

URGENT ACTION

EGYPTIAN ACTIVISTS HELD IN HIGH SECURITY PRISON

Three men have been detained in solitary confinement in Egypt since 6 April in Alaqrab high security prison for insulting the Minister of Interior. The men could be at risk of torture and other ill-treatment while in detention and may be prisoners of conscience.

Mohamed Mostafa Youssef, Mamdouh Hassan Mamdouh, and Abdelazeem Abdo, all activists in the 6 April Youth Movement, were arrested by Central Security Forces on 29 March during a protest outside the house of Egypt's Minister of Interior in Nasr City, Cairo. The protesters were holding underwear and a banner which called the Ministry of Interior "a prostitute who would go to bed with any notorious regime" and chanted against what they described as the infiltration of the Ministry of Interior by the Muslim brotherhood. It is feared that the three men are detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and assembly, in which case they would be considered prisoners of conscience.

According to sources in the country, the three activists were beaten upon arrest and then taken to the Nasr City's Awal police station. A few hours later, they were moved to the Al Gabal Al Ahmar Central Security Forces Camp in Al Salam City, an unofficial place of detention. On 30 March, they were referred to the Public Prosecutor's office in Nasr City, who accused them of insulting the Minister of Interior and attacking security forces. The prosecutor ordered they be held in preventive detention for four days. They were then transferred to Tora Istiqbal prison. On 3 April, the case was transferred to the New Cairo Criminal Court where their detention was renewed for another 15 days.

Since 6 April, the three men have been held in solitary confinement in Alaqrab high security prison. There are fears that the three activists are being held in solitary confinement as a form of punishment for insulting the Minister of Interior and are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. The men reported to their families that they are each held in a small cell, with no lights. They went on hunger strike for two days to protest against their solitary confinement in detention, and have asked the prison authorities to transfer them to an ordinary prison.

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

- √ Urge the Egyptian authorities to end the solitary confinement of Mohamed Mostafa Youssef, Mamdouh Hassan Mamdouh, and Abdelazeem Abdo and move them to an ordinary prison without delay; and ensure they are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment while in detention;
- √ Demand that they investigate allegations that the men were beaten by police during arrest and bring anyone found responsible to justice;
- √ Call on them to clarify the legal basis for the detention of Mohamed Mostafa Youssef, Mamdouh Hassan Mamdouh, and Abdelazeem Abdo. If they are detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly, they must be released immediately and unconditionally.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 MAY 2013 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Mohamed Ibrahim Youssef Ahmed
Ministry of the Interior
25 El Sheikh Rihan Street
Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 279 455 29
Email: moi@idsc.gov.eg
Salutation: Dear Minister

Prosecutor General

Talaat Ibrahim Abdallah
Supreme Court House
1 26 July Road
Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2 577 4716 / +202 2 575 7165
Salutation: Dear Counsellor

And copies to:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign
Affairs for Human Rights
Mahy Hassan Abdel Latif
Human Rights and International
Humanitarian and Social Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2 574 9713

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.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 29 March 2013, a group belonging to the 6 April Youth Movement marched from Al Hay Althamen to the Minister of Interior's house in Nasr City, in Cairo. The protesters chanted claims that the Muslim Brotherhood was infiltrating the Ministry of Interior and marched under a slogan which called the Ministry of Interior "a prostitute who would go to bed with any notorious regime". They also carried underwear during the protest.

The protest reportedly started peacefully, but led to some incidents of violence between protestors and the Central Security Forces when the protestors used insulting words against the Ministry of Interior and the Central Security Forces responded with obscene gestures. The Central Security Forces then reportedly shot at the protestors with shotgun pellets and used tear gas to disperse them.

Mamdouh Hassan Mamdouh was arrested after an altercation with the head of the security forces. According to information received by Amnesty International, he was beaten during his arrest. Mohamed Mostafa was reportedly trying to engage with both sides to reduce the tension, but was arrested as he tried to intervene in the arrest of an 18-year-old protestor. Abdelazeem Abdo was also reportedly arrested while trying to engage with the Central Security forces. According to information received by Amnesty International, he was beaten during his arrest.

The 6 April Youth Movement began as an online network on Facebook in 2008 to support striking workers in the town of El-Mahalla El-Kubra. Under the administration of former President Hosni Mubarak, the 6 April Youth Movement was one of the most active movements calling for greater respect for human rights and the end of the state of emergency. Its members participated prominently in the mass protests during the "25 January Revolution".

Name: Mohamed Mostafa Youssef, Mamdouh Hassan Mamdouh, and Abdelazeem Abdo
Gender m/f: Male

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