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| MDE 12/9079/2025 - Egypt - Date: 27 February 2025 |
| FURTHER INFORMATION | URGENT ACTION | FI UA 132/19-16 |
| Life of mother protesting son’s unjust detention at risk |
| EGYPT |

August 11, 2025 / Update: Laila Soueif ended her hunger strike in mid-July due to concerns about her deteriorating health. Alaa Abdel Fattah, for his part, switched from a full hunger strike to a partial strike in June. At the end of July, the authorities removed Alaa's name from the terror lists, which is a positive development. We are currently working on an update to this UA with adjusted suggested letters.

Prominent Egyptian-British activist Alaa Abdel Fattah remains arbitrarily detained despite completing the length of his unjust five-year prison sentence on 29 September 2024. Since then, his 68-year-old mother, Laila Soueif, has been on hunger strike. On 24 February, after 149 days on hunger strike, she was hospitalized after her blood sugar and blood pressure were recorded at dangerously low levels. Her life is in critical danger according to a doctor who examined her on 25 February. Alaa Abdel Fattah, who has spent most of the past decade behind bars, has been subjected to a litany of human rights violations including arbitrary detention, unfair trial, torture and other ill-treatment. Alaa Abdel Fattah is a prisoner of conscience who should be immediately and unconditionally released as his detention is solely linked to the exercise of his human rights.

Alaa Abdel Fattah, a well-known political activist and government critic, has been repeatedly arrested during the past decade including for his role in the 2011 uprising. On 29 September 2019, National Security Agency (NSA) officers arrested him from Dokki police station in Greater Cairo, where he was forced to spend 12 hours every night following his release on probation in March 2019, after having served another unjust five-year prison sentence. Later that day human rights lawyer Mohamed Baker, was arrested from a prosecution office while attending the investigation session of his client Alaa Abdel Fattah. Alaa Abdel Fattah and Mohamed Baker were ordered into pre-trial detention pending investigations into bogus terrorism-related charges under Case No.1356/2019 of the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP), a branch of the Public Prosecution specialized in investigating national security threats.

The SSSP opened investigations into similar charges against them under new Case No. 1228/2021 as part of a strategy increasingly used by the authorities, referred to as «rotation», to circumvent the two-year limit for pre-trial detention allowed under Egyptian law and to indefinitely extend the detention of activists. Their trial in Case No. 1228/2021 started on 28 October 2021, together with another defend-ant: blogger and activist Mohamed Ibrahim Radwan «Oxygen». Mohamed Baker and «Oxygen» were convicted on charges of «spreading false news» in relation to social media posts and sentenced to four years’ imprisonment. Proceedings before emergency courts are inherently unfair as their verdicts are not subject to appeal by a higher tribunal. Defence lawyers were prevented from communicating with defendants in private and photocopying the casefiles and indictments.

Alaa Abdel Fattah was held in inhumane conditions at the Tora Maximum Security 2 Prison, in Cairo from September 2019 to May 2022. Prison authorities held him in a small, poorly ventilated cell and have denied him a bed and mattress. The prison authorities also denied him reading materials, exercise in the prison yard, adequate clothing, radios, watches, access to hot water and any personal belongings, including family photos. On 12 May 2022, Alaa Abdel Fattah told his mother that he was beaten while handcuffed by the deputy prison warden at Tora Maximum Security 2 prison. On 18 May 2022, he was transferred to Wadi al-Natroun Prison after significant public pressure.

On 19 July 2023, following sustained supporter mobilization Mohamed Baker received a presidential pardon after nearly four years of arbitrary detention stemming solely from his human rights work. Since the President’s reactivation of the Presidential Pardons Committee in April 2022, the Egyptian authorities released high-profile prisoners of conscience and hundreds of others held for political reasons. However, thousands remain arbitrarily detained solely for exercising their human rights, or following grossly unfair trials, or without legal basis.

