

URGENT ACTION

AMAL FATHY REMAINS IMPRISONED AS TRIAL IS POSTPONED

On 11 August, Maadi Misdemeanour Court postponed Amal Fathy's trial to 8 September in one case, while a State Security Prosecutor renewed her pre-trial detention for 15 more days in another case.

On 11 August, the Maadi Misdemeanour Court postponed Amal Fathy's trial to 8 September. Amal is being charged with "spreading false news", "possession of indecent material", and "use of insulting language". If convicted, the court could sentence her to prison in addition to fining her. A court initially ordered her release on bail in that case on 21 June, however she has since remained in detention in another case.

On 13 August, the State Security Prosecutor renewed Amal's pre-trial detention for 15 more days. the prosecutor is investigating her for "belonging to a terrorist group", "broadcasting ideas calling for terrorist acts", and "publishing false news". Earlier in the day, even before the renewal hearing took place, "Al-Youm Al-Sabe" one of Egypt's largest private and pro-government newspapers published an article stating that the prosecutor renewed the detention of Amal Fathy for 15 more days.

Amal Fathy was detained by police on 11 May, after she posted a video on her Facebook page in which she shared her experience of sexual harassment, highlighted the prevalence of the issue in Egypt, and criticized the government's failure to protect women as well as the deteriorating socio-economic situation in Egypt.

Amnesty International considers Amal Fathy to be a prisoner of conscience.

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

- Immediately and unconditionally release Amal Fathy as she is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully expressing her opinions;
- Recognize the legitimacy of the work of human rights defenders, like Amal Fathy, and in particular the right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 SEPTEMBER 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

Public Prosecutor

Nabil Sadek
Office of the Public Prosecutor, Dar al-Qada al-Ali, Down Town
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2577 4716

Salutation: Dear Counsellor

And copies to:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights
Ahmed Ihab Gamal-Eldin Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche el-Nile, Cairo, 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 98/18. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/8423/2018/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amal Fathy is an Egyptian activist who focuses mostly on raising awareness on the cases of people detained for their participation in protests or because of their social media activity. She has been vocal about human rights violations in Egypt, especially the arbitrary detention of activists. She is married to Mohamed Lotfy, former Amnesty International researcher, and the director of the NGO Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF).

On 9 May, Amal Fathy posted a video on her Facebook page in which she shared her experience of sexual harassment, highlighted the prevalence of the issue in Egypt, and criticized the government's failure to protect women. She also criticized the government for the crackdown on human rights, socioeconomic conditions, and public services. The police raided Amal Fathy's home on 11 May at around 2.30 AM. The police then detained her at Maadi police station, Cairo, along with her husband – Mohamed Lotfy and current director of the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF), a human rights organization in Egypt – and their three-year-old child. Her husband and child were released three hours later.

On 11 May, the Maadi prosecutor examined Amal Fathy's case and ordered her detention for 15 days pending investigation on charges including "publishing a video that includes false news that could harm public peace". The next day, a Supreme State Security prosecutor interrogated her in another case about her alleged connection to the 6 April Youth Movement, which is a youth activism movement that was central in the protests that led to ousting former President Hosni Mubarak back in 2011, and ordered her detention for an additional 15 days pending investigations for belonging to a banned group in Egypt.

Online trolls copied the video and photos of Amal Fathy from her social media accounts and posted them on Facebook and Twitter pages, alongside gender-based insults and calls for her arrest. Several pro-government and state-owned media released articles about the video and falsely stated that she is a 6 April Youth movement activist, working at ECRF. They additionally published that she is married to the director of ECRF, in violation of her privacy.

There are two open cases against Amal Fathy which are exemplary of recent arrests the Egyptian authorities have launched against activists, journalists, human rights defenders, and even social media figures over speech related offenses. The first case, before the Maadi misdemeanour prosecution, sees Amal Fathy facing charges of "disseminating a video on social media to publicly incite overthrowing the government", "publishing a video that includes false news that could harm public peace", and "misusing telecommunication tools". In the second case, before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, she faces charges of "belonging to a banned group", "using a website to promote ideas calling for terrorist acts", and "intentionally disseminating false news that could harm public security and interest". The prosecutor did not provide any evidence and instead relied on the National Security Agency's report, which the lawyers were not allowed to examine. Along with Amal Fathy, there are at least four more individuals, including a video producer, former politician from the liberal Dostour party, a blogger, and a 6 April Youth movement member. Since 2013, the Egyptian authorities have been targeting its leadership with arrests and punitive probation measures.

Name: Amal Fathy

Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 98/18 Index: MDE 12/8947/2018 Issue Date: 16 August 2018