

URGENT ACTION

EX-DIPLOMAT AT RISK OF IMMINENT RETURN

Former diplomat Mishal al-Mutiry has been given 24 hours to leave Qatar or be forcibly returned to Saudi Arabia, where he would be at grave risk of imprisonment and possible torture or other ill-treatment in relation to his criticism of the Saudi Arabian authorities.

Mishal al-Mutiry told Amnesty International by phone on 14 January that the Qatari police had called him at 8am and told him to leave Qatar by 11am the next day. He said that when he told them that he could not afford to do so they responded by threatening to drive him and his family to the Qatar-Saudi Arabia border and handing them over to the Saudi Arabian authorities. In a text message, the family implored Amnesty International to act, saying: "Please help, urgent, please we are going to hell. Please help, please. Tomorrow they will take us to Saudi. Al Mutiry family".

He had managed to flee Saudi Arabia to neighbouring Qatar in 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 from human rights NGOs.

A senior Qatari police officer called him on 2 January 2013 and told him the Ministry of Interior had written to say that he should leave Qatar within 48 hours. When he replied that he could not afford to leave Qatar, the officer asked him to hand himself in to the authorities, who would take care of deporting him to Saudi Arabia. He has since been repeatedly told to leave Qatar.

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

- Urging the authorities to stop the forcible return of Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutiry 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 them to provide Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutiry with the opportunity to seek asylum without delay.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 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
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. This is the first update of UA 1/13. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/mde22/001/2013>

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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 *Saudi Arabia: Repression in the name of security* (Index: MDE 23/016/2011), issued in December 2011 (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/016/2011/en>).

Name: Mishal bin Zaar Hamad al-Mutiry (previously spelled as al-Mutairy)

Gender m/f: M

Further information on UA: 1/13 Index: MDE 22/002/2013 Issue Date: 14 January 2013