



BRISMES

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9JQ

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President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi
Arab Republic of Egypt
Sent by email: p.spokesman@op.gov.eg

Chancellor Hamada El-Sawy
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Sent by email: m.office@ppo.gov.eg

Prime Solicitor-General Khaled Diauddin
Supreme State Security Prosecution in the Arab Republic of Egypt
c/o Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
26 South Street
London W1K 1DW
Sent by email: egtamboff@gmail.com

15 August 2023

Dear Mr. President,

I write on behalf of the Academic Freedom Committee of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) to express our deep concerns about the ongoing detention of Dr Ahmed Tohamy, Assistant Professor of Political Sciences in the Faculty of Economic and Political Sciences, Alexandria University.

We are deeply concerned about the well-being of Dr Al Tohamy, who has been on hunger strike since the Egyptian authorities refused to respond to his demand to open an investigation into the conditions of his imprisonment, including lack of medical care and prohibition from daily exercise.

On 3 June 2020, unidentified security forces appeared at Abdel Hay's home in Cairo and took him away. He was held at the headquarters of State Security in Cairo until 30 June, when he was brought before the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP). He was ordered to remain in pretrial detention in connection with Supreme State Security Case 649/2020. As per this case, Al Tohamy was accused of joining a terrorist group, spreading false news and statements, and misusing social media.

The circumstances surrounding the arrest and detention of Dr Al Tohamy are deeply concerning. He was "disappeared" for seventeen days, and held without access to family or lawyers prior to being brought before a prosecutor who, then, ordered him to be detained



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provisionally for an additional 15 days. That provisional detention has since been renewed multiple times, and Dr Al Tohamy was not allowed to see his family until October 2020, nearly four months after his arrest. At no point has Dr Al Tohamy had access to a lawyer.

According to information we have received from Dr Al Tohamy's family, the authorities have not provided him with sufficient health care for chronic and new conditions, including high blood pressure and a spinal disc condition, among others. The authorities have held him incommunicado several times, sometimes for months, during which the family knew nothing about his health or whereabouts. In addition to denying him access to timely health care, including medical examinations, prison authorities have complete discretion over provision of his vital medications and medical devices. Dr Al Tohamy has reported being denied medications entirely or given pills inconsistently.

Dr Al Tohamy, who holds a PhD from Durham University, UK and is a former BRISMES member, is a leading academic in his field, who has worked at Alexandria University since 2014, and previously held positions at the National Center for Social and Criminological Research, Cairo, at the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, and at the Free University of Berlin.

We call upon you to intervene in these matters, to drop all charges against Dr Al Tohamy and release him from detention, while in the meantime ensuring that he receives the medical treatment he needs.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Neve Gordon

Vice President, BRISMES

On behalf of the BRISMES Committee on Academic Freedom