

Amnesty International

Public Statement

Index: MDE 12/1164/2015

9 March 2015

Egypt carries out first execution of Morsi supporter following controversial trial

Amnesty International deplores the execution by hanging by the Egyptian authorities of Mahmoud Ramadan, a man convicted of murder in relation to political violence on 5 July 2013 in Alexandria after the ousting of former president Mohamed Morsi, after his death sentence was upheld in February 2015 following an unfair trial. The organization fears that the move might pave the way to further executions in light of the hundreds of death sentences handed down by Egyptian courts against supporters of the banned Muslim Brotherhood group.

Since the ousting of Mohamed Morsi in July 2013, at least 400 people have been sentenced to death following unfair trials in relation to political violence, while no security officer has been held accountable for police abuses and killings, noted Amnesty International.

[Violent protests](#) erupted on 5 July 2013 between Morsi supporters and pro-army protestors in Sidi Gaber district, Alexandria. Morsi supporters, including Mahmoud Ramadan, were videotaped allegedly stabbing a child; while other shocking videos of children being thrown from a water tank onto the roof of a building by other Morsi protestors were also widely broadcasted. Amnesty International has also documented cases where Morsi supporters were stabbed by army supporters during the same clashes. At least 17 people died on that day according to the Alexandria Forensic Authority.

Mahmoud Ramadan was arrested on 7 July 2013 and charged along with 57 others for the murder of four people and the attempted murder of eight others. They were also charged with protesting without authorization, destroying public and private property, using violence, and belonging to a banned group. A Cairo Criminal Court sentenced Mahmoud Ramadan to death while it handed down sentences of life imprisonment to the 57 others. On 5 February 2015, the Court of Cassation rejected the appeal submitted by the defendants and upheld the death sentence against Mahmoud Ramadan and the life imprisonment against the 57 others.

Mahmoud Ramadan's legal defence team told Amnesty International that the lawyer initially involved in the case was arrested ahead of the trial, on the basis of trumped up charges, and released after the trial had concluded. The court also failed to address the unwillingness of the police to intervene in stopping the violence on that day, despite them being stationed near to the scene. The court refused to include the investigations related to the killings of 14 Morsi supporters in the same clashes. According to the legal defence team, the court relied on weak evidence including unclear audio-visual evidence, which did not reflect the whole picture.

Mahmoud Ramadan was executed on the morning of 7 March 2015 in Borg Al Arab Prison in Alexandria, where he had been held. His body was received by his family on the same day from Kom El Dekka Morgue in Alexandria.

Amnesty International recognises the obligation and duty of governments to protect human rights, including the right to life, by prosecuting people suspected of violent criminal acts. Perpetrators of human rights abuses must be brought to justice in proceedings that conform with international fair trial standards, but without recourse to the death penalty. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime, the guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the offender or

the method used by the state to carry out the execution. The death penalty violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Amnesty International notes that states that retain the death penalty are obligated to ensure that trials for crimes carrying the death penalty comply with the most rigorous internationally recognized standards for fair trial.