

Table of Contents

- [Two Christians accused of 'terrorism', a call for their release](#)
-

Two Christians accused of 'terrorism', a call for their release

Religious freedom advocates call on Egypt to release detained Christians accused of 'terrorism' for peaceful engagement on Facebook

- Two Christian Egyptian men arrested, held without trial for over two years, for answering theological questions on Facebook.
- ADF International backs international legal efforts for their release.

ADF (04.06.2024) ADF International is calling upon Egyptian authorities to release two Christian men who have been held in pre-trial detention for over two years. The men, **Nour Girgis and Abdulbaqi Saeed Abdo**, were arrested in 2021 for their involvement with a Facebook page that is dedicated to supporting people who have converted from Islam to Christianity. Authorities arrested the men after discovering their affiliation with the page, spuriously linking their involvement with terrorism activities.

The two men have been moved around to different detention centers while awaiting their repeatedly postponed criminal trials. In addition to the very poor conditions which have negatively impacted their physical health, they only have been allowed occasional visits from their families and legal counsel.

"The arbitrary detention of these two Christian men without trial constitutes a severe violation of their human rights," said [Elizabeth Francis](#), Legal Counsel for ADF International's [Global Religious Freedom](#) team. *"The peaceful expression of one's religious convictions is not terrorism. No one should be imprisoned for supporting Christian converts, let alone be told that they are a national security risk for expressing their beliefs."*

"We are calling on the government of Egypt to abide by its international human rights obligations, and immediately ensure that both men receive justice and a fair trial, and ultimately a safe and speedy return to their families. The rights to religious freedom, free expression, and a fair trial are all enshrined in international law, and Egyptian authorities have blatantly violated these basic rights by detaining these men and prolonging their imprisonment. It is past time for these men to be released," added [Kelsey Zorzi](#), Director of Advocacy for Global Religious Freedom for ADF International.

"The freedom of religion and belief is an unalienable human right, worthy of the highest protection. What has happened to these two men in Egypt is unacceptable, and an undeniable violation of their right to worship freely. Hostility towards religion is becoming a global problem, and advocates for freedom must continue to speak out against these injustices that plague religious minorities, including in Egypt. These two men must be released and exonerated," said Samuel Brownback, former U.S. Senator, Governor of Kansas, and Ambassador-At-Large for International Religious Freedom.

ADF International is supporting their legal defence and using international legal mechanisms to advocate for their release.

"The arbitrary detention of these two Christian men without trial constitutes a severe violation of their human rights. The peaceful expression of one's religious convictions is not terrorism. No one should be imprisoned for supporting Christian converts, let alone be told that they are a national security risk for expressing their beliefs."

- Elizabeth Francis, Legal Counsel for ADF International's Global Religious Freedom team

Arrested for their faith

Egyptian born **Nour Girgis**, a pharmaceutical employee, was asked by his employer to report to a police station in November 2021 to answer questions, during which time he was kept incommunicado for forty days. He was then transferred to the Terrorism Unit where a prosecutor verbally informed him that he was being held under the terrorism laws for leading a Facebook group named "Al Abareen" (*Arabic, meaning "to cross over"*), and because he had allegedly blasphemed against Islam. Girgis has been repeatedly interrogated about his activities and whether he has any links to Western organisations. He has also reported facing humiliation and torture at the hands of the prison guards. His trial date has been continuously pushed back and he has not had the opportunity to prepare a sufficient defence with his lawyer.

Abdulbaqi Saeed, originally from Yemen, also was arrested in December 2021 for his connection to the "Al Abareen" Facebook page and his public evangelism. He subsequently has been transferred to various detention cells while he awaits his repeatedly postponed criminal trial, despite suffering from severe medical issues. He only has been allowed occasional visits from his wife and children, including his son who was born while he was in detention.

ADF International has submitted information to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on behalf of Girgis and Saeed, citing that both men have been deprived of their right to religious freedom and a fair trial under international law.
