

# URGENT ACTION

## FRENCH NATIONAL RELEASED IN EGYPT

**French national Romuald Roger Durand Sébastien, known as Romuald Durand, was released on 22 June, after having spent two months in detention in the Egyptian capital, Cairo. He was deported to France on his release. He told Amnesty International he had been tortured and otherwise ill-treated while in the custody of State Security Investigations (SSI) services in Egypt.**

Romuald Durand was held by border police at Cairo International Airport for two days following his arrest on 21 April. He was then transferred into the custody of the SSI in Nasr City, Cairo, where he remained until the end of May. He was then transferred to another facility run by SSI.

Blindfolded and handcuffed throughout this period, Romuald Durand told Amnesty International he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated during the first ten days of his detention in the SSI facility in Nasr City. He reported being stripped naked and subjected to electric shocks while his arms and legs were tied, and stretched. He was slapped and stood upon, as well as forced to remain standing for hours. Romuald Durand says SSI personnel also threatened him with rape. He asked to contact the French consular officials, a right guaranteed in international law, but was told "Here, even if [French President] Sarkozy himself wanted to come, he couldn't." SSI personnel also threatened that Romuald Durand would face a military trial in Egypt without a defence lawyer.

Romuald Durand says he was interrogated about his contacts in Egypt, including people whom SSI suspects of being involved in terrorism-related activities, and was questioned about his own conversion to Islam. Throughout his detention, he says he heard many other detainees being tortured.

At the end of May, Romuald Durand was transferred to SSI headquarters in Lazoghly, central Cairo, where he says he also heard detainees being tortured with electric shocks, as he could hear the sound of electricity. In mid-June, he was taken to the Ministry of Interior's passport and emigration office to arrange for his deportation. Whilst there, he was able to see his family and the French consulate staff.

Romuald Durand spent the final week of his detention at El Khalifa Prison in Cairo. On 22 June he was taken to Cairo airport, where he was greeted by his wife and children, and they left the country.

**No further action is requested by members. Romuald Durand has asked us to thank all those who sent appeals on his behalf.**

This is the first update of UA 149/09 (MDE 12/024/2009, 12 June 2009).  
Further information: [www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/024/2009/en](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/024/2009/en)



# URGENT ACTION

Further Information on UA: 149/09, Index: MDE 12/027/2009, Issue Date: 03 July 2009

**AMNESTY**  
**INTERNATIONAL**

