URGENT ACTION

RELEASE AHMADI MINORITY MEMBERS

Between 8 and 14 March 2025, the Egyptian authorities arbitrarily arrested at least four members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light, solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief. Following periods of enforced disappearance, authorities brought three members of the religious minority, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed, before the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP). Prosecutors ordered their detention pending investigations on charges of "joining a group established in violation of law and constitution" and denied them access to a lawyer of their choice. The Egyptian authorities must immediately and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained Ahmadis and halt the targeting of religious minorities that are not espousing state-sanctioned religious beliefs.

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 grave concern over the ongoing arbitrary detention of members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light who have been detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief.

On 11 March 2025, police officers in plain clothes arrested Ahmed Mohammed Al-Tenawi and his brother, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, two Syrian asylum seekers registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), at their house in 6th of October City in Giza governorate, without presenting an arrest warrant, according to a family member. Ahmed Mohammed Al-Tenawi was held incommunicado at the 6th of October First Police Station for 28 days before being unlawfully deported to Syria on 9 April. On 10 March, security forces arrested Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, another member of the Ahmadi community, following a violent raid on his home in Cairo. A relative said that police officers searched the house again on the same day to arrest Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid's brother-in-law, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed, also a member of the religious minority, who had fled. However, he was arrested three days later, on 13 March, in 10th of Ramadan City in Sharqia Governorate, according to his family.

Security forces subsequently forcibly disappeared Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed for periods ranging between 29 to 34 days before bringing them before a prosecutor. Their families submitted complaints to the prosecution on 25 March, inquiring about their whereabouts, but have not received a response. On 10 and 13 April 2025, authorities brought Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed and Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, for interrogation before the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP) without allowing them access to a lawyer of their choosing. Prosecutors investigated them along with 10 other members of the religious minority on charges of "joining a group established in violation of law and constitution". They have all been detained pending investigations and are currently held in the 10th of Ramadan Prison.

I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed and all other members of the Ahmadi religious minority who have been arbitrarily detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief, to open an investigation into the three men's enforced disappearance and to stop prosecuting Ahmadi believers solely for peacefully exercising their faith.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Religious minorities, including Coptic Christians, Shi'a Muslims and Bahá'ís, consistently face discrimination in law and/or practice in Egypt. Members of religious minorities, atheists and others not espousing state-sanctioned religious beliefs are frequently summoned and questioned by the National Security Agency or otherwise threatened or harassed, including by their educational institutions and online.

The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light was established in 1993. It follows the teachings of Imam Mahdi and believes in Imam Ahmed al-Hassan as its divine guide. The latest crackdown on Ahmadis was triggered when a member of the religious minority hung a banner advertising an Ahmadi TV channel on a pedestrian bridge in Giza in early March. Amnesty International reviewed a photograph of the banner hanging on the bridge, which showed the frequency of "Mahdi Has Appeared" (*Zahra al-Mahdi*), a TV channel affiliated with the Ahmadi religion, and featured a photo of its leader.

On 8 March 2025, security forces arrested the individual who hung the banner. He was released later that day without charge, according to Imran Ali, the United Kingdom-based bishop of the Ahmadi religion in Egypt and another Ahmadi man who was in touch with the individual after his release. It appears that the security forces identified Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed after searching the arrested man's phone and finding a Telegram group for members of the religious group in Egypt, of which the three were members, according to Imran Ali and the men's relatives.

Ahmed Al-Tenawi, one of the two Syrian asylum seekers, was unlawfully deported to Syria on 9 April 2025. Police officers arrested him on 11 March with his brother, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi. On 22 April, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi informed his lawyers that National Security Agency officers subjected him to torture while he was held in the agency's headquarters. He also said that conditions in the 10th of Ramadan Prison were poor and that he was not receiving sufficient quantities of food and was being denied access to medical care. Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed were also subjected to torture, including the use of electric shocks, according to their lawyer.

In separate incidents, at least four other members of the religious minority were arrested throughout March, according to Imran Ali. The UK-based bishop said that three of them messaged him to say they were about to be arrested. He has not heard back from them since.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English.
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 20 August 2025**.**
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and **Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed** (he/him).