

URGENT ACTION

FIVE ACTIVISTS SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS IN PRISON

Five activists, including surgeon Ahmed Said, are due to appear at a Cairo court for an appeal hearing on 30 December. They were sentenced on 13 December to two years in prison on trumped-up charges, less than a month after their arrest.

Five activists, including surgeon **Ahmed Mohamed Said**, are due to appear at the Abdeen Misdemeanour Appeals Court in Cairo on 30 December. They are appealing their conviction and sentencing to two years' imprisonment by the Abdeen Misdemeanour Court on 13 December, handed out less than a month after their arrest. The other defendants are: **Mostafa Ibrahim, Mohamed Ahmed, Karim Khaled Fathy, Mohamed Abdel-Hamid**, and **Gamila Seryel-Dain**. Some of the charges against them, such as assembling without a permit, violate protected human rights, while others, such as disrupting traffic, for which they were convicted, were unfounded.

Four of the activists were arrested on 19 November, the fourth anniversary of the 'Mohamed Mahmoud' clashes. Mohamed Mahmoud is a street in Cairo just off Tahrir Square, where clashes between protesters and the police left 51 people dead over six days, starting on 19 November 2011. Surgeon Ahmed Said was present at the time, treating injured protesters. On the fourth anniversary, protesters gathered peacefully on Cairo's 6th October Bridge to commemorate those who died. A total of 13 activists, including four of the defendants sentenced to two years in jail, were arrested in various locations in Cairo on the day. Gamila Seryel-Dain was arrested on 22 November, while taking food to the detainees, her family told Amnesty International.

Ahmed Said began a partial hunger strike (liquids, but no food) on 8 December. He was tortured during interrogations in Cairo's Abdeen Prison on the day of his arrest, his family said. He was handcuffed, blindfolded, beaten, given electric shocks and his hand was burned with cigarettes. Mostafa Ibrahim also had cigarette burns on his hand and is on a partial hunger strike, his family said. The four male defendants are being held in Cairo's 15 May Prison, while Gamila Seryel-Dain remains held at Abdeen Prison as there is no women's facility at 15 May. Families and lawyers haven't had access to the male detainees since their transfer on 14 December.

Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to ensure the verdict and sentences in this case are quashed, and the five defendants (naming them) are released immediately;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure, pending their release, the detainees are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and have regular access to their lawyers and families;
- Urging the authorities 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 1 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:

Fax Email Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Said participated in the peaceful 6th October Bridge protest stand-in Cairo, in which around 30 people stood on the pedestrian sidewalk holding banners commemorating those who died, including with slogans such as: "Trial for the killing of revolutionaries" and "release our detainee brothers and sisters". It took place from 2pm and after about five to seven minutes, the protest came to a natural end. Arrests were made in the aftermath by security forces, who had formed a heavy presence in Cairo on the day, according to relatives of the detainees and a protester who was present at the 6th October Bridge stand.

After the protest, Ahmed Said went to a nearby neighbourhood in Downtown Cairo, called Abdeen, where he sat at a coffee shop with his friend, computer engineer Mostafa Ibrahim. 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 them both to the nearest police station to be questioned. By 4pm his family say his mobile phone was switched off. When relatives and lawyers asked at various police stations, including at Abdeen police station, police officers denied that either man was there. It wasn't until around 4am the following day when relatives and lawyers learned that Ahmed Said and Mostafa Ibrahim, as well as two others, Karim Khaled Fathy and Mohamed Abdel Hamid, were in fact being held at the Abdeen police station.

The five defendants, including Gamila Seryel-Dain, were convicted of protesting, while blocking the road and disrupting traffic, violating the 2013 Protest Law, which arbitrarily restricts the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party, as well as Articles 65 and 73 of Egypt's Constitution. They had also been charged with protesting without a permit, and assembling more than five people. Gathering in a group of five or more violates Egypt's 1914 Assembly Law, which also arbitrarily restricts protected human rights. The judge convicted them on the charge that carries the harshest punishment, one of the defence lawyers said.

According to their lawyers, there is no physical evidence in the casefile on the defendants that proves the charges against them. The casefile only includes the investigation report by a single National Security officer. That report says that the defendants had participated in a protest at the intersection of Cairo's Mohamed Mahmoud and Mohamed Farid streets with more than 40 people, which caused obstruction to traffic and presented a threat to the security of citizens. According to defence lawyers, a report by the Ministry of Traffic confirms there was no complaint of a protest in that street or disruption of traffic reported to them on that day. The five activists were kept in pre-trial detention at Abdeen Prison, until their trial three weeks later on 13 December.

Nine other activists were arrested on the same day near the 6th October Bridge: Sahar Mandour Amer, Mohamed Ibrahim Ahmed Ibrahim, Mohamed Ali Noaman Elsayed, Ahmed Elsayed Hassan, Sayed Mohamed Ahmed, Mohamed Ibrahim Abouel-Yazid, Mahmoud Islam Elsayed, Ahmed Essam Mohamed, and Mohamed Desouky Ramadan. They were taken to the Qasr el-Nil police station, where they are still being held. Their case, however, is being tried separately in the Qasr el-Nil Misdemeanour Court. Their first trial session was due on 15 December, but it was postponed to 5 January 2016.

On 20 November, when Ahmed Said told the Public Prosecution he was tortured, his family say the prosecutor refused to record his incident of torture. On 22 November, a judge ordered the 13 defendants' release on bail, but the Public Prosecution appealed this decision and they were returned to pre-trial detention. In Gamila Seryel-Dain's case, she was initially arrested by the Qasr el-Nil prosecution. Four days later, the judge released her with a 3,000 EGP (\$380) bail, which she paid. After her release, the Abdeen Prosecution ordered her detention based on trumped-up charges. She is now a defendant in both cases.

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

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