

TO: HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
FROM: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

APPEAL FOR ACTION

RE: EGYPTIAN SECURITY FORCES MUST RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS

In the days leading up to the resignation of Hosni Mubarak Egyptian security forces used excessive force causing injury, disfigurement and even death to some protesters. Since 25 January 2011, at least 384 protesters have been killed and over a thousand people detained. Reports of torture and ill-treatment in military custody have also been widespread. Amnesty International has documented many personal accounts from protesters and ex-detainees of excessive force and torture by the Egyptian military. The Egyptian security forces must take action to stop the use of torture and ill-treatment against detainees. Authorities must investigate allegations of torture in detention and the use of excessive force by security forces.

Accounts of the excessive force used by the Egyptian military include those of protesters Mahmoud Mohamed Amin and Wael Mohamed Mahmud Ali. Each lost the sight in one eye after security forces attacked protesters using batons, tear gas and shotguns on 25 January. The type of eye injuries suffered by the two men, caused by shrapnel from shotguns, were among the most common reported by Cairo's hospitals. One hospital said it admitted 58 such cases in 24 hours. Both wounded men were visited by the Minister of Health, who assured them they would be visited by medical specialists, but that has not yet happened.

Mahmoud Mohamed Amin, a 30-year-old-accountant from Aswan, said the protest was peaceful until security forces began to intervene in the afternoon of 25 January. They beat protesters with batons and used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the crowd. He says he was hit by a "rash" (described as a weapon that emits several round bullets that shatter in all directions - most likely a shotgun). About 15 pieces of shrapnel were lodged in his upper body, including three pieces in his eye and some in his nostril. He has lost the sight in the right eye. Doctors told him there is a chance he can regain his sight but he would need treatment outside Egypt.

Wael Mohamed Mahmud Ali was standing by Al-Qasr Al Eni street, south of Tahrir square, when he felt something hit his face and chest and realised he was bleeding. At the hospital, police agents kept him under surveillance and accompanied him to the toilet or to pray. He lost sight in his left eye and does not know if it can be restored. He also has shrapnel in his nose and ear, along with broken front teeth.

Those detained and held in custody also report abuses by the security forces. Recently released detainees told Amnesty International researchers in Egypt that members of the armed forces used beatings, whipping and other forms of torture and other ill-treatment to intimidate protesters and to obtain information about plans for the protests.

One former detainee, a 29-year-old man from Gharbiya Province north of Cairo, told Amnesty International he was tortured by soldiers on 3 February in an annexe to the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities. He states that he was forced to undress and lie on the floor. The soldiers proceeded to beat him with a whip, kick him and step on his back, hands and feet. After an interrogation by a man in plain clothes, the detainee, whose name is being withheld to protect his security, was beaten over the head with a chair by a soldier, leaving him unconscious.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY:

- Explaining that you are a health professional concerned about human rights;
- Calling on the authorities to publicly condemn torture and move swiftly to eradicate it;
- Urging the authorities to investigate allegations of torture and bring perpetrators to justice;

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



- Calling on the authorities to launch independent investigations into all cases where the security forces are reported to have used excessive force against protesters;
- Urging the authorities to provide medical care to anyone who has been victim to security force brutality;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that reparations are made to those who have suffered injury or loss of a family member.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 01/05/2011 TO:

Leader, Supreme Military Council

Field Marshal Muhammad

Tantawi

Ministry of Defence,

23 Al Khalifa Al Ma'moun Street,

Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +202 2 291 6227

Email: mod@idsc.gov.eg mmc@afmic.gov.eg, mod@afmic.gov.eg

Salutation: Dear Field Marshal

Minister of Interior

M.E. Mahmoud Wagdy

Ministry of Interior

25 El Sheikh Rihan Street

Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt.

Fax: +20 22 796 0682

Email: moi@idsc.gov.eg

Salutation: Your Excellency

Prosecutor General

Abd El-Megeed Mahmoud

Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali

Ramses Street, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +20 22 577 4716

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

IF YOU RECEIVE NO REPLY WITHIN SIX WEEKS OF SENDING YOUR LETTER, PLEASE SEND A FOLLOW-UP LETTER SEEKING A RESPONSE. PLEASE SEND COPIES OF ANY LETTERS YOU RECEIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, ATTENTION OF THE HEALTH TEAM, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 0DW OR E-MAIL: health@amnesty.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Egypt has been a party to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment since 1987. However, Egypt has operated under a state of emergency continuously since 1981 and most recently renewed in May 2008. The government has used its powers to detain peaceful critics and opponents as well as people suspected of security offences or involvement in terrorism. Some were held under administrative detention orders; others were sentenced to prison terms after unfair trials before military courts. Torture and other ill-treatment remained widespread in police cells, security police detention centres and prisons, and in most cases were committed with impunity.

On 12 February, a day after the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, the Supreme Military Council announced that Egypt would abide by its international treaties, but it remains to be seen if the military will uphold this promise.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

