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Dear Counsellor,

Amid rising fears over the spread of COVID-19 in Egypt's overcrowded prisons, prisoner of conscience Ziad el-Elaimy's health is at risk, as he suffers from sarcoidosis, asthma, hypertension and diabetes. Despite this, the prison authorities deny him access to adequate health care. According to a doctor with knowledge of his medical history, Ziad managed his health conditions before being imprisoned. However, his health has not been monitored on a regular basis during incarceration as prison authorities persistently refuse to conduct comprehensive medical evaluations. Ziad has also been denied medication for pericardial effusion, a condition he developed in prison. Without the proper diagnosis and treatment, Ziad's health is at risk of further deterioration.

Moreover, Ziad has been denied access to his lawyer and family since the Egyptian authorities suspended all prison visits on 10 March as a measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 but failed to ensure regular alternative means of communication.

Ziad is facing three separate criminal proceedings as a result of his political activism. On 25 June 2019, security forces arbitrarily detained Ziad (in relation to case 930/2019, known as the "Hope case") on charges connected to his peaceful political activities. On 18 April 2020, the terrorism circuit of the Cairo Criminal Court included Ziad and 12 other detainees on Egypt's "terrorism" lists for five years in relation to case 571/2020. The effect of the decision includes travel bans, asset freezes, and prohibition of political activities. On 2 June 2020, a higher court judge upheld his conviction and sentence in relation to case 684/2020 for conducting an interview with BBC Arabic on the human rights situation in Egypt.

I therefore ask you to immediately and unconditionally release Ziad el-Elaimy, Hossam Moanis, Hisham Fouad and other individuals detained in case 930/2019, as their detention is arbitrary and solely based on the peaceful exercise of their human rights. I call on you to also ensure that all the charges against them are dropped, and the decision to include Ziad el-Elaimy on the "terrorism" list rescinded. Pending their release, I urge you to ensure that Ziad el-Elaimy and the other detainees are provided with adequate health care and the means to regularly communicate with their families and lawyers.

Yours sincerely,