

URGENT ACTION

EX-DIPLOMAT COULD BE RETURNED, TORTURED

The Qatari authorities are preparing to forcibly return a former diplomat to Saudi Arabia, where he would be at grave risk of detention and possibly torture or other ill-treatment in relation to his criticism of the Saudi Arabian authorities.

Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutairy, a 50-year-old former Saudi Arabian diplomat, was dismissed from his job at the Saudi Arabian embassy in the Dutch city of The Hague in 2003 after he complained to the Saudi Arabian authorities that the embassy was involved in funding terrorism. He subsequently made public this allegation. He was granted political asylum in the Netherlands in September 2004.

Mishal al-Mutairy told Amnesty International that in 2006 he was taken at gunpoint by men in civilian clothes, whom he believed to be Saudi Arabian agents, from the Netherlands to the Belgian capital, Brussels, by car. He said that one of his sons was taken away in another car. Once in Brussels he was told to fly to the Saudi Arabian capital, Riyadh. He said: "I had no option but to go as they had my son". He was detained upon arrival and held for six months in the General Directorate of Investigations prison in Riyadh. He was reportedly detained incommunicado for about a week during which he was said to have been subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, including being beaten and made to stand for hours. He was released without charge but forbidden to leave Saudi Arabia. His son was also returned to Saudi Arabia, but not detained.

He managed to flee Saudi Arabia to neighbouring Qatar on 11 August 2011. On 1 September 2012 the Qatari authorities arrested him with the apparent intention of returning him to Saudi Arabia. They released him about a week later, following pressure by human rights NGOs.

He was called by a senior Qatari police official on 2 January 2013 and told that the Ministry of Interior had written to say that he should leave Qatar within 48 hours. When he replied saying he could not afford to leave Qatar, he was asked to hand himself in to the authorities, who would then take care of deporting him to Saudi Arabia.

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

- Urging the Qatari authorities to stop the forcible return of Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutairy to Saudi Arabia, where he would be at grave risk of detention and possibly torture or other ill-treatment in relation to his criticism of the Saudi Arabian authorities ;
- Calling on the authorities to provide Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutairy with the opportunity to seek asylum without delay.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 FEBRUARY 2013 TO:

Minister of the Interior
 Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalid Al Thani
 Ministry of the Interior
 PO Box 920
 Doha, State of Qatar
 Fax: +974 4444 4945 (keep trying)
 Email: info@moi.gov.qa
Salutation: His Excellency

Amir of the State of Qatar
 Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani
 PO Box 923
 Doha,
 State of Qatar
 Fax: +974 4436 1212
Salutation: Your Highness

And copies to:

Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
 Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem Al Thani
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 PO Box 250
 Doha, State of Qatar
 Fax: + 974 44 429 454 / 44 383 745
Salutation: Your Highness

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

EX-DIPLOMAT COULD BE RETURNED, TORTURED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In Saudi Arabia criticism of the state is generally not tolerated. Those who do criticize the government, their policies or practices, are often held incommunicado without charge, sometimes in solitary confinement, denied access to lawyers or the courts to challenge the lawfulness of their detention. Torture or other ill-treatment are frequently used to extract “confessions” from detainees, to punish them for refusing to “repent”, or to force them to make undertakings not to criticize the government. Incommunicado detention often lasts until a “confession” is obtained, which can take months and occasionally years.

If charged it is sometimes with vague security-related offences such as “disobeying the ruler”. Legal proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial: defendants are generally denied legal counsel, and in many cases they and their families are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. Court hearings are often held behind closed doors.

For more information on violations of freedom of expression in the name of security see the Amnesty International report *Saudi Arabia: Repression in the name of security* (MDE 23/016/2011), issued on 1 December 2011 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/016/2011/en>).

Name: Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutairy
Gender m/f: M

UA: 1/13 Index: MDE 22/001/2013 Issue Date: 4 January 2013