ADVOCACY DOSSIER

TAWFIQ ABDEL-WAHID IBRAHIM GHANEM

توفيق عبد الواحد إبراهيم غانم

Detained (pretrial) **Egypt**

Tawfiq Ghanem is a retired Egyptian journalist, a former regional director of Anadolu Agency in Cairo and former editor in chief of IslamOnline. Arrested in May 2021 and held in pretrial detention since then on terrorism-related charges, he is now on trial.

HuMENA.

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Case reference HM-EG-2021-001

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Tawfiq Ghanem is a retired Egyptian journalist, a former regional director of Anadolu Agency in Cairo and former editor in chief of IslamOnline. Arrested in May 2021 and held in pretrial detention since then on terrorism-related charges, he is now on trial.

STATUS	**Detained (pretrial)**
ARRESTED	**21 May 2021**
COUNTRY	**Egypt**
CHARGES	**Joining a terrorist organization** **Spreading false news** **Misusing social media platforms**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Release Tawfiq Ghanem immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

04 Provide Tawfiq Ghanem with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

Latest updates on this case
Scan the code or visit:
https://humena.org/defenders/tawfiq-ghanem/

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DOCUMENTED VIOLATIONS

	INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
Arbitrary detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9
Denial of medical care	UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rules 24 to 27
Enforced disappearance	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 9, 16
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Press freedom violation	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19
Prolonged pretrial detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)
Unfair trial	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

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HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

21 May 2021

ARREST

Arrested at his home in Giza

State Security officers arrested Tawfiq Ghanem at his home in Giza, confiscated his laptop and took him to an unknown place. He was 68 years old.

26 May 2021

REAPPEARANCE IN CUSTODY

Reappears before State Security Prosecution and is charged

After being held at an unknown location, he appeared on 26 May 2021 before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, which charged him in case 238 of 2021 with joining a terrorist group and ordered his pretrial detention.

9 July 2024

CALL BY OTHERS

Amnesty calls for his release and medical care

Amnesty International issued an urgent call for his release and for him to receive adequate medical care.

1 October 2026

HEARING

Trial adjourned to 26 December 2026

The Second Terrorism Circuit of the Cairo Criminal Court, sitting in Badr, adjourned his trial in case 238 of 2021 to 26 December 2026 to add exhibits.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and Work

Tawfiq Ghanem built a career in Egyptian journalism spanning several decades. He was regional director of Anadolu Agency in Cairo until he retired in 2015, and was also formerly editor in chief of IslamOnline. He focused his reporting on government accountability, civil liberties, and freedom of expression. His work centered on amplifying questions of transparency and human rights in Egypt's public sphere. Colleagues describe his journalism as methodical and grounded in documentary evidence.

Born in 1953, Ghanem came of age during a period of intense political transformation in Egypt and the wider Arab world. He chose journalism as his vehicle for civic engagement, writing on issues that often placed him at odds with successive administrations. His reporting examined the intersection of state power and individual freedoms, themes that have defined his professional life.

The Arrest

Tawfiq Ghanem was arrested on 21 May 2021. He was 68 years old at the time. State Security officers arrested him at his home in Giza, confiscated his laptop and took him to an unknown place. He reappeared on 26 May 2021 before the Supreme State Security Prosecution, which charged him in case 238 of 2021 with joining a terrorist group and ordered his pretrial detention.

He was later transferred to Badr 1 Prison in Badr City, a large detention complex east of Cairo that houses hundreds of pre-trial detainees in State Security cases. The facility is known for overcrowded conditions and limited access to legal counsel and family visits.

Detention Conditions and Health

Ghanem's health has declined significantly during his prolonged detention. He has developed multiple medical conditions that require specialized care beyond what the prison medical clinic can provide. The prison doctor has formally recommended that he be transferred to an external hospital for treatment. Despite this recommendation, no transfer has taken place.

The denial of adequate medical care is compounded by his age and the length of his detention. Family members have raised concerns about his deteriorating condition, but access to him has been limited. Badr 1 Prison operates under strict visitation protocols, and visits are often denied or delayed without explanation.

Legal Proceedings

Ghanem was charged on 26 May 2021 and then held in pretrial detention for years before his case went to trial. His detention was renewed approximately every 45 days by the State Security Prosecution, a mechanism that allows Egyptian authorities to hold individuals indefinitely without trial under the

country's emergency and counterterrorism legal framework.

The State Security Prosecution later referred Ghanem to criminal trial. The charges include joining a terrorist organization, spreading false news, and misusing social media platforms. These charges are commonly applied to journalists, activists, and political dissidents in Egypt, often on the basis of their published work or online activity.

His trial is under way before the Second Terrorism Circuit of the Cairo Criminal Court; on 1 October 2026 it was adjourned to 26 December 2026. Ghanem remains in Badr 1 Prison. His legal team continues to seek his release on health grounds and to challenge the legality of his prolonged pre-trial detention. Egyptian law nominally limits pre-trial detention to two years, but this limit is routinely exceeded in State Security cases through procedural workarounds.

International Response

International human rights organizations have documented Ghanem's case as part of a broader pattern of judicial harassment targeting journalists and freedom-of-expression defenders in Egypt. His prolonged detention without trial, the denial of medical care, and the vague national-security charges against him exemplify the tools used to silence critical voices.

Legal-assistance organizations have prioritized his case, providing representation and seeking to expedite proceedings. However, State Security cases in Egypt move slowly, and defendants often spend years in detention before reaching trial. Ghanem's age and medical condition add urgency to calls for his immediate release.

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SAMPLE LETTER

Copy it, adapt it and send it from your own address.

Your Excellency,

I am writing to demand the immediate release of Tawfiq Ghanem, retired journalist; former regional director of Anadolu Agency in Cairo and former editor in chief of IslamOnline, currently detained in Egypt since 21 May 2021, and an end to all reprisals tied to this case.

In brief: Tawfiq Ghanem is a retired Egyptian journalist, a former regional director of Anadolu Agency in Cairo and former editor in chief of IslamOnline. Arrested in May 2021 and held in pretrial detention since then on terrorism-related charges, he is now on trial.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Release Tawfiq Ghanem immediately and unconditionally;
2. Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights;
3. Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention;
4. Provide Tawfiq Ghanem with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

I will continue to monitor this case until Tawfiq Ghanem is free.

Respectfully,

[Your name]
[Your city, country]
8 November 2026