

URGENT ACTION

AHMADI MINORITY MEMBERS TORTURED

Over a dozen members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light have been arbitrarily detained for over seven months solely for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief. Since their arrest in March 2025, three members of the religious minority, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated and detained in appalling conditions in the 10th of Ramadan prison according to their family members. They are facing charges of “joining a group established in violation of the constitution and the law”. The Egyptian authorities must immediately and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained Ahmadis and halt discrimination against members of religious minorities who do not espouse state-sanctioned religious beliefs.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

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Dear Counsellor,

I write to you to express my grave concern over the ongoing arbitrary detention of over a dozen members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light who have been imprisoned solely for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief. I am also deeply troubled by allegations that Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in custody.

Family members of two of the men told Amnesty International that, between 10 March and 8 April 2025, National Security Agency (NSA) officers subjected them to torture and other ill-treatment in NSA detention facilities. Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid was tortured by electric shocks to his genitals and by being beaten with a stick all over his body, resulting in two damaged vertebrae at the end of his spine, leading to difficulty in moving. NSA officers subjected Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed to electroshocks on his genitals and beat him with an iron object, which led to the severing of a tendon in his hand. After his arrest, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi's health further deteriorated, leaving him in urgent need of medical treatment.

All detained Ahmadi minority members are facing accusations of “joining a group established in violation of the provisions of the Constitution and the law” before the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP), solely in relation to their religious beliefs. Hussein Mohamed Al-Tenawi was additionally charged with “founding and leading a group established in violation of the Constitution and the law”, also before the SSSP. They are charged under Article 86 bis of the Penal Code which mandates up to five years of imprisonment, Hussein Mohamed Al-Tenawi risks up to 15 years of imprisonment. Their lawyers were prevented from attending the initial investigation sessions. Although they can now attend virtual renewal sessions, the detainees still cannot communicate or consult with lawyers of their choice.

I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed and all other members of the Ahmadi religious minority who have been arbitrarily detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief. Pending their release, they must be granted regular access to their lawyers and to adequate food and healthcare, including in outside hospitals if necessary, and be held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners. There must be prompt, independent and impartial investigations into enforced disappearances and allegations of torture and other ill-treatment in custody. Finally, I call on you to stop prosecuting Ahmadi believers solely for peacefully exercising their faith.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 11 March 2025, police officers in plain clothes arrested Ahmed Mohammed Al-Tenawi and his brother, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, two Syrian asylum seekers registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), at their house in 6th of October City in Giza governorate, without presenting an arrest warrant, according to a family member. Ahmed Mohammed Al-Tenawi was held incommunicado at the 6th of October First Police Station for 28 days before being unlawfully deported to Syria on 9 April. On 10 March, security forces arrested Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, another member of the Ahmadi community, following a violent raid on his home in Cairo. A relative said that police officers searched the house again on the same day to arrest Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid's brother-in-law, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed, also a member of the religious minority, who had fled. However, he was arrested three days later, on 13 March, in 10th of Ramadan City in Sharqia Governorate, according to his family.

Security forces subsequently forcibly disappeared Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed for periods ranging between 29 and 34 days before bringing them before a prosecutor. Their families submitted complaints to the prosecution on 25 March, inquiring about their whereabouts, but have not received a response. On 10 and 13 April 2025, authorities brought Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid, Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed and Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, for interrogation before the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP), where the prosecutors questioned them without allowing them access to a lawyer of their choice. Prosecutors have been investigating them along with a dozen other members of the religious minority on charges of "joining a group established in violation of the constitution and the law".

The health of Ahmadi members is of concern. Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid suffers from high blood pressure and headaches. Hussein Mohamed Al-Tenawi's preexisting medical issues have significantly worsened following his arrest. Before his detention, he had suffered from a cervical disc injury and chronic sinusitis, which required therapy and surgery. Moreover, the three detainees have been subjected to extremely harsh conditions of detention, including severe cold in their cells causing recurrent, serious respiratory illnesses. They are not receiving adequate medical treatment despite the gravity of their health conditions, which require urgent medical attention. Finally, these three men receive grossly inadequate amount of food consisting of a few spoons of rice and pieces of bread.

Religious minorities, including Coptic Christians, Shi'a Muslims and Bahá'ís, consistently face discrimination in law and/or practice in Egypt. Members of religious minorities, atheists and others not espousing state-sanctioned religious beliefs are frequently summoned and questioned by the National Security Agency or otherwise threatened or harassed, including by their educational institutions and online. The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light was established in 1993. It follows the teachings of Imam Mahdi and believes in Imam Ahmed al-Hassan as its divine guide. The latest crackdown on Ahmadis was triggered when a member of the religious minority hung a banner advertising an Ahmadi TV channel on a pedestrian bridge in Giza in early March. Amnesty International reviewed a photograph of the banner hanging on the bridge, which showed the frequency of "Mahdi Has Appeared" (*Zahra al-Mahdi*), a TV channel affiliated with the Ahmadi religion, and featured a photo of its leader.

On 8 March 2025, security forces arrested the individual who hung the banner. He was released later that day without charge, according to Imran Ali, the United Kingdom-based bishop of the Ahmadi religion in Egypt and another Ahmadi man who was in touch with the individual after his release. It appears that the security forces identified Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed after searching the arrested man's phone and finding a Telegram group for members of the religious group in Egypt, of which the three were members, according to Imran Ali and the men's relatives.

On 22 April, Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi informed his lawyers that National Security Agency officers subjected him to torture while he was held in the agency's headquarters. In separate incidents, at least four other members of the religious minority were arrested throughout March, according to Imran Ali. The UK-based bishop said that three of them messaged him to say they were about to be arrested. He has not heard from them since.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 21 April 2026
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Hussein Mohammed Al-Tenawi, Omar Mahmoud Abdel Maguid and Hazem Saied Abdel Moatamed (He/Him).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/9296/2025/en/>

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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Salutation: Your Excellency