

URGENT ACTION

JAIL SENTENCES OF THREE LAWYERS OVERTURNED

Three Saudi Arabian lawyers convicted over messages posted on Twitter deemed offensive to the Ministry of Justice have had their prison sentences quashed by an appeal court.

Three lawyers, **Dr Abdulrahman al-Subaihi**, **Bander al-Nogaithan** and **Abdulrahman al-Rumaih**, had their sentences quashed on 15 April 2015, it has now been confirmed. The Appeal Court of the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC) in the capital, Riyadh, quashed their sentences and overturned their convictions. A social media ban and combined total fine of 1,250,000 Saudi Arabia riyals (about US\$333,000) which had been imposed on the three lawyers prior to their convictions have also been lifted, and their law licences reinstated.

The SCC, which deals with security and terrorism-related offences, had found the three lawyers guilty on 27 October 2014 of violating Article 6 of the cyber-crime law by “impinging on public order” in their tweets. It sentenced Dr Abdulrahman al-Subaihi to eight years in prison, to be followed by a 10-year travel ban, and Bander al-Nogaithan and Abdulrahman al-Rumaih each to five years in prison to be followed by a seven-year travel ban, on charges related to the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression. The court also banned all three for an unspecified length of time from talking or giving interviews to media outlets, and from posting on social media.

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

This is the first update of UA 285/14. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/030/2014/en/>

Names: Dr Abdulrahman al-Subaihi, Bander al-Nogaithan and Abdulrahman al-Rumaih
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 285/14 Index: MDE 23/3340/2016 Issue Date: 27 January 2016