of expression in these turbulent times.

Aslı Ü. Bâli
MESA President
Professor, Yale Law School