

**PUBLIC**

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**25 February 2009**

**UA 51/09**      **Torture and ill-treatment/Death Threats**

**EGYPT**      **Mona Said Thabet (f) aged 24, mother of two children**  
**Yasser Naguib Mahran (m) aged 37, bus driver**  
**Their three children, 16, 3 years old, and 8 months**

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Mona Said Thabet, Yasser Naguib Mahran, her husband, and their three children are being subjected to a campaign of harassment and intimidation by members of their local police force. Both parents have been tortured and otherwise ill-treated despite complaints to the public prosecutor's office and there are serious concerns for their safety.

Mona Said Thabet went to file a complaint at her local police station (police station No.II in Shobra al-Khayma), north of Cairo on 19 January, concerning an assault on herself at her sister's home, by two men who are reportedly police informers, and who are relatives of her husband's ex-wife. Instead of dealing with the complaint, she was reportedly spat on and slapped on the face by the head of the police station, who also put out his cigarette on her cheek. She was reportedly beaten, insulted, had her head completely shaved (to both shame and punish her) and threatened with rape in order to force her to withdraw an earlier complaint against the torture of her husband in September 2008.

Two days later, on 21 January, Mona Said Thabet filed a complaint with the public prosecutor's office in Shobra al-Khayma with the assistance of lawyers from the Association for Human Rights and Legal Aid (AHRLA), an Egyptian human rights organization. AHRLA has been providing legal advice to victims of human rights violations, including by representing them before Egyptian courts. As a result, an investigation into the attack on her was opened and she was referred for examination by a forensic doctor.

On 1 and 2 February, Mona Said Thabet was threatened by telephone with further torture, rape, the killing of her husband and the kidnapping of her children if she did not withdraw her complaint to the public prosecutor. Despite this, she once again lodged a complaint about the threats with the office of the public prosecutor on 4 February. As a result the order was made for the incident to be investigated. The head of the Shobra al-Khayma police station No.II was reportedly summoned by the office of the public prosecutor for questioning. He failed to appear and a few days after Mona Said Thabet's complaint, police officers visited her home and made death threats against her.

On 13 February, police officers in a micro-bus came to her house at around 6pm, beat and slapped her in the street in front of her house and torn off her clothes. Mona Said Thabet reported that police opened fire at her husband, who fled the scene. She said she was also attacked with a sharp object in her back, which caused cuts that required 23 stitches. When Amnesty International delegates met her the next day, she was fearful of returning to her home. She had injuries to her thighs and bruises on her nose and eyes. She also had bandages around her foot and was limping. On 15 February, she again complained to the public prosecutor's office and was examined by a forensic doctor.

Mona Said Thabet's husband, Yasser Naguib Mahran, was detained many times for several days at Shobra al-Khayma police station No.II, allegedly for refusing to act as a police informer. In September 2008 he was held in incommunicado for about a week, during which he was tortured and had cuts in the cheeks and behind his ears. Whilst on the floor, he was reportedly kicked in the mouth and lost his front teeth. When he

returned home on 19 September 2008, Mona Said Thabet went and filed a complaint about his torture at the Ministry of Interior headquarters in Banha (complaint No. 55 of 19 September 2008).

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Torture and other ill-treatment remains widespread and systematic in police stations, and other detention centres of the State Security Investigations services. Amnesty International continues to receive reports of torture and other ill-treatment in Egypt. Although the authorities have declared that those who commit torture are brought before justice, Amnesty International was unable to obtain from the authorities statistics about the number of torture complaints investigated in the recent years, nor the number of police officers who were tried and convicted for committing acts of torture. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture has been requesting since 1996 to visit Egypt to investigate reports of torture and other ill-treatment.

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

- urging the authorities to take all necessary steps to ensure that Mona Said Thabet, Yasser Naguib Mahran and their three children are effectively protected from further threats, torture and other ill-treatment;
- calling for the forensic examination results of Mona Said Thabet to be submitted without undue delay to the public prosecutor's office as evidence in the investigations into the alleged attacks against her;
- asking the authorities to promptly and effectively investigate the allegations of torture and other ill-treatment of Mona Said Thabet and Yasser Naguib Mahran and to ensure that the head of police of the police station in Shobra al-Khayma No.II, and any other persons summoned in relation to this investigation appear before the public prosecutor;
- calling for those suspected of threatening, torturing and ill-treating Mona Said Thabet and Yasser Naguib Mahran, to be suspended from duty pending the public prosecutor's investigation.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

##### Minister of Interior

Minister Habib Ibrahim El Adly  
Ministry of the Interior  
25 Al-Sheikh Rihan Street, Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt

**Fax:** +20 22 796 0682  
**Email:** moi@idsc.gov.eg  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

##### Public Prosecutor

Counsellor Abdel Meguid Mahmoud  
Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali  
Ramses Street, Cairo, EGYPT

**Fax:** +20 22 577 4716  
**Salutation:** Dear Counsellor

#### **COPIES TO:**

##### Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights Affairs

Wael Abu al-Magd  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, EGYPT

**Fax:** +20 22 574 9713  
**Salutation:** Dear Mr. Abu al-Magd

and 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 8 April 2009.