

URGENT ACTION

AHMED MANSOOR SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

On 29 May, the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) sentenced prominent Emirati human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor to 10 years in prison and a fine of 1,000,000 Emirati Dirham on charges including "insulting the UAE and its symbols". He is a prisoner of conscience.

On 29 May, the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court of Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) capital, sentenced human rights defender **Ahmed Mansoor** to 10 years imprisonment and a fine of 1,000,000 Emirati Dirham (approximately USD \$270,000). The court also ordered placing him under surveillance for three years following his release. Ahmed Mansoor was tried and 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 had also been charged with "cooperating with a terrorist organisation operating outside the country" but was acquitted on this charge.

According to information received by Amnesty international, the trial of Ahmed Mansoor began in March and his second trial session took place on 11 April in a court in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE. A third hearing may have taken place on 9 May but there has been no confirmation of this. On 29 May, the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi issued the verdict and sentence. He can appeal his sentence to the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court. Ahmed Mansoor's whereabouts remain unknown.

According to Amnesty International's information, Ahmed Mansoor has been held in prolonged solitary confinement, which can amount to torture or other ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the UAE authorities to quash the conviction and sentence and release Ahmed Mansoor immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression, including through his human rights work;
- Urging them to disclose, pending his release, his exact whereabouts, and ensure that he is held in an official place of detention and he is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment;
- Calling on them to ensure he has immediate and regular access to a lawyer of his choosing, his family, and any healthcare he may require.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 JULY 2018 TO:

Vice-President and Prime Minister

HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin
Rashid al-Maktoum
Prime Minister's Office
PO Box 212000
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Fax: +971 4 330 4044

Email via web:

<https://uaecabinet.ae/en/contact-the-prime-minister>

Twitter: @HHShkMohd

Salutation: Your Highness

Minister of Interior

Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Zayed Sport City, Arab Gulf Street, Near
to Shaikh Zayed Mosque
PO Box 398
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Fax: +971 2 402 2762/ +971 2 441 5780

Salutation: Your Highness

And copies to:

Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi

HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al
Nahyan
Crown Prince Court
King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz
Al Saud Street,
P.O. Box 124

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Fax: +971 2 668 6622

Twitter: @MohamedBinZayed

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fifth update of UA 200/15. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/8062/2018/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Mansoor is married and the father of four young boys. 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. He has documented the human rights situation in the UAE since 2006 and has spoken out publicly in defence of international human rights in his blog, via social media and in interviews with international media.

Ahmed Mansoor was arrested on 20 March 2017, at his home in the emirate of Ajman in the UAE. Several hours after his arrest, the official state-run news website announced that he was arrested on the orders of the Public Prosecution for Cybercrimes and detained pending further investigation on charges of "using social media [including Twitter and Facebook] sites to publish false and misleading information that harms national unity and social harmony and damages the country's reputation" and "promoting sectarian and hate-incited agenda".

On 28 March 2017, a group of UN human rights experts called on the UAE to release him immediately, describing his arrest as "a direct attack on the legitimate work of human rights defenders in the UAE". They expressed fear that his arrest "may constitute an act of reprisal for his engagement with UN human rights mechanisms, for the views he expressed on social media, including Twitter". See also:

http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21449&LangID=E&_sm_au=iVV5L7PTt6N6VHk6.

On 29 March 2017, the authorities stated that Ahmed Mansoor was held in custody at the Central Prison (al-Wathba prison) in Abu Dhabi; that he had "the freedom to hire a lawyer" and that his family was allowed to visit him. Despite these claims, Ahmed Mansoor's exact place of detention remains unverified. According to Amnesty International's information, he had no access to a lawyer, and has been held in prolonged solitary confinement, which amounts to torture and other ill-treatment. Since his arrest, Ahmed Mansoor has received only two supervised family visits on 3 April and 17 September 2017. Each time he was brought to the Public Prosecution building in Abu Dhabi, where his family met him briefly.

At the end of February 2018, a group of international human rights organizations commissioned two Irish lawyers to travel to Abu Dhabi to seek access to Ahmed Mansoor. The UAE authorities gave the lawyers conflicting information about his whereabouts. The Ministry of Interior, the official body responsible for prisons and prisoners, denied any knowledge of his whereabouts and referred the lawyers to the police. The police also said they had no information about his whereabouts. The lawyers also visited al-Wathba Prison in Abu Dhabi. However, the prison authorities told the lawyers that he was not being held there. See also: *UAE: Joint statement: One year on, award-winning human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor's whereabouts remain unknown* (AI Index: MDE 25/8101/2018), 20 March 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/8101/2018/en/>.

As a result of his human rights work, Ahmed Mansoor has faced repeated intimidation, harassment, physical assault, and death threats from the UAE authorities or their supporters. Since at least 2011, the authorities had placed him under physical and electronic surveillance. His computer and email accounts have been hacked and he foiled an attempted hacking of his iPhone in 2016, which prompted Apple to issue a security update to the smartphone in August 2016.

Name: Ahmed Mansoor

Gender m/f m

Further information on UA: 200/15 Index: MDE 25/8510/2018 Issue Date: 04 June 2018