

Egypt: academic freedoms under fire



Mahmoud Hussein: locked up for anti-torture t-shirt

Nineteen year old student Mahmoud Hussein was arrested on 25 January 2014 for wearing a t-shirt with the slogan "nation without torture" and a scarf celebrating the '25 January Revolution'.

He was arrested on his way home from a protest against military rule and the Muslim Brotherhood. Mahmoud was brought before National Security officers in the police station for interrogation, where he was blindfolded and tortured until he confessed to possessing explosives, belonging to a "terrorist" group, receiving money to demonstrate and participating in an unauthorized protest.

Mahmoud has not yet been formally charged or tried for any offence, but has spent more than 500 days in pre-trial detention, a period which was extended by another 45 days on 24 August 2015. He is being held in the Appeals Prison known to be among the worst prisons.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Pass a resolution through your student union or trade union condemning the repression in Egypt and inviting a speaker from the campaign
- Organise a film-showing or speaker meeting – get in touch with us for help and advice
- Check our website for information about protests and events where you can get involved

Turn over for more campaigning suggestions



Esraa el-Taweel: kidnapped and 'disappeared'

Student and photojournalist Esraa el-Taweel vanished in June 2015. Her case was just one in a wave of disappearances in Egypt over the past summer. After two weeks Esraa was reported to have been incarcerated in al-Qanater women's prison on charges of spreading false news and belonging to a terrorist organisation.

Her detention was renewed for the eighth time on September 21, although her lawyer says no formal charges have been brought against her. She is in great need of medical attention due to a bullet wound she has suffered from since January 2014, however has been refused adequate care.

Emad Shahin: sentenced to death for his opinions

Emad Shahin, professor of Public Policy at the American University in Cairo, was sentenced to death in absentia on 16 May 2015 as part of the "Grand Espionage" case, which also included former president Mohamed Morsi and senior leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The charges include espionage, leading an illegal organisation, providing a banned organisation information and financial support, calling for the suspension of the constitution, preventing state institutions and harming national unity and social harmony. Shahin denies all the charges.



Heba Kishta: jailed by a military court for two years

Heba is a student at Mansoura University's Faculty of Commerce. She was arrested on October 30, 2014 by security forces when they stormed the campus, attacking and beating students and staff. Heba was arrested whilst helping an injured student.

She was then tried in front of a military court in Port Said under the anti-protest laws and sentenced to two years in prison, having been charged with "belonging to a terrorist group". Since her arrest, security officials have broken into her home and seized her belongings. Heba was arrested along with three other students and a university professor.



He left Egypt for the US in January 2014 and has remained in self-imposed exile since then. Shahin has won support from academic colleagues, including the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), which has 3,000 members worldwide. MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom wrote to the Egyptian authorities calling on them to revoke the death sentence.

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