

URGENT ACTION

COUPLE HELD IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR 66 DAYS

Ola al-Qaradawi and her husband Hossam Khalaf have been detained in solitary confinement since 3 July. On 30 June, security forces arrested them on charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. They are both detained in poor prison conditions.

Hossam Khalaf, a 59-year-old Egyptian engineer and member of the legally registered Al Wasat Islamic Political Party, is held at Tora Maximum Security Prison 2, in Cairo, while his wife **Ola Al-Qaradawi**, a 55 year-old Qatari national of Egyptian origins, has been detained at Al Qanater Women Prison in Qalyubia. On 3 July, State Security Prosecution ordered their detention on charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Prison authorities immediately placed them in solitary confinement, and denied them access to their lawyers and families.

Prison authorities placed Ola al-Qaradawi in a small solitary cell of about 160cmx180cm in size without a bed or a toilet and which lacks sufficient ventilation and lighting. Prison guards allow her only five minutes every morning to use an external toilet. She finds herself compelled to reduce her food intake to avoid the need to go to the toilet. Lawyers who saw Ola al-Qaradawi in the office of the State Security Prosecution on 27 August said that she appeared very weak. Also, unlike other inmates, she is denied time outside her cell.

Hossam Khalaf has been suffering from pain in his eyes since his detention. Prison authorities rejected his request to undergo medical checks at his own expense in an external hospital. He is confined to his cell for 24 hours a day.

Hossam Khalaf and Ola al-Qaradawi's lawyers and relatives filed six requests and complaints to the State Security Prosecution asking for the end of their solitary confinement and allow them to receive family and lawyers' visits. Despite the fact that prison regulations grant those on pre-trial detention the right to receive at least two visits every month, the Prosecutors rejected all of these requests.

Prolonged solitary confinement can amount to torture or other ill-treatment, according to UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules) and must not be imposed under any circumstances.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Calling on the Egyptian authorities to immediately end the solitary confinement of Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf, ensuring that they are held in humane conditions and receive adequate healthcare;
- Urging them to provide Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf with access to their families and lawyers;
- Urging them to ensure that Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf are protected from torture and other ill treatment and are treated in accordance with the Mandela Rules at all times.

Contact below official by 20 October, 2017:

Minister of Interior

Minister Magdy Abd el-Ghaffar

Ministry of Interior

Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

F: +202 2794 5529

E: center@moi.gov.eg or HumanRightsSector@moi.gov.eg

Salutation: Dear Minister

Ambassador Yasser Reda, Embassy 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

Twitter: @MfaEgypt

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 206.17*

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Relatives and lawyers of Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf believe that isolating them in solitary confinement, preventing visits and not providing them with adequate food and medical care make them more vulnerable to medical problems. International standards on the treatment of prisoners prohibit prolonged or indefinite solitary confinement.

On 30 June, security forces raided Ola al-Qaradawi's summer house, in the North Coast of Alexandria, while she was there on vacation with her husband, Hossam Khalaf, who is a member in Al Wasat Islamic Party. Police forces took them to Burj Al-Arab police station and referred both of them to State Security Prosecution in Cairo. Prosecutors interrogated them for two days and ordered their detention for 15 days on charges of belonging to and financially supporting the Muslim Brotherhood group. Prosecutors have been renewing their detention since then. Security forces also raided their apartment in Cairo and confiscated money and Ola al-Qaradawi's personal jewellery and Hossam Khalaf's work documents.

On 17 August, a state-appointed committee tasked with overseeing the finances of alleged Muslim Brotherhood affiliates froze Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf's assets along with those of another 14 individuals. The committee claimed that they belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood. On 30 August, the Cairo Criminal Court designated Ola al-Qaradawi and Hossam Khalaf's as "terrorists" according to the Terrorist Entities Law number 8 of 2015.

Ola Al-Qaradawi is the daughter of Youssef Al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian national who lives in Qatar and is designated by the Egyptian authorities as a "terrorist" since June 2017. Hossam Khalaf is an engineer and a member in the legally-registered Al Wasat Islamic political Party. Authorities had detained him for two years between 2014 and 2016 on charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Public Prosecution ordered his release on 22 March 2016 without charging him.

Name: Ola Al-Qaradawi (f) and Hossam Khalaf (m)
Gender m/f: both

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