

Let my nephew go

Written by Ahmed Tharwat
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I am writing as an Egyptian national who has lived in the United States for 35 years and who still feels a close connection to his native country.

I am writing on behalf of my brother and his family, whose son, Hassan, was arrested during the recent crackdown in August. My nephew, Hassan, is a sweet 19-year-old boy, who all his life he has been working hard to build his future. Hassan, like all teens, loves music, reading and camping. From my last visit in 2011, I remember Hassan as a gentle, kind, young boy, a hard worker and lovely kid. He has never been affiliated with any political or religious organization.

In August, Hassan found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time when he was arrested among the thousands who were lucky enough not to get killed the day of the crackdown on El Nahda sit-in protest. For weeks, his family didn't know anything about Hassan. They finally found him in Wady El Natroon detention center in Eastern Cairo.

To date, he hasn't been charged with anything or had his day in court. Additionally, his family has to go through great hardship every time they are allowed to visit him.

Here, I'm asking for your help to intercede in the case of my nephew and to help win his release as well as all political prisoners held with no charge. Many of these are young men, like Hassan, who need to go back to their university studies and be reunited with their families.

Hassan is not a threat to the national security of Egypt, but, rather, he and his fellow prisoners are the future of Egypt.

Ahmed Tharwat is a host and producer for Arab American television show, "BelAhdan" (with open Arms). His weekly talk show airs on MN Public TV and at www.ahmediatv.com.