

URGENT ACTION

RELEASED AFTER TORTURE AND DISAPPEARANCE

Islam Khalil, a 27-year-old survivor of enforced disappearance and torture, was released on 31 August by the National Security Agency, 10 days after the prosecution ordered his release on bail.

On 31 August, **Islam Khalil** was released by the National Security Agency (NSA), which had been refusing to comply with a decision 10 days earlier by the East Alexandria Prosecution that he should be released on bail. The family had made a bail payment of 50,000 Egyptian pounds (US\$ 5,510) on 23 August. However, instead of releasing Islam Khalil, police officers had fabricated a new charge against him and subjected him to a severe beating, according to his brother and his lawyer. In the final hours before his release from a police station in al-Santa, Islam Khalil's hometown in the Gharbeya Governorate north-west of Cairo, his hands were tied to the ceiling and he was made to stand in that position for more than three hours. Islam Khalil's health is in a poor condition, according to his brother, requiring mental and physical rehabilitation.

Islam Khalil initially faced a range of charges and was at risk of the death penalty if convicted of some of them. However, due to campaigning efforts in Egypt and internationally, all but one of the charges were dropped. He continues to face the charge of "belonging to a banned group" and, if convicted of this, risks up to five years in prison. He is also facing another charge, filed against him after the prosecution ordered his release, of "assaulting a police officer". For this, he could face a fine of 10,000 to 20,000 Egyptian pounds (US\$ 1,123 to 2,245).

Nour Khalil, Islam Khalil's brother, sent this message to Amnesty International's staff and activists: "Thank you for your great effort; that was the biggest reason for my brother to gain his freedom today. Islam remains under threat by the security services and there is a real risk that he is arrested once again or that they harm him. Continue your support and struggle for Islam until he achieves all his rights and those responsible for the crimes committed against him are held accountable. Keep up your pressure for all those subjected to enforced disappearance and prisoners of conscience for the sake of freedom, truth and peace. Thank you, Amnesty, and thank you to all of Amnesty's activists everywhere."

Islam Khalil had been repeatedly tortured and otherwise ill-treated in detention, according to his own testimony and information received via his family and lawyer. The 27-year-old sales manager was originally abducted from his home in al-Santa by NSA officers on 24 May 2015. He was subjected to enforced disappearance, during which the authorities refused to acknowledge his deprivation of liberty and concealed his fate for 122 days. During this time, according to Islam Khalil, he was tortured by NSA officers to "confess" to crimes he says he did not commit.

Amnesty International is closing the Urgent Action but will keep monitoring this case closely.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 187/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE12/4735/2016/en/>

Further information on UA: 187/16 Index: MDE 12/4765/2016 Issue Date: 7 September 2016