

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 12/37/97

24 June 1997

**Further information on UA 183/97 (MDE 12/36/97, 19 June 1997- Prisoners of conscience / Fear of further POCs), new concern Fear of Torture**

**EGYPT Hamdein Sabbahi, journalist  
Mohammad 'Abdu, veterinarian  
Mohammad Sulayman Fayyad, lawyer  
Hamdi Haykal, lawyer**

---

Amnesty International has received reports that the four men mentioned above have been tortured. Following their arrest on 17 June and their interrogation they were taken to Tora Penitentiary in the early hours of 18 June. They were allegedly put in a small cell and were forced to take off their clothes and were left standing in their underwear. Then they were tortured by security officers reportedly for about four hours. They were made to face the wall while being kicked, beaten with a stick and whipped. They were said to have lost consciousness at times but the beating continued. They were then immediately transferred to the High Security Prison in Tora (commonly known as the Scorpion Prison), where detainees, mostly alleged members of illegal Islamist groups, have had no access to lawyers and families since December 1993 following a ban imposed by the Ministry of the Interior. There they were held in a very small cell, isolated from other detainees.

The four men's lawyers and families did not know their whereabouts until 19 June, but they were unable to visit them that day because of the ban. However, Hamdein Sabbahi's wife, Siham Nagm, obtained permission to visit her husband on 21 June. She saw marks of torture on her husband's body. After he had told her about what had happened she alerted local human rights organizations and journalists and she lodged a complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office. The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, the Centre for Human Rights Legal Aid and the Journalists' Syndicate all lodged complaints with the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Office protesting about the alleged torture of the four men and calling for an investigation as well as for their immediate release.

On 23 June the four people were brought to the Public Prosecutor's Office and were questioned in connection with their alleged torture. They were promised to be referred to forensic medical doctors on 24 June.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, French, Arabic or in your own language:**

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the four people mentioned above who are held as prisoners of conscience;
- expressing deep concern about their alleged torture;
- urging that a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation be carried out into the allegation of torture, that the methods and findings of this investigation be made public and that anyone implicated in perpetrating the torture against the four people be brought to justice without delay;

- seeking assurances that the four men are protected from any form of torture and ill-treatment, and that they have access to their lawyers, families and to medical care.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt  
**Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

General Hassan al-Alfy  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Al-Sheikh Rihan Street  
Bab al-Louk, Cairo  
Egypt  
**Telex: 21361 MOICM UN**  
**Fax: +202 355 7792**  
**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Ms Nayla Gabr  
The Human Rights Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes: +202 574 9808**

Mr Raga' al-'Arabi  
Public Prosecutor  
Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali  
Ramses Street  
Cairo  
Egypt

Dr Fathi Sorour  
Speaker  
The People's Assembly  
Magles al-Sha'ab Street, Cairo, Egypt

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 August 1997.