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Excellency,

Photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid, known as “Shawkan”, is facing trial for witnessing the security forces crush a mass sit-in in Cairo. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Police forces arrested the freelance photojournalist on 14 August 2013 near Rabaa al-Adawiya Square in Cairo district of Nasr City where he took photos of a sit-in staged by thousands of supporters of Egypt’s ousted president, Mohamed Morsi. Mahmoud Abu Zeid is charged with nine trumped-up charges, including murder. He has denied all charges against him. If convicted, he risks the death penalty.

His court hearings have been adjourned by the court for over 40 times. The journalist says he has been tortured. According to his family, he is suffering from Hepatitis C and his health is deteriorating in prison.

I’m asking you to ensure that all charges against Mahmoud Abu Zeid be dropped and he be released immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression. Please also ensure that Mahmoud Abu Zeid is provided with any medical treatment he may require. In addition, I would like to ask you to release, immediately, all other journalists detained solely for exercising their freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely

Cc:

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