

URGENT ACTION

TRIAL OF NUBIAN ACTIVISTS ADJOURNED

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Thus far, Egyptian authorities have failed to investigate the death in custody of prisoner of conscience Gamal Sorour, who was arrested along with the other 24 protesters. He died of a diabetic coma, a result of medical negligence, and the reluctance of prison authorities at Al Shalal Security Camp in Aswan to take him to the hospital in a timely manner. The Egyptian authorities have shown no efforts to investigate the case.

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

- Drop all charges against the 32 Nubian activists as they are solely charged for their peaceful exercise of their human right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;
- Repeal the decrees stipulating that crimes under protest laws are referred to State Security Emergency Courts, and ensure everyone convicted of a criminal offence has the right to appeal and have the conviction and sentence reviewed by a higher tribunal;
- Promptly initiate an independent, impartial, and effective investigation into the death of Gamal Sorour with a view to bring anyone suspected of criminal responsibility to justice, without resorting to the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 MARCH 2018 TO:

President

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi
Office of the President
Al Ittihadia Palace
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2391 1441
Email: p.spokesman@op.gov.eg
Twitter: @AlsisiOfficial

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

Magdy Abdel Ghaffar
Ministry of Interior
Fifth Settlement, New Cairo
Egypt
Fax: +202 2794 5529
Email: center@moi.gov.eg
Twitter: @moiegypt

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 2574 9713
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.eg
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 second update of UA 249/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7397/2017/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 15 November, the Aswan State Security Emergency Court ordered the release of all 32 Nubian activists and adjourned their trial to 12 December. The Nubian activists, including two women activists Seham Osman and Wafaa Abelqawi, were originally referred to a State Security Emergency Court on 13 November. They are set to appear in front of the court in Aswan, in the south of Egypt, on 12 December. The activists are being charged with “participating in an unauthorized protest” and “repeating chants against the state for the purpose of harming public interest”.

On 3 September, 25 Nubian activists were arrested for their participation in peaceful protests. Later, the Aswan Prosecutor added eight more protesters to the case and issued arrest warrants against them too. The first session of the trial was scheduled for 15 November, but it was adjourned to 12 December.

The protests were in response to the forcible displacement of Nubians, who are an Indigenous people, from their traditional lands by successive Egyptian governments for development projects. The displacement poses a threat to the preservation of the Nubian cultural, historical, and linguistic identity, which had already been severely eroded. The displacement of Nubians has had huge socio-economic consequences for the community. Nubians are often unable to work in agriculture as they were forcibly moved from their old villages on the banks of Nile to desert areas which lack the necessary access to water and fertile soil.

Nubian activist Mohamed Saleh Sorour (also known as Gamal Sorour) died on 4 November after falling into a diabetic coma, while in detention in Aswan, in the south of Egypt. According to his relatives, Gamal Sorour had been suffering from diabetes and had two heart attacks two years ago. He had been receiving regular treatment for his health problems, before his arrest on 3 September for partaking in a peaceful protest. Despite other inmates repeatedly knocking on the cell door begging prison guards for help, it took prison authorities three hours to take Gamal Sorour to the hospital, according to lawyers and relatives. For further information on the Urgent action see www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7397/2017/en/.

Further information on UA: 249/17 Index: MDE 12/7819/2018 Egypt Issue Date: 02 February 2018