



29 January 2025

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you about the urgent matter of imprisoned British-Egyptian writer Alaa Abd el-Fattah. We are deeply concerned about the health of his mother, Laila Soueif, who has been on hunger strike for more than 120 days in protest at his detention.

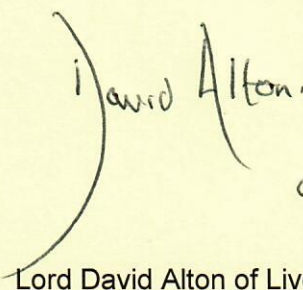
As you are aware, Alaa's most recent - and deeply unjust - sentence should have ended on 29 September 2024 but the Egyptian authorities refused to release him, in violation of their own laws. Alaa's mother, Laila Soueif, a 68 year old mathematics professor at Cairo University, has been on hunger strike ever since, surviving solely on black coffee, restorative salts and herbal tea. She has lost over 20kg of weight.

We took some reassurance from the Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament in November that he shared the "determination and resolve [of the House] to see Alaa reunited with his family". We also welcome the fact that you wrote directly to President Sisi in December raising Alaa's case and that your office has called securing Alaa's release an "absolute priority". At this point we respectfully ask you to intensify efforts across the whole of government to make Alaa's urgent release a reality. We are in a critical period for Laila's health. We are convinced that a direct conversation between you and President Sisi on Alaa's case, in person or by telephone, is essential to achieve all our shared goal of Alaa being safely returned to his family in Brighton and an end to Laila Soueif's hunger strike.

Each passing day is crucial to Laila's wellbeing and we urge you to act as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

The undersigned.


David Alton
on behalf of:

Lord David Alton of Liverpool

Órfhlaith Begley MP

London
SW1A 0PW



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