

Press briefing note on Israel / Bedouin, Syrian refugees /Jordan and Egypt detentions

Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Liz Throssell

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Subject: (1) Israel / Bedouin, (2) Syrian refugees / Jordan, (3) Egypt detentions

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(3) Egypt detentions

We call on the Government of Egypt to unconditionally release Ola Al-Qaradawi and her husband Hosam Khalaf, who have been arbitrarily detained in the country since they were arrested on 30 June last year. Al-Qaradawi has been held in solitary confinement for one year in one of the worst prisons in Egypt and has been denied visits from her family and lawyers since her arrest. We understand she recently began a hunger strike in protest.

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on 12 June issued a decision determining that Al-Qaradawi and Khalaf's detention was arbitrary and called for their immediate release. The Working Group determined that their arrest was arbitrary and that the repeated renewal of 45-day detention orders against them has resulted in ongoing violations of their rights to a fair trial and due process. Al-Qaradawi's prolonged solitary confinement could also amount to torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The Working Group stated that it "cannot but conclude that Al-Qaradawi and Khalaf have been arrested and detained for their family ties with Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi."

We understand that Ola Al-Qaradawi's health is frail and deteriorating and urge the authorities to ensure that her right to health and to physical and psychological integrity is respected. We call on Egypt to release all those arbitrarily detained in the country unconditionally.

ENDS

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*2018 is the 70th anniversary of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948. The Universal Declaration – translated into a world record 500 languages – is rooted in the principle that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” It remains relevant to everyone, every day. In honour of the 70th anniversary of this extraordinarily influential document, and to prevent its vital principles from being eroded, we are urging people everywhere to **Stand Up for Human Rights**: www.standup4humanrights.org.*