

# URGENT ACTION

## NEW TRIAL MARRED BY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

**Twenty Egyptian and 10 UAE nationals, including at least three prisoners of conscience, face long prison sentences in a new mass trial whose latest session took place on 17 December. Those detained have apparently not been allowed to see a lawyer. Their verdict is due on 21 January 2014. If convicted, they will have no right to appeal.**

High profile lawyer **Mohammed al-Mansoori**, physicist **Hussain Ali Alnajjar Alhammadi** and former teacher **Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi** are among the 10 UAE nationals on trial; all 10 were sentenced to imprisonment in a previous mass trial, known as the "UAE 94" trial, earlier this year. In this new case, the 20 Egyptian nationals are accused of setting up a branch of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the UAE. One of them is also accused of stealing secret national defence information from a USB memory stick allegedly passed to him by a security official. Mohammed al-Mansoori, Hussain Alnajjar and Saleh al-Dhufairi, along with others, are facing charges of knowing about the theft, but failing to notify the authorities. Saleh al-Dhufairi, along with the others, has also been charged with disseminating the stolen information, although his family say that he was in detention at the time he was alleged to have done so. In addition, he and others have been charged with failing to alert the authorities about the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood branch. All the defendants have denied the charges against them. All could face prison terms of up to 10 years.

The trial began on 5 November 2013 in the Federal Supreme Court in Abu Dhabi. Apart from six who are being tried in their absence, the Egyptian nationals were arrested between November 2012 and January 2013 and reportedly held incommunicado in secret detention for months. Many have told the court they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated, including with the use of electric shocks, and forced to sign "confessions". Amnesty International documented similar abuses in the case of the "UAE 94". None of the defendants in the trial appears to have been allowed to see a lawyer since the case began. Amnesty International considers at least three of the detainees – Mohammed al-Mansoori, Hussain Alnajjar and Saleh al-Dhufairi – to be prisoners of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression or association.

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

- Urging the UAE authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Mohammed al-Mansoori, Hussain Alnajjar, Saleh al-Dhufairi and anyone else in the case being held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association;
- Calling on them to immediately and impartially investigate allegations of torture or other ill-treatment and bring to justice anyone found responsible in accordance with international fair trial standards.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JANUARY 2014 TO:**

#### 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**

#### Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
Crown Prince Court Bainunah Street  
Abu Dhabi, P.O. Box 124  
United Arab Emirates  
Fax: +971 2 668 6622  
Twitter: @MBZNews  
**Salutation: Your Highness**

#### **And copies to:**

Vice-President and Prime Minister  
Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid al-Maktoum  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Dubai, P.O. Box 2838  
United Arab Emirates  
Fax: + 971 4 3531974  
Email: info@primeminister.ae  
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

Mohammed al-Mansoori, Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi and Hussain Ali Alnajjar Alhammadi, along with the other seven UAE nationals, were among the 69 people convicted and sentenced to between seven and 15 years' imprisonment in the "UAE 94" trial. Mohammed al-Mansoori was among 18 people who, in August 2013, started a hunger strike in protest at their conditions of detention and physical abuse by prison guards. See *UAE: Jailed government critics on hunger strike* (MDE 25/009/2013). The 10 UAE nationals, along with the 14 Egyptian nationals detained in relation to the current case, are held in al-Razeen Prison in Abu Dhabi.

Abdulhameed al-Kumaiti, the main defence lawyer in the case, has been refused access to his clients since the case began. On 15 December 2013, two days before the latest trial session, the authorities of al-Razeen Prison in Abu Dhabi forced him to wait for two hours to meet his clients before denying him access to them. Abdulhameed al-Kumaiti says he has noticed being under increased surveillance since his involvement in this case and that of the "UAE 94", in which he was also a defence lawyer, began. He has, for instance, been frequently followed by cars that he believes belong to UAE's State Security apparatus.

During his four-hour defence statement at the trial session on 17 December, Abdulhameed al-Kumaiti asked for the charges against his clients to be dropped and highlighted what he argued was a lack of due process and inconsistencies in the prosecution's case against them. He argued that the dates on which the prisoners were first detained differed from the arrest dates recorded by the court documents. Detainees claim that these dates were falsified and that they were in fact arrested without arrest warrants being shown to them beforehand and then held in secret detention for months, during which they were forced to sign "confessions" under torture. Abdulhameed al-Kumaiti said that detainees were also blindfolded and not given their glasses when forced to sign to "confessions".

Amnesty International has previously documented the UAE's record of unfair trials. For more information see *United Arab Emirates: End abuses in the criminal justice system* (MDE 25/005/2013); *UAE: Unfair mass trial of 94 dissidents* (MDE 25/003/2013).

Independent political activity in the UAE is severely restricted. In the wake of the large demonstrations since 2011 across the Middle East and North Africa region, a small number of people in the UAE have openly called for greater accountability, transparency and democratization, but have faced repression in a widening crackdown on freedom of expression and association. People who criticize the UAE authorities have been arrested and charged with vaguely worded national security offences. Many of those arrested, charged and convicted have been labelled as "Islamists" and vilified by the UAE authorities, as well as the largely pro-government national media. Human rights defenders in the UAE have long been harassed, and intimidated. Some have been arbitrarily detained, subjected to travel bans or threatened with deportation. Some have received death threats, been physically attacked by government supporters or faced smear campaigns on social media networks and in government-run media.

Name: Mohammed al-Mansoori, Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi, Hussain Ali Alnajjar al-Hammadi, Saleh Faraj, Salah al-Meshad, Medhat Rajab, Abdullah Al-Arabi, Ibrahim Abdulaziz, Murad Muhammad, Medhat Mohamed, Mohammed Abdel-Moneim, Abdel Moneim Al-Sayed, Abdullah Mohammed, Ali Ahmad, Mohamed Mahmoud, Ahmed Labib, Ahmed Mahmoud, Othman Abdul Rahman, Al-Sayed. Awad, Hassan Al-Sayed, Ashraf Kamel, Ahmed Mohammed, Hamada Abdulaziz, Ahmad Al-Tabour, Hassan Al Hammadi, Khalid al-Shibeh, Hamad Ruqait, Ali Al-Kindi, Rashid Imran, Tariq Al-Qasim.

Gender m/f: all male

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