

# URGENT ACTION

## TORTURED CONVERT ON TRIAL FOR HIS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

On 15 July 2025, security officers arrested Egyptian national and Christian convert Said Abdelrazek from his home in Cairo. After nine months of arbitrary pretrial detention, Said Abdelrazek was referred to trial before the Terrorism Circuit of the First Criminal Court in Badr on charges stemming from his conversion and religious beliefs. His first court hearing took place on 21 April 2026, and the trial was adjourned to 15 June 2026. Said Abdelrazek is currently detained in the 10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan prison amid growing concerns over his health. The Egyptian authorities must immediately and unconditionally release Said Abdelrazek as he is solely detained for exercising his right to freedom of religion and belief.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

**Public Prosecutor Mohamed Shawky Ayyad**

Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

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Dear Counsellor,

*I write to express my concern over the arbitrary detention and prosecution of 30-year-old Said Abdelrazek simply for exercising his human rights, including his right to freedom of religion and belief. In July 2024, Said Abdelrazek, a Muslim-born convert to Christianity, was deported from Russia to Egypt, where National Security Agency (NSA) officers arrested him upon arrival to the airport. They took him an undisclosed location in Alexandria and forcibly disappeared him for 10 days. According to informed sources, during this period, NSA officers subjected him to torture and other ill-treatment by attempting to remove his Christian tattoos, including a large cross, causing him severe pain and bleeding on his arms and by suspending him for hours in a "crucifixion" position. Before releasing him, NSA officers interrogated him about his beliefs and pressured him to reconsider his conversion as well as provide information about other converts.*

*In July 2025, security forces arrested Said Abdelrazek from his home in Cairo after he sought legal avenues to change his religion on his national identity documents to reflect his Christian faith. He was subsequently interrogated by the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP) who accused him of "establishing and leading a group in violation of the law", "financing the group with the objective of committing crimes", and "contempt for [God's] Divine Essence and publishing content that harms the Islamic religion". In April 2026, Said Abdelrazek was referred to trial on charges that stem entirely from his conversion to Christianity and from his attempts to exercise his right to freedom of belief. If convicted he faces up to life in prison. His rights to a fair trial have been violated, including his right to adequate defence. Prison authorities in 10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan prison are denying him adequate access to his lawyer who was only able to visit him once in January 2026.*

*Said Abdelrazek's health has gravely deteriorated following his unjust imprisonment. According to his fiancée, he is suffering from extreme undiagnosed pain in his lower back and urinary tract. During his first court hearing in April 2026, his lawyer requested for a doctor to urgently examine Said Abdelrazek; but his request was dismissed. Moreover, his lawyer was only able to bring him winter clothing, a blanket and hygiene items once in January 2026. Since then, prison authorities have been banning his family and lawyers from bringing him food, clothes and medicine.*

***I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Said Abdelrazek. Pending his release, he must be granted regular access to his lawyer and be held in conditions that comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners including access to adequate food and healthcare. There must be prompt, independent and impartial investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment in custody. Finally, I call on you to stop prosecuting individuals solely for peacefully exercising their faith.***

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Said Abdelrazek is 30-year-old Egyptian national who converted to Christianity in 2016 after studying comparative religions and following years of personal reflection. According to his partner, following his conversion, Egyptian authorities targeted him through arbitrary arrests and surveillance. In 2018, Said Abdelrazek fled to Russia, where he sought asylum and obtained temporary protection status for a year. In 2024, the Russian authorities deported him to Egypt in violation of the principle of non-refoulement. This principle prohibits states from returning, extraditing, or otherwise transferring individuals to a country where they face a real risk of persecution, torture, or other serious human rights violations. According to informed sources, his deportation following a conviction on the charge of “offence of the feeling of believers” after he shared content considered offensive to Muslims. Said Abdelrazek filed an application for a humanitarian visa to Australia in May 2024. Since his arrest in 2025, his fiancée, an Australian national, has been publicly calling for urgent diplomatic intervention, raising concerns about the absence of decisive action. Human rights organizations have [urged](#) the Australian government to expedite the visa process and pressure the Egyptian authorities into releasing him immediately.

Said Abdelrazek is currently held in the 10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan prison. Amnesty International has extensively [documented](#) cruel and inhuman detention conditions in the prison marked by severe restrictions on movement, sunlight, and family contact. All prisoners are deprived of sunlight because they are not permitted daily outdoor exercise, and many are confined to their cells for 23 hours a day, with only a maximum of one hour of exercise in a corridor inside the building rather than in open air. Family visits are also heavily restricted to only 20 or 30 minutes once per month, while some detainees are denied visits altogether. Relatives of detainees further reported invasive body searches by guards and unhygienic inspection of food brought by families, which remains the main source of nutrition due to the poor quality and insufficient portions of prison meals.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party, protect the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, which includes the right to choose or replace one’s religion. Religious minorities, including Coptic Christians, Shi’a Muslims and Bahá’ís, consistently face discrimination in law and/or practice in Egypt. Members of religious minorities, atheists and others not espousing state-sanctioned religious beliefs face threats and harassment including abusive summons and interrogations by the National Security Agency (NSA) and in some cases prosecution over vague “contempt of religions” charges.

In recent months the Egyptian authorities have intensified their crackdown against individuals who do not espouse state-sanctioned beliefs. Egyptian authorities are increasingly targeting of individuals discussing religious matters online, in breach of the country’s international human rights obligations. Between mid-July 2025 and 1 January 2026, security forces [arrested](#) at least 29 people across six governorates for online content diverging from state-sanctioned religious narratives, with at least four detainees reporting torture following arrest, at least eleven denied legal counsel during interrogation, and one dying in custody.

Muslim-born Christians in Egypt have long faced government harassment, in some cases including criminal prosecution on “contempt of religion” charges, particularly if they are suspected of proselytizing or seek to change their religion on their national identification numbers. All Egyptians over the age of 16 must have and at all times carry national identification numbers. They are required to access higher education, healthcare and employment and carry-out any administrative and financial transactions. Egyptian authorities have long denied Baha’is as well as converts from Islam to Christianity and other religions legal recognition and identity documents.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic and English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 7 November 2026

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Said Abdelrazek (He/Him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** First UA