

PUBLIC

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To: Medical professionals  
From: Medical Office / Middle East Program  
Date: 19 February 1999

***Further information on***  
***MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION***

**Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani**  
**EGYPT**

**[also see AI Index: MDE 12/21/98, 20 April 1998 and earlier actions on the detention of health professionals in Egypt]**

Theme: re-arrest of former prisoner of conscience

**Summary**

Amnesty International has learned that Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani, a medical doctor and former prisoner of conscience who was last released from detention in March 1998, was arrested again on 14 February 1999 together with eight other members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Reportedly he has been transferred to Mazra'at Tora prison [south of Cairo] after initially having been held at the State Security Investigations Department in Alexandria.

Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani has been charged with "belonging to a secret organization that was established against the law and possession of leaflets that promote the group's ideas". As a member of the Muslim Brotherhood who neither uses nor advocates violence, Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani is considered by Amnesty International to be a prisoner of conscience and the organization is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

**Recommended Actions**

Letters are requested from medical professionals to the addresses given below:

- o introducing yourself as a member of Amnesty International's health professional network and referring to your earlier letters on the case of Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani [if appropriate]
- o explaining that Amnesty International again considers Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani to be a prisoner of conscience, detained only for the peaceful expression of his political beliefs
- o asking for the charges against Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani to be dropped and for him to be released from detention immediately and unconditionally



If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow-up letter seeking a response. Please send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat [attn: medical team] and check with your national coordinator or the medical team if you send appeals after 16 April 1999.

## ADDRESSES

H.E. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 390 1998

E-mail: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg

Mr Faruq Sayf al-Nasr

Minister of Justice

Ministry of Justice

Midan Lazoghly, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 355 81 03

General Habib al-'Adeli

Minister of the Interior

Ministry of the Interior

Al-Sheikh Rihan Street

Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 579 2031

General Nabil Sayyam

Director of prisons

Maslahat al-Sugun

al-Gala'a Street, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 574 5561

## COPIES:

The Human Rights Department

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Corniche al-Nil

Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 574 9533

Egyptian Medical Syndicate

Dar al-Hikmah

42 Kasr el Eini Street

Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 356 2751

Egyptian Organization of Human Rights  
[EOHR]

8/10 Mathaf El Manial Street

Manial El Roda

Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 362 1613

Email: eohr@link.com.eg

Egyptian Medical Syndicate

Alexandria Branch

Egyptian Human Rights Committee

Sapa Pacha

Alexandria, Egypt

Fax: +203 588 1412

[Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani was

Secretary-General of this branch and head of its human rights committee at the time of his arrest in 1995]

**Please also send copies of your letters to diplomatic representatives of Egypt in your country or to the nearest Egyptian embassy.**

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***"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression"***

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
Article 19**

Date: 19 February 1999

***Further information on***  
***MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION***  
**Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani**  
**EGYPT**

Amnesty International has learned that Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani, a medical doctor and former prisoner of conscience who was last released from detention in March 1998, was arrested again in Egypt shortly after midnight on 14 February 1999 together with eight other members of the Muslim Brotherhood after the group held an unauthorized meeting in the house of one of them. Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani's flat was searched by security forces and he was taken to the State Security Investigations Department in Alexandria. On 15 February, he was transferred to Mazra'at Tora prison south of Cairo.

Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani has now been charged with "belonging to a secret organization that was established against the law and possession of leaflets that promote the group's ideas". As a member of the Muslim Brotherhood who neither uses nor advocates violence, Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani is considered by Amnesty International to be a prisoner of conscience and the organization is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

### **Background**

Dr Ibrahim Khalil al-Za'farani, who is the former Secretary General of the Alexandria branch of the Egyptian Medical Association, was serving a three-year prison sentence for membership of the Muslim Brotherhood from November 1995 to early 1998. He was re-arrested only hours after his release on 22 January 1998 and had to spend another two months in detention before finally being released for good in March 1998.

Recent arrests of members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt have taken place in the context of a recent clamp down by the government on the organization. In 1998, more than 100 alleged Muslim Brothers were arrested. Many of them were held in administrative detention for several months without being brought before a judge. At the end of 1998, at least 42 remained in detention.

Alleged Muslim Brothers are frequently arrested at night in their homes. Detainees are taken for interrogation to the State Security Investigations (SSI) Department before being transferred to prison. Some of the alleged Muslim Brothers have after their release reported to have been tortured and ill-treated while held at the SSI office.

Given the circumstances of arrests and detention it appears that the authorities increasingly use the administrative detention of alleged Muslim Brothers as a form of short-term punishment. It is questionable whether in these cases investigations could not be carried out without detaining the suspects, as the places of residence of the Muslim Brothers are generally well known to the authorities. Furthermore, not one of the alleged Muslim Brothers who have been detained since the beginning of 1998 has so far been brought to trial.