

PUBLIC

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UA 149/09 Incommunicado detention/fear of torture

EGYPT **Romuald Roger Durand Sébastien (m), aged 35**

French national Romuald Durand, who has lived in Egypt for at least three years, was arrested on 21 April, and has been held incommunicado since then. He is believed to be in the custody of State Security Investigations (SSI) services, but his whereabouts are unknown. Detainees held by the SSI are at risk of torture, especially when they are held incommunicado and at undisclosed locations.

Romuald Durand was arrested at Cairo International Airport, after he returned from visiting his mother in France. He was able to text his family to inform them he had been arrested, but this was the last they heard from him. The Egyptian authorities initially denied holding him. A few days later, they acknowledged to the French consulate that he was in custody. Neither his family nor the French consulate have had access to him and the authorities have not disclosed where he is or why they arrested him; they have only confirmed that he is being held in Egypt.

Romuald Durand moved to Egypt to learn Arabic, and lives in Cairo with his wife and two young children. His visa does not expire until November 2009.

The authorities have arrested a number of foreign nationals since late May, ostensibly as part of an operation to enforce visa regulations. In early June, it was announced that several foreign nationals would be deported. A few days earlier, the Egyptian authorities announced that they had arrested seven people in connection with al-Hussine bombing, Cairo, in February 2009, including two Britons and a French woman of Lebanese origin.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic or your own language:

- urging the authorities to disclose Romuald Durand's whereabouts immediately, and give him access to lawyers of his choice, consular services, his family and any medical attention he may require;
- urging the authorities to ensure that he is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- urging the authorities to release Romuald Durand immediately and unconditionally, unless he is promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to trial in fair proceedings in line with international standards for fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Interior

Minister Habib Ibrahim El Adly
Ministry of the Interior
25 Al-Sheikh Rihan Street, Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt

Fax: +20 22 796 0682

Email: moi@idsc.gov.eg

Salutation: Dear Minister

Prosecutor General

Counsellor Abd El-Megeed Mahmoud

Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali
Ramses Street, Cairo, EGYPT
Fax: +20 22 577 4716
Salutation: Dear Counsellor

COPIES TO:

Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights
Wael Abu al-Magd
Human Rights and International Humanitarian and Social Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil
Cairo
EGYPT
Fax: +20 22 574 9713
Salutation: Dear Deputy Assistant Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 July 2009.