

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN MEN FACE UNFAIR TRIAL

On 8 March 2020, 81-year-old Palestinian national Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari and his son Dr. Hani al-Khudari (48 years old) were brought before the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC), Saudi Arabia's counter-terror court, in a mass trial on trumped-up charges under the counter-terror law. They have no legal representation. Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari requires adequate medical attention and treatment for cancer.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King
Royal Court, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Your Majesty

*On 8 March 2020, Palestinian national **Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari** and his son **Dr. Hani al-Khudari** were brought before the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC), for their alleged connection to the Hamas de-facto authorities in Gaza, as part a mass trial of 68 individuals. According to information received by Amnesty International, the two men were charged with "joining a terrorist entity"- understood to be Hamas. Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari was additionally charged with holding several leadership positions within the entity and establishing institutions that finance it within the Kingdom. Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari had once served as an official representative of the Hamas de-facto administration in Saudi Arabia, but he resigned from the post 10 years ago. Dr Hani al-Khudari is a university professor and has no political affiliation. Both men have had no legal representation since their arrest. Their next court session is scheduled for 5 May 2020. Amnesty International has found that trials before the SCC have failed to adhere to international fair trial standards and that every stage of proceedings involving this court have been characterized by human rights abuses.*

Both men were arbitrarily arrested on 4 April 2019 and remained in detention without charges until 8 March 2020. They were forcibly disappeared for one month after their arrest and held incommunicado and in solitary confinement for the next two months of their detention. A month into Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari's arrest, his wife received a phone call from authorities in Dhahban Prison requesting his medical records. Two weeks prior to his arrest Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari had undergone surgery. There is serious concern for his health as he was detained while he was being treated for cancer. This concern has been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic and the particular threat it poses to older prisoners and those with underlying medical conditions. Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari is currently detained in Al-Hai'r Prison in Riyadh, while his son, Dr. Hani al-Khudari, is detained in Dhahban Prison near Jeddah.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic and Dr Mohammed al-Khudari's poor health, we urge your Majesty to secure his release without delay. We further call on your Majesty to ensure these unfounded charges against Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari and Dr. Hani al-Khudari are dropped and that they are released. In the interim, ensure that both men are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari is immediately granted adequate medical attention.

Yours Sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to information received by Amnesty International, 68 Palestinian, Jordanian and Saudi nationals were divided in several groups at the opening of the mass trial on 8 March 2020. All family members and some legal representatives of the 68 individuals were not allowed into the court session.

Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari is a Palestinian national and a retired doctor and politician, who has been residing in Saudi Arabia for approximately 30 years. Dr. al-Khudari was the official representative in Saudi Arabia of the Hamas de facto authority in Gaza and responsible of coordinating relations between the Hamas de facto authority in Gaza and the government of Saudi Arabia. He resigned from his position and has been inactive for the past 10 years due to his illness.

Dr. Hani al-Khudari is a Palestinian national with no political affiliation. He completed his Ph.D. in computer science and is currently a professor at Um al-Qura University, where he was arrested.

Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari and Dr. Hani al-Khudari have been subjected to gross human rights violations including enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest and detention, being held incommunicado and solitary confinement. Furthermore, both men were interrogated behind closed doors without the presence or participation of their lawyers. Their treatment and conditions of detention placed a great deal of stress and psychological pressure on both men, especially Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari who was reportedly heard crying in his cell every night. The denial of access to adequate medical care has caused further deterioration of the health of Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari, who received a diagnosis while in detention that his cancer had spread. Such conduct violates the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.

Two weeks prior to his arrest, Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari underwent surgery and was being treated, including through radiotherapy, for his cancer. According to the medical reports shared by his family, when discharged from the hospital his treatment required that he regularly take eight different medications. Although he has been allowed access to medical care in jail, the family is concerned that Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari is not getting the adequate medical treatment. The arrests of the two Palestinian nationals is part of a wider crackdown by the Saudi Arabian authorities on Palestinian, Jordanian and Saudi Arabian nationals residing in Saudi Arabia with a perceived link to Hamas de facto authorities. Since February 2019, the Saudi authorities have detained 68 individuals visiting or residing in Saudi Arabia, including students, academics, and businessmen.

Amnesty International has [documented](#) the Saudi Arabian authorities' use of the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC) since 2011 to systematically silence dissent, concluding that SCC judges have presided over grossly unfair trials, handing down prison sentences of up to 30 years and numerous death sentences under vague provisions of the counter-terror and anti-cybercrime laws.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic/English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 15 May 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari (him/his) and Dr. Hani al-Khudari (him/his)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/1571/2019/en/>