

# URGENT ACTION

## STUDENT DETAINED AND TORTURED AFTER PROTEST

**Mahmoud Hussien, an 18-year-old student, has been held in detention without trial for 293 days, pending investigation. He is facing several trumped-up charges, including protesting without authorization. He was subjected to torture and coerced into making a "confession" on videotape. He is a prisoner of conscience and must be released immediately and unconditionally and all charges against him must be dropped.**

On 25 January 2014, the third anniversary of the uprising in Egypt, **Mahmoud Hussien** joined a protest against the Muslim Brotherhood and military rule in downtown Cairo at the press syndicate. The protest did not last more than five minutes before the security forces started to disperse it with tear gas. Mahmoud Hussien left the protest and took a bus to his home in El Marg neighbourhood, Cairo. At a checkpoint in El Marg, approximately at noon, the security forces stopped the bus and arrested Mahmoud Hussien for wearing a shirt with a logo of the "Nation Without Torture Campaign" and a scarf with the logo of the "25 January Revolution".

Mahmoud Hussien told his lawyer and his brother that following his arrest he was taken to El Marg police station where he was beaten. His hands were cuffed behind his back, he was blindfolded and then taken to the National Security officer for interrogation. During the interrogations, he was beaten, given electric shocks to his back, hands and testicles for approximately four hours until he agreed to "confess" to crimes he did not commit. In a "confession" that was videotaped by his interrogators, he stated that he belonged to the banned Muslim Brotherhood, possessed explosives, and had participated in an unauthorized protest. According to his lawyer, the sole evidence against him is a scarf with the logo of the "25 January Revolution" and a gas mask. His lawyer and his brother saw the signs of torture when they visited him four days later in the police station.

On 26 January, Mahmoud Hussien was questioned by the State Security Prosecutor without the presence of a lawyer and was not given the chance to call his family. Although he denied the accusations and stated that he was tortured and coerced to make a videotaped "confession", the prosecutor did not refer him for a forensic examination and did not order an investigation into his torture allegation. Instead, he ordered his detention for 15 days. His pre-trial detention has been renewed since then. He is currently held in Cairo's Appeal Prison.

### **Please write immediately in Arabic or English or your own language:**

- Urging the Egyptian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Mahmoud Hussien and drop any pending charges against him as he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Calling on them to protect Mahmoud Hussien from further torture and other ill-treatment;
- Urging them to order an independent and impartial investigation into reports of torture in custody and bring those responsible to justice.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 DECEMBER 2014 TO:**

Public Prosecutor  
Hesham Mohamed Zaki Barakat  
Office of the Public Prosecutor  
Supreme Court House, 1 "26 July" Road  
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt  
Fax: + 202 2 577 4716  
+202 2 575 7165  
(switched off after office hours, GMT+3)

**Salutation: Dear Counsellor**

Minister of Justice  
Mahfouz Saber  
Ministry of Justice  
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt  
Fax: + 202 2 795 8103  
Email: [mojeb@idsc.gov.eg](mailto:mojeb@idsc.gov.eg)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

### **And copies to:**

President of the National Council for Human Rights  
Mohamed Fayek  
69 Giza St. (next to the Saudi Arabia Embassy)  
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt  
Fax: + 202 3 762 48

**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.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 25 January 2014, the third anniversary of the uprising in Egypt, Mahmoud Hussien joined a protest against the Muslim Brotherhood and military rule at the press syndicate in downtown Cairo. Within minutes of protesters gathering outside the press syndicate and chanting against the military and Muslim Brotherhood, security forces started to disperse the protest with tear gas. While some protestors sought to escape towards Talaat Harb street. Mahmoud Hussien decided to go home because of the violent dispersal and took a bus home in El Marg neighbourhood, Cairo.

According to the information gathered by Amnesty International, upon his arrest on 25 January, Mahmoud Hussien asked about the reason for his arrest but was reportedly beaten by five plain-clothed police officers who dragged him by the legs to a small police station near the El Marg checkpoint. Security forces continued beating Mahmoud Hussien for 30 minutes. Mahmoud was then taken to El Marg police station where he was beaten by security forces upon arrival with their hands and batons for around an hour, a practice in Egyptian police stations and prisons called "welcoming parties". In the police station Mahmoud Hussien was accused of possessing Molotov cocktails, hand grenades, belonging to a banned group, protesting without authorization and receiving money to protest.

Mahmoud Hussien was later put in an overcrowded cell at the police station with some 50 suspects in a cell designed for 16 detainees. Mahmoud Hussien was beaten and threatened by his cellmates at the request of the police officers for some three hours until he was taken to National Security officers in the police station for interrogations.

The national security officer told him that he will dictate a "confession" and videotape him. Mahmoud refused and said that he would not confess to crimes he did not commit. He was then beaten, given electric shocks on his back, hands and testicles. After four hours of interrogations, electric shocks and beatings, Mahmoud Hussien told the National Security officer that he would "confess" to whatever they asked him to stop the torture. The National Security officer videotaped Mahmoud Hussien "confessing" to possessing explosives, receiving money to demonstrate, and participating in an unauthorized protest.

On 26 January, Mahmoud was taken to the State Security Prosecutor in New Cairo, a public prosecutor office meant to investigate offences related to "National Security" matters. He was questioned. Mahmoud Hussien denied all the accusations and said he was tortured and coerced to "confess" before the State Security Prosecutor but he was not referred for a forensic examination and no investigation into his torture allegations was ordered. Mahmoud Hussien stayed in El Marg police station for six days and was later transferred to Abu Zabaal Prison where he was beaten upon arrival. In May 2014, he was transferred to the Cairo's Appeal Prison where he was beaten again upon arrival. Mahmoud Hussien's family filed complaints with the Public Prosecutor Office for his torture and beatings but no genuine investigations were carried out.

On 24 January 2014, at least 1000 protestors were arrested for protesting without authorization and security forces used excessive force to disperse protests across the country. At least 60 protestors were killed.

A protest law signed by President Adly Mansour on 24 November 2013 gives the Interior Ministry wide discretionary powers over protests. It requires protest organizers to submit complete plans for any gatherings of more than 10 people to the Interior Ministry at least three days in advance. The law also gives the Interior Ministry the authority to cancel a demonstration or change its route, in effect meaning that demonstrations can take place only with the Ministry's prior authorization. The law also gives the security forces a legal framework for the use of excessive force against any protestors deemed to have committed a "crime punishable by law". Protesters convicted of breaking the law face up to five years in prison and fines of EGP100,000 (US\$14,500).

Name: Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed Hussien  
Gender m/f: m