

URGENT ACTION

PROTESTERS' APPEAL HEARING POSTPONED

Surgeon Ahmed Said and four other activists have had their appeal hearing postponed to 13 January. They were jailed for two years in December, for protesting.

Activists **Ahmed Said, Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed, Karim Khaled Fathy, Mohamed Abdel-Hamid, and Gamila Seryel-Dain** will now have their appeal heard on 13 January. The new date was set by Abdeen Court of Appeals on 30 December. A defence lawyer had asked the court for more time to prepare the appeal.

Surgeon Ahmed Said is now detained in the maximum-security "Scorpion" Prison, part of the Tora Prison complex, just south of Cairo. His family have said he is in an overcrowded cell and sleeps on a concrete floor without a blanket or warm clothing during what is the coldest time of the year in Egypt.

Ahmed Said's family told Amnesty International that he was transferred to Tora Prison after they lodged a formal complaint about his case with the South Cairo district attorney on 29 December. The Public Prosecution has yet to investigate Ahmed Said's allegation that the security forces tortured him.

He is no longer on hunger strike, but has lost around eight kilos since he has been detained, his family said.

Gamila Seryel-Dain was transferred to Qanater Women's Prison on 31 December, her family told Amnesty International. The prison administration have not given her warm clothing and she is said to be deeply unhappy as she misses her two children. She is facing a separate trial on a trumped-up charge of "protesting without authorization".

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Egyptian authorities to ensure the verdict and sentences handed down to these five people (naming them) are quashed, and the five people are released immediately;
- Calling on them to ensure that the five people are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and have regular access to their lawyers and families;
- Urging them to order a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into allegations of torture and ensure those responsible are brought to justice in a fair trial without resort to the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 FEBRUARY 2016 TO:

Justice Minister

Ahmed El-Zend
Lazoughly Square
Ministry of Justice
Downtown, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2795 8103
Email: info@moj.gov.eg

Salutation: Dear Minister

Interior Minister

Magdy Abdel Ghaffar
Ministry of Interior
25 El-Sheikh Rihan Street
Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2794 5529
Twitter: @moiegy

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign
Affairs for Human Rights
Mahy Hassan Abdel Latif
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2574 9713
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.eg
Twitter: @MfaEgypt

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 294/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/3119/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A small group of people gathered briefly on Cairo's 6th October Bridge on 19 November to commemorate those killed by the security forces in November 2011, during days of deadly clashes between protesters and security forces in nearby Mohamed Mahmoud Street. The protest began at 2pm and involved around 30 people, who started leaving after five to seven minutes.

After the group had left, the security forces arrested a number of people, including Ahmed Said, Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed, Karim Khaled Fathy and Mohamed Abdel-Hamid. They arrested Gamila Seryel-Dain on 22 November when she brought food to the detainees, her family told Amnesty International.

Ahmed Said had treated injured protesters during the 2011 Mohamed Mahmoud Street protests. When the event on 19 November ended, he went to the Downtown Cairo neighbourhood of Abdeen to meet his friend Mostafa Ibrahim at a coffee shop. As they were getting up to leave, police officers approached them and asked for their national identification cards. Ahmed Said didn't have his with him, and the officers took both men to the nearest police station for questioning.

Ahmed Said's mobile phone was switched off by 4pm that day. When his relatives and lawyers asked at Abdeen Police Station and other police stations, police officers denied that either man was there. It was only at around 4am the following day when Ahmed Said's name appeared on a list of detainees held in Abdeen Police Station and his relatives and lawyers learned that Ahmed Said and Mostafa Ibrahim, as well as Karim Khaled Fathy and Mohamed Abdel Hamid, were in fact being held there.

Ahmed Said's family said that the security forces tortured him on the day of his arrest while interrogating him at Abdeen Police Station. They said he was handcuffed, blindfolded, beaten, given electric shocks and had his hand burned with cigarettes. Mostafa Ibrahim's family said that he too had cigarette burns on his hand and began a hunger strike. Ahmed Said told a public prosecutor on 20 November that the security forces had tortured him, but his family said that the prosecutor had refused to record the complaint.

The group were put on trial before the Abdeen Misdemeanour Court on 13 December on charges that included "assembling without a permit" and "blocking the road and disrupting traffic". Prosecutors had charged them with violating Egypt's 2013 Protest Law and 1914 Assembly Law. The court sentenced the group to two years' imprisonment. Defence lawyers said that the Public Prosecution had not produced any physical evidence, such as photographs or videos, to substantiate the charges, and that their case was based on a report by a single National Security officer, which claimed the group had taken part in a protest in central Cairo – at the intersection of Mohamed Mahmoud and Mohamed Farid Streets – that blocked traffic and threatened the security of citizens. Defence lawyers obtained a report by the Ministry of Traffic, which said the Ministry had received no complaints about protests or disruption to traffic in the area where the protest had supposedly taken place.

The men were transferred to 15 May Prison on 14 December. There, the prison administration told Ahmed Said and the others to sign a paper that said they had not been mistreated and were no longer on hunger strike: the men apparently believed that it would lead to them being transferred back to Abdeen Police Station.

A separate group of people arrested in connection with the gathering on 19 November are on trial before the Qasr el-Nil Misdemeanour Court: the next hearing will be on 2 February. Gamila Seryel-Dain is also facing trial in the case.

Names: Ahmed Mohamed Said, Mostafa Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed, Karim Khaled Fathy, Mohamed Abdel-Hamid, Gamila Seryel-Dain
Gender m/f: All m except Gamila Seryel-Dain (f)

Further information on UA: 294/15 Index: MDE 12/3169/2016 Issue Date: 8 January 2016