

URGENT ACTION

SIX MEN EXECUTED FOLLOWING GROSSLY UNFAIR TRIAL

Six men were executed in Egypt yesterday following a grossly unfair trial before a military court. Security forces tortured the men in order to force them to “confess” to terrorism-related offences. Officials also falsified the men’s date of arrest in official documents.

The six men, **Mohamed Bakry, Hany Amer, Mohamed Afifi, Abdel Rahman Said, Khaled Farg Mohamed and Islam Said** were executed in the morning of 17 May. Their families later recovered the bodies from Cairo’s Zeinhoum Morgue.

One of their lawyers told Amnesty International that prison officials had transferred the men from their cells in Tora Prison to an unknown location on 16 May, apparently in preparation for their execution.

In October 2014 a military court had convicted the men of taking part in deadly attacks on security forces between 13 and 19 March 2014. The Supreme Military Court upheld the sentences on appeal in late March 2015.

The security forces had tortured all six of the men to extract “confessions” from them, their representatives said. Officials also falsified the date of arrest in their investigations and the casefile, claiming that security forces had arrested the men on 19 March 2014 during a raid on a warehouse owned by an armed group. The men’s families and lawyers said all six were already in custody at the time of the raid.

Three of the men could not have taken part in any of the attacks in March 2014 as they were already in secret detention in a military prison. Security forces arrested the other three on 16 March 2014, making it impossible that they could have taken part in any attacks after that date.

No further action is required. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 84/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE12/1420/2015/en/>



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The security forces stormed a warehouse in Arab Sharkas village, in Qalyubia Governorate, north of Cairo on 19 March 2014, claiming that it belonged to the armed group Ansar Bait al-Maqdes. Egypt's Interior Ministry said that the security forces had killed six men and arrested eight others during the raid, contradicting the account of the security forces who had carried out the raid, who told a television show that they had left no one alive.

Lawyers and families of Mohamed Afifi, Mohamed Bakry and Hany Amer provided evidence that the men could not have taken part in attacks on the security forces in March 2014, because security forces had been holding them in secret detention since 2013. The men were secretly detained in al-Azouly Prison, a military facility in Ismailia, 130 km north-west of Cairo. Amnesty International saw two petitions submitted by the men's families to the Public Prosecutor's Office reporting their enforced disappearances. The men's lawyers said that the Public Prosecution had ordered an investigation into the family's complaints in February 2014, a month before the alleged attacks.

Representatives of Abdel Rahman Said, Islam Said and Khaled Farg Mohamed also said that the men were already in custody by 19 March 2014, when they were accused of killing nine members of the security forces – including two military officers. Their families and lawyers said that the security forces had arrested all three men on 16 March 2014, Abdel Rahman Said and Islam Said at a travel agency and Khaled Farg Mohamed at his home.

Mohamed Afifi, Mohamed Bakry and Hany Amer were tortured and otherwise ill-treated while in Al Azouly Prison to extract confessions, according to their families and lawyers. Security forces also tortured Abdel Rahman Said, Islam Said and Khaled Farg following their arrest, at the National Security Agency in Lazougli in Cairo.

All six men had been transferred to al-'Aqrab Maximum Security Prison, part of the Tora Prison complex which lies south of Cairo, by the end of March 2014. The military prosecutor then questioned all the defendants inside the prison without giving them access to their lawyers or families. Khaled Farg Mohamed initially faced his questioning in hospital as he had sustained two broken legs as a result of torture. The men's families were not allowed to visit them until May and June 2014. The men then told them how they had been tortured, with security forces electrocuting them and suspending them for long hours in stress positions.

The only witness in the case was an official from the National Security Agency, with the court ignoring defence lawyers' requests to summon witnesses who could have testified in the men's favour. Security forces also intimidated potential defence witnesses, the men's families said.

Amnesty International opposes the trials of civilians before military courts as such trials violate the right to a fair and public hearing before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law, as guaranteed in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These courts are neither independent nor impartial, and defendants are denied an effective opportunity to appeal against their conviction and sentence to a higher tribunal. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception.

The executions on 17 May came a day after gunmen shot dead three judges and their driver in El-Arish in the Sinai Peninsula.

Names: Mohamed Bakry Haroun, Hany Mostafa Amer, Mohamed Ali Afifi, Abdel Rahman Said Rizk, Khaled Farg Mohamed, Islam Said Ahmed

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 84/15 Index: MDE 12/1670/2015 Issue Date: 18 May 2015