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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 104/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - EGYPT

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

China - 1 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

**\*\*Turkey - 30 June\*\*** - News item on torture, deaths in custody, "disappearances" and political killings and calling on CSCE to send special mission to Turkey.

**\*\*Pakistan - 27 July\*\*** - PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Guatemala - 25 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

**\*\*MOROCCO - 30 MAY\*\*** - Report and news service on hundreds still in detention after a year of promises by the government.

**\*\*Austria - 7 June\*\*** - Report and News Service on the ill-treatment of foreigners. The report will be going out in the Weekly Mailing of 25 May.

**\*\*Denmark - 15 June\*\*** - Report and news service item on ill-treatment. The document will be mailed out by swiftair end next week.

Myanmar - 20 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

## FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Annual Report - 7 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 51/94

**News Service 104/94**

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20 MAY 1994**

**EGYPT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR RELEASE OF 36 LAWYERS DETAINED FOR PEACEFUL PROTESTS**

Amnesty International is calling for the release of 36 Egyptian lawyers arrested and interrogated in recent days apparently for participating in peaceful protests about the death of 'Abd al-Harith Mohammad Madani, a 32-year-old lawyer reportedly arrested and fatally tortured by Egyptian security police.

"We consider these lawyers to be prisoners of conscience, arrested simply for expressing their views in a non-violent way and are urging the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally," Amnesty International said. "In recent months human rights defenders, particularly lawyers, have been increasingly harassed by security police officers."

Most of the lawyers arrested in this incident are known for their defence of Islamist political prisoners, including hundreds tried by military courts in the last 18 months.

In the early hours of 18 May, police arrested nine lawyers, including Mukhtar Nouh, Galal Sa'ad and Khaled Badawi -- all members of the Bar Association's elected council. Other prominent lawyers, including Salah Salem, Muntasar al-Zayyat, Qamar Moussa, Mohammad Hamdan, Mahmoud Riyadh and Gamal Tag al-Din were also arrested. After being held for several hours in various police stations in Cairo they were taken to Qasr al-'Aini Procuracy. All nine were interrogated there until dawn yesterday and reportedly charged with "the offence of planning to assemble, demonstrate, resist the authorities and disturb public order." They were given a 15-day detention order and allegedly transferred to Tora Penitentiary.

At dawn on 17 May, Egyptian police also arrested 27 lawyers for interrogation by Qasr al-'Aini Procuracy, which ordered their detention for 15 days. They were allegedly transferred to Istiqlal Tora Prison, where they are still thought to be held.

Following the news of 'Abd al-Harith Mohammad Madani's death, thousands of lawyers reportedly gathered at the Cairo headquarters of the Bar Association on Tuesday 10 May to protest. A number of lawyers, as well as the Medical Syndicate, lodged complaints on 7 May with the office of the Public Prosecutor, Raga' al-'Arabi, requesting an independent autopsy and permission to be present at the investigation.

The arrests started on Tuesday, 17 May, when a large number of lawyers decided to organize a peaceful demonstration by marching from the Bar Association to the Presidency in 'Abedine Palace. Security forces, however, reportedly fired canisters of tear gas and rubber bullets directly into the Bar Association's building just as the lawyers began to leave the premises. The lawyers had reportedly reassured the security forces that their demonstration was to be peaceful.

Amnesty International has already called on the Head of the Human Rights Unit within the Procuracy to set up a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the circumstances surrounding 'Abd al-Harith Mohammad Madani's death. The organization has urged that both the procedures followed and the findings of such an investigation be made public and that if 'Abd al-Harith Mohammad Madani is established to have died as a result of torture, the perpetrators be brought to justice.

**ENDS\**