

URGENT ACTION

ISRAA AL-TAWEEL DENIED VITAL MEDICAL CARE

The Egyptian prison authorities are preventing Israa al-Taweel from getting medical treatment that could prevent her from becoming permanently disabled.

Israa al-Taweel's family have told Amnesty International that the prison doctor diagnosed her in July as having a permanent disability that needed no further treatment. Her family complained several times but the prison authorities repeatedly refused to grant her medical treatment, saying she was disabled and further treatment would not improve her condition. However, according to medical reports by doctors outside prison, seen by Amnesty International, Israa al-Taweel is suffering from "leg paresis as a result of a gunshot sustained in her lower back that led to laceration of the nervous plexus". The medical report goes on to say that Israa al-Taweel must continue with treatment that includes physiotherapy or she will face a "collapse in her leg muscle strength".

Egypt's Doctors' Syndicate published Israa al-Taweel's external medical reports in October, that clearly state that she must continue her treatment or will face a relapse. The Syndicate has been urging the Public Prosecutor, Ministry of Interior and National Council for Human Rights to allow it to send a medical committee to the prison to give Israa al-Taweel a medical examination. The Syndicate has not yet been allowed access.

Egyptian security forces shot Israa al-Taweel in her lower back on 25 January 2014, at a protest on the third anniversary of the January 2011 uprising. She was left unable to walk and used a wheelchair for almost a year. Her condition improved with physiotherapy treatment and she was able to walk using crutches, then one crutch and finally just support by her friends. After she was arrested in June 2015, she was denied access to treatment and her condition worsened. She has now told her family that in custody her condition is deteriorating and has asked them to bring back her crutches.

Her pre-trial detention was renewed on 2 November for 45 days. She has now been detained for 155 days, for being with two friends wanted by the security forces and for possessing a camera.

Please write immediately in English or Arabic:

- Urging the authorities to release Israa Al Taweel unless she is charged promptly with a recognizable criminal offence, and given a fair trial;
- Urging them to immediately grant her access to proper medical treatment outside the prison as her condition cannot be treated in the Prison Medical Centre.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 DECEMBER 2015 TO:

Minister of the Interior
Magdy Abdel Ghaffar
Ministry of the Interior
25 El Sheikh Rihan Street
bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2 794 5529
Salutation: Dear Minister

Public Prosecutor
Nabil Sadek
Office of the Public Prosecutor Supreme
Court
House 1 "26 July" Road
Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +202 2 577 4716
(Only during office hours, GMT +2)
Salutation: Dear Counsellor

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 2 574 9713
Email: Contact.Us@mfa.gov.eg

Also send copies to:

Ambassador Mohamed Tawfik, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
3521 International Ct NW, Washington DC 20008
Fax: 202 244 4319 -OR- 202 244 5131 | Phone: 202 895 5400 | Email: embassy@egyptembassy.net

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! EITHER send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with "UA 191/15" in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, OR fill out this [short online form](#) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if taking action after the appeals date. This is the first update of UA 191/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/2371/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Israa al-Taweel was arrested on 1 June while she was out in Cairo with two friends wanted by the security forces. The three of them were detained secretly, under conditions of enforced disappearance for 15 days. Israa al-Taweel is still in pre-trial detention while her two friends are facing military trial. It appears that Israa al-Taweel was arrested because of who she was with. The security forces later found a camera in her possessions and accused her of broadcasting false news. Israa al-Taweel told her family that after she was arrested she was kept blindfolded for 15 days in the National Security (NS) office, even when she was using the toilet and while eating. They only removed the blindfold when she went to bed at night. She also said she could hear people being tortured in the cells near her for the entire 15 days in the NS office.

Israa al-Taweel's family told Amnesty International that after she was subjected to enforced disappearance, they asked about her in various police stations, including al-Ma'adi and Qasr al-Nil police stations in Cairo. They also asked in the headquarters of the prison authorities in Cairo. The authorities denied that she was being held in any police station or prison and told the family that her name was not registered with them. Her family submitted a complaint to the Public Prosecutor on 3 June that she had been subjected to enforced disappearance. They also complained to the Ministry of Interior's Human Rights Department, which denied that Israa al-Taweel was in official custody. Eventually, they submitted a report to the National Council for Human Rights, but only found out where she was after she was transferred to al-Qanater prison on 16 June. Someone who saw her in the prison called the family and told them she was there. Her family went to the prison to see her on 17 June, but the authorities refused to let them, though they did confirm that she was in the prison and in their custody. They were officially allowed to visit her in prison a week later.

Amnesty International has documented an increase in the number of people subjected to enforced disappearance since the beginning of 2014. Many have been abducted from their homes, the streets or their workplaces across the country by heavily armed teams of men, generally in black uniform, some in balaclavas, as well as men in civilian clothes. Relatives present during the "arrests" have said these men broke into their homes in the middle of the night, confiscated laptops and mobile phones, stole money and other valuables, and in some cases assaulted those inside physically and verbally. In all cases, the security forces refused to say where and why they were taking the people they were abducting, and did not show any arrest or search warrants.

Name: Israa al-Taweel
Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 191/15 Index: MDE 12/2799/2015 Issue Date: 3 November 2015