

URGENT ACTION

DEATH SENTENCES COMMUTED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

On 26 February 2019, Egypt's Supreme Military Court of Appeals formally accepted an appeal on the two death sentences of Ahmad Amin Ghazali and Abdul Basir Abdul Rauf. The judge commuted their death sentences to life imprisonment, almost a year after a judge in the same court had upheld their death sentences, in a case marred by torture and enforced disappearances.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

A military court had initially sentenced to death Ahmed Amin Ghazali and Abdul Basir Abdul Rauf, along with four other civilians in case 174/2015, more commonly known as "advanced operations committee" case. On 29 May 2016, a military judge had convicted six civilian men, along with 20 others, on charges of "membership in an illegal group," "possession of firearms and explosives" and "obtaining classified military information without authorization", in a case that had been marred by torture and enforced disappearances. A judge had initially acquitted two defendants, sentenced eight to death, including two in absentia, and sentenced 18 others to prison terms ranging between 15 and 25 years.

On 26 March 2018, a judge in the Supreme Military Court of Appeals had upheld the death sentences of Ghazali and Abdul Rauf, while accepting the appeals of the other four men, sentencing them to 15 years in prison. However, in December 2018, the same court finally agreed to reconsider the death sentences of Ghazali and Abdul Rauf after their lawyers filed a request to the Military Prosecution asking for a review of the final verdict of death penalty.

Military trials violate the right to a fair hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal. This right is guaranteed under Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a State Party.

Amnesty International had called on the Egyptian authorities to quash the death sentences against the two men since the first verdict issuing in 2016. People from around the world mobilized to call on the Egyptian authorities to drop the death penalty and retry all those convicted in Case 174/2015 before an ordinary, civilian court, without recourse to the death penalty. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence, or other characteristics of the individuals; or the method used by State to carry out the execution.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Ahmed Amin Ghazali (he/him) and Abdul Basir Abdul Rauf (he/him)

THIS IS THE EIGHTH AND FINAL UPDATE FOR UA 91/16

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/9484/2018/en/>

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