



The Rt Hon Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer KC
10 Downing St
London SW1A 2AB

21 May 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing as a coalition of 32 organisations concerned with the ongoing arbitrary and unlawful detention of Alaa Abd el-Fattah, the British-Egyptian political prisoner and democracy writer who should have been released from prison in Egypt at the end of his sentence in September 2024.

The hope that we allowed ourselves to feel after you [pressed President Abd el-Fattah al-Sisi for Alaa's release](#) in February has been replaced by devastation that no progress has been made toward Alaa's release and his safe reunion with his family in the United Kingdom.

It is hard to express the depth of our worry for the health and wellbeing of Laila Soueif, Alaa's mother. After years of exercising every other option available trying to free Alaa, Laila entered a hunger strike. It is now nearly eight months since she stopped eating in protest at Alaa's continued arbitrary and unlawful detention. Her hunger strike has taken a terrible toll on her body. We recall how close she came to death in February when she was admitted to hospital, and we fear the worst for her.

It has been three months since you and President al-Sisi agreed to speak again soon. There is no time to lose: this contact must happen now, for the sake of Alaa, his mother, and their whole family. It has been more than five years since Alaa was re-arrested and the Egyptian government still refuses to even abide by international law and provide the British government consular access to Alaa. This is not how alleged partners are supposed to treat each other's citizens.

Prime Minister, we urge you to make clear to President al-Sisi that what happens to Alaa and his mother will have long-lasting and meaningful ramifications beyond their family: both for Egypt's reputation and standing on the international stage, and for the future of its relationship with Britain, including cooperation on tourism, trade, and investment.

Yours sincerely,

Access Now
ALQST for Human Rights
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
Campaign Against Arms Trade
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
Council for Arab-British Understanding
DAWN
Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms
Egyptian Front for Human Rights
Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)
Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
El Nadeem Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence
English PEN

FairSquare
Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
INSM
International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
Intersection Association for Rights and Freedoms
MENA Rights Group (MRG)
Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
PEN International
People in Need – Center for Human Rights and Democracy
REDRESS
Reporters Without Borders
REDWORD for Human Rights & Freedom of Expression
Sinai Foundation for Human Rights
The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)