

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED COUPLE'S HEALTH CRITICALLY DETERIORATING

Ola al-Qaradawy and her husband Hossam Khalaf have been arrested on unfounded charges and held in poor prison conditions. Although Hossam Khalaf has been transferred to a collective cell, Ola al-Qaradawy has been in solitary confinement since her arrest. Their health is critically deteriorating and Hossam Khalaf has been denied access to healthcare.

Since 3 July, **Hossam Khalaf** and his wife **Ola Al-Qaradawy**, have been detained on unfounded charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. So far, prosecutors have failed to provide any evidence to justify their detention, while the couple has not been able to effectively challenge the legality of their detention. Prison authorities have denied both of them visits from lawyers or their relatives.

Since her arrest, Ola al-Qaradawy has been held in Al-Qanater Women Prison in Qalyubia governorate in a small solitary cell of about 160 cm by 180 cm in size, without a bed, toilet and without sufficient ventilation and lighting. She is only allowed to use an external toilet for five minutes every morning. Ola al-Qaradawy finds herself compelled to reduce her food intake to avoid the need to go to the toilet. Lawyers, who saw Ola al-Qaradawy on 5 November in the office of the Supreme State Security Prosecution, told Amnesty International that she went on a hunger strike for the first four days of November protesting against her detention and poor prison conditions.

Hossam Khalaf has been moved from solitary confinement to a collective cell. He is being held at Tora Maximum Security Prison 2 in Cairo, the capital of Egypt. However, he has been suffering from pain in his eyes ever since his detention, and prison authorities continue to reject his request to undergo medical checks whether in the prison hospital or at his own expense in an external hospital.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Egyptian authorities to ensure that Ola al-Qaradawy and Hossam Khalaf are able to challenge the lawfulness of the detention;
- Urging them to immediately end the prolonged solitary confinement of Ola al-Qaradawy;
- Urging them to provide Ola al-Qaradawy and Hossam Khalaf access to the adequate healthcare they require, and to allow them to receive regular visits from their relatives and lawyers;
- Reminding them that pre-trial detention must be an exceptional measure and based on an individualised determination that is reasonable and necessary, specified in law and without vague and expansive standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 JANUARY 2018 TO:

Minister of Interior
Minister Magdy Abd el-Ghaffar
Ministry of Interior
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
F: +202 2794 5529
E: center@moi.gov.eg or
HumanRightsSector@moi.gov.eg
Salutation: Dear Minister

President
President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi
Office of the President
Al Ittihadia Palace
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax +202 2391 1441
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:
Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign
Affairs for Human Rights
Laila Bahaa El Din
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2576 7967
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.org
Twitter: @MfaEgypt

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR NASSER AHMED KAMEL ALI, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 26 South Street W1K 1DW, 020 7499 3304/2401, Fax 020 7491 1542, eg.emb.london@mfa.gov.eg and etembuk@hotmail.com

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 206/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7069/2017/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ola Al-Qaradawy is the daughter of Youssef Al-Qaradawy, an Egyptian national who lives in Qatar and is designated by the Egyptian authorities as a "terrorist" since June 2017. Hossam Khalaf is an engineer and a member of the legally-registered Islamist Al-Wasat political Party. He was previously detained for two years between 2014 and 2016 under investigation for charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Public Prosecution ordered his release on 22 March 2016 without formally charging him. On 3 July 2017, the Supreme State Security Prosecution ordered their detention on charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Prison authorities immediately placed them in solitary confinement, and denied them access to their lawyers and families.

According to their relatives and lawyers, their health condition has worsened due to the lack of adequate food and medical care. International standards on the treatment of prisoners prohibit prolonged solitary confinement, which is the confinement for more than 22 hours a day without meaningful human contact for a time period in excess of 15 consecutive days.

On 30 June, security forces raided Ola al-Qaradawy's summer house, in the North Coast of Alexandria, while she and Hossam Khalaf were staying at the house for vacation. Police forces took them to Burj Al-Arab police station and referred both of them to the Supreme State Security Prosecution in Cairo. Prosecutors interrogated them for two days and ordered their detention for 15 days on the unfounded charges of belonging to and financially supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. Prosecutors have been renewing their detention since then. Security forces also raided their apartment in Cairo and confiscated money, Ola al-Qaradawy's personal jewellery, and Hossam Khalaf's work documents.

On 17 August, a state-appointed committee tasked with overseeing the finances of alleged Muslim Brotherhood affiliates froze Ola al-Qaradawy and Hossam Khalaf's assets along with those of another 14 individuals, as they believe them to be part of the organization. On 30 August, the Cairo Criminal Court designated Ola al-Qaradawy and Hossam Khalaf's as "terrorists" according to the Terrorist Entities Law, number 8 of 2015. The designation decision relied only on information gathered by the National Security Agency of the Ministry of Interior and has been decided without trial.

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