

URGENT ACTION

EXTENDED DETENTION FOR PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

A judge in Cairo renewed the detention order of student Mahmoud Hussein for 45 days on 24 August. He has spent over 18 months in pre-trial detention for wearing a T-shirt with the “Nation Without Torture Campaign” logo and a scarf with the logo of the “25 January Revolution”. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Egyptian prisoner of conscience **Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed Hussein**, a 19-year-old student, appeared in court in Cairo on 24 August. A judge renewed his detention order for another 45 days. He has spent over 18 months in pre-trial detention. Under Egyptian law, a person can be held in pre-trial detention for up to two years if they are accused of a crime punishable by either life imprisonment or the death penalty. Mahmoud Hussein is at risk of life imprisonment on trumped-up charges.

After he was arrested on 25 January 2014 Mahmoud Hussein was tortured by his interrogators and forced to “confess” on video that he belonged to the banned Muslim Brotherhood organization, possessed explosives and had taken part in an unauthorised protest. He was beaten and given electric shocks to his back, hands and testicles for four hours, according to his lawyer and his brother.

He was arrested on the third anniversary of the Egyptian uprising at a checkpoint on his way home, for wearing a T-shirt with the “Nation Without Torture Campaign” logo and a scarf with the logo of the “25 January Revolution”. Mahmoud Hussein is being held in Cairo’s Tora Prison. He has been beaten several times, most recently on 14 July, when he was held in Cairo’s Appeals Prison.

Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the Egyptian authorities to release Mahmoud Hussein immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Calling on them to protect Mahmoud Hussein from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Urging them to order a prompt and independent investigation into his allegations of torture and bring those responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 OCTOBER 2015 TO:

Assistant Public Prosecutor

Ali Omran
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Supreme Court House
1 “26 July” Road
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 577 4716
(only during office hours, GMT +2)
Salutation: Dear Counsellor

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
Moh_moussa@op.gov.eg
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
Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2 574 9713
Email: Contact.US@mfa.gov.eg

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 286/14. Further information:
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE12/2109/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mahmoud Hussein was moved to Cairo's Tora Prison on 25 July. Prior to this, he was held at Cairo's Appeals Prison, where he was beaten twice. On 14 July, two prison guards slapped Mahmoud Hussein on the face and punched him in his stomach after he insisted on taking his personal belongings with him when they announced he would be transferred to a different prison. According to his family, this was the second incident of beating at Cairo's Appeals Prison. The first one occurred one year prior. Mahmoud Hussein's family say they have filed complaints with the Public Prosecutor's Office about his torture and other ill-treatment. The office stated it had opened an investigation, but so far the family has not been informed of the findings, according to Mahmoud Hussein's brother and his lawyer.

Mahmoud Hussein was arrested on 25 January 2014 after joining a protest against the Muslim Brotherhood and military rule in central Cairo. This was the third anniversary of the "25 January Revolution" in Egypt. Security forces broke up the protest with tear gas after no more than five minutes. Mahmoud Hussein left the protest and took a bus to his home in the El Marg district of north-east Cairo. At a checkpoint in El Marg, at about noon, the security forces stopped the bus and arrested Mahmoud Hussein for wearing a t-shirt and a scarf.

Upon arrest, Mahmoud Hussein is understood to have asked why he was being arrested but was then beaten by five plainclothes police officers who dragged him by his feet to a small police station nearby. They continued beating Mahmoud Hussein for 30 minutes, and then took him to El Marg police station, where they beat him with their fists and batons for around an hour. This torture is known in Egyptian police stations and prisons as "welcoming parties". In the police station, Mahmoud Hussein was accused of the trumped-up charges of belonging to a banned group, possessing Molotov cocktails and hand grenades, protesting without authorization and receiving money to protest.

Mahmoud Hussein was later put in a cell with around 50 other people. The cell, located at the police station, is only designed to hold 16 detainees. His cellmates beat and threatened him, allegedly on the instructions of the police officers, for some three hours until he was taken to National Security officers in the police station for interrogation. A national security officer told him that he would dictate a "confession" and videotape him. Mahmoud refused and said he would not confess to crimes he had not committed. He was then beaten and given electric shocks for four hours. After this, Mahmoud Hussein told the National security officer that he would "confess" to whatever they asked him to stop the torture. The National Security officer videotaped Mahmoud Hussein "confessing" to trumped-up charges.

On 26 January, Mahmoud Hussein was taken for questioning to the State Security Prosecution in New Cairo, which is meant to investigate offences related to national security. He denied all the accusations and said he had been tortured to make him "confess", but the prosecutor did not refer him for forensic examination or order any investigation into his torture allegations. Mahmoud Hussein stayed in El Marg police station for six days and was later transferred to Abu Zaabal Prison where he was beaten upon arrival. In May 2014, he was transferred to the Cairo Appeal Prison.

At least 1,000 people were arrested on 25 January 2014 for protesting without authorization, and the security forces used excessive force to disperse protests across the country. A protest law that came into force on 24 November 2013 is repressive and gives the Interior Ministry wide discretionary powers.

Name: Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed Hussein

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 286/14 Index: MDE 12/2323/2015 Issue Date: 26 August 2015