

URGENT ACTION

ARBITRARY DETENTION EXTENDED

On 8 January 2019, the Cairo Criminal Court renewed Islam Khalil's detention for a further 45 days. Islam Khalil was a victim of an enforced disappearance and has been held in pre-trial detention on trumped-up charges since 10 March 2018. He is being denied access to necessary health care. The charges, of which Islam Khalil maintains his innocence, are believed to have been brought against him in retaliation for his political activism. The four other co-defendants who were facing the same charges denied knowing Islam Khalil and were released on probation on 4 September.

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

Mr. Nabil Sadek
Public Prosecutor
Office of the Public Prosecutor, Dar alQada
al-Ali, Down Town
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
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Dear Counsellor,

On 8 January 2019, the Cairo Criminal Court renewed Islam Khalil's detention for a further 45 days. From 10 March to 1 April 2018, Islam Khalil's fate and whereabouts were unknown. On 2 April, His family received information about Islam Khalil's whereabouts when a visitor at Tora Investigation prison, in Cairo governorate, said they saw Islam Khalil there. He has since remained in arbitrary detention on unfounded charges of "membership of an illegal group" and "spreading false news". The other co-defendants were released in 4 September 2018.

Islam Khalil's detention conditions are bad; he sleeps on the floor in a small cell that he shares with 14 other inmates, he suffers from back pain, and gets out of the cell for only 30 min a day.

I urge you to release Islam Khalil, who is being detained arbitrarily and drop the charges against him. The Egyptian authorities should ensure that, pending his release, Islam Khalil is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that his conditions of detention are in line with international standards, including access to water, food and medication. Furthermore, I urge you to conduct a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into both Islam Khalil's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and the circumstances surrounding his enforced disappearance from 10 March to 1 April 2018, bringing all those suspected to be responsible to justice in fair trials.

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Islam Khalil was forcibly disappeared from 10 March until 1 April 2018. According to Islam Khalil's family, they last knew about him on 10 March, when he was in Aswan. After losing contact with him, his family inquired with the Aswan police station to see if he was held there, but officers at the station denied his presence there. On 15 March, his family submitted a complaint to the public prosecutor about the incident but received no response. The family also inquired with the prosecution in Hurghada, south east of Cairo, and the Aswan prosecution. However, both denied the presence of Islam Khalil in their custody. His family only learnt about his whereabouts on 2 April, when the authorities acknowledged he was being detained at Tora Investigation prison.

According to his brother, the prison administration prevented him from receiving books and food, and denied him family visits for a month. At one point, he was moved to a cell infested with bugs and was being denied access to water and adequate food. He was then moved to another cell with detainees who forced him to pray and prevented him from smoking and reading certain books. According to his brother, Islam feels that he is facing this alone and that he needs people's support. In a letter that he wrote in 15 August 2018, he says: "We are and will remain on the path of love, calling for justice, freedom and peace. To you, free birds that ignite with hope, sing in our names, and be the sun that protect us. Write about us and be our voice that was deliberately and forcibly silenced".

Islam Khalil has been previously tortured and ill-treated in detention, according to his own testimony and information received from his family and lawyer. On 24 May 2015, he was abducted from his home in al-Santa in Al Gharbiyah governorate in Egypt by National Security Agency (NSA) officers. He was subjected to an enforced disappearance, during which the authorities refused to acknowledge his deprivation of liberty and concealed his fate and whereabouts for 122 days. During this time, according to Islam Khalil, he was tortured by NSA officers in order to force him to "confess" to crimes he says he did not commit. He was released on 31 August 2016, 10 days after the prosecution ordered his release on bail. He was charged of belonging to the banned Muslim Brotherhood group; inciting violence; and attacking security forces.

Arbitrary detention is the practice of detaining people for no legitimate reason or without legal process. The Egyptian authorities launched a new, intensified crackdown on critics in December 2017, ahead of the presidential elections.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 28 February 2019.

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Islam Khalil (Him/his)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/9203/2018/en/>