

# URGENT ACTION

## PROTESTER SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS IN JAIL

On June 26, 2024, Egypt's Emergency State Security Court (ESSC) sentenced anti-torture protester, Mahmoud Hussein, also known as the "T-shirt detainee" to three years in prison for wearing an anti-torture T-shirt. He was arrested following the court verdict and taken into custody to serve the remainder of his sentence after he had already spent two years and 10 months in pretrial detention. He is currently held in the El Marg police station, in Cairo, where detainees are banned from visits by families and lawyers. The Egyptian authorities must immediately and unconditionally release Mahmoud Hussein as his detention is solely related to the exercise of his human rights.

### TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Third Urgent Action 90.23**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

#### President Abdelfattah al-Sisi

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#### Egyptian Embassy in the United States

**Ambassador Motaz Mounir Zahran**  
3521 International Court, NW,  
Washington DC 20008  
Email: [Embassy@egyptembassy.net](mailto:Embassy@egyptembassy.net)  
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Your Excellency, or Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to express my concern about **Mahmoud Hussein's** arbitrary detention solely for wearing an antitorture T-shirt.

Mahmoud Hussein was first arrested on January 25, 2014, in the aftermath of peaceful protests marking the third anniversary of the January 25, 2011 Revolution for wearing a T-shirt with the slogan "A Nation without Torture" and a scarf with the "25 January Revolution" logo. He is currently held at El Marg police station, where detainees are banned from family visits.

Mahmoud Hussein's physical and mental health have severely deteriorated during his time in custody. Amnesty International documented how following his arrest in 2014, he was subjected to torture and other ill treatment including beatings and electric shocks. He has suffered from chronic health conditions requiring two hip replacement surgeries. In November 2023, he underwent an anal fistula surgery at Badr prison hospital. His family remains extremely concerned about his well-being as his health condition requires regular monitoring by specialized medical professionals.

I urge you to quash Mahmoud Hussein's unjust conviction and sentence and immediately release him from arbitrary detention. Pending his release, he must be granted access to his family, lawyers, and adequate healthcare and protected from torture and other ill-treatment. He must be held in conditions that meet international standards for the treatment of prisoners. Reports that he was subjected to torture and other ill treatment upon his first arrest in 2014 must be effectively, independently, and impartially investigated.

Yours sincerely,

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Security forces first arrested then 18-year-old **Mahmoud Hussein** on [January 25, 2014](#), in the aftermath of protests marking the 3rd anniversary of the “25 January Revolution”. Security forces stopped him when he was returning home on a bus from protests, and arbitrarily arrested him simply because he was wearing a T-shirt with the slogan “A Nation without Torture” and a scarf with the emblem of the January 25 Revolution. Amnesty International [documented](#) how, following his arrest in 2014, National Security Agency (NSA) officials subjected him to [torture](#) and other ill-treatment, including beatings and the use of electric shocks. As a result of the torture, he was forced to “confess” to belonging to a banned group, possessing Molotov cocktails and hand grenades, and participating in unauthorized protests, with his forced “confession” recorded on video. The day after he “confessed” on camera, Mahmoud Hussein was taken for questioning by the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP). He denied all the accusations and said he had been tortured to “confess”, but the prosecutor did not refer him for forensic examination or order any investigation into his torture allegations. Mahmoud Hussein stayed in El-Marg police station for six days and was later transferred to Abu Zaabal Prison where he was beaten upon arrival. In May 2014, he was transferred to Cairo’s Tora Appeal Prison, where he was also subjected to beatings on at least two occasions. He was eventually transferred to Cairo’s Tora Investigations Prison. He remained in pretrial detention under case number 715 of 2014 in El-Marg and was referred for trial on January 31, 2016. On March 24, 2016, he was released on bail of 1,000 Egyptian pounds. The torture and other ill-treatment to which he was subjected left him with chronic health concerns. After being released from prison, Mahmoud Hussein developed a dependency on a crutch for walking and had two hip replacement surgeries.

Mahmoud Hussein is currently held at El Marg police station, Cairo, in an overcrowded room with no beds or access to healthcare. In that police station, officials ban visits to all detainees.

Mahmoud Hussein’s renewed arrest came amid a wave of fresh arrests of critics and relatives of dissidents based abroad, including the fathers of Egyptian journalist, Ahmed Gamal Ziada, based in Belgium, and German-Egyptian activist, Fagr al-Adly, based in Germany; both arrested in August 2023. Mahmoud Hussein is among the thousands of individuals arbitrarily detained in Egypt solely for exercising their human rights or following proceedings violating fair trial rights or without legal basis. Amnesty International has also documented how the SSSP prosecutors routinely open investigations into new cases on similar bogus charges against individuals in detention in relation to separate cases. The practice, commonly referred to as “rotation”, allows for the indefinite detention of individuals who served their sentences, received release orders by courts, or exceeded two years in pretrial detention, the maximum period permissible under Egyptian law.

Following his release from detention in 2016, Mahmoud Hussein tried to rebuild his life, opening a small business to produce T-Shirts, and had recently proposed to his girlfriend. He had also undergone medical treatment and was getting counseling.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic, English, or your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** November 7, 2024

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Mahmoud Hussein (He/Him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7841/2024/en/>