

URGENT ACTION

MEN CONVICTED AFTER UNFAIR MASS TRIAL IN UAE

Twenty Egyptian and 10 United Arab Emirates (UAE) nationals, including at least three prisoners of conscience, have been convicted in a second mass trial marred by human rights violations. They have no right to appeal the court verdict, in contravention of the UAE's obligations under international human rights law.

On 21 January, 10 UAE nationals, including human rights lawyer **Dr Mohammed al-Mansoori**, physicist **Hussain Ali Alnajjar Alhammadi** and former teacher **Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi**, and 20 Egyptian nationals were found guilty by the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court in Abu Dhabi. They had been charged in connection with establishment of an "international" branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, stealing and distributing secret information from the security services or failing to notify the authorities about the theft. The men received prison sentences ranging from one to five years. All the UAE nationals received one-year and three-month prison terms except for Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi, who received a prison sentence of four years and three months. All the UAE nationals convicted had already been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in a separate mass trial in July 2013, known as the "UAE 94" trial. The UAE nationals are detained in al-Razeen Prison in Abu Dhabi, where they were already serving their existing sentences. The Egyptian nationals, who were also sentenced to be deported after the end of the prison terms, are held in al-Wathba Prison, Abu Dhabi. The men had all denied the charges against them. Under UAE law, they do not have the right to appeal.

The trial was marred by the fact that many defendants were held in prolonged incommunicado detention following their arrest and had no access to a lawyer prior to the trial and limited access during the trial. In court, some of the defendants said they had been subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, including use of electric shocks, and were forced to make "confessions" under duress. Amnesty International documented similar abuses in the "UAE 94" trial.

Amnesty International considers at least three of those sentenced – Dr Mohammed al-Mansoori, Hussain Ali Alnajjar Alhammadi and Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi – to be prisoners of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression or association.

On 5 February, Gabriela Knaul, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers issued her preliminary observations after an official visit to the UAE. The Special Rapporteur expressed a number of concerns including that the UAE judicial system remains under the de facto control of the executive branch of government. She made a series of recommendations to the UAE government, including that it revise legislation to ensure the right of appeal in cases currently heard in first instance by the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court; establish an independent committee to investigate all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment in detention; and ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional Protocols, as well as the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced disappearance.

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

This is the first update of UA 347/13. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE25/012/2013/en>

Names: Mohammed al-Mansoori, Saleh Mohammed al-Dhufairi, Hussain Ali Alnajjar al-Hammadi, Saleh Faraj, Salah al-Meshad, Medhat Rajab, Abdullah Al-Arabi, Ibrahim Abdulaziz, Murad Muhammad, Medhat Mohamed, Mohammed Abdel-Moneim, Abdel Moneim Al-Sayed, Abdullah Mohammed, Ali Ahmad, Mohamed Mahmoud, Ahmed Labib, Ahmed Mahmoud, Othman Abdul Rahman, Al-Sayed. Awad, Hassan Al-Sayed, Ashraf Kamel, Ahmed Mohammed, Hamada Abdulaziz, Ahmad Al-Tabour, Hassan Al Hammadi, Khalid al-Shibeh, Hamad Ruqait, Ali Al-Kindi, Rashid Imran, Tariq Al-Qasim.

Gender (f/m): m

Further information on UA: 347/13 Index: MDE 25/007/2014 Issue Date: 14 February 2014

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