



Stella Creasy MP
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15 December 2024

The Rt Hon David Lammy MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

Dear Foreign Secretary,

We are writing to express our deep concern about the case of British-Egyptian writer Alaa Abd el-Fattah, following the refusal of the Egyptian government to release him when his sentence ended in September.

Alaa is an Amnesty International prisoner of conscience who has been imprisoned in Egypt for the past decade for his writings in support of democracy. His most recent five-year sentence, which ended on 29 September, was handed to him following a grossly unfair trial for the simple act of sharing a Facebook post about torture in prison in Egypt.

The Egyptian government refuses to acknowledge that Alaa's two years spent in pre-trial detention awaiting his verdict count towards his time served, in violation of international and Egyptian law. They have stated that they do not plan to release him until January 2027, which would see a further two years and three months of Alaa's life needlessly wasted. On 30 September, the day he should have been released, Alaa's mother Laila Soueif began a hunger strike in protest against his continued imprisonment, saying that she would not eat again until he was released.

Through his ordeal, Alaa has been able to count on strong support in the outside world, from the editorial boards of the [Times](#) and the [Guardian](#) to [16 Nobel prize winners](#), and in our [Parliament](#). We recall your important support to Alaa's family when he was undergoing a hunger strike in 2022. We understand that Alaa himself felt hopeful after hearing you had been appointed as Foreign Secretary.

Foreign Secretary, Alaa's case has been raised with the Egyptian President by four successive British Prime Ministers. Yet, our consular officials remain unable even to visit him in prison because the Egyptian government will not recognise his British nationality. We are deeply alarmed that any British citizen should be treated in this way, and we urge you to use the full range of diplomatic tools at your disposal to secure Alaa's safe release, to allow him to finally be reunited with his 13 year-old son, Khaled, who lives in Brighton where he attends a special educational needs school.

We welcome that you have promised to prioritise the rights of detained British nationals in this Parliament. Securing the early release of Alaa Abd el-Fattah would be the strongest possible demonstration of the depth and force of this commitment.

Yours sincerely,



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