

Egypte: Mahmoud Abu Zeid (Shawkan)

Prison et risque de peine de mort pour des photoreportages

Le photojournaliste Mahmoud Abu Zeid travaillait auparavant pour des médias internationaux. En 2013, il a été arrêté pour avoir documenté grâce à son appareil photo la violente répression de manifestations. La peine de mort n'est pas exclue.

«Je suis un photojournaliste, pas un criminel», déclare Mahmoud Abu Zeid. Le photographe libre, connu sous le nom d'artiste de Shawkan, est injustement en prison depuis plus de 3 ans déjà. Le reporter a simplement exercé son métier: il a couvert les manifestations égyptiennes pour la presse internationale. Ses photos sont également parues dans des journaux allemands. En août 2013, alors qu'il photographiait le violent démantèlement d'un camp de manifestants partisans du président déchu Mohammed Morsi au Caire, Mahmoud Abu Zeid a été arrêté par la police. Il fut torturé et maltraité en détention. Le parquet a formulé des accusations élaborées contre le photographe, dont «participation à un rassemblement illégal» et «meurtre». En cas de condamnation, il risque la peine de mort. La procédure engagée à son encontre a jusqu'ici été injuste. Ses avocats se sont vu refuser l'accès à des documents clés. De nombreux médias internationaux ont pris position à son égard et ont invité l'Égypte à respecter la liberté de la presse. Mahmoud Abu Zeid est un prisonnier politique pacifique qui n'aurait jamais dû être incarcéré.

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The human rights situation continued to deteriorate. The authorities arbitrarily restricted the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, enacted a draconian new anti-terrorism law, and arrested and imprisoned government critics and political opposition leaders and activists, subjecting some to enforced disappearance. The security forces used excessive force against protesters, refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. Detainees faced torture and other ill-treatment. Courts handed down hundreds of death sentences and lengthy prison sentences after grossly unfair mass trials. There was a critical lack of accountability; most human rights violations were committed with impunity. Women and members of religious minorities were subject to discrimination and inadequately protected against violence. People were arrested and tried on charges of "debauchery" for their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

The army forcibly evicted communities from their homes along the border with Gaza. Executions were carried out following grossly unfair trials.

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Egypt's National Security Agency (NSA) is abducting, torturing and forcibly disappearing people in an effort to intimidate opponents and wipe out peaceful dissent.

The report „Egypt: ‘Officially, you do not exist’: Disappeared and tortured in the name of counter-terrorism” reveals a trend which has seen hundreds of students, political activists and protesters, including children as young as 14, vanish without trace at the hands of the state. On average three to four people per day are seized according to local NGOs, usually when heavily armed security forces led by NSA officers storm their homes. Many are held for months at a time and often kept blindfolded and handcuffed for the entire period.

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