

URGENT ACTION

ARBITRARILY DETAINED PRISONER ON HUNGER STRIKE

Ola al-Qaradawi has started a hunger strike in custody on 27 June, demanding the end of her arbitrary detention and abusive prison conditions. Ola al-Qaradawi has been in solitary confinement since her arrest on 3 July 2017. Hossam Khalaf, her husband, faces the same arbitrary detention. The prosecution is denying their lawyers access to the casefile. Prosecutors also failed to present any evidence to justify their detention on the charges brought against them.

On 27 June, **Ola al-Qaradawi** went on hunger strike to protest against her arbitrary detention and the poor prison conditions in which she is held. On the same day, a judge examined her pre-trial detention and renewed it for another 45 days without allowing her lawyers to present arguments against the detention.

Since 30 June 2017, Ola al-Qaradawi and her husband Hossam Khalaf have been detained on trumped up charges of belonging to and financially supporting the Muslim Brotherhood for the purpose of harming national security. For the past year, prosecutors have failed to provide any evidence to justify these charges, while they have not been able to effectively challenge the legality of their detention. Prosecutors also have refused to grant their lawyers access to the casefile to prepare their defence. Prison authorities have denied both of them visits from lawyers and their relatives. Ola al-Qaradawi remains in solitary confinement since her first day in prison. On 7 May, Amnesty International released a report on solitary confinement in Egyptian prisons, the report considered that al-Qaradawi's solitary confinement and prison conditions amount to torture (for more information see: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/8257/2018/en/>).

Since her arrest, Ola al-Qaradawi 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.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language to the Egyptian authorities:

- Urging them to release Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf and drop the charges against them;
- Urging them to urgently provide Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf access to the adequate healthcare they require, and to allow them to receive regular visits from their relatives and lawyers;
- Urging them to immediately end the prolonged solitary confinement of Ola al-Qaradawi.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 AUGUST 2018 TO:

Minister of Interior
Minister Mahmoud Tawfik
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
Ahmed Ihab Gamal Eldin
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 second update of UA 206/17. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7069/2017/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ola Al-Qaradawi is the daughter of Youssef Al-Qaradawi, 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 and financially supporting the Muslim Brotherhood for the purpose of harming national security. 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 2017, security forces raided Ola al-Qaradawi’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 for the purpose of harming national security. Prosecutors have been renewing their detention since then. Security forces also raided their apartment in Cairo and confiscated money, Ola al-Qaradawi’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-Qaradawi 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-Qaradawi 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. The Egyptian authorities have been using this law arbitrarily and without due process.

Name: Ola Al-Qaradawi (f) and Hossam Khalaf (m)

Gender m/f: both

FU UA: 206/17 Index: MDE 12/8703/2018 Issue Date: 05 July 2018