

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

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### **Qatar: Lift arbitrary and unexplained travel ban on Dr Najeeb al-Nuaimi**

Amnesty International has today expressed its dismay that the Government of Qatar has banned lawyer and former Justice Minister, Dr Najeeb al-Nuami from travelling outside of Qatar. The organization calls on the Qatari government to immediately rescind the ban or to urgently provide to him, in writing, its legitimate legal basis and reasons for doing so.

On 8 January 2017, the office of the Public Prosecutor in Doha sent a text message to Dr Najeeb al-Nuaimi, which stated his identification number and stated simply that he had been put on the no-fly list. The SMS message referred him to the office of the Public Prosecutor for information.

In the course of the past week, Dr Najeeb al-Nuaimi's office wrote twice to the office of Qatar's Attorney General, Dr Ali Bin Fetais al-Marri, who approves the country's no-fly list, in order to seek clarification, including the basis for the travel ban, but he has not received a reply.

Amnesty International is concerned that the ban placed on Dr Najeeb al-Nuami, who runs his own law practice in the capital, Doha, is politically motivated and relates to opinions peacefully expressed by Dr Najeeb al-Nuami, including on twitter, many of which have been critical towards the government.

The lawyer has, for many years, taken up contentious cases both in and outside Qatar, including cases involving migrant workers. He was one of three foreign lawyers who represented former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and he was part of an international team of lawyers who represented individuals held by the United States government at the Guantanamo Bay facility in Cuba.

He represented the Qatari poet, Mohammed al-'Ajmi, (also known as Ibn Dheeb). The authorities sentenced al-'Ajmi to 15 years' imprisonment in 2012 for writing and reciting poems deemed by the authorities to be offensive to the Emir and the State. He was released on 15 March 2016 under an unconditional pardon granted by the Emir. Dr Najeeb al-Nuaimi was publically critical of the trial process.

On 7 February, Dr Najeeb al-Nuaimi's office issued a statement confirming the imposition of the travel ban. On the morning of 9 February, the office of the Public Prosecutor re-affirmed the ban in a telephone call with a representative of the lawyer.

Public Document

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