

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PRESS RELEASE

Index: PRE 01/498/2011  
4 October 2011

### **Life of Egyptian blogger hangs in the balance as appeal postponed**

Egypt's military rulers are responsible for the life of a jailed blogger on the 43rd day of a hunger strike, Amnesty International warned today after a Cairo military court adjourned his appeal hearing until 11 October.

Maikel Nabil Sanad, aged 26, has been on hunger strike since 23 August to protest against his conviction and imprisonment for comments he made on Facebook and his blog related to the Tahrir Square protests earlier this year and his views on the military in Egypt.

Nabil Sanad, whose health has significantly worsened in recent days, was unable to attend today's hearing in Cairo.

"Maikel Nabil Sanad's dire predicament highlights the ongoing abuses faced by prisoners of conscience in Egypt," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"Civilians should never face trial before military courts, which are fundamentally unfair, as they deny defendants basic fair trial guarantees, including the right to proper appeal."

"It seems that little has changed since the 'January 25 Revolution'. The Egyptian authorities must urgently act to rectify the injustice done to this blogger whose life is in danger after his wrongful imprisonment."

A lawyer representing the blogger said he was unable to plead before the court in today's hearing because the presiding judge did not have the original case file in the court room. He said he believed the postponement had been intentional.

In the Egyptian military court system, appeals are limited to legal points and do not include a review of the facts of the case and the evidence.

After his arrest at his home in Cairo on 28 March, a military court sentenced Maikel Nabil Sanad on 10 April to three years in prison over his criticism of the Egyptian military's use of force against protesters in Tahrir Square and his objection to military service.

The blogger's weight has plummeted since he went on hunger strike and prison authorities have removed medication he needs to treat a heart condition.

"The postponement is like a death sentence against Maikel because he has vowed to stop drinking water if not released today," his father Ibrahim Nabil Sanad told Amnesty International.