

Human Rights Watch

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/07/15/kuwait-8-egyptian-dissidents-unlawfully-returned>

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Deportees Face Torture, Persecution in Egypt

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(Beirut) [Kuwaiti](#) authorities on July 15, 2019 unlawfully returned eight Egyptian dissidents despite the serious risk of torture and persecution they face in [Egypt](#), Human Rights Watch said today. The deportation of the men appears to violate Kuwait's obligations under international law.

On July 12, the Kuwaiti government announced that it had separately arrested the eight dissidents, claiming that the Egyptian authorities sought them for crimes they allegedly committed in Egypt as members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Kuwaiti authorities should end further deportations to Egypt of anyone facing mistreatment and hold accountable those responsible for the recent deportations.

Kuwaiti authorities have put at grave risk eight men who fled mass oppression in Egypt and thought they had found refuge in Kuwait, said [Sarah Leah Whitson](#), Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. It's horrendous that Kuwait is acting at the behest of abusive Egyptian security agencies and returning dissidents to face torture and persecution.

KUNA, Kuwait's official news agency, said on July 15 that [the government deported wanted Egyptians](#), identifying them as Hossam Ibrahim al-Adl, Abdel Rahman Mohamed Ahmed, Abu-Bakr Atef al-Fayomi, Abdel Rahman Ibrahim Abdel Moniem, Walid Suleiman, Najeh Awad, Faleh Hassan, and Momen Abu Al-Wafa. All had lived in Kuwait for several years. There is no record of any judicial review of the deportation orders or of the risks faced by these men on return to Egypt.

Kuwait's Interior Ministry [issued a statement](#) claiming that the eight men were members of a terrorist cell that was part of the Muslim Brotherhood and that they had been convicted by Egyptian courts. The ministry said that it had the deportees under surveillance before their arrest. It published a [video](#) showing their names with blurred faces and claimed that they confessed to carrying out terrorist activities in different parts in Egypt.

The deputy foreign minister, Khaled Al-Jarallah, said that the deportations followed cooperation with the Egyptian authorities and that this cooperation will continue. He [said](#) that the Kuwaiti-Egyptian security coordination is very strong and makes us feel assured.

Hossam Ibrahim al-Adl's daughter, Menna al-Adl, told Human Rights Watch that men in civilian clothes arrested her father on July 10 at the pharmacy where he worked. Al-Adl, 57, had been living legally in Kuwait since October 2013, his daughter said. Her family provided two videos from the pharmacy's security cameras that show the moment al-Adl was arrested.

Menna al-Adl said her father had never been arrested before, in Egypt or Kuwait. Human Rights Watch reviewed court documents that show Egyptian courts had acquitted al-Adl in three cases of alleged protests and political violence between 2014 and 2016. She said an Egyptian court sentenced him to five years in prison in 2016 for allegedly participating in a 2016 protest even though he had not been back to Egypt since he left, in October 2013.

She also said that Kuwaiti State Security officials confirmed they had detained al-Adl but refused to allow the family to visit him. Every lawyer we approached said he couldn't do anything, she said. They said because it's a State Security case, they can't intervene. Al-Adl's family said they do not know any of the other men deported.

As a party to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Kuwait has a treaty obligation not to return anyone to a territory where they face a real risk of torture or ill-treatment. Under customary international law, Kuwait is also obligated to ensure that no one is forcibly sent to a place where they would risk being subjected to persecution. In addition, Kuwait violated due process rights by denying the men an opportunity to fairly contest their arrests and deportation, and by denying them access to lawyers and family members.

Egyptian authorities have not officially commented about the returned dissidents. In January and March, one Egyptian deported from Turkey and five deported from Malaysia were reported [missing upon their forcible return to Egypt](#). The man deported from Turkey appeared weeks later in a court hearing with signs that he [had been badly tortured](#), lawyers said.

Since July 2013, the Egyptian government [has arbitrarily detained or prosecuted tens of thousands](#) of dissidents on political grounds. Prosecutors have placed thousands in lengthy pretrial detention without a legal basis. Judges have also unlawfully held hundreds of detainees in pretrial detention beyond the two-year limit under Egyptian law. Many of those detained were rounded up solely for exercising their rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, and free expression, including membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, which the government banned in 2013.

Egypt's prisons are notorious for [unlawful detention conditions](#) including overcrowding and [insufficient access](#) to medical care. Torture in unofficial detention sites is rampant and unpunished. Security forces torture detainees during lengthy periods of forced disappearance to extract confessions.

Torture in Egypt, because of its systematic, widespread nature and indications that it is state policy, may be crimes against humanity, Whitson said.

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