

His Excellency Abdel Fattah el-Sisi
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Office of the President
Al Ittihadiya Palace
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

March 4, 2025

Dear President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi,

We, a group of leaders from human rights organizations, writers, and public media figures, appeal to you to grant clemency to Egyptian-British writer Alaa Abdel-Fattah, who has spent nearly a decade in prison and now faces two more years in detention—despite grounds in Egyptian law that would have led his family to expect his release, taking into consideration the time he spent in pre-trial detention.

In a profound act of desperation, his mother, Professor Laila Soueif—a respected 69-year-old Egyptian academic—has endured over 150 days of hunger strike to protect her son and safeguard her grandson's future. Her health has now [severely deteriorated](#), and she has been hospitalized. Doctors [warn](#) that she faces an "immediate risk of sudden death with continued fasting."

Mr. President, as the leader of all Egyptians, the power to end this suffering lies solely in your hands. Granting Alaa a presidential pardon under Article 155 of the Egyptian Constitution would reunite a mother with her son and signal a commitment to justice and compassion. At a time of regional instability, such an act of clemency would demonstrate the Egyptian leadership's responsiveness to its own people's needs, serving as a sign of strength and mercy. This appeal comes not only from his [family](#) but also from [Egyptian politicians](#), a broad coalition of [Egyptian women](#), and the wider international community—urging a decision that upholds humanitarian values and the rule of law.

The world is watching, and history will not forget this act of humanity. As families across Egypt gather each evening in Ramadan to break their fast, one mother refuses to eat. With each passing day, her strength fades—her only prayer is to see her son free. A presidential pardon is not just justice; it is an act of humanity. Let history remember not a tragedy, but a reunion: Alaa free, holding his son, and Laila Soueif breaking her fast with the family she so longs to be with. This Ramadan, let them share a meal, like millions of Egyptian families, for the first time in years.

Respectfully,

1. **Aatish Taseer** – Writer

2. **Ahdaf Soueif** – Novelist
3. **Ahmed Attalla** – Director, **Egyptian Front for Human Rights**
4. **Alec Soth** – Photographer
5. **Arundhati Roy** – Author
6. **Arwa Shobaki** – Managing Director, **Middle East Democracy Center**
7. **Asad Rehman** – Executive Director, **War on Want**
8. **Azar Nafisi** – Writer and Professor
9. **Basma Mostafa** – Programs Manager, **Law and Democracy Support Foundation**
10. **Brendan de Caires** – Executive Director, **PEN Canada**
11. **Chris Doyle** – Director, **Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu)**
12. **Daniel Gorman** – Director, **English PEN**
13. **Diana Moukalled** – Co-Founder, **Daraj**
14. **Eléonore Morel** – CEO, **International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**, within the framework of the **Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders**
15. **Elif Shafak** – Novelist and Essayist
16. **Gerald Staberock** – Secretary General, **World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)**, within the framework of the **Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders**
17. **Grace Westcott** – President, **PEN Canada**
18. **Hossam Bahgat** – Executive Director, **Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)**
19. **Inès Osman** – Executive Director, **MENA Rights Group**
20. **James Lynch** – Co-Director, **FairSquare**
21. **Jodie Ginsberg** – Chief Executive Officer, **Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)**
22. **Julie Trébaud** – Executive Director, **Artists at Risk Connection (ARC)**
23. **Katie Fallon** – Advocacy Manager and Director, **Campaign Against Arms Trade**
24. **Karim Abdelrady** – Executive Director, **Law And Democracy Support Foundation**
25. **Khalid Abdalla** – Actor
26. **Khalid Ibrahim** – Executive Director, **Gulf Center for Human Rights (GCHR)**
27. **Lama Fakih** – Middle East and North Africa Director, **Human Rights Watch**
28. **Liesl Gernholtz** – Director, **PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Center, PEN America**
29. **Mai El-Sadany** – Executive Director, **The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)**
30. **Mohamed Abdel Salam** – Executive Director, **Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE)**
31. **Mostafa Al-A'sar** – Executive Director, **REDWORD for Human Rights & Freedom of Expression**
32. **Mostafa Fouad** – Executive Director, **HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement**
33. **Narges Mohammadi** – Human Rights Defender, Writer
34. **Nasrin Sotoudeh** – Human Rights Lawyer
35. **Nour Khalil** – Executive Director, **Refugees Platform in Egypt (RPE)**
36. **Orhan Pamuk** – Novelist and Screenwriter
37. **Paul Kingsley Clark** – Barrister & Head of International Team, **Garden Court Chambers**

38. **Phil Klay** – Writer
39. **Professor Peter Greste** – Executive Director, **Alliance for Journalists' Freedom**
40. **Quinn McKew** – Executive Director, **ARTICLE 19**
41. **Romana Cacchioli** – Executive Director, **PEN International**
42. **Rupert Skilbeck** – Director, **REDRESS**
43. **Salma El Hosseiny** – Senior Program Manager, **International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)**
44. **Samar Elhussieny** – Programs Director, **Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)**
45. **Sarah Sheikh Ali** – Regional Manager, **Innovation for Change-MENA**
46. **Siri Hustvedt** – Novelist and Essayist
47. **Sir William Browder KCMG** – **Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign**
48. **Susan Hendrickson** – President and CEO, **Human Rights First**
49. **Terry Anderson** – Executive Director, **Cartoonists Rights Network International**
50. **Thibaut Bruttin** – Director General, **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**