

URGENT ACTION

SOUAD AL-SHAMMARI RELEASED

Women's rights activist Souad al-Shammari was released on 29 January after three months of detention without charge. The conditions of her release and current legal status are unclear.

Souad al-Shammari, a Saudi Arabian women's rights activist, was released on 29 January. A royal pardon had been issued that day by the new King, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, but it is unclear if she was released because of it. According to her daughter, Souad al-Shammari was made to sign a pledge to stop or "reduce" her activism.

Souad al-Shammari had been detained without charge since 28 October 2014 after a four-hour interrogation session at the Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution in Jeddah. At the end of the interrogation session the General Prosecutor told her she would be detained for further questioning. She was held at the women's section of the General Prison of Briman, in Jeddah, until she was released.

As a women's rights activist, Souad al-Shammari is well-known for her opposition to the country's guardianship system which subordinates women's autonomy to the authority of male guardians. She has taken part in campaigns to lift the ban on women driving cars in Saudi Arabia. She is also the head of the Saudi Arabian Liberals Network, which is a network of activists peacefully calling for social and political reform. One of the founding members of the Saudi Arabian Liberals Network, Raif Badawi, was sentenced in September to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes for his online activism, and he was publicly flogged in 9 January.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 276/14. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/029/2014/en>

Name: Souad al-Shammari
Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 276/14 Index: MDE 23/009/2015 Issue Date: 2 February 2015

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

