

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# EGYPT: JOINT STATEMENT: RELEASE JOURNALIST TAWFIK GHANEM AFTER 150 DAYS IN DETENTION

Eleven human rights organizations call on the Egyptian authorities to immediately release 66-year-old journalist Tawfik Ghanem, who has been arbitrarily detained for 150 days solely because of his media work. Pending his release, Ghanem should be granted immediate access to medical care.

On [21 May 2021](#), Egyptian authorities subjected Tawfik Ghanem to enforced disappearance for five days during which he was questioned about his previous work at Anadolu Agency, a state-run Turkish news agency. He then was brought before Supreme State Security Prosecution in Cairo on 26 May 2021, which ordered 15 days of pretrial detention pending investigations on charges of “spreading false news,” “misusing social media,” and “terrorism-related charges.” Since then, Ghanem’s pretrial detention has been renewed, even though he has been unable to challenge the lawfulness of his detention or communicate with his lawyer. Ghanem is currently held in Tora Reception (Istiqbal) prison and his detention was most recently renewed for 45 days on October 11, 2021.

The undersigned organizations are greatly alarmed that Tawfik Ghanem is being denied access to adequate healthcare in prison or outside facilities for diagnosis and treatment. According to his family, prison authorities failed to transfer Ghanem to an outside hospital despite the prison doctor recommending his transfer to the Qasr El Einy hospital for examinations for a suspected kidney tumor 50 days ago. According to his medical records, Ghanem also suffers from diabetes, neuritis in his legs and knee, lower back problems, and an enlarged prostate that requires ongoing specialist treatment in a properly equipped medical facility.

Throughout his career, Tawfik Ghanem has headed a number of media organizations, including Media International, which ran the Islam Online website for ten years. Most recently, he served as regional director of the Anadolu Agency in Cairo until his retirement in 2015.

The undersigned organizations call on authorities to stop their systematic crackdown on media freedoms and halt the misuse of pretrial detention pending investigations on bogus terrorism charges to punish any criticism or dissent. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists’ 2020 prison census, Egypt continues to arbitrarily detain a record number of at least 27 journalists and media workers, several of whom have been held in extended periods of pretrial detention.

### Signed:

Amnesty International  
Civil Rights Defenders  
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)  
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)  
Egyptian Front for Human Rights (EFHR)  
The Freedom Initiative  
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)  
MENA Rights Group  
PEN America  
Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)  
Sinai Foundation for Human Rights