

**SWEDEN/EGYPT** Muhammad Muhammad Suleiman Ibrahim El-Zari (m), aged 33  
Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza (m), aged 39  
His wife and five children

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The Swedish authorities forcibly returned the two Egyptian asylum-seekers named above on 18 December, after rejecting their asylum claims in an unfair procedure. In Egypt they are at grave risk of torture and unfair trial. The men's whereabouts are unknown and they are feared to be held incommunicado. Both have said that they have been tortured while detained in Egypt in the past.

Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza's wife and five children have been denied refugee status in Sweden in an unfair procedure, and may also be at risk of forcible return.

Muhammad Muhammad Suleiman Ibrahim El-Zari has been described in various international publications, including the Arabic daily newspapers *al-Sharq al-Awsat* and *al-Hayat*, as a member of an armed Islamist group. He has denied this, and stated that he is an activist for a non-violent Islamist opposition group in Egypt.

Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza has denied allegations by the Swedish Security Police (*Säpo*) that he is a member of an armed group. He had been one of 107 people charged with membership of the Islamist armed group *al-Gihad* (Holy Struggle) in an unfair trial before the Supreme Military Court. In April 1999 the court sentenced him *in absentia* to 25 years' imprisonment. Such trials of alleged members of armed Islamist groups before military or (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts are grossly unfair.

The Swedish government recognised both men as having a well-founded fear of persecution in a decision on 18 December 2001. However, the government excluded them from protection on the basis of connections to organizations which had been responsible for acts of "terrorism". The government made its decision on the basis of secret evidence provided by the Swedish Security Police which was not disclosed in full to the men and their legal counsel.

The Swedish government held that the men would not be at risk of serious human rights violations in Egypt, on the basis of written guarantees from the Egyptian authorities. Amnesty International is concerned that these written guarantees are an insufficient safeguard, that the Swedish government is in breach of its obligations under international refugee law and human rights law not to send anyone back to a country where they risk serious human rights violations such as torture.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In Egypt suspected members of armed Islamist opposition groups are frequently tortured, particularly at the SSI headquarters in Lazoghly Square, Cairo, but also other SSI branches, at police stations and occasionally prisons. The methods most commonly reported are electric shocks, beatings, suspension by the wrists or ankles, burning with cigarettes, and various forms of psychological torture, including death threats and threats of rape or sexual abuse of the detainee or their female relatives. Despite hundreds of complaints of torture reported by lawyers and local human rights groups to the Public Prosecutor's Office, no impartial investigations are known to have been conducted.

After considering the State Party Report in May 1999, the UN Committee Against Torture recommended "that Egypt takes effective measures to prevent torture in police and SSI custody...[and] that a proper registry of detainees, both police and SSI, which is accessible to members of the public be established and maintained."

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Swedish, Arabic or your own language:**

**To the Swedish authorities:**

- expressing concern that the Egyptian asylum-seekers Muhammad Muhammad Suleiman Ibrahim El-Zari and Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza were forcibly returned to Egypt on 18 December, and urging them to ensure that the men are not subjected to human rights violations, including torture and unfair trial, in Egypt;
- urging the authorities not to forcibly return Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza's wife and children to Egypt, and to ensure that his family's claims for protection will be examined in a fair asylum procedure;
- urging the Swedish government not to forcibly return anyone to a country where they would be at risk of serious human rights violations, in accordance with Sweden's international obligations.

Prime Minister Göran Persson  
Prime Minister's Office  
SE-103 33 Stockholm  
Sweden

**Fax: + 46 8 723 11 71**

**E-mail: [registrator@primeminister.ministry.se](mailto:registrator@primeminister.ministry.se)**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Foreign Minister Anna Lindh  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Box 161 21  
SE-103 39 Stockholm  
Sweden

**Fax: + 46 8 723 11 76**

**E-mail: [registrator@foreign.ministry.se](mailto:registrator@foreign.ministry.se)**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Ambassador Sven G. Linder  
Embassy of Sweden  
13, Mohamed Mazhar Street  
PO Box 131  
11211 Zamalek  
Egypt

**Fax: +20 2 735 43 57**

**E-mail: [ambassaden.kairo@foreign.ministry.se](mailto:ambassaden.kairo@foreign.ministry.se)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**To the Egyptian authorities:**

- seeking assurances that Muhammad Muhammad Suleiman Ibrahim and Ahmed Hussein Mustafa Kamil Agiza are being humanely treated in detention and that they are given regular access to lawyers of their choice;
- reminding the government of the absolute prohibition on torture in customary international law and of their commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights, in particular Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

**Telegram: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt**  
**E-mail: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg**  
**Fax: + 202 390 1998**  
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**Salutation: Your Excellency**

His Excellency General Habib al-'Adeli

Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Al-Sheikh Rihan Street  
Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt  
**Telegram: Minister Interior, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Fax: + 202 579 2031**  
**E-mail: moi@idsc.gov.eg**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Copies to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 January 2002.