

URGENT ACTION

POLITICAL ACTIVIST DETAINED IN YEMEN

Southern Yemeni political activist Khaled al-Junaidi has been held without charge in virtual incommunicado detention since 6 November. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment and may have been targeted for his peaceful political activism.



On 6 November, **Khaled al-Junaidi**, a 41 year-old engineer and father of three, was arrested in the southern Yemeni city of Aden while on his way home. He is the spokesperson of the Youth & Student Movement for Freedom and Independence of South Arabia and a member of the political coalition the Southern Movement (also known as al-Hirak).

Khaled al-Junaidi is believed to be currently held at the al-Solban Political Security Prison in Aden, where a relative was allowed to see him for a few minutes on 12 November after waiting for hours outside of the prison. At the time, Khaled al-Junaidi was handcuffed and accompanied by at least three guards, and he complained of hunger and lack of food. Since then, his family were not allowed to visit him again.

On 7 November the General Prosecutor in Aden had issued an order to the head of the Special Security, also known as Central Security, the agency believed to have carried out the arrest, to either press criminal charges against Khaled al-Junaidi, or release him in line with Yemeni law.

Khaled al-Junaidi was previously arrested on three separate occasions, twice in 2011 and then again in February 2013, for taking part in protests. He was questioned for his political activism and released without charge within days in 2011 and within a month in February 2013. However during all his previous arrests his family was notified about his whereabouts and allowed to visit him regularly in prison.

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

- Urging the Yemeni authorities to ensure that Khaled al-Junaidi is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and is immediately granted access to his family and a lawyer of his choice;
- Urging that he is released or charged with a recognizable criminal offence and tried in proceedings in line with international standards for fair trial and stressing that the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and assembly are guaranteed in international law and should not be criminalized in Yemeni law.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 DECEMBER 2013 TO:

Minister of the Interior

His Excellency Abdul-Qader Qahtan
Ministry of Interior
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: +967 1 332 754 and +967 1 332581
Email: moi@yemen.net.ye
Salutation: Your Excellency

Governor of Aden

Waheed Ali Rasheed
PO Box: 6013, Khormaksar
Aden
Republic of Yemen
Fax: +967 2 222 412
Email: adengov8@gmail.com
Salutation: Dear Mr Waheed Ali Rasheed

And copies to:

Minister of Human Rights
Her Excellency Houriah Ahmed
Mashhour
Ministry of Human Rights
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: +967 1 444 833
Email: mshr@y.net.ye

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**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Protests in the south of Yemen have been taking place sporadically since 2007 when retired soldiers from the south launched protests complaining that they were not receiving the same treatment in employment, salary and pensions as soldiers from the north of the country. Most of the retired soldiers are from the army of the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), commonly known as South Yemen. Following the unification of the country in 1990, the armies of both the PDRY and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), commonly known as North Yemen, were merged into a single army of the new Republic of Yemen. However, after a civil war in 1994, which ended in the defeat of the South, many of the soldiers of the former PDRY were dismissed from the army. They, as well as those who remained in the current unified army, have alleged that they are treated on equal footing with soldiers originally from the army of the YAR.

The Southern Movement (also known as al-Hirak, a short form of its name in Arabic) is a loose coalition of political groups, many of whom call for the peaceful separation of southern Yemen, which was independent until its unification with the north in 1990. It appears to have emerged following these protests and began to organize its own demonstrations over what it perceives to be the government's failure to address discrimination against people from the south of the country. The government's response to these protests has been heavy-handed. Dozens of demonstrators have been killed in or near demonstrations; in many cases they appear to have been shot dead unlawfully when posing no threat to the lives of the security forces or others. Since the protests began in 2007, the security forces have arrested and detained, in many cases arbitrarily, thousands of demonstrators and bystanders, as well as leaders and activists of the Southern Movement.

Since February 2011 and following calls for the president to stand down, protesters in Aden in particular have started calling for regime change and for the president to stand down. Protests calling for the south to separate from the rest of the country have also taken place in Aden and other parts of south Yemen. These have been met at times with excessive use of force (see for instance, *Yemen must investigate sniper killings of protesters*, 9 July 2012 at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/yemen-must-investigate-sniper-killings-protesters-2012-07-09>).

Photo of Khaled al-Junaidi can be found on ADAM – ID: 183679. Photo can be used in published and online materials and in campaigning work on behalf of Khaled al-Junaidi.

Name: Khaled al-Junaidi

Gender m/f: m

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