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EGYPT

UNJUSTLY HELD STUDENT DENIED PROSTHETIC LEG

Oqba Hashad has been arbitrarily detained without trial for over four years and six months solely for his brother's human rights activism. Security forces subjected him to enforced disappearance for 77 days. While in detention, they tortured him and subjected him to ill-treatment including severe beatings, electric shocks and suspension in contorted positions.

Authorities in Wadi al-Natroun prison, where he is held, continue to deny him access to adequate health care, including for his right leg. The leg was amputated above the knee from his childhood, and for which he needs a prosthetic leg to move. Since his prosthetic leg broke in August 2022, prison authorities have denied him a replacement as well as the medicine and antiseptics he needs for his stump care.

Write to the Public Prosecutor urging him to:

- Ensure that Oqba Hashad is immediately and unconditionally released and all charges against him dropped as he is detained solely as a punishment for his brother's activism.
- Pending his release, ensure that he is granted regular access to his family, lawyers and adequate healthcare, including in outside hospitals if necessary, and held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

Write to:

Public Prosecutor,
Mohamed Shawky Ayyad
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Madinat al-Rehab; Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt
Twitter: @EgyptianPPO

And copy:

His Excellency Ahmed Abdallah Ibrahim HAFEZ
Ambassador
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
454 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, ON K1N 6R3
Email: embassy.Ottawa1@mfa.gov.eg
Tel: (613) 234-4931, 4935 Fax: (613) 234-9347/234-4398

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Oqba Hashad, now 26 years old, was studying business at the University of Sadat City (USC), in Menoufia governorate, prior to his arrest. On May 20, 2019, National Security Agency (NSA) agents stormed his student residence and arrested everyone without a warrant. All other students were released within days, except for Oqba Hashad. His brother Amr Hashad, a human rights activist and legal researcher, fled Egypt in 2019 after his release from prison. He was arrested in 2014 in connection with his activism with the student union at Assiut University and opposition to the university's decision to engage a private security firm. Subsequently, a court sentenced Amr Hashad to three years in prison after convicting him of charges of joining a terrorist organization, attempting to overthrow the government and inciting protests.

From exile, Amr Hashad continued to document human rights violations in Egypt including enforced disappearances and cruel and inhuman detention conditions in Egyptian prisons. Oqba Hashad's mother was also detained and questioned for nine hours during a visit to Shebin Al-Kom prison, where Oqba Hashad was held at the time, in relation to a Facebook post written by Amr Hashad in December 2020 about his brother being banned from accessing his prosthetic leg and the injustices suffered by their family.

Oqba Hashad is currently detained in the Wadi El Natroun prison. On August 7, 2022, relatives of Oqba Hashad's cellmate, who had visited the prison that day, called Oqba Hashad's family to inform them that his prosthetic leg had broken. His family rushed to the prison to collect the broken prosthetic leg, and took it for repairs at a specialized clinic, where a doctor and an engineer told them that a replacement was needed.

The family did not have the financial means to replace it, and therefore sought to repair it instead. On August 9, 2022, when his relatives returned to the prison with the prosthetic leg, the prison authorities insisted on carrying out a thorough inspection, attempted to dismantle it, and informed the family that they will submit it for further inspections. To date, the authorities have not returned the repaired prosthetic leg to him or secured a replacement.

Amnesty International has documented the targeting of relatives of Egyptian dissidents or critics abroad, including through arbitrary arrests and detention, summoning for questioning and other forms of harassment. For instance, they have forcibly disappeared and denied healthcare to Salah Soltan, father of prominent US based human rights defender Mohamed Soltan, in retaliation for his son's activism. In August 2023, the authorities arrested the fathers of Egyptian journalist Ahmed Gamal Ziada, based in Belgium, and German-Egyptian activist Fagr al-Adly, based in Germany. Both have been questioned about their relatives' activism.

As a state party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Egypt must fulfil its obligations to ensure that when persons with disabilities are deprived of their liberty, they are, on an equal basis with others, entitled to guarantees in accordance with international human rights law and are provided with reasonable accommodation and with health services specifically because of their disabilities.

On September 3, 2021, United Nations experts, including the Special Rapporteur's on the situation of human rights defenders, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Special Rapporteur on the

rights of persons with disabilities, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment sent a letter to the Egyptian authorities highlighting the enforced disappearance and prolonged arbitrary detention of Oqba Hashad.