

URGENT ACTION

AUTHORITIES THREATEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER Egyptian National Security officers made an attempt to arrest human rights defender Dr Ahmed Abdullah on 9 January, when they raided a coffee shop he is known to frequent.

Three National Security officers in plain clothes raided a coffee shop in El Agouza, Cairo, that human rights defender **Dr Ahmed Abdullah** is known to frequent, on 9 January at around 2.30pm. They showed no arrest or search warrant, but searched the coffee shop for Dr Abdullah and asked shop employees where he was.

Dr Ahmed Abdullah filed a complaint about this with the Public Prosecutor in which he said the Interior Ministry was responsible for any attempt to harm him or endanger him in any way. The authorities are not known to be investigating Dr Ahmed Abdullah, and he has not been presented with any order by the public prosecutor. Dr Ahmed Abdullah's means of communication, particularly his phone, have been under surveillance by the security forces, who have threatened him repeatedly by phone that they will arrest him.

A campaign to smear Dr Ahmed Abdullah in the national media has been underway since October 2015. He chairs the Board of Trustees of the human rights NGO Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF); he and the ECRF's executive director, Mohamed Lofty, have been portrayed in the press as a threat to national security. The media have portrayed both men as holding secret meetings with US and European officials to harm Egypt's national security and destroy its image abroad.

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

- Calling on the authorities to end the harassment and intimidation of Dr Ahmed Abdullah, who is being targeted solely because of his human rights work;
- Calling on them to ensure that Dr Ahmed Abdullah's human rights are not threatened, and abide by their obligations under international human rights law;
- Calling on them to respect the right to freedom of expression and association, and allow NGOs to carry out their human rights work without hindrance or threats.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 FEBRUARY 2016 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Magdy Abdel Ghaffar
Ministry of the Interior
25 El Sheikh Rihan Street
ab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 27960682
Email: center@iscmi.gov.eg

Salutation: Dear Minister

Public Prosecutor

Nabil Sadek
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Madinat Al-Rihab
New Cairo, Egypt

Salutation: Dear Counsellor

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
Twitter: @MfaEgy

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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Interior Ministry and structures under its command continually harass and intimidate Dr Ahmed Abdullah and threaten his human rights, including his right to life and integrity of person, solely because of his human rights work and association with the ECRF. The organization's Executive Director, Mohamed Lotfy, was briefly detained in June 2015 in Cairo Airport when attempting to travel to Germany to brief the German Green Party's parliamentarians and other stakeholders about the human rights situation in the country ahead of the Egyptian President's visit to Germany. His passport was confiscated and he has been banned from foreign travel. Two ECRF researchers were arrested in 2015 for conducting field research on economic and social rights. They were released on bail after a few hours.

The ECRF has led a campaign on enforced disappearances in the country. It concluded, in its final report published, that some security services such as the National Security Agency, run by the Ministry of Interior, and the Military Intelligence Service, had been involved in abducting people and holding them incommunicado in secret detention centres or illegal locations. The attempt to arrest Dr Ahmed Abdullah appears to have resulted from the ECRF's work on enforced disappearances.

This is yet another blow to freedom of expression and association in Egypt, which have been under increasing pressure since the July 2013 ousting of then-president Mohamed Morsi. The threat to arrest Dr Ahmed Abdallah and Mohamed Lotfy is another clear attack on human rights defenders and civil society for carrying out human rights work.

The Egyptian authorities have a record of arbitrarily raiding NGOs, both under former president Hosni Mubarak and in the aftermath of the 2011 uprising. NGOs have been attacked several times, with staff arrested and taken to unknown locations where they were ill-treated.

Name: Ahmed Abdullah

Gender m/f: m

UA: 9/16 Index: MDE 12/3204/2016 Issue Date: 14 January 2016