

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/egypte-press-photographer-held-without-08-10-2014,47076.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Egypt

Persecution

## Press photographer held without charge for past 14 months

8 October 2014

Arrested while covering the Rabaa massacre, he has been badly mistreated and is now in poor health.

Reporters Without Borders condemns freelance news photographer **Mahmoud Abu Zied's** arbitrary detention without trial or charge for the past 14 months. His detention was extended for another 45 days on 2 October.

Known by the pseudonym of "Shawkan," 27-year-old Zied was [arrested](#) in Cairo's Al-Tayaran Street on 14 August 2013 while providing the *Demotix* and *Corbix* agencies with coverage of the government's use of force to clear former President Mohamed Morsi's supporters from Rabaa Al-Awadiya Square.

After being held in various detention centres, he is now in Cairo's biggest prison, Tora, where he is in very poor health. According to Amnesty International, he has been badly [mistreated](#) since his arrest.

*"Arresting journalists and holding them in preventive detention on the basis of unfounded allegations is indicative of the orchestrated crackdown on independent reporting in Egypt,"* Reporters Without Borders deputy programme director Virginie Dangles said.

*"The situation of journalists in Egypt has become very worrying. Reporters Without Borders calls on the Egyptian authorities to free Zied immediately and unconditionally and urges the international community to keep raising his case in order to obtain his release as soon as possible."*

In a letter from prison, the [emotionally exhausted](#) Zied compared his situation in Tora prison to "a black hole, where all things are the same, and everything is black."

His brother has created a [Facebook page](#) to rally support in the international community.

[Three journalists](#) – **Ahmed Abdel Gawad**, **Mosab Al-Shami** and **Mick Dean** – were among the estimated 700 to 1,000 people killed when soldiers and police used force to evict the demonstrators from Rabaa Al-Awadiya Square.

Although one of the bloodiest episodes in Egypt's contemporary history, [no investigation](#) was been carried out in the past 14 months and no one has been held to account for this massacre.

### Satirical TV host sued

CBC television's star satirical presenter, **Bassem Youssef**, is being sued again. This time a group of lawyers filed the lawsuit after Khaled Abou Bakr, a presenter on the pro-government commercial channel Orbit, posted a tweet claiming that Youssef insulted President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in public.

Among other demands, the plaintiffs have [requested](#) that Youssef be stripped of his citizenship. An investigation has been opened and Youssef has been banned from leaving the country.

Youssef [responded](#) on Twitter, making fun of the way people slander him in an attempt to ingratiate themselves with the Sisi administration. The previous Morsi government began prosecuting Youssef for allegedly insulting President Morsi and a warrant was issued for his [arrest in March 2013](#). Morsi finally [withdrew](#) his complaint the following month "out of respect for free speech and media freedom."

Youssef's satirical programme was censored many times before being [taken off](#) the air in June as a result of repeated government pressure.

