

URGENT ACTION

TORTURED STUDENT DENIED USABLE PROSTHETIC LEG

Egyptian authorities continue to deny arbitrarily detained student Oqba Hashad a suitable prosthetic leg, which he needs to move unassisted. Following his family's repeated requests and supporter mobilization, the Egyptian authorities provided him with a prosthetic leg on 4 January 2024 for the first time since his old prosthetic broke in August 2022. However, it is not the correct size, making it unusable and increasing the risk of health complications according to independent doctors. Prison authorities also continue to deny him the medicine and antiseptics he needs for his stump care. Unjustly held for four years and eight months without trial solely for his brother's human rights activism, Oqba Hashad has been subjected to a litany of human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, torture and other-ill treatment. He must be immediately and unconditionally released.

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

Public Prosecutor Mohamed Shawky Ayyad

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Dear Counsellor,

I write to you to express my concern about the continued arbitrary detention of 26-year-old student Oqba Hashad without trial solely for his brother's activism. Since his arbitrary arrest on 20 May 2019, authorities have subjected him to a catalogue of human rights violations including enforced disappearance for 77 days as well as torture and other ill-treatment through beatings, electric shocks and denial of adequate healthcare. On 4 January 2024, following his family's repeated requests and supporter mobilization, Wadi al-Natroun prison authorities have provided Oqba Hashad with a new prosthetic leg, which he needs to move unassisted as his right leg has been amputated above the knee since childhood. However, it is unusable, as it is size 40 while Oqba Hashad needs a size 45. According to an independent medical report, reviewed by Amnesty International, using it could lead to further health complications, including spinal and mobility related issues and skin irritation and scarring. Prison authorities have yet to respond to a request submitted by Oqba Hashad's family to the prosecution on 10 January for a doctor to visit him and take measurements for an appropriate prosthetic leg.

Since August 2022, in violation of the absolute violation of torture and other ill-treatment, prison authorities have been cruelly denying Oqba Hashad access to adequate healthcare and a prosthetic leg, causing him severe physical and psychological pain and suffering, including as he is forced to rely on other prisoners to meet his most basic needs. During his last pretrial detention renewal session on 9 January 2024, Oqba Hashad was transferred to court without a wheelchair, hopping on one leg, and was forced to sit on the floor in front of the judge. The prison authorities are also refusing to grant him specialized medical care, not available in prison, raising fears about permanent and irreversible damage to his spinal column, according to independent doctors consulted by his relatives. Further, authorities are denying him access to antiseptics and sterilizations tools, needed to care for his stump, increasing the risk of infection.

I urge you to ensure that Oqba Hashad is immediately and unconditionally released and all charges against him dropped as he is detained solely as a punishment for his brother's activism. Pending his release, he must be granted a suitable prosthetic leg as well as regular access to his family, lawyers and adequate healthcare, including in outside hospitals if necessary, and held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Oqba Hashad has been arbitrarily detained for four years and eight months without trial, solely due to his family affiliation, in particular the human rights activism of his brother Amr Hashad, a human rights activist and legal researcher who left Egypt in 2019. Prison authorities had interrogated Oqba Hashad on multiple occasions, most recently in October 2023, about his brother's human rights work and contact with his family in Egypt. They also questioned Oqba Hashad on whether he had shared any information with his brother about his prison conditions. Amr Hashad was arrested in 2014 in connection to his activism with the student union at Assiut University and opposition to the university's decision to engage a private security firm. Subsequently, a court sentenced Amr Hashad to three years in prison after convicting him of charges of joining a terrorist organization, attempting to overthrow the government and inciting protests. From exile, Amr Hashad continued to document human rights violations in Egypt including enforced disappearances and cruel and inhuman detention conditions in Egyptian prisons. Oqba Hashad's mother was also detained and questioned for nine hours during a visit to Shebin Al-Kom prison, where Oqba Hashad was held at the time, in a relation to a Facebook post written by Amr Hashad in December 2020 about his brother being banned from accessing his prosthetic leg and the injustices suffered by their family.

Oqba Hashad was studying business at the University of Sadat City (USC), in Menoufia governorate, prior to his arrest. On 20 May 2019, National Security Agency (NSA) agents stormed his student residence and arrested everyone without a warrant. All other students were released within days, except for Oqba Hashad. Following his arbitrary arrest, security forces forcibly disappeared Oqba Hashad for 77 days, during which period he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. According to information gathered by Amnesty International, Oqba Hashad was stripped of his clothes, suspended by his arms from the ceiling, beaten, dragged on the ground by a rope tied around his neck, insulted, and given electric shocks including on his genitals and stump of his leg. On 1 August 2019, he was taken before a Shebin Al-Koum prosecutor, who ordered his pre-trial detention pending investigations into charges with "joining a group formed against the rule of law" and "participating in demonstrations to overthrow the regime". Since then, his pretrial detention, which has long exceeded the two-year limit permitted under Egyptian law, has been extended without granting him the opportunity to meaningfully challenge the lawfulness of his detention.

Oqba Hashad is currently detained in the Wadi El Natroun prison. On 7 August 2022, relatives of Oqba Hashad's cellmate, who had visited the prison that day, called Oqba Hashad's family to inform them that his prosthetic leg broke. His family rushed to the prison to collect the broken prosthetic leg, and took it for repairs at a specialised clinic, where a doctor and an engineer told them that a replacement was needed. The family did not have the financial means to replace it, and therefore sought to repair it instead. On 9 August 2022, when his relatives returned to the prison with the prosthetic leg, the prison authorities insisted on carrying out a thorough inspection, attempted to dismantle it, and informed the family that they will submit it for further inspections. Oqba Hashad also suffers from severe back pain as he is forced to sleep on the floor in his cell in Wadi El Natroun prison.

Amnesty International has documented the targeting of relatives of Egyptian dissidents or critics abroad, including through arbitrary arrests and detention, summons for questioning and other forms of harassment. For instance, they have forcibly disappeared [and](#) denied healthcare to Salah Soltan, father of prominent US based human rights defender Mohamed Soltan, in retaliation for his son's activism. In August 2023, the authorities arrested the fathers of Egyptian journalist Ahmed Gamal Ziada, based in Belgium, and German-Egyptian activist Fagr al-Adly, based in Germany. Both have been questioned about their relatives' activism.

As a state party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Egypt must fulfil its obligations to ensure that when persons with disabilities are deprived of their liberty, they are, on an equal basis with others, entitled to guarantees in accordance with international human rights law and are provided with reasonable accommodation and with health services specifically because of their disabilities. On 3 September 2021, several United Nations experts sent a [letter](#) to the Egyptian authorities highlighting the enforced disappearance and prolonged arbitrary detention of Oqba Hashad.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 28 March 2024

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Oqba Hashad (He/Him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7494/2023/en/>