



**BELLEVUE/NYU PROGRAM  
FOR SURVIVORS OF TORTURE**



New York University School of Medicine

Allen S. Keller, M.D., *Director*

Bellevue Hospital Center  
462 First Avenue CD 732  
New York, NY 10016-9196

Main Office:  
Tel: (212) 683-7446  
Fax: (212) 994-7177  
[www.survivorsoftorture.org](http://www.survivorsoftorture.org)

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding Mr. Khaled El-Masri in his update to his petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. I previously submitted a declaration regarding Mr. El-Masri in his April, 2008 submission to the Commission prepared by REDRESS. This letter serves to update that declaration.

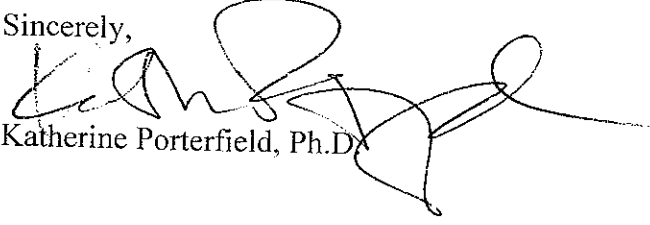
Over the winter of 2008-2009, I had several phone calls with Mr. El-Masri at the request of his lawyer, Mr. Steven Watt. Mr. El-Masri had been expressing emotional distress at the time and Mr. Watt asked that I speak with him about the possibility of his beginning psychological and/or psychiatric treatment. Over the course of those calls, it was my opinion that Mr. El-Masri was expressing symptoms of anxiety and depression at a level that was indicative of the need for treatment. Therefore, I shared that recommendation with Mr. El-Masri and assisted in his referral to a therapist in his community. It was my understanding, after a follow-up call with Mr. El-Masri, that he had engaged in therapy.

I was recently informed by Mr. El-Masri's lawyers that he had another legal incident in September, 2009 involving an assault and that he is now serving a two year prison sentence. I have also been told that he is refusing all contact with his attorneys, as well as his wife. I am writing to say that it remains my clinical opinion that Mr. El-Masri is in need of psychological and psychiatric treatment to address his emotional difficulties. As a clinician who has worked with survivors of torture and trauma for the last 11 years, I can say that the events that Mr. El-Masri is documented to have endured can leave lasting and severe psychological effects. I believe, from my limited contact with him, and after hearing of the events of the past year, including the assault and his isolation from others that this man is manifesting these effects and is urgently in need of a thorough psychological assessment and an attendant treatment plan.

I recognize that there are complex and detailed legal issues in this case that require the time and attention of the Commission before it can act. However, as a clinician, I am expressing my concern for Mr. El-Masri's well-being and my concern about his notable psychological deterioration, as evidenced by his recent behaviors. I recommend that the Commission move forward on its inquiry regarding Mr. El-Masri's case and include a thorough psychological and psychiatric evaluation as part of that inquiry.

If I can provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 212-994-7163. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Katherine Porterfield, Ph.D.