

URGENT ACTION

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE ILL-TREATED

At least 10 prisoners of conscience are being ill-treated in al-Razeen Prison in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the conditions in the prison are worsening. Amnesty International fears their mental and physical health is at risk.

At least 10 prisoners of conscience, who are held with more than 50 political prisoners in Abu Dhabi's al-Razeen Prison, are being ill-treated in deteriorating prison conditions. The prisoners of conscience were convicted after unfair trials. They include Qatari medical doctor **Dr Mahmoud al-Jaidah** and nine men jailed after the "UAE 94" mass trial of 94 reform activists and government critics: human rights lawyers **Dr Mohammed al-Roken** and **Dr Mohammed al-Mansoori**; former teacher **Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi**; teacher **Hussain Ali al-Najjar al-Hammadi**; former judge **Ahmed al-Zaabi**; founder of Ittihad University **Sheikh Dr Sultan Kayed Mohammed Al-Qassimi**; university students **Khalifa al-Nuaimi** and **Abdulla al-Hajri**; and **Dr Ali Hussain al-Hammadi**.

Prison guards frequently raid cells, beat prisoners and have confiscated their belongings, including their clothes, toiletries and notebooks. At least one prisoner has been beaten for questioning guards about the raids and refusing to give up his clothes. He was put in solitary confinement with no water and inadequate food, and denied visits from his family. The prison authorities have for several months withheld sanitary items such as soap and shampoo, and the prisoners have not been able to buy these, or food and water, as the prison store has been closed. Meal sizes have been reduced: some prisoners have lost so much weight that at least two collapsed on around 26 April. The windows throughout the wards are being bricked up, leaving no natural light. Prisoners are transferred to other wards during building works, making them overcrowded. The prison authorities, Ministry of Interior and Abu Dhabi Attorney General have ignored letters of complaint from prisoners and their families. In August 2013, 18 prisoners went on hunger strike in protest at this ill-treatment. In September, the UAE authorities replied to activists who had sent appeals in response to UA 238/13 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE25/009/2013/en>).

Please write immediately in English, Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the UAE authorities to release the 10 prisoners of conscience (naming them) immediately and unconditionally, and any others held for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association;
- Calling on them to ensure that all prisoners are treated with dignity and respect, protected from torture and other ill-treatment, have regular access to their families, receive any medical attention they may require and are held in adequate conditions in line with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JULY 2014 TO:

Minister of Interior

Lt-General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
Human Rights Directorate
POB 398
Abu Dhabi, UAE
Fax: +971 4 398 1119
Twitter: @SaifBZayed
Salutation: Your Highness

President

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Ministry of Presidential Affairs
Corniche Road, Abu Dhabi,
P.O. Box 280, United Arab Emirates
Fax: +971 2 622 2228
Email: ihtimam@mopa.ae
Salutation: Your Highness

And copies to:

Vice-President and Prime Minister
Shaikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Office of the Prime Minister
POB 2838, Dubai, UAE
Fax: +971 4 353 1974
Email via website:
<http://uaeprm.ae/English/Pages/ContactUs.aspx>
Twitter: @HHSkMohd

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The prisoners in al-Razeen Prison are only being allowed into the prison yard around midday when the sun is at its strongest and the temperature can reach over 50 degrees Celsius in the summer (June-August). Often the prisoners' twice-weekly 15-minute phone calls are being cut short after at most a few minutes, and the prison authorities have moved the time of these calls from afternoons to mornings, so the prisoners can no longer speak to their children or siblings, who are either at school or work.

On 5 May 2014, Mohammed al-Roken was placed in solitary confinement for over a week and denied all contact with his family during that time. We issued UA120/14 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE25/011/2014/en>) in response.

Sixty-one of the prisoners in al-Razeen Prison were convicted following a mass trial of 94 activists, including human rights lawyers, judges, university professors and student leaders, most of whom had been arrested between March and December 2012 during a massive crackdown on freedom of expression and association in the UAE. The government put these 94 people, 13 of them women, on trial on 4 March 2013, in what became widely known as the "UAE 94" trial. A number of those on trial were members of Jam'iyat al-Islah wal Tawjeeh al-Ijtima'ee (Reform and Social Guidance Association), a well-known UAE-based association legally established in 1974 which has been engaged in peaceful social and political debate. It is not known to have used or advocated violence.

Of the 94 defendants, 69 were convicted on 2 July 2013 of attempting to overthrow the government, in connection with their alleged activities in al-Islah. The State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court in Abu Dhabi sentenced the 69 (eight of whom had been tried in their absence) to between seven and 15 years' imprisonment. A number of the 69 are not members of al-Islah but are prominent figures in the UAE who had called for democratic reforms. The remaining 25, including all the women, were acquitted. The trial was marred by a catalogue of human rights violations, including arrests without judicial warrants, months of secret detention and solitary confinement with no access to lawyers; allegations of torture and other ill-treatment; and the use of "confessions" extracted under duress which were used in court as evidence of guilt. The others in al-Razeen Prison who have been ill-treated include prisoner of conscience Dr Mahmoud al-Jaidah, a Qatari medical doctor who was sentenced on 3 March 2014, after a grossly unfair trial, to seven years' imprisonment.

In August 2013, 18 prisoners in al-Razeen Prison went on hunger strike in protest at being ill-treated by the prison authorities, including beatings by prison guards and restrictions on family visits. They also complained of light deprivation and said the prison authorities had deliberately turned off air conditioning when the weather was hot. Three prisoners, who had been among the first six to go on hunger strike on 31 July 2013, collapsed between 21 and 28 August. The prisoners on hunger strike were Mohammed al-Mansoori, Salem al-Shehhi, Mohammed Saeed al-Abdouli, Ali al-Kindi, Najeeb Amiri, Ahmed Qobaisi, Juma al-Felasi, Mansoor al-Ahmadi, Saif al-Ajlal, Abdulla al-Hajiri, Fahad al-Hajiri, Ali al-Khaja, Ahmed al-Zaabi, Abdul-Rahman al-Hadidi, Hadeef al-Owais, Abdussalam Darwish, Rashid Sabt, and Mahmood al-Hosani. They are serving sentences of between seven and 10 years' imprisonment following their convictions in the mass "UAE 94" trial.

Names: Dr Mahmoud al-Jaidah; Dr Mohammed al-Roken; Dr Mohammed al-Mansoori; Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi; Hussain Ali al-Najjar al-Hammadi; Ahmed al-Zaabi; Sheikh Dr Sultan Kayed Mohammed Al-Qassimi; Khalifa al-Nuaimi; Abdulla al-Hajiri; Dr Ali Hussain al-Hammadi
Gender m/f: m

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