

# URGENT ACTION

## UNJUSTLY JAILED RIGHTS LAWYER REFERRED TO TRIAL

Ibrahim Metwaly, human rights lawyer and co-founder and coordinator of the Association of the Families of the Disappeared in Egypt, has spent over seven years arbitrarily detained in retaliation for his human rights work. Security forces arrested Ibrahim Metwaly on 10 September 2017 from the Cairo International Airport while on his way to Geneva to address the UN. Since September 2024, he has been referred to two separate trials on similar bogus charges. He is held in Badr 3 prison, where he is being denied urgent healthcare. He must be immediately and unconditionally released as he is being held solely due to the exercise of his human rights, including seeking truth and justice for his forcibly disappeared son.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

**Public Prosecutor Mohamed Shawky Ayyad**  
Office of the Public Prosecutor  
Madinat al-Rehab; Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt  
Fax: +202 2577 4716; Twitter: @EgyptianPPO

Dear Counsellor,

*I am writing to express my grave concern over the prolonged arbitrary detention of 64-year-old Ibrahim Metwaly since 10 September 2017, solely for his human rights activism including his efforts to secure truth and justice for his forcibly disappeared son. Ibrahim Metwaly was arrested by Egyptian security forces at Cairo International Airport on his way to Geneva, where he was invited to attend the 113<sup>TH</sup> session of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to discuss enforced disappearances in Egypt. Following his arrest, he was held incommunicado for two days until he appeared before the Supreme State Security Prosecutor (SSSP) in Cairo. He told his lawyers that during this period National Security Agency (NSA) officers stripped him naked, gave him electric shocks in various parts of his body, doused him in water, and beat him, in violation of the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.*

*Ibrahim Metwaly was initially held in pre-trial detention pending investigations into charges of communicating with "foreign entities" and spreading "false news" under case No.900 of 2017. The SSSP opened two new criminal cases against him, namely case No.1470 of 2019 and No.786 of 2020, on similar charges. This abusive practice referred to as "rotation" has been systematically used by the authorities against critics to keep them in pre-trial detention indefinitely, in contravention of Egyptian law which sets two years as the maximum permissible period for pre-trial detention. In September and October 2024, the Egyptian authorities referred Ibrahim Metwaly to trial in Case No.900 of 2017 and No. 1470 of 2019, respectively, on charges of "joining a group that was founded in violation of the law and committing a crime of funding terrorism", among others. His lawyers have not been granted access to his casefiles to date, and no trial sessions have been scheduled yet.*

*In June 2022, after five years in Tora Prison Complex, Ibrahim Metwaly was transferred to Badr 3 prison where he remains. Ibrahim Metwaly suffers from multiple health conditions, including an enlarged prostate which requires urgent surgical intervention according to urologist. On 4 December 2024, his family submitted a request to the SSSP to approve his transfer to a specialized hospital outside the prison to undergo an urgent prostate surgery. The family's request remains unanswered.*

***I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Ibrahim Metwaly as he is detained solely for peacefully exercising his human rights. Pending his release, he must be held in conditions meeting international standards for the treatment of prisoners and granted access to adequate healthcare, including in outside hospitals if necessary, as well as his family and lawyers.***

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ibrahim Metwaly is a lawyer and co-founder of the Families of the Disappeared in Egypt group. He co-founded the group after his son, Amr, was forcibly disappeared on 8 July 2013. He searched for his son in police stations, prisons, hospitals and morgues with no success. Egyptian security forces [denied](#) knowledge of his son's fate and whereabouts. Amr remains subjected to enforced disappearance, but the family stopped searching for him after the arrest of Ibrahim Metwaly out of fear of further reprisals.

On 12 September 2017, following his arrest on 10 September, the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP) ordered the detention of Ibrahim Metwaly for 15 days pending investigations into charges of founding and leading an illegal group, the "Families of the Disappeared in Egypt Group," "conspiring with foreign parties to harm Egyptian national security," and "publishing false news". While Egyptian law imposes a maximum two-year pretrial detention period, this is routinely bypassed in cases involving state critics and political opponents through a practice known as "rotation". In Ibrahim Metwaly's case, SSSP prosecutors opened two new cases in 2019 and 2020.

On 15 January 2025, the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders issued a [statement](#) condemning the use anti-terrorism legislation to imprison human rights defenders. In her statement, she highlighted the prolonged arbitrary detention of Ibrahim Metwaly as well as the Egyptian authorities' denial of adequate healthcare.

Ibrahim Metwaly is currently held in [Badr 3 Prison](#), located 70 kilometres to the northeast of Cairo, where, according to Amnesty International's research, prisoners are subjected to horrific and punitive conditions. Former detainees and family members have spoken of heavily restricted access to basic necessities such as sufficient food, clothing and books. Authorities often deny regular contact with families and lawyers and detention renewal hearings are routinely held online. Such hearings take place under coercive circumstances in the presence of prison guards and detainees are prevented from communicating with their lawyers. Further, they expose detainees to risks of reprisals from guards for complaining about torture or other ill-treatment and impede the ability of judges to spot visible bruises or other injuries.

Ibrahim Metwaly's family is allowed to visit him every 45 days or two months. The visitors sit in a booth with glass partition separating them from their loved ones, which makes communication difficult due to the low volume of the phone. The family is also allowed to deliver food, clothing and medical items every 30 days, but report that on some occasions officials ban specific items at their whim.

Amnesty International has documented a pattern of enforced disappearances which have plagued Egypt for the past decade. The National Security Agency (NSA) and other security forces routinely hold those accused of involvement in terrorism or protests incommunicado and deny any information about their fate and whereabouts to their relatives and lawyers, for periods ranging from a few days to 23 months. Egypt remains a non-signatory of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic and English.  
You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 27 June 2025.  
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Ibrahim Metwaly (he/him).

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/7114/2023/en/>.

## ADDITIONAL TARGETS

His Excellency Mr Sherif Ahmed Mahmoud Kamel  
*Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary*  
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Salutation: Your Excellency

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Salutation: Dear Minister

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