

To: The Egyptian Ambassador to Germany Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy, The Egyptian Interior Minister Habib Ibrahim El Adly, The Governor of Alexandria General Adel Ali Labib, The German Ambassador to Egypt Michael Bock

We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned for 25-year-old Egyptian blogger and former law student Abdul Kareem Nabeel Suleiman (better known by his Internet pseudonym, Kareem Amer), who has been sentenced and charged to 4 years in prison for expressing his personal opinions on his Weblog <http://karam903.blogspot.com/>.

As you are probably aware, Mr. Amer has been arrested twice, detained and charged with “spreading information and malicious rumors that disrupt public security”, “defaming the president of Egypt”, “incitement to overthrow the regime based upon hatred and contempt”, “incitement to hate ‘Islam’ and to breach public peace standards”, and “highlighting inappropriate issues that harm the reputation of Egypt and spreading these publicly”.

The interrogation process has allegedly involved certain irregularities by the Public Prosecutor's Office, according to the human rights lawyer of The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information who represented Kareem Amer before the Prosecutor. The observed irregularities include the illegal attendance of three interrogators, their laughing at Kareem Amer while interrogating him, and their addressing unwarranted questions to him, such as “Do you fast during Ramadan?”, and “Do you practice prayer?”.

The Public Prosecutor informed Kareem Amer that if he did not abandon his views, even though personal, he may be imprisoned. Nevertheless, Mr. Amer insisted on his right to freedom of expression, and was consequently detained pending investigation. His detention was renewed four times before his trial opened in an Alexandria court in January 25, 2007. After months of delay, his final appeal was rejected on the 22nd of December, 2009.

Mr. Amer's detention and imprisonment is considered a violation of his right to hold opinions without interference, which is stipulated in the Egyptian constitution.

Moreover, Egypt has been a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) since 1982. Article 19 of the ICCPR states that:

Article 19 (1): “Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.”

Article 19 (2): “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”

Furthermore, Articles 18 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, state that:

Article 18: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change religion or belief, the freedom to manifest religion or belief in worship, observance, practice, and teaching either alone or in community with others and in public or private."

Article 19: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

Because the rights to freedom of thought and freedom of expression are basic human rights that should never be undermined, and in light of the aforementioned international law articles:

We, the undersigned individuals, call upon the Egyptian government to honor its commitments to the ICCPR and the UNDHR;

We urge the Egyptian government to release Kareem Amer without delay, protect him against more harassment, and guarantee his right to freedom of expression;

We appeal to the Egyptian government to amend Egyptian laws that contradict the individual's right to free expression under international law.

Sincerely,

[The Undersigned:](http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?KAmer) http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?KAmer