



MOHAMED SOLTAN || POLICY ADVOCATE FOUNDER • THE FREEDOM INITIATIVE

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Mohamed Soltan is a policy advocate and founder of The Freedom Initiative, a leading human rights organization dedicated to the release of political prisoners in the Middle East. Soltan graduated from The Ohio State University with a B.S. in Economics, and is currently a M.S.F.S. candidate at Georgetown University. Soltan's work has been featured in the Washington Post, The New York Times, Time Magazine, CNN, CBS, ABC and Fox News.

In 2013, Soltan was pursuing a career in business development in the oil service sector in Egypt when he was shot and detained amid a violent crackdown on dissent following a military coup. Charged with spreading false information and sentenced to life in prison, Soltan began an open-ended hunger strike to protest his unjust imprisonment and inhumane detention conditions, which ultimately lasted 489 days. The Obama Administration, urged by members of Congress and international civil society, intervened at the highest levels to facilitate his release.

Since his release in May 2015 and return to the United States, Soltan has built on the broad campaign that secured his liberty by co-founding The Freedom Initiative. Under his leadership, the

organization has spearheaded more than 120 successful campaigns for the release of political prisoners in the Middle East, including American citizens. Additionally, he mobilized hundreds of Arab-American youth from across the United States for Advocacy Days on Capitol Hill in 2018 and 2019. Soltan has been instrumental in highlighting the murder of Khashoggi and the accountability efforts that followed.

Through his tireless advocacy, Soltan quickly became an authentic and influential voice on Middle East policies as he established a strong network of prominent experts and officials in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East. He has organized and participated in hundreds of high-level briefings and engagements with policy makers and experts around the impact of repression on US national security and counterterrorism,

During the 2018 midterm elections, in his personal capacity, Soltan mobilized the Arab and Muslim American communities to support candidates with principled foreign policy platforms. In the 2020 Democratic primary, Soltan publicly endorsed Senator Elizabeth Warren and was surrogate for her campaign.

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