

**H.E. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi**  
**Al Ittihadia Palace, Cairo**  
**Arab Republic of Egypt**

19 May 2020

Your Excellency,

First, please allow us to wish you and your close ones a blessed and prosperous Eid al-Fitr celebration this year.

On the eve of the Eid, we are writing to you to draw your attention to the plight of Egyptian citizens, Mustafa Gamal and Galal El-Behairy, both currently detained in Cairo's Tora Prison. Mr. Gamal and Mr. El-Behairy are kind young men with unblemished record and no prior convictions.

- **Mr. Mustafa Gamal** (born 7<sup>th</sup> of August 1994) is a web designer. He was arrested in March 2018 and has been detained ever since despite the expiry of the two-year time-limit prescribed by the Egyptian legislation. On 13 May, Mr. Gamal's detention was again extended for another forty-five days.
- **Mr. Galal El-Behairy** (born 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1990) is a poet and lyricist. He was arrested in March 2018 and is currently serving a three-year sentence; his charge is simply having written a book of poetry which was never even published.

We regret that neither Mr. Gamal nor Mr. El-Behairy have been released as part of the recent annual prisoner release in April this year in connection with the commemoration of the Sinai Liberation Day. However, we are well aware that, in the past years, it has been customary for Egypt's leadership to release or to pardon prisoners on the occasion of the Eid al-Fitr celebration as a sign of magnanimity and good will.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic which ravages prisons around the world, we remind you, Excellency, of the international appeal of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, issued in March 2020, calling for the release of every person detained without sufficient legal basis and others detained for expressing critical or dissenting views. We believe Mr. Gamal and Mr. El-Behairy to be among those directly concerned by her call.

We implore you, Excellency, to respond positively to Commissioner Bachelet's call and to have Mr. Gamal and Mr. El-Behairy promptly released from detention so that they may spend the upcoming Eid holiday with their families.

We thank you in anticipation of your consideration of our plea.

Respectfully,

Avant-Garde Lawyers  
Freemuse  
PEN International  
PEN America  
International Music Council  
European Music Council  
Artists At Risk  
SafeMuse  
English PEN

**CC: Michelle Bachelet**  
**United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**