

URGENT ACTION

ELSHAMY IN UNKNOWN LOCATION, RISKS TORTURE

Prisoner of conscience Abdallah Elshamy has been moved from Tora Prison to an unknown location, which the authorities have not disclosed to his family or lawyers. He may have been subjected to enforced disappearance, which would put him at increased risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Abdallah Elshamy, a journalist with Al Jazeera Arabic, who has been in prison since August 2013, was moved from his cell in Tora Prison to an unknown location on 12 May at around noon.

His lawyer petitioned the public prosecutor that day to have him released and hospitalised within 48 hours, according to an Al Jazeera report. The journalist's health has deteriorated severely after four-and-a-half months of hunger strike, during which the prison authorities denied him access to a doctor or adequate medical care. He has also faced torture and other ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Egyptian authorities to disclose the whereabouts of Abdallah Elshamy immediately and give him access to his lawyers and family;
- Urging them to drop all charges against Abdallah Elshamy and release him immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to give Abdallah Elshamy access to any medical attention he may require, and refrain from taking any punitive measures against him for his hunger strike.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JUNE 2014 TO:

Public Prosecutor

Hesham Mohamed Zaki Barakat
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Supreme Court House, 1 "26 July" Road
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 577 4716
+202 2 575 7165
(switched off after office hours, GMT+2)

Salutation: Dear Counsellor

Interim President

Adly Mahmoud Mansour
Office of the President
Al Ittihadia Palace
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 391 1441
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign
Affairs for Human Rights
Mahy Hassan Abdel Latif
Multilateral Affairs and International
Security Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 574 9713
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.eg

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 101/14. Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/022/2014/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdallah Elshamy is an Egyptian national who works for Al Jazeera Arabic. He had been largely reporting on West Africa, until Al Jazeera asked him to travel to Cairo to report on protests against then-president Mohamed Morsi on 30 June 2013. Abdallah Elshamy is not known to have taken part in the protests or in any political violence. Throughout his time in Egypt, he was working as a journalist. The only evidence presented against him has been his camera, passport and foreign currency taken from him by the security forces during his arrest.

Three days after the ousting of Mohamed Morsi, Abdallah Elshamy began to report on a large sit-in staged by the former president's supporters in Rabaa al-Adawiya Square, in the Nasr City district of Cairo. The security forces used excessive and unnecessary lethal force to disperse the demonstration on 14 August, killing hundreds of people. In the ensuing violence, eight members of the security forces also died.

Abdallah Elshamy was arrested at a nearby military checkpoint when he tried to leave the area. The security forces held him for at least two hours, questioning him about his identity, nationality and work. They then transferred him to Sherouk Police Station, where they beat him and several other detainees, and questioned him about why he was at Rabaa al-Adawiya.

Abdallah Elshamy was transferred to Abu Zabaal Military Prison on 18 August. Despite the summer heat, he and a number of prisoners were first held for two hours, without water, in a police truck. The security forces apparently beat Abdallah Elshamy and the prisoners as they got out of the truck and continued to beat them as they walked into the prison. Abdallah Elshamy was questioned and then taken to a cell with several other detainees. He was beaten again and told to clean the cell.

Three days later, he was transferred to Abu Zaabal Prison 2. Once again, he and other detainees were beaten upon arrival. Abdallah Elshamy was finally transferred to Tora Istiqbal Prison on 16 December.

Abdallah Elshamy has been on hunger strike since 21 January, in protest at his continued detention. He is drinking water, but not eating food. His weight is known to have dropped from 108kg to 73kg and the prison authorities only carried out a report on his hunger strike after the first 30 days. Such reports are a normal procedure, carried out to monitor the health of any detainee on hunger strike and assess how far it has deteriorated.

Abdallah Elshamy's health condition is worsening because of his hunger strike. His eyesight is said to be deteriorating, he has passed out at least once and his blood pressure is low.

The Egyptian authorities have continued to crack down on the Al Jazeera network, as well as other media seen as supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and ousted president Mohamed Morsi. Three other Al Jazeera journalists have been detained as part of a separate case, along with five Egyptian media students. All have been charged with falsifying news and involvement with the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood movement, which backed Mohamed Morsi.

Enforced disappearance increases risk of torture, and is itself almost invariably a form of torture for the disappeared person and a form of ill-treatment for the individual's family. Enforced disappearance is absolutely prohibited under international law.

Name: Abdallah Elshamy
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 101/14 Index: MDE 12/0 Issue Date: 13 May 2014