

URGENT ACTION

SYRIAN REFUGEE AT RISK OF DEPORTATION

On 9 April 2024, Jordanian security forces arrested Syrian refugee, Atiya Mohammad Abu Salem, while he was on his way to film pro-Gaza protests in Amman. His lawyer was told that the authorities issued a deportation order for him to Syria, and he remains in detention at a security centre. Syria is not safe for returns, and if deported, he would be at risk of serious human rights violations. International law requires that the Jordanian authorities must immediately halt his deportation order and release him so long as he has not been charged with a recognised crime, in which case he should be charged and given all due process rights.

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

HE Mazin Abdellah Hilal Al Farayeh
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Arjan Area Behind Regency Hotel
PO Box 100 Amman -11118
Amman, Jordan
Twitter: @moi_jor

Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my grave concern about at the imminent risk of deportation of Syrian refugee Atiya Mohammad Abu Salem, a Syrian journalism student and freelance videographer, who sought refuge in Jordan 12 years ago.

Security forces arrested Atiya Mohammad Abu Salem on 9 April 2024 while he was on his way to film a pro-Gaza protest in the vicinity of the Israeli embassy in al-Rabieh in Amman. Security forces did not inform Atiya of the reasons for his arrest and interrogated him in the absence of a lawyer. According to his lawyer, Atiya was subjected to several human rights violations, including threatening him with deportation and forcing him to unlock his phone for inspection. Atiya was not referred to a judicial body and was not charged with any crime. However, his lawyer was told that the authorities issued a deportation order for him.

A legal aid organisation has appealed Atiya's deportation order on his behalf before the Administrative Court. Syria is not safe for returns. Amnesty International and other human rights organisations consistently document serious violations of human rights of refugees who are illegally returned to Syria, including enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest and torture, at the hands of the government's security forces.

I urge you to ensure that Atiya Mohammad Abu Salem is not deported to Syria and that he be released or appropriately charged with a crime and provided with full due process rights, including access to a lawyer and the ability to challenge his detention. Returning him to Syria would violate the international principle of non-refoulement, which is non-derogable in relation to a risk of torture, and states that governments should not, under any circumstance, deport persons to places where they may be at risk of torture and other serious human rights violations.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Deportations in Jordan fall under the authority of the Ministry of Interior and by law are implemented through a governor's office. Articles 32 and 37 of Law No.24 of 1973 on Residence and Foreigners' Affairs, allow the governor or the Minister of Interior to expel foreigners for their "illegal presence." Article 19 of the same law allows the Minister to cancel a foreigner's residency permit without justification. According to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which Jordan is party to, no State Party shall expel, return ("refouler") or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.

Amnesty International documented how Syrian authorities specifically target people who fled the country upon their return to Syria, subjecting them to torture, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. As such, Amnesty International opposes returns to Syria in all cases except where they are voluntary.

Since 7 October 2023, the Jordanian authorities have arrested at least 1,500 people, including around 500 detained since March following huge protests outside the Israeli Embassy in Amman in March.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English and Arabic.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 13 June 2024.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Atiya Mohammad Abu Salem (He/his).