

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

## News Flash

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### **Egypt: Karim Amer sentence makes bloggers new target of the authorities**

Amnesty International condemns the four-year sentence handed down by an Egyptian court today against blogger Karim Amer, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

"This sentence is yet another slap in the face of freedom of expression in Egypt," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Middle East and North Africa Deputy Programme Director. "The Egyptian authorities must protect the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression, even if the views expressed might be perceived by some as offensive. Amnesty International considers Karim Amer to be a prisoner of conscience who is being prosecuted on account of the peaceful expression of his views."

"The Egyptian authorities must repeal legislation that, in violation of international standards, stipulates prison sentences for acts which constitute nothing more than the peaceful exercise of the rights of freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion."

Karim Amer is the first Egyptian blogger to be tried for writing blogs criticizing Egypt's al-Azhar religious authorities, President Husni Mubarak and Islam. Charges against him included "spreading information disruptive of public order and damaging to the country's reputation", "incitement to hate Islam" and "defaming the President of the Republic".

Public Document

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