

EGYPTIAN NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY'S ARBITRARY DETENTIONS

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Safwan Thabet and his son Seif Thabet have been held in arbitrary detention by the Egyptian National Security Agency for refusing to transfer their assets from Juhayna company to a state-owned entity. Amman Center for Human Rights Studies alerts of the deterioration of their health condition, condemns the use of torture employed, and the cruelty of their treatment. We urge Egyptian authorities to establish a fair trial.

In December 2020, Safwan Thabet, a former CEO of Egypt's leading producer of dairy products and juices, Juhayna Food Industries group, was arrested and placed in solitary confinement by the National Security Agency (NSA) for an indefinite period. According to Egyptian state media, Safwan Thabet was arrested on allegations of financing the Muslim Brotherhood, which is listed by Egyptian authorities as a terrorist group. These allegations of terrorist affiliation are denied by experts and not based on any tangible evidence.

Two months after Safwan Thabet's arrest, his son Seif Thabet was summoned by the NSA without being allowed to bring a lawyer. The National Agency for Security blackmailed him by demanding that he hand over all of his family's shares in Juhayna or suffer a similar fate to his father. His refusal led to his incarceration on February 2 in the al-Arab prison of the Tora prison complex.

Philip Luther, Director of Research and Advocacy for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International said that "the Egyptian authorities have a long history of using bogus counter-terrorism charges and accusations to crack down on political dissent; now they are using the same tactic to target businesspeople who refuse to comply with their arbitrary seizure orders."

Safwan Thabet aged 75 years suffers from various diseases and heavy injuries, such as a stomach ulcer and hypercholesterolemia. He has been denied medical treatment, which amounts to torture. Seif Thabet is isolated in an insect-infested cell, with partial access to a toilet and shower. He has no access to water and decent food, nor a blanket to sleep on the floor. He is not allowed to receive personal items or visitors on a regular basis. Denying medical care, holding him in solitary confinement for months, inhumane conditions, and denying family contact violates Egypt's obligations under international law.

These extended arbitrary detentions violate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The inhumane and cruel treatment of Safwan and Seif Thabet goes against principles of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment ratified by Egypt in 1986. The arbitrary detention of human rights Safwan and Seif Thabet goes against principles of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or is a violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Amman Center for Human Rights Studies condemns the torture, arbitrary detention, and cruel treatment of prisoners. ACHRS alerts the deteriorating health conditions of Safwan Thabet affected by various serious diseases. We urge the Egyptian authorities to respect international conventions; promote, protect, and implement respect for human rights; stop arbitrary political detentions; provide decent treatment; and proceed as soon as possible to the implementation of a fair and just trial for Safwan and Seif Thabet.