

# URGENT ACTION

## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE HELD IN DIRE CONDITIONS

On 7 September 2019, human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor went on hunger strike to protest his detention conditions, and after prison guards beat him. He remained on strike at least until the end of October, with signs of deteriorating health. His conditions have not improved as he remains in solitary confinement, without a mattress or access to fresh air, since his arrest on 20 March 2017.

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

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Your Excellency,

*On 7 September 2019, human rights defender and prisoner of conscience **Ahmed Mansoor** began a hunger strike to protest his prison conditions, and after prison guards beat him. For the first week of his hunger strike, prison guards forced him to eat, but from 14 September and until at least 28 October, Ahmed was on continuous hunger strike, ingesting only fluids. His health has deteriorated both physically and psychologically.*

*Ahmed continues to be denied a mattress, access to books, and to be permitted to go out in a yard to exercise and be exposed to sun light. Since the beginning of his detention on 20 March 2017, the only improvement to his prison conditions is that running water in the isolation ward was made available in October 2019.*

*The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) state that solitary confinement for more than 15 days can amount to torture and other ill-treatment.*

*I urge you to quash Ahmed Mansoor's conviction and sentence and release him immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and association, including through his human rights work. Pending his release, I call on you to ensure that he is detained in conditions that comply with international standards, that he is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment; and has immediate and regular access to his family and any health care he may require.*

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Mansoor was arrested on 20 March 2017, at his home in the emirate of Ajman in the UAE. His trial started a year later before the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court. On 29 May 2018, he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of 1,000,000 Emirati Dirhams (around USD \$270,000). The court also ordered that he be placed under surveillance for three years after his release. He was convicted on charges including "insulting the status and prestige of the UAE and its symbols", including its leaders, "publish[ing] false information to damage [the] UAE's reputation abroad" and "portray[ing] the UAE as a lawless land." He was also charged with "cooperating with a terrorist organisation operating outside the country" but was acquitted on this charge on 31 December 2018 by State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court that upheld his conviction and sentence. Since his arrest, Ahmed has been held in solitary confinement.

On 17 March 2019, Ahmed went on hunger strike to protest his detention conditions in Sadr prison in Abu Dhabi, as well as his unfair trial. He ended his hunger strike in mid-April after the authorities promised to address his demands relating to his detention conditions. He was then allowed a few more family visits and was granted a phone call to his mother.

On 7 May 2019, [seven UN experts](#) condemned Ahmed's prison conditions and called for him to receive medical treatment, for his detention conditions to be improved and for his retrial "in accordance with the fundamental judicial guarantees provided for in international human rights law, or his immediate release."

Ahmed is a blogger, a poet and a prominent human rights defender who received the prestigious Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders in 2015. He is a member of the advisory committee of the NGO Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division, as well as of the advisory board of the organization Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR). He has documented the human rights situation in the UAE since 2006 and has publicly spoken out in defence of human rights on his blog, via social media and in interviews with international media. Ahmed Mansoor is a long standing trusted friend of Amnesty International and other human rights organizations.

Amnesty International has worked very closely with Ahmed Mansoor over the years. Up until his arrest, he was one of the only independent voices still brave enough to speak out against human rights violations from inside the country.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic or English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 29 January 2020

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

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Ahmed Mansoor (he/him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/0441/2019/en>