



Press release

Region: Middle East And North Africa

Country: Egypt

Date: 24/11/2015

EGYPT: Increase in serious human rights violations of Sudanese nationals

Since the beginning of October Egyptian security forces have arrested and detained hundreds of Sudanese nationals, bringing forth claims of Egyptian forces systematically targeting Sudanese nationals. Yehia Zakareya, who came to Egypt on a tourist visa for a surgery for his son, has spoken out on social media about the misconduct of the security forces and the violent abuse he suffered under their detention. This comes following an incident on Sunday 15th November, where 15 Sudanese nationals were killed by Egyptian police forces trying to cross from Egypt to Israel.

On 12th November the Consul General of Sudan in Cairo submitted a memo to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, highlighting the increase in arrests and harassment by the police and security forces. It calls for the Egyptian Foreign Ministry to investigate and put an immediate stop to these policies. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry's response to this incident has been totally inadequate, issuing a statement which claims that "there is no discrimination against Sudanese nationals in Egypt", indicating that they are not taking this incident seriously.

Yehia Zakareya, was arrested and tortured on 6th November 2015, despite being in possession of a valid tourist visa for a surgery for his son. In spite of orders from the prosecutor to release him on the 8th November, he was held for a further three days in which security forces beat him and burnt him with cigarettes, kicked him in the head, handcuffed him and dragged him along the floor amounting to torture. This was confirmed in a medical report from a physician in Khartoum, who recorded that Zakareya suffered swelling of the scalp with a suspected concussion, bleeding in the eye, external wounds in the forearm and ankle, wounds to the right shoulder caused by burning, a bruised back and anal fissure. During his time in the custody of the security services, Zakareya met other African nationals who suffered similar violations to himself. These amount to violations of the UN Convention against Torture, which Egypt ratified.

The Centre for Refugee Solidarity, is deeply concerned for the well-being of African nationals and refugees in Egypt.

Rebecca Stewart, Researcher, Center for Refugee Solidarity, stresses that 'the increase in targeting and violent mistreatment of Sudanese nationals highlights a complete disregard for the rights of African nationals and refugees in Egypt, violating their basic human rights and freedoms'. This is further highlighted by the lack of investigation into the 15th November killings in Sinai, with conflicting views from Egyptian security officials into the circumstances of their death.

The Centre for Refugee Solidarity stands in solidarity with Sudanese nationals and urges the Egyptian government to:

- **Implement the Four Freedoms agreement, signed by Egypt and Sudan in 2004, which gives citizens from the two countries freedom of movement and residence, right to work and own property.**
- **Stop random checks and arrests of African nationals.**
- **Conduct an investigation into the torture of Yehia Zakareya.**
- **Conduct an investigation into the killing of 15 Sudanese nationals in Sinai.**