

3 December 2019

Egypt: Detention of human rights defender Ramy Kamil

On 2 December 2019, the Supreme Public Prosecution in Cairo ordered the preventive detention of human rights defender Ramy Kamil. He is facing charges of “funding a terrorist organisation”, “defamation” and “misuse of social media”.

Ramy Kamil belongs to the Coptic religious minority in Egypt and his work concentrates primarily on defending the right to freedom of religion. He is the founder of the Masbero Youth Association, which works towards achieving justice for and ending the discrimination against Copts. Ramy Kamil also works on documenting human rights violations against his religious community in Upper Egypt which has seen church burnings and the kidnapping of female minors.

On 23 November 2019, at around 1:45am, State Security agents in plain clothes raided Ramy Kamil’s house and arrested him. His laptop and phones were confiscated by the security agents, and damage was caused to the human rights defender’s property. Ramy Kamil was taken to an unknown location for more than 24 hours. He appeared on 24 November 2019, at the State Public Prosecution, and was transferred the same day to Tora prison.

At Tora prison, Ramy Kamil continues to be refused family visits, and has spent several days under interrogation, with restricted access to his lawyer. Ramy Kamil is facing charges of joining and “funding a terrorist organisation”, “defamation” and “misuse of social media”. On 2 December 2019, he was placed under preventive detention by the Supreme Public Prosecution in Cairo.

Ramy Kamil has been frequently harassed by the Egyptian authorities. Two weeks before his arrest he was called by the State Security Services and questioned about his human rights work. Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the ongoing detention and harassment of human rights defenders in Egypt and believes that the detention of Ramy Kamil is solely motivated by his peaceful and legitimate human rights activities.

Front Line Defenders urge the Egyptian authorities to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Ramy Kamil and drop all charges against him;
2. Allow Ramy Kamil immediate and unfettered access to his families and lawyers;
3. Ensure that the treatment of Ramy Kamil, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the *‘Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment’*, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Egypt are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.