

URGENT ACTION

EGYPTIAN'S ARBITRARY DETENTION RENEWED

Islam Khalil, a former victim of an enforced disappearance, has been held in pre-trial detention on trumped-up charges since 10 March. On 27 August, the Cairo Criminal Court renewed his detention for a further 45 days.

From 10 March to 1 April, **Islam Khalil's** fate and whereabouts were unknown. He was last seen by his family on 10 March, in the city of Aswan, South Egypt. His family received information about Ismail Khalil's whereabouts on 2 April, when a visitor at Tora Investigation prison, in Cairo governorate, said they saw Islam Khalil there. He has since remained in arbitrary detention on unfounded charges of "membership of an illegal group" and "spreading false news". The charges, of which Islam Khalil maintains his innocence, are believed to have been brought against him in retaliation for his perceived political activism. On 27 August, the Cairo Criminal Court renewed Islam Khalil's detention for a further 45 days. The Court will next review his detention order on 8 October.

Islam Khalil is being accused with three other co-defendants facing the same charges and who deny knowing Islam Khalil. Two of the co-defendants are political activists who were arrested as part of the same case, allegedly in connection to their Facebook posts calling for the presidential elections to be boycotted. They were released on 9 September.

Islam Khalil's brother has told Amnesty International of several inconsistencies in the register of detention, which claims that Islam Khalil was arrested from the surroundings of his home in Gharbeyya, when in fact he was arrested from Aswan. The register also claims that Islam Khalil was arrested on 30 March, a day before he appeared in front of the prosecution, when in fact he was arrested on 10 March and subjected to enforced disappearance.

According to his family, the State Security Prosecution interrogated Islam Khalil on 1 April without the presence of a lawyer. His family were also only allowed to visit him in 12 days later. Islam Khalil alleges he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated while he was forcibly disappeared from 10 March to 1 April. According to his brother, on 10 March, Islam Khalil was arrested and held in Berenice military airport where he was physically assaulted for an hour. He was then moved to the headquarters of the National Security Agency in Cairo, and later to Tanta, another Egyptian city, where he was beaten, hanged, electrocuted, and received rape and death threats.

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

- Urging them to release Islam Khalil, who is being detained arbitrarily, and drop the charges against him;
- Calling on them to ensure that, pending his release, Islam Khalil is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that his conditions of detention are in line with international standards, including access to water and food;
- Urging them to conduct a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into both Islam Khalil's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and the circumstances surrounding his enforced disappearance from 10 March to 1 April, bringing all those found to be responsible to account in fair trials.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 NOVEMBER 2018 TO:

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

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 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.

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Islam Khalil was subjected to an enforced disappearance from 10 March until 1 April. According to Islam Khalil's family, they last knew about him on 10 March, when he was in Aswan. After losing contact with him, his family inquired with the Aswan police station to see if he was held in custody, but officers at the station denied his presence there. On 15 March, his family submitted a complaint to the public prosecutor about the incident but received no response. The family also inquired with the Hurgada prosecution in Hurgada, south east of Cairo, and the Aswan prosecution. However, both denied the presence of Khalil in their custody. His family only learnt about his whereabouts on 2 April, when the authorities acknowledged he was being detained at Tora Investigation prison.

According to Islam Khalil's brother, the prison administration prevented him from receiving books, food and denied him family visits for a month. At one point, he was moved to a cell infested with bugs and was being denied access to water and adequate food. He was then moved to another cell with detainees who forced him to pray and prevented him from smoking and reading certain books.

Islam Khalil has been previously tortured and otherwise ill-treated in detention, according to his own testimony and information received from his family and lawyer. On 24 May 2015, he was abducted from his home in al-Santa, Al Gharbiyah in Egypt by National Security Agency (NSA) officers. He was subjected to an enforced disappearance, during which the authorities refused to acknowledge his deprivation of liberty and concealed his fate and whereabouts for 122 days. During this time, according to Islam Khalil, he was tortured by NSA officers in order to force him to "confess" to crimes he says he did not commit. He was released on 31 August 2016, 10 days after the prosecution ordered his release on bail. He was charged of belonging to the banned Muslim Brotherhood group; inciting violence; and attacking security forces.

An enforced disappearance is the arrest, detention or abduction of an individual by state agents, or people acting with their authorization, support or acquiescence, followed by the refusal to acknowledge this or the concealment of the person's fate or whereabouts placing them outside the protection of the law. Enforced disappearance is a crime under international law.

Amnesty International has extensively documented Egyptian security forces' use of enforced disappearances as a tool against political activists, human rights defenders and peaceful protesters, including students and children in Egypt (see <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/4368/2016/en/>). Hundreds of people forcibly disappeared were arbitrarily arrested and held incommunicado in secret detention with no access to their lawyers or families and no external judicial oversight. This pattern of abuse became particularly evident after President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi appointed Major-General Magdy Abd el-Ghaffar as Minister of Interior in March 2015.

Arbitrary detention is the practice of detaining people for no legitimate reason or without legal process. The Egyptian authorities launched a new, intensified crackdown on critics in December 2017, ahead of the presidential elections. Over the past 10 months, security forces have arbitrarily arrested and detained at least 111 people solely for peacefully expressing critical opinions about the authorities or for calling for or participating in protests or political gatherings. At least 70 of them remain imprisoned, facing charges that carry prison sentences of up to 15 years. Hundreds were sentenced, some to death, after grossly unfair mass trials. Courts continued to rely heavily on reports of the NSA and unsound evidence, including confessions obtained under torture, in their sentencing. Civilians continued to face unfair trials before military courts.

Name: Islam Khalil

Gender: Male

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