

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# SAUDI ARABIA: HASSAN AL RABEA'S EXTRADITION CONSTITUTES A GRAVE VIOLATION OF MOROCCO'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

Mr. Aziz Akhannouch  
Head of Government of Morocco  
Prime Minister's Office  
Touarga, Rabat

CC: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Residing Abroad; Ministry of Justice; National Human Rights Council

**Subject: Hassan al-Rabea's extradition constitutes a grave violation of Morocco's international obligations**

To the Prime Minister of Morocco, Mr. Akhannouch:

We, the undersigned human rights organisations, write to express our grave concern for the fate of Saudi national Hassan al-Rabea and seek clarification as to why your government approved his extradition to Saudi Arabia.

Al-Rabea arrived in Morocco in June 2022. On January 14, 2023, he was arrested at Marrakesh airport, following the Arab Interior Ministers Council's issuance of a provisional arrest request made by Saudi Arabia. He was wanted on charges of "collaboration with terrorists by having them agree and collaborate with him to get him outside of Saudi Arabia in an irregular fashion," based on article 38 of the 2017 Law on Combating Terrorism Crimes and its Financing, which carries a prison sentence of between 10 to 20 years.

On February 6, 2023, al-Rabea was extradited from Morocco despite repeated civil society calls for his release and non-extradition to Saudi Arabia, where he faces credible risks of persecution and other serious harm, including a risk of torture, for reasons related to his religious beliefs and his family's history of political protests.

We are deeply