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His Highness Vice President and Prime Minister
Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Prime Minister's Office
P.O. Box: 212000 Dubai
United Arab Emirates (UAE)

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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Open letter to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum from Amnesty International and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute

Your Highness

We are writing to express our grave concern about the continuing imprisonment of human rights lawyer Dr Mohammed al-Roken in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

As we are sure Your Highness is aware, Dr Mohammed al-Roken, 52, is a prominent university professor and human rights lawyer from Dubai. He is one of the most respected human rights lawyers in the Middle East and North Africa region. He is a former member of the International Bar Association and a former president of the UAE's Jurists Association. Dr Mohammed al-Roken was a professor of constitutional law at UAE University before he was forced to stop giving public lectures and has written numerous books and journal articles on human rights and legal matters. He has been a well-respected and prominent figure in the UAE in both the law and academia for over two decades and has acted as advisor to the UAE government on a number of occasions.

Because of his conviction and commitment to advancing the rule of law and human rights, Dr Mohammed al-Roken has worked tirelessly and at great personal cost to protect and promote the rights of others in the UAE.

He has been imprisoned since 17 July 2012 and is presently serving a 10-year prison sentence in Abu Dhabi after he was convicted in July 2013, during a grossly unfair mass trial of 94 individuals, on the charge of "establishing an organization seeking to bring about the government's overthrow" – a charge which he denied in court.

The trial of the "UAE 94" was deeply flawed and unfair and was widely condemned by various UN human rights bodies and international human rights organizations. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has found that the arrest and detention of Dr Mohammed al-Roken and the other prisoners had resulted from the exercise of their rights to opinion and expression and to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It called on the UAE government to release them and provide them with adequate reparation.

Amnesty International and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute consider Dr Mohammed al-Roken a prisoner of conscience; he has been imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and association, including his work as a human rights lawyer defending and promoting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others.

We remind Your Highness of your Government's responsibility to protect the rights of Dr Mohammed al-

Roken and other lawyers in the UAE as they carry out their professional duties, as well as your responsibility to protect their rights to freedom of expression, belief, association, and peaceful assembly.

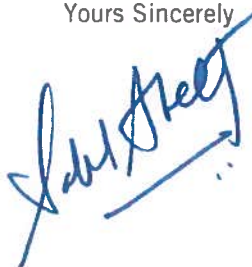
Lawyers play a key role in the administration of justice and the protection of human rights. The UN's Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers states that governments must ensure that lawyers are able to perform their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference. Lawyers must not suffer or be threatened with prosecution or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with their recognized professional duties, standards and ethics. The state has the duty to adequately safeguard lawyers where their security is threatened as a result of discharging their functions.

The Basic Principles also state that lawyers "have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization."

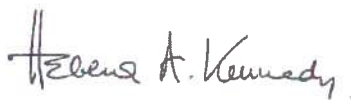
In this regard, we urge Your Highness to use your power to ensure that Dr Mohammed al-Roken is immediately and unconditionally released, that his licence to practice law is reinstated so that he may resume his work as a lawyer, and that he is also permitted to continue teaching law.

Given the fact that Dr Mohammed al-Roken has been unjustly imprisoned since 2012, we would be grateful if you were to treat this matter with the utmost urgency. We look forward to Your Highness' response at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely



Salil Shetty
Secretary General
Amnesty International



Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
Co-Chair
International Bar Association's
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Ambassador Hans Corell
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