

URGENT ACTION

FIVE PEOPLE HELD INCOMMUNICADO

Since 6 April, Omani authorities have launched a series of arbitrary detentions of individuals from Musandam province. The security forces are currently holding five persons incommunicado and without charges. They are believed to be in the custody of the Internal Security Service in the capital Muscat.

On 28 May, Omani forces detained **Mohammed Sulaiman Mohammed Mazyud al-Shahi** at the al-Dara border crossing with the UAE as he was returning to Musandam after completing the 'umrah pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. On the night of 5 May, United Arab Emirates police, acting on a request from the Omani authorities, detained Omani citizen **Mohammed Abdullah Ahmed bin Rahma al-Shahi** from his residence in Dubai, where he has lived and worked for several years. Mohamed is originally from Musandam. The Dubai police immediately transferred him to Omani authorities, who then transferred him to the office of the Internal Security Service in the capital Muscat. On 6 April Omani security forces detained Emirati citizen **Rashed Saeed al-Salhadi al-Shahi** while he was attending the wedding party of a relative in al-Rawda, Musandam, along with an Omani citizen who was subsequently released without charge. On 9 April, armed Omani security forces detained **Ali Mohammed Ali al-Mazyud al-Shahi** from his father's home, where he was visiting with his wife and children, in the town of Khasab, Musandam. They did not present a warrant or state any information on the reasons for the arrest. On the same day security forces took **Ali Ahmed Rajab al-Obaidi al-Shahi** from his residence in Lima town, Musandam. Oman continues to hold these five detainees incommunicado and without legal charge. With the exception of a single phone call from one detainee – during which he was unable to speak freely – Omani security forces have not allowed the detainees to contact their families or lawyers. The authorities have provided no information on the reasons for the arrest, and Amnesty International has received no reply to an inquiry sent to the Ministry of Interior on 2 June.

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

- Calling on the Omani authorities to release all five detainees immediately unless they are charged with a crime recognized under international law and brought without delay before a court that can rule impartially on the legality of their detention.
- Urging them to ensure that the detainees are able to exercise their right to challenge the legality of their detention and to allow them to communicate freely with family and legal counsel of their choice, including by regular visitation in a recognized place of detention.
- Urging them to ensure that the detainees are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 AUGUST 2018 TO:

Minister of Interior

Hamood bin Faysal al-Busaeedi
Ministry of Interior
al-Wazarat St., 3415 Way
al-Khuwayr, Muscat
Sultanate of Oman
Email: MinisterOff@moi.gov.om
Salutation: Your Excellency

Sultan

Qaboos bin Said
Diwan of the Royal Court
Wadi Bahayis St., 3209 Way
Seeb, Muscat
Sultanate of Oman
Email: tawasul@rca.gov.om
Twitter: @__qaboos__
Salutation: Your Majesty
Minister of Justice

And copies to:

Minister of Justice

Abdulmalik bin Abdullah Al Khalili
P.O. Box 354
Postal Code 112
Ruwi, Muscat
Sultanate of Oman
Twitter: @moj_gov
Email: info@moj.gov.om
Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below: Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation SalutationPlease check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All five detainees – Mohammed Abdullah Ahmed bin Rahma al-Shahi, Ali Mohammed Ali al-Mazyud al-Shahi, Ali Ahmed Rajab al-Obaidi al-Shahi, Mohammed Sulaiman Mohammed Mazyud al-Shahi, and Rashed Saeed al-Salhadi al-Shahi – are from the Shuhuh tribe, as indicated by the family name al-Shahi. The Shuhuh tribe exists on both sides of the UAE-Omani border and its members make up the majority of the residents of Musandam, known locally as Ru'us al-Jibal. Musandam is a territorial exclave of Oman, separated from its mainland and forming the tip of the Arabian Peninsula where it juts into the Strait of Hormuz. It abuts the territory of the United Arab Emirates, adjacent to the emirate of Ras al-Khaimah. UAE prisoner of conscience Ahmed Mansoor al-Shahi is also from the Shuhuh tribe (more information under <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/8510/2018/en/>).

Amnesty International is concerned that these detentions may have been motivated in part by discrimination based on the detainees' tribal origins as members of the al-Shuhuh, which would contravene the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which Oman is a party. The organization is also concerned that the arrests were arbitrary since they occurred without an arrest warrant. Under Article 48 of Oman's Code of Criminal Procedure, arrests are to be made with authorization from the Office of Public Prosecution. Per Article 49, paragraph 1, the order for arrest must be in writing and must state the cause for arrest; and, per paragraph 2, the detained shall be informed "immediately" of the cause for his arrest and has the right to call and inform whomever he wishes and to access legal counsel. It appears that these procedures were not followed in this case. *Incommunicado* detention is incompatible with Articles 6, 10, and 11.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and arbitrary detention is contrary to Article 9.

The Shuhuh tribe and Musandam province have culturally distinct practices from mainland Oman, including the manner of dress and agricultural and animal husbandry practices. Their practice of Islam also differs from the Ibadi sect that predominates in Oman.

There have been several waves of similar arbitrary detentions in recent years in Musandam. In September 2015, for instance, two groups of people were detained because authorities had monitored them using Google and Twitter to search for and discuss information on the history of Musandam. In March 2016, a local folkloric music group were detained, but released after several weeks without charge. Two more detention campaigns followed later in 2016. The Omani government maintains an almost complete media blackout on detentions in "security" cases. The current detentions have not been reported in any official or semi-official media. Omani authorities have arbitrarily detained at least eight people from Musandam since early April this year; three out of the eight have been released shortly after the arrest.

Name: Mohammed Abdullah Ahmed bin Rahma al-Shahi, Ali Mohammed Ali al-Mazyud al-Shahi, Ali Ahmed Rajab al-Obaidi al-Shahi, Mohammed Sulaiman Mohammed Mazyud al-Shahi, Rashed Saeed al-Salhadi al-Shahi
Gender m/f: all m

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