

UPDATED PRESS RELEASE

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EGYPT: Immediately and Unconditionally release Youssef Mohamed Aden

Since the 6th July 2015, Egyptian security forces have detained Youssef Mohamed Aden, a 17 year old Somalian, at Alexandria's Karmooz police station. Youssef Mohamed Aden, who fled Somalia after the militant Islamist group Al Shabab attempted to recruit him, has spoken to the Center for Refugee Solidarity about his detention and mistreatment at the hands of the Egyptian security forces.

On the 21st December 2015, the Center for Refugee Solidarity issued a detailed report about the case of Youssef Aden, that involved evidence of the poor conditions in which Youssef and other African refugees are detained in, in addition to showing that detaining Youssef is a breach of both Egyptian and the International law, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Youssef was part of the Karmooz Refugees group, who went on open hunger strike to protest their detention conditions and to demand their freedom. While the other members of this group have all been resettled in Sweden, Germany or France, Youssef has been left behind and remained in detention. Youssef was originally charged with illegal immigration and not holding valid identity papers. However, Egypt's decision to detain him violates the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which states that refugees should not be placed in immigration-related detention, irrespective of their legal status.

On the 24th December 2015, the Center received an appeal from Youssef Aden to save him. At about 4:00 am (EET), Egyptian Police officers entered Youssef's cell, handcuffed him, and took him, along with other African refugees, to the Tahrir complex in Cairo and issued a "Movement Certificate" to prove that he entered Egypt in an illegal way, in order to "legally" detain him. Youssef was charged and then transferred to "Qanater Prison" in Cairo, where his mobile phone was confiscated. He now he has no contact with anyone, and the Center is unable to know anything about his whereabouts or wellbeing.

"Youssef Aden is an undocumented minor. Instead of releasing Youssef, the Egyptian Authorities are adjusting laws to detain a child in a prison among adults, which is a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child." said **Nader G. Attar**, *executive director* of the Center for Refugee Solidarity.

The Center for Refugee Solidarity is deeply concerned for Youssef's wellbeing, stands in solidarity with Youssef and urges the Egyptian Authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Youssef Aden.

"The Egyptian government are unfortunately still employing the same methods of illegal detentions, breaching laws and other ill-treatment of detainees, despite repeated promises by the Egyptian government to respect the rule of law, human rights violations against refugees in Egypt continues at a disturbing rate" said Nader G. Attar.

- The Center for Refugee Solidarity condemns in the strongest terms, the continuing detention of Youssef Aden, and urges Egypt to immediately release Youssef Aden and the other Africans detained at Karmooz. Furthermore, Egypt should respect and follow the international laws which it has ratified, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- The Center for Refugee Solidarity also urges UNHCR Egypt to respect and fulfill its obligations to those in need of protection, in particular those who are arbitrarily detained. UNHCR Egypt had promised Youssef that they would follow up on his case and provide him with updates. However, Youssef has not heard from the organisation since. The Center notes and concerned that UNHCR Egypt's response to this case has been totally inadequate.

- The Center for Refugee Solidarity opposes the detention of Youssef Aden, and calls upon the international community to immediately work towards the release and resettlement of Youssef.