During UN Climate Change Conference (COP27), a chorus of voices called on the Egyptian authorities to release Alaa Abdel Fattah who was on hunger strike for seven months when the event started on 6 November 2022. For instance, on 8 November, expressing deep regret at his ongoing detention, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, called for his immediate release and urged the authorities to provide him with the necessary healthcare. Alaa Abdel Fattah began his hunger strike on 2 April 2022 to protest his unjust imprisonment and denial of consular visits. On 1 November 2022, he escalated his hunger strike and stopped consuming the 100 calories he had been consuming since April and on 6 November 2022 he stopped drinking water. On 11 November 2022, Alaa Abdel Fattah lost consciousness in the shower, and when he regained it, he was held by a cellmate, surrounded by a large crowd and had a tube inserted into his body. Following this near-death experience, he decided not to resume his hunger strike immediately, but vowed to continue if «there continues to be no real movement on his case».

On 21 February 2025, 25 Egyptian and international civil society organizations, including Amnesty International, signed a joint letter urging the UK government to increase the pressure on the Egyptian authorities to release Alaa Abdel Fattah during the upcoming 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council which takes places from 24 February to the 4 April.

TAKE ACTION

* Write an appeal in your own words or use the **model letter** on **page 2**.
* Please take action before **27 August** 2025.
* Preferred language: **Arabic, English**. You can also write in your own language.
* **INFO POSTAGE**: Post delivery is possible to almost all countries. Please check at the Swiss Post whether letters are currently being delivered to the destination country.
If not, please send by email, fax or social media and/or via the embassy with the request for forwarding to the named person. Thank you !

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| ⭢ **Social media guidance** and **additional targets** see online: [amnesty.ch](https://www.amnesty.ch) 🔍**UA 132/19** |

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President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi
Office of the President

Al Ittihadia Palace
Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt

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Your Excellency,

**I am writing to express my deep concern that prominent Egyptian-British activist Alaa Abdel Fattah continues to be detained, even though he had completed the length of his unjust five-year prison sentence on 29 September 2024**. **In protest at his ongoing detention, on 30 September 2024, Alaa Abdel Fattah’s mother, Laila Soueif, announced an open-ended hunger strike, surviving on herbal tea, black coffee and rehydration salts**. On 24 February 2025, Laila Soueif was hospitalized in Saint Thomas Hospital in London after her vitals dropped significantly, including her blood sugar and blood pressure. After nearly five months of hunger strike and losing nearly 30 kilograms, «there is now an immediate risk to life including further deterioration or death», according to a report by a medical consultant in Saint Thomas Hospital dated 25 February 2025.

In reprisal for his activism, Egyptian security forces last arrested Alaa Abdel Fattah on 29 September 2019. In December 2021, an Emergency State Security Court (ESSC) convicted Alaa Abdel Fattah on bogus charges of «spreading false news» for sharing a social media post under Case No. 1228/2021. On 3 January 2022, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi ratified the verdict against Alaa Abdel Fattah and two other defendants. A document issued by the prosecution and seen by Amnesty International indicated that the authorities are refusing to count time spent in pre-trial detention as part of his prison sentence, and consider that his sentence commenced from the date of ratification, rather than from the date of his arrest. The document states that Alaa Abdel Fattah is to be released in January 2027.

On 28 January 2025, during Egypt’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the UK has made a statement calling for the release of Alaa Abdel Fattah. On 16 February, UK’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced that he met with Laila Soueif and is committed to do everything in his power to secure his release; a commitment repeated during Prime Minister’s Questions on 26 February 2025. On 27 February 2025, a group of UN Special Rapporteurs urged the Egyptian authorities to immediately release Alaa Abdel Fattah. Despite this chorus of voices calling for his release, he remains arbitrary detained while his mother’s life is at risk.

**I urge you to release Alaa Abdel Fattah immediately and unconditionally, as he is detained solely for exercising his human rights. Pending his release, he must have regular access to his lawyers, family and adequate healthcare and be held in conditions that meet international standards for the treatment of prisoners. He must be granted a consular access without further delay.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

Botschaft der Arabischen Republik Ägypten, Elfenauweg 61, 3006 Bern

Fax: 031 352 06 25 / E-Mail: eg.emb.bern@gmail.com ; / FB: eg.bern.embassy