

Public Prosecutor Mohamed Shawky Ayyad

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Dear Counsellor,

I write to you to express my concern about the continued arbitrary detention without trial since 20 May 2019 of 26-year-old student Oqba Hashad solely for his brother's activism. After a judge ordered his release on 20 February 2024 on the grounds that his pretrial detention in Case No. 7769/2019 of the Supreme Security State Prosecution (SSSP) had exceeded the two-year limit under Egyptian law, prosecutors ordered his detention in a new Case No. 3391/2023 of the SSSP on similar bogus charges of joining and financing a terrorist group. The practice, commonly referred to as "rotation," will indefinitely extend his pre-trial detention way beyond the two-year limit stipulated by Egyptian law. After his transfer from Wadi al-Natroun prison to Ashmoun Police station on 22 February in preparation for his release, authorities subjected him to enforced disappearance until 2 March 2024 when he appeared at the SSSP, without a lawyer of his choosing. During this period, Oqba Hashad was denied any contact with his family and lawyer.

Oqba Hashad's right leg is amputated above the knee and he requires a prosthetic leg to move unassisted. When his relatives visited him in 10th of Ramadan prison on 14 March, he told them that he was not allowed to bring his prosthetic leg with him after his transfer from Wadi al-Natroun prison. He said he had been held in the State Security headquarters of Shebin Al-Kom, in Monufia Governorate, and questioned by the National Security Agency (NSA). He said he had formally complained to the prosecutor about his enforced disappearance and unjust detention for five years for his brother's human rights activism adding that the prosecutor did not order investigations into his claims, and instead verbally insulted him. Prison authorities continue to deny Oqba Hashad a prosthetic leg.

I urge you to ensure that Oqba Hashad is immediately and unconditionally released and all charges against him dropped as he is detained solely as a punishment for his brother's activism. Pending his release, he must be granted a suitable prosthetic leg as well as regular access to his family, lawyers and adequate healthcare, including in outside hospitals if necessary, and held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners.

Yours sincerely,