

URGENT ACTION

BLOGGER DETAINED INCOMMUNICADO IN QATAR

Sultan al-Khalaifi, who is a Qatari blogger and the founder of a human rights organization, was arrested on 2 March and is being detained incommunicado. He is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. The reasons for his detention are unknown.

Sultan al-Khalaifi was arrested in the evening of 2 March by around eight individuals in plain clothes, believed to be members of the security forces. He was leaving his parents' house at the time. The individuals took him to his own home, which they then searched, seizing CDs and a laptop. His family's car was also searched. According to information received by Amnesty International, he had told his wife earlier that day that State Security had contacted him, asking him to report to them, but that he did not know why.

His whereabouts are not known, but it is believed that he is being held in the custody of State Security. It is not known why he was arrested. Amnesty International is concerned that his detention incommunicado puts him at increased risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

The organization founded by Sultan al-Khalaifi campaigns primarily on cases of detention in Qatar, but is legally registered in Switzerland.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to ensure that Sultan al-Khalaifi is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and is allowed prompt and regular access to a lawyer of his choosing, his family and any medical treatment he may require;
- Asking for details of any charges he faces to be made public and calling on the authorities to ensure that any legal proceedings against him conform to international fair trial standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 APRIL 2011 TO:

Minister of the Interior

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

Amir of the State of Qatar

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

Attorney General

Dr Ali bin Fetais Al Marri
PO Box 705
Doha
State of Qatar
Fax: +974 4484 3211
Salutation: Dr Ali bin Fetais Al Marri

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Incommunicado detention is standard practice by State Security forces in Qatar. Amnesty International has received reports in recent years of dozens of people being detained incommunicado by State Security forces for weeks or months, followed by prolonged arbitrary detention without charge or trial.

In 2006, the UN Committee against Torture examined Qatar's implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Committee expressed concern that arrest and detention procedures placed suspects at increased risk of torture, particularly the lack of access to a lawyer or independent doctor or any requirement that the authorities notify a detainee's relatives of the arrest.

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