URGENT ACTION

END THE USE OF MUSIC TO TORTURE PRISONERS

Prisoner of conscience Dr Mohammed al-Roken passed out in his cell in al-Razeen Prison in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 11 November after the prison authorities deliberately broadcast very loud noise, which could amount to torture.

Prisoner of conscience **Dr Mohammed al-Roken** was woken on 11 November by blaring music on the speakers in Abu Dhabi's al-Razeen Prison. He rang the emergency bells in his locked cell, but no one responded, and he passed out. Security guards checking the monitoring cameras fitted in the cells came when they saw him on the floor. As he was unconscious, they took him to the prison clinic in a wheelchair. Dr Mohammed al-Roken was found to have high blood pressure. He was later returned to his cell, in which he is locked from 10pm to 5am. In the morning, the prison authorities started to play loud music again. Dr Mohammed al-Roken felt pain in his ear and was transferred back to the prison clinic where he was diagnosed with an ear infection, which the extremely loud music had exacerbated.

Dr Mohammed al-Roken is serving a 10-year sentence for "attempting to overthrow the government", handed down on 2 July 2013 in the grossly unfair and politically motivated "UAE 94" trial. Several of those tried alongside him alleged and presented evidence of torture and other ill-treatment, but none has been independently investigated. The authorities have not responded to a request by the UN Special Rapporteur on torture to visit the country..

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

- Urging the UAE authorities to ensure that prisoners at al-Razeen Prison are protected from torture and other ill-treatment, including very loud noise, and have access to lawyers of their choosing, their families and any medical attention they may require;
- Urging them to accept the request of Special Rapporteur on torture Juan Mendez to be allowed to visit the UAE and investigate accusations of torture practiced by the State Security;
- Calling on them to release Mohammed al-Roken and all other prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally, as they are held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 JANUARY 2016 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: info@primeminister.ae
Twitter: @HHShkMohd
Salutation: Your Highness

Minister of Interior
Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Ministry of the Interior
Zayer Sport City, Arab Gulf Street, Near to Sheikh Zayed Mosque
PO Box: 398
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Fax: +971 2 402 2762 / +971 2 441 5780
Twitter: @SaifBZayed
Email: (via website):
https://www.moi.gov.ae/en/contactus/contactusform.aspx
Salutation: Your Highness

And copies to:
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi
Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Crown Prince Court
King Abdulaziz Al Saud Street
PO Box: 124
Abu Dhabi, United arab Emirates
Fax: +971 2 668 6622
Twitter: @MBZNews

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.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

URGENT ACTION

END THE USE OF MUSIC TO TORTURE PRISONERS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr Mohammad al-Roken is a prominent human rights lawyer from the emirate of Dubai, and former president of the UAE's Jurists Association. He was arrested in the early hours of 17 July 2012 by State Security officers as he was driving to a Dubai police station to inquire about his son, Rashid Mohammed al-Roken, and his son-in-law, Abdulla al-Hajri, who had been arrested hours earlier. The next day, 17 security officers took him to his house, which they searched and confiscated all the family's computers, iPads, books, magazines, photo albums and all their DVDs, including the children's ones. For the next three months, Dr Mohammed al-Roken was subjected to enforced disappearance and held in solitary confinement at an undisclosed location. He was sentenced in July 2013 to 10 years' imprisonment, followed by three years' probation, at the end of the grossly unfair trial of 94 reform advocates, which became known as the "UAE 94" trial.

Many of the UAE 94 defendants and others standing trial before the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court have alleged in court that they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in pre-trial detention, where they were often held incommunicado for months in secret State Security detention facilities. The State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court has not adequately investigated these allegations, despite mounting evidence that State Security are abusing detainees.

In March 2013, the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review recommended that the UAE "promptly and impartially investigate all allegations of torture, and persecute those responsible for ordering, carrying out or acquiescing in torture or ill-treatment". They also recommended that the UAE "extend an open invitation to the Special Rapporteur on Torture to visit the country". In her report to the Human Rights Council in May 2015, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers reported that she had received credible evidence of torture and other ill-treatment of detainees held incommunicado in secret detention facilities, and underlined that any information obtained as a result of torture or other ill-treatment must not be used as evidence, but must be used by the UAE authorities to prosecute the torturers.

The speakers recently installed in al-Razeen prison broadcast very loud music, including the UAE's national anthem and national pledge of allegiance, intermittently between 10pm and 2am. All 60 prisoners convicted in the same case with Dr Mohammed al-Roken are held at the prison.

In August 2013, 18 prisoners in al-Razeen Prison went on hunger strike in protest at ill-treatment by the prison authorities, including beatings by prison guards and restrictions on family visits. They also complained of being kept in darkness and said the prison authorities had deliberately turned off air-conditioning when the weather was hot. Three prisoners, who had been among the first six to go on hunger strike on 31 July 2013, collapsed between 21 and 28 August. See UA 238/13 for details (http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE25/009/2013/en). At least 10 prisoners of conscience were being ill-treated in al-Razeen Prison in June 2014. See UA 149/14 (https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/013/2014/en/).

The Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan Mendez, asked in October 2015 to be allowed to visit the UAE in the first half of 2016 and investigate accusations of torture practiced by the State Security. The government has not accepted this request or those made by four other Special Rapporteurs.

Amnesty International documented the UAE 94 trial in its November 2014 report *"There is no freedom here" – Silencing dissent in the United Arab Emirates* (http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE25/018/2014/en).

Name: Mohammed al-Roken
Gender m/f: m

UA: 270/15 Index: MDE 25/2944/2015 Issue Date: 27 November 2015