

URGENT ACTION

JAIL SENTENCE AGAINST FIVE ACTIVISTS CONFIRMED A Cairo appeal court confirmed on 27 January the two-year jail sentence imposed on five activists. The activists had been sentenced on 13 December on trumped-up charges.

Abdeen Misdemeanour Appeal Court in the capital, Cairo, confirmed on 27 January the two-year jail sentence handed down to activists **Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed, Karim Khaled Fathy, Mohamed Abdel-Hamid, Gamila Seryel-Dain** and **Ahmed Mohamed Said**.

The activists had been convicted on 13 December of protesting, while blocking the road and disrupting traffic, violating Egypt's 2013 Protest Law. This law arbitrarily restricts the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly guaranteed under international human rights law and Egypt's Constitution. According to the defence lawyers, there is no physical evidence proving the charges against the five. The only evidence is an investigation report by a single National Security officer, according to which the five had taken part in a protest on 19 November at the intersection of Cairo's Mohamed Mahmoud and Mohamed Farid streets. According to the defence lawyers, a report by the Traffic Ministry confirms there were no complaints of a protest in that street on that day.

Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed has been denied urgent medical care in prison. He has suffered from severe shortness of breath and chest pains. The prison doctor has said he has problems with a coronary artery and heart valve and referred him to the prison hospital for further tests and an X-ray but, according to his family, this has not been done yet. Ahmed Mohamed Said, a vascular surgeon and well-known poet, explained he had been tortured during interrogation by National Security officers on 19 November, the day he was arrested. He was beaten and given electric shocks. The four male activists are detained in Cairo's Tora Prison complex. Gamila Seryel-Dain is held in Qanater Women's Prison, north-west of Cairo.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release the activists (naming them) immediately, because their convictions and sentences were for offences that criminalize the peaceful exercise of human rights or are based on trumped-up charges;
- Calling on them to ensure that Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed is given the medical attention he requires;
- Urging them to order a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, and ensure those responsible are brought to justice in a fair trial without resort to the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 MARCH 2016 TO:

National Council for Human Rights

President
Mohamed Fayek
69 Giza St, - next to the Saudi Embassy
Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 3762 4852/4229
Email: Nchr@nchr.org.eg
Twitter handle: @nchregypt
Salutation: Dear Mr Fayek

President

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi
Office of the President
Al Ittihadia Palace
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 391 1441
Email: p.spokesman@op.gov.eg
Twitter: @AlsisiOfficial
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign
Affairs for Human Rights
Mahy Hassan Abdel Latif
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.eg
Twitter: @MfaEgypt

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 294/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE12/3169/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Mohamed Said was in Cairo on a visit from Germany where he was working as a doctor. He and 30 other activists took part in a peaceful protest on 19 November, on Cairo's 6th October Bridge. They were commemorating those who had died four years earlier, in the 'Mohamed Mahmoud' street clashes between protesters and police. Over a six-day period, starting 19 November 2011, 51 people had been killed. Ahmed Mohamed Said had volunteered at the time as a doctor, treating injured protesters. He is also known for his poetry, which he has recited on Egyptian television.

The protest vigil on the bridge started at 2pm and lasted about five to seven minutes. Afterwards, Ahmed Mohamed Said went to a café in the Abdeen area of Cairo with his friend Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed, who is a political activist with the socialist Bread and Freedom Party. As they were leaving the café, police officers approached them and asked them for their identification cards. They were then taken to the nearby Abdeen Police Station for questioning. Ahmed Said's mobile phone went dead at about 4pm, his family have said. It was not until 4am the next day that the families and lawyers found out where he and the other activists were. Karim Khaled Fathy and Mohamed Abdel-Hamid were also arrested arbitrarily, as they were walking in the street. Gamila Seryel-Dain was arrested two days later, on 22 November, while taking food to the detainees.

Nine other activists were arrested on 19 November near the 6th October Bridge. They were taken to the Qasr el-Nil police station, and are being tried separately. On 20 November, when Ahmed Mohamed Said told the Public Prosecution he had been tortured, his family say the prosecutor refused to record it. Two days later, a judge ordered the release of defendants in both the Abdeen and Qasr al-Nil cases, but the Public Prosecution appealed this decision and they were returned to pre-trial detention. Gamila Seryel-Dain had been arrested by the Qasr el-Nil prosecution. Four days later, the judge released her on bail of 3,000 Egyptian pounds (US\$380), which she paid. After her release, the Abdeen Prosecution ordered her detention based on charges that included "inciting protests". She was made a defendant in both cases.

The day after the five activists were convicted in the Abdeen case, on 14 December, the four male activists were transferred to Cairo's 15 May Prison, where they were held in a disciplinary room. Their families say they saw no sunlight during their two weeks they were detained there, and went on a hunger strike in protest.

The detainees were transferred once again to Scorpion Prison, a maximum security facility in Cairo's Tora Prison complex. The families say this happened after they submitted a formal complaint about the case to the South Cairo district attorney on 29 December. The head of 15 May Prison had told the four male activists that they would be taken back to Abdeen Police Station, where conditions are better, but in order for the transfer to happen Ahmed Mohamed Said had to sign a paper saying that he had not been mistreated and was no longer on hunger strike. He did so, but the activists were then taken to a maximum security facility, where they say they are being kept in overcrowded, separate cells with jihadists and forced to sleep on thin mattresses on cold floors, during the coldest time of the year in Egypt. Gamila Seryel-Dain was taken to Qanater Women's Prison. She is a mother of three children.

The rights to freedom and expression and peaceful assembly are guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party, as well as Articles 65 and 73 of Egypt's Constitution.

Name: Ahmed Mohamed Said (m), Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed (m), Karim Khaled Fathy (m), Mohamed Abdel-Hamid (m), Gamila Seryel-Dain (f).

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 294/15 Index: MDE 12/3356/2016 Issue Date: 5 February 2016