

URGENT ACTION

AMAL FATHY SENTENCED FOR HER PEACEFUL ACTIVISM

On 29 September, the Maadi Misdamenour court sentenced Amal Fathy to two years in prison and a fine of 10,000 EGP (560 USD). The bail to temporarily suspend her sentence was set at 20,000 EGP (1,120 USD). The first appeals hearing is set for 25 November.

On 29 September, Egyptian woman human rights defender, **Amal Fathy**, was sentenced to two years in prison and a fine of 10,000 EGP (560 USD). The bail to temporarily suspend her sentence was set at 20,000 EGP (1,120 USD). The court convicted Amal on three accounts and sentenced her to one year for each of the charges of "spreading false news with intent to harm the Egyptian state" and possessing "indecent material", and given a fine of 10,000 Egyptian pounds (560 USD) for making "public insults"- all of this for posting a Facebook video in which she decries sexual harassment and criticizes the Egyptian authorities for failing to protect women.

Amal Fathy had already spent nearly 5 months in prison since her arbitrary arrest. Her lawyers paid the bail and fine to suspend her sentence, however Amal Fathy remains imprisoned as the state security prosecutor renewed her pre-trial detention in a second case against her for 15 more days on 27 September. Amal is facing additional charges in a separate case including "belonging to a terrorist group," "broadcasting ideas calling for terrorist acts" and "publishing false news". On 14 October, the State Security prosecutor will decide on whether to renew her detention for 15 more days.

Amal Fathy was detained by police on 11 May 2018 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 detained solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression.

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 legitimate work of human rights defenders, like Amal Fathy, and ensure they can carry out their activities without undue restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 NOVEMBER 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
alQada
al-Ali, Down Town
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Fax: +202 2577 4716
Salutation: Dear Counsellor

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 third update of UA 98/18. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/mde12/8947/2018/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amal Fathy is an Egyptian activist who focuses mostly on raising awareness on 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 human rights 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, the dire socioeconomic conditions and public services. The police raided Amal Fathy's home on 11 May at around 2.30 AM. The police then took her to Maadi police station, Cairo, along with her husband 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.

Shortly after her detention, a smear campaign was launched against her. 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. The first case, before the Maadi misdemeanour prosecution, sees Amal Fathy facing charges "spreading false news with intent to harm the Egyptian state", "possessing "indecent material", and "public insults". In the second case, before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, she faces charges of "belonging to a terrorist group", "broadcasting ideas calling for terrorist acts", and "publishing false news". 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.