

URGENT ACTION

HEALTH RISK FOR DETAINED ANTI-TORTURE T-SHIRT PROTESTER

Mahmoud Hussein, a protester who had already spent two years in arbitrary pretrial detention for wearing an anti-torture T-shirt, was re-arrested on August 30. After his release on bail in 2016, he was convicted of bogus charges and sentenced to life imprisonment in his absence in a grossly unfair trial by an emergency court marred by allegations of torture. He is detained at Badr 1 prison pending his retrial, amid concerns over his health. He must be immediately and unconditionally released as his detention is solely linked to the exercise of his human rights, including wearing an anti-torture T-shirt.

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 **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.

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Fax: +202 2577 4716
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Egyptian Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Motaz Mounir Zahran
3521 International Court, NW, Washington DC 20008
Phone: (202) 895-5400
Email: Embassy@egyptembassy.net

Your Excellency,

I am concerned about the arbitrary detention of Mahmoud Hussein since August 30, solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression. Security forces stopped him at a checkpoint on his way back from Beni Suef to Cairo. He was then forcibly disappeared for five days, with the authorities refusing to provide his lawyers or family with any information about his fate or whereabouts. On September 5, he was interrogated in connection to a case dating back to protests on January 25, 2014. The then 18-year-old was arrested for wearing a T-shirt with the slogan "A Nation Without Torture" and arbitrarily detained for two years.

On February 26, 2018, the Emergency State Security Court (ESSC) convicted him and sentenced him to life imprisonment. As he was tried in his absence, he will now stand retrial on the same charges, also in front of an ESSC. Mahmoud Hussein is currently detained in Badr 1 Prison, where Amnesty International has documented concerns regarding inhumane detention conditions and denial of adequate healthcare to prisoners. Since being detained, Mahmoud Hussein has not received healthcare for his various health issues.

I urge you to ensure Mahmoud Hussein's release and that all charges against him be dropped. Pending his release, he must be granted regular access to his family, lawyers, and adequate medical care, and held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

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 third anniversary of the January 25 Revolution. Security forces stopped him at a checkpoint in northern Cairo, 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 officials subjected him to torture and other ill-treatment, including beatings and the use of electric shocks to his hands, back and testicles. 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 the Cairo’s Tora Appeal Prison, where he was also subjected to beatings on at least two occasions. He was eventually transferred 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.

Mahmoud Hussein is currently held in Badr 1 Prison, located 70 km northeast of Cairo. According to Amnesty International’s previous research, prisoners there complain of cruel and inhumane conditions characterized by deliberate denial of healthcare, exposure to extreme cold, and constant camera surveillance. Family visits for other prisoners are only allowed every two months for 20 minutes and are conducted through a glass barrier preventing direct and physical contact with loved ones. This is in breach of Egypt’s prison regulations that stipulate weekly visits lasting no less than 45 minutes for detainees in pretrial detention.

Mahmoud Hussein’s renewed arrest comes amid a wave of fresh arrests of critics and relatives of dissidents based abroad. These unrelenting arrests and prosecutions expose the authorities’ lack of genuine commitment to reform, despite the recent releases of a handful of critics and the long-awaited launch of the National Dialogue with elements of the political opposition in May 2023.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: November 15, 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mahmoud Hussein (he/him)