



PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 172/98 (MDE 12/32/98, 9 June 1998) and follow-up (MDE 12/39/98, 8 July 1998) - Health concern / Ill-treatment / Possible prisoner of conscience and new concern: Legal concern

**EGYPT' Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im, free-lance journalist, aged 34**

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Amnesty International fears that 'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im, a civilian whose trial before a Military Court in Heikstep (east of Cairo), is expected to start within days, will not receive a fair hearing.

Trials of civilians before Military Courts violate international standards; defence lawyers are given insufficient time to prepare cases, there is no right of appeal, and sentences are subject to review only by a Military Appeals' Bureau - a body composed of military judges which is not a court - before going to the president for ratification.

'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im has been charged, with 106 others, in the "Returnees from Albania" case (so-called because some of the defendants were forcibly returned from Albania to stand trial [see Extra 53/98, 4 August 1998 and follow up]). Although the Military Prosecutor has not provided details of the charges, they are known to be accused of supporting militant Islamist groups active in Egypt during the time many of the defendants were in prison - some, including 'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im, have been in prison for up to eight years.

In July 1993 the UN Human Rights Committee said of the trial of civilians by military courts in Egypt "military courts should not have the faculty to try cases which do not refer to offences committed by members of the armed forces in the course of their duties".

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International believes 'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im is a possible prisoner of conscience detained for journalistic and political activities critical of the government. He was one of many students who was briefly arrested and tortured in 1989 for activities on behalf of Islamist student groups.

'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im was arrested in February 1993. In October that year he was acquitted by the Supreme Military Court on charges of being a member of the Islamist group: *Tala'i al-Fatah* (Vanguards of the Conquest). Instead of being released, however, he was immediately issued with a new detention order and placed in a high security prison until 1995. He is currently detained at Istiqbal Tora, a closed prison which does not allow family visits. His long stay in prison, where conditions are appalling, have caused his health to suffer.

In June 1998, 'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im went on a hunger strike in protest at his almost five-year illegal detention. For more information on his case see Amnesty International report "Egypt: Human Rights Defenders under threat, AI Index MDE 12/15/94.

'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im has a six-year-old girl whom he has never seen.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/E-mails/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Arabic, English, French or in your own language:**

- asking for 'Abd al-Mun'im Gamal al-Din 'Abd al-Mun'im to be granted a fair trial before a civilian court in accordance with recognized international standards;
- seeking assurances that he is humanely treated and has regular access to lawyers of his choice and his family;
- reminding the government of Egypt of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 10 : "Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal".

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak  
 President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
 'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt  
**Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN**  
**Faxes: + 202 390 1998**  
**e-mail: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

His Excellency General Habib al-'Adeli  
 Minister of the Interior  
 Ministry of the Interior  
 Al-Sheikh Rihan Street, Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt  
**Telegrams: Minister Interior, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Faxes: + 202 579 2031**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Ms Nayla Gabr  
 The Human Rights Department  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes: + 202 574 9533**

Mr Raga' al-'Arabi  
 Public Prosecutor  
 Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali  
 Ramses Street, Cairo, Egypt

Dr Fathi Sorour  
 Speaker  
 The People's Assembly  
 Magles al-Sha'ab Street, Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes: + 202 574 91 75**

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 24 February 1999.

Visit the Amnesty International UDHR campaign website on <http://www.amnesty.excite.com>