

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: MDE 12/06/90

Distr: UA/SC

UA 358/90 Detention and Torture of Possible POC

September 11, 1990

EGYPT: Khaled ESH-SHERIF, Journalist

On 13 August 1990, Khaled esh-Sherif, a journalist working for the Egyptian weekly newspaper, Al-Hakika, was arrested, apparently because of his association with Islamic political groups. This is the fourth time he has been detained under state of emergency provisions which make it possible to hold detainees for months at a time without charge or trial. Amnesty International believes he may be a prisoner of conscience.

According to Al-Hakika, Khaled esh-Sherif was held initially at the State Security Centre at Giza, and then at the Lazoghly State Security Intelligence Centre, where he is alleged to have been severely tortured. He was then transferred to Tora Reception Prison, but is said to have been subsequently returned to Lazoghly for a further week, during which he was again tortured.

Amnesty International has frequently expressed concern about the use of state of emergency legislation to detain political opponents of the government, including prisoners of conscience, in Egypt, and torture of such detainees.

Khaled esh-Sherif has been visited at Tora Reception Prison by lawyers, including a representative of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), who state that he bears visible traces of torture, including scars from electric shock torture and burns from cigarettes. In August Al-Hakika reported that one of the lawyers submitted a formal complaint to the Prosecutor General concerning Khaled esh-Sherif's detention and alleged torture. The Prosecutor's Office is said to have authenticated these signs of torture and to have ordered the detainee's referral to the Forensic Medical Office. As of 5 September, this had not been carried out. It is important that Khaled esh-Sherif be examined promptly by forensic doctors before any marks of torture have time to fade.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: faxes, telexes, telegrams, airmail letters

- asking what are the reasons for Khaled esh-Sherif's detention and urging that if he is not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence he be immediately and unconditionally released;
- expressing concern at his reported torture and ill-treatment and urging that he be granted immediate medical treatment, if required, and that he be examined by a forensic medical doctor without delay;
- seeking assurances that a thorough, impartial investigation into the allegations of torture be carried out and that any individual suspected to be responsible for torture be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
General Muhammad Abdel-Halim Moussa
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Al Sheikh Rihan Street
Bab al Louq
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Telex no.: 21361 MOKM UN

His Excellency the Prosecutor
General
Dar Al Qada Al Aali
26th July Street
Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt

Telex no.: 92060 KHARG UN (care
of Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Faxes may be sent to (202) 724 241, attention of the Head of the Legal Department,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a request to forward to the above.

COPIES TO: His Excellency Dr Ahmad Esmat Abdel Meguid
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Maidan At-Tahrir
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 October 1990.