

URGENT ACTION

YOUTH UNJUSTLY JAILED IN RELATION TO PROTEST

Badr Mohamed is serving an unjust five-year prison sentence following his conviction in January 2023 in connection to the Ramsis Square protests on 16 August 2013, when he was 17 years old. His trial before a terrorism circuit of the Cairo Criminal Court was grossly unfair. He is held at the Badr Prison Complex in conditions that violate the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment and is denied healthcare despite suffering from toothaches, vision impairment, inability to sleep and mental health concerns.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Public Prosecutor Hamada al-Sawi
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Dear Counsellor,

*I am writing to express my deep concern over the unjust imprisonment of **Badr Mohamed**, a 27-year-old who was convicted in January 2023 in connection to protests and sentenced to five years in prison after a grossly unfair trial. The charges relate to a protest violently dispersed by security forces on 16 August 2013, when Badr Mohamed was 17 years old. Badr Mohamed, who was initially convicted in his absence, was retried before a terrorism circuit of the Cairo Criminal Court after his arrest on 11 May 2020. His rights to a fair trial were violated, including his right to adequate defence, to equality of arms, to be tried by a competent independent and impartial tribunal and to cross-examine witnesses against him and to call witnesses on his behalf. During the trial hearings, which commenced in June 2020, Badr Mohamed was kept inside a glass cage where he could not fully observe, hear, or speak during proceedings. He was banned from communicating with his lawyer privately through the pre-trial and trial phases. His appeal in front of the Court of Cassation is pending.*

Badr Mohamed is held in Badr 1 prison, notorious for its inhumane detention conditions. He is only allowed short family visits once a month, which is not enough to spend time with his daughter who was born while he was detained. According to the child's mother, the absence of her father due to his unjust imprisonment has impacted their child's mental health. Prison guards often deny or delay written correspondence between him and his loved ones, and ban any phone calls. He is held in a small, poorly ventilated cell, which lacks any natural light, together with another 20 detainees. Prisoners are subjected to camera surveillance and fluorescent lights round the clock, which causes severe pain and suffering and violates the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment. Badr Mohamed also complained about the failure of prison authorities to provide him and other prisoners with sufficient and nutritious food and potable water. Prison authorities also ban books, paper, pens, and climate appropriate clothes. These prison conditions have had a detrimental impact on his physical and mental health with his family reporting that he lost significant weight since his detention. Badr Mohamed has also complained about his vision worsening, toothaches, and inability to sleep. Despite this, he has not had access to any healthcare.

Given the above, I urge you to quash the unjust conviction and sentence against Badr Mohamed, and in light of his arbitrary detention release him. Pending his release, he must be granted immediate access to his family, lawyers and any medical assistance he may require, and he must be held in conditions that meet international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Security forces arrested Badr Mohamed on 16 August 2013 in connection to the Ramsis Square protests, when he was 17 years old. Amnesty International [documented](#) the excessive force used by security forces against protesters and bystanders during these protests, resulting in the death of 97 protesters. According to information gathered by Amnesty International, Badr Mohamed was in the vicinity of Ramsis Square when violence erupted, and he ran to the nearby Al-Fath mosque for safety. The security forces then raided the mosque, where tens of protesters and bystanders were trapped, including many who were injured, and arrested Badr Mohamed and many others. According to the casefile, reviewed by Amnesty International, Badr Mohamed was named as a suspect in case 8615/2013 and interrogated before Al-Azbakeya prosecution on 19 August 2013 without a lawyer present. Badr Mohamed was arbitrarily detained with adults in Wadi al-Natron prison and transferred to a juvenile detention facility three months later, where he remained until his release on bail in November 2013. Under international law and standards, the arrest, detention or imprisonment of children should only be used as a measure of last resort; must be subject to regular review and be for the shortest appropriate duration; and alternatives to detention should be used whenever possible. According to his relatives, after his release, he has been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and has been living in hiding fearing re-arrest. On 18 August 2017, Badr Mohamed was sentenced to five years in prison in his absence on charges of murder of police officers, attempted murder, “destroying public property”, “protesting without authorization”, “attacking the security forces” and “hindering the work of national institutions”, among other charges. He was tried in a [grossly unfair mass trial](#) that included 494 defendants, 43 of whom were sentenced to life imprisonment, while 399 were sentenced to between five and 15 years in prison, including eight children. The verdict, examined by Amnesty International, heavily relied on investigations and eyewitness accounts by security forces and other government officials.

Security forces arrested Badr Mohammed in front of his wife, an Austrian national, during a Ramadan breaking of the fast (Iftar) on 11 May 2020. He was referred to re-trial before a terrorism circuit of a Cairo Criminal Court in July 2020. According to lawyers, new defendants were arrested and/or added to the case every month, which delayed court proceedings considerably. In mid-2022, the presiding judge dismissed the lawyers’ requests to call witnesses or re-examine evidence. The retrial initially took place in a courtroom inside Tora Prison Complex, and then in a courtroom inside the Badr Prison Complex. On 12 January 2023, Badr Mohamed was convicted of “participating in an illegal gathering”, “displaying force associated with the crime of premediated murder”, “attempted murder”, “destruction of public property”, “attempted use of explosives and possession of firearms and knives”, among other charges and sentence to five years in prison. Similarly, to the original verdict issued in August 2017, the presiding judge in the retrial relied on secret reports by security forces, to which defendants and their lawyers don’t have access, and witness testimonies from police and other security or government officials. Lawyers raised concerns that no material evidence was presented in relation to Badr Mohamed’s alleged participation in protests or violent acts. Amnesty International learned from Badr Mohamed’s lawyers that the court dismissed statements by defence witnesses that he did not take part in the protests. Badr Mohamed’s trial and retrial took place before dedicated judicial chambers, named terrorism circuits, established in 2014 to try individuals involved in anti-government protests. These chambers have sentenced hundreds of individuals to death, life imprisonment and prolonged prison terms after grossly unfair mass trials. The establishment of these chambers was one of the measures taken by the Egyptian authorities since 2013 to undermine the independence of the judiciary, in effect transforming courts into tools of repression against actual or perceived critics of the government. Despite the reactivation of the Presidential Pardons Committee in April 2022 and the launch of the National Dialogue in May 2023, the Egyptian authorities continue to arrest real or perceived critics, while thousands remain arbitrarily detained solely for exercising their human rights, following grossly unfair trials or without legal basis.

Since February 2023, concerns about inhumane detention conditions in the Badr Prison Complex have increased amid leaked letters by prisoners indicating rampant torture and other ill-treatment, including deliberate denial of healthcare, exposure to extreme cold, and camera surveillance and bombardment with bright lights 24 hours a day. Prisoner letters paint a frightening picture of starving detainees held in isolation, whose despair at the injustices suffered for years has led some to attempt suicide and others to go on hunger strike. During a detention renewal hearing, held online on 13 March 2023, prisoners held in Badr 3 complained about being stripped naked and beaten.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 16 September 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Badr Mohamed (he/him)