

Global Trade Union Movement Demands Freedom for Jailed Egyptian Journalist Ahmed Khalifa

26th January 2021

Ahmed Khalifa, social news editor at [Egypt 360](#) website, was arrested on 6th January after publishing a series of factual reports about workers' protests.

He was charged on 16th January with joining a terrorist group, spreading false news, and using the internet to commit a crime, and remains in detention.

The Global Unions Federations and the International Trade Union Confederation call on the Egyptian president to order his immediate release.

Before his arrest, Khalifa published several reports about workers' strikes at the state-owned *El Delta Company for Fertilizers and Chemical Industry*. In December 2020, the workers and their families organized protests and a sit-in for three weeks, after the plan to modernize the factory was replaced by an order to reallocate it to another city 150km away, without proper consultations with the workers as required by law. According to [reports](#), security forces arrested eight workers on 31 December including four union leaders. Three days later they were charged with incitement and disruption of production.

The global trade union movement condemns Khalifa's detention simply for doing his job and demands his immediate release. Labour leaders are especially outraged that his factual reporting on workers' protests has been considered as false news and a crime by the attorney general.

President Abdul Fattah Al- Sisi bears the ultimate responsibility for the detention of Khalifa and must set him free. Since president Sisi took office in 2014, his security forces have led a repressive campaign against critical journalists and the media, union leaders, human rights defenders and civil society activists. On 22 January, the UN Special Rapporteurs on protection of human rights and freedom of expression [deplored the Egyptian authority's criminalization](#) of fundamental human rights. According to the recent [EU Parliament Resolution on Human Rights in Egypt](#), thousands are currently in jail in life threatening conditions. There are currently 25 imprisoned journalists in Egypt [according to the IFJ](#), this makes it the second biggest jailer of journalists in the world, only surpassed by Turkey.

We demand the immediate release of jailed union leaders, workers, journalists and all those who are currently jailed in Egypt for practicing their basic rights.

We stand united in solidarity with the Egyptian workers who are struggling to secure a decent life for their families and with all journalists and human rights activists who are paying a heavy price for making their voices heard.

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