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### **Egypt: Human rights defender and poet Ahmed Douma detained for four days pending investigation**

On 6 April 2026, the Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP) ordered the detention of human rights defender **Ahmed Douma** for four days pending investigations. Ahmed Douma had complied with a summons for questioning on a case involving charges of “publishing false news and statements, both domestically and abroad, deemed capable of disturbing public order, and spreading unrest.”

[Ahmed Douma](#) is a prominent Egyptian human rights defender, poet, and writer who became a symbol of resistance during the 2011 uprising. His activism began in 2009, when he was arrested, tortured, and sentenced to one year in prison by a military court for joining a peaceful solidarity mission to Gaza. He was arbitrarily detained in 2013 under Egypt’s repressive protest law, subjected to torture, denied medical care, and held in solitary confinement for four years. In 2015, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison following an unfair trial, a verdict upheld in 2020 despite international condemnation. Though released under a presidential pardon in August 2023, he remains under a travel ban and faces ongoing judicial harassment and surveillance aimed at silencing his activism.

On 2 April 2026, Ahmed Douma received a summons from the SSSP to attend a questioning on 6 April 2026 in connection with Case No. 2449 of 2026, registered with the SSSP. The summons was delivered to his family home in Damanhur, and Ahmed Douma appeared at the SSSP Office on the appointed day, accompanied by his legal team. The human rights defender was summoned after publishing a post on his social media page and an opinion piece on the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed website ‘[A Prison Within the State and a State Within the Prison](#).’ On the evening of 6 April 2026, following the questioning, Ahmed Douma was detained under an order from the SSSP.

Since Ahmed Douma was pardoned in August 2023, the SSSP has opened six cases against him and summoned him for questioning six times, including the summons on 6 April 2026. The cases against him primarily relate to his social media publications. However, his writings and published opinions are important contributions to defending human rights and clearly fall within his right to freedom of expression. He has shared, among others, his experiences in detention, aimed at drawing the authorities’ attention to these violations, triggering investigations, and taking measures to put an end to torture and

ill-treatment in prisons. His publications are reports on human rights violations, and should not serve as grounds for prosecution. The latest case occurred in [January 2026](#), when he was detained for over 12 hours and subjected to ill-treatment, including being blindfolded, restrained, assaulted, and denied basic necessities. His personal belongings and electronic devices were confiscated without proper documentation.

Several months ago, the SSSP announced a seventh case against Ahmed Douma. However, he has not been summoned for questioning on this case yet. He is accused of publishing false news, statements, and rumours both inside and outside the country, as well as misusing social media.

After past detentions, Ahmed Douma has been released on bail. Between November 2024 and January 2026, the total bail he has paid amounts to approximately €3,700 (230,000 Egyptian Pounds), pending the outcome of current detention.

In addition to the judicial harassment and detention, Ahmed Douma has been placed under a travel ban and he cannot obtain official documents, preventing him from securing permanent employment.

Front Line Defenders expresses grave concern over the arrest and detention of Ahmed Douma, and the continuous judicial harassment he has been subjected to. The organisation believes that the targeting and harassment of Ahmed Douma by the authorities in Egypt is a direct retaliation for his legitimate and peaceful human rights work.

### **Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Egypt to:**

1. Immediately release Ahmed Douma;
2. Drop all charges against Ahmed Douma and cease all forms of judicial harassment;
3. Lift the travel ban against Ahmed Douma;
4. Guarantee that all human rights defenders in Egypt can carry out their work without the fear of reprisals and free from all restrictions.

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