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USA

HISHAM KASSEM RELEASED AFTER UNJUST IMPRISONMENT

On February 21, 2024, Egyptian publisher, writer, and opposition politician Hisham Kassem was released from prison after serving a six-month sentence. He had been unjustly jailed on defamation and other politically motivated charges brought against him for peacefully expressing his opinions. His release came after months of global solidarity efforts calling for his freedom.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Hisham Kassem is a prominent critic of the Egyptian government and a longtime advocate for free expression. He was arrested on August 20, 2023, after publicly criticizing a former government minister. He was later sentenced to six months in prison based on defamation charges — a punishment clearly intended to silence dissent.

Even after his release, Hisham continued to face harassment. He left Egypt to avoid re-arrest following a court summons related to a separate defamation case brought by another former minister. In May 2025, he was convicted in absentia and sentenced to another six months in prison along with a fine. He also faces yet another case, this time stemming from accusations made by three police officers.

Hisham's release is a moment of relief, but it highlights a broader crackdown on free speech in Egypt. Despite continuing legal threats, he remains committed to speaking out against repression. In a message to Amnesty International supporters after his release, he shared:

"Speaking out to expose oppression is a duty. Staying silent in the face of injustice is a form of complicity. I am 65 years old, and for 35 years I have been standing up against the regime. I hold deep respect and admiration for the work Amnesty International does in defending human rights worldwide. Thank you for your solidarity."

Amnesty International will keep campaigning for the release of others who are arbitrarily detained in Egypt for peacefully expressing their views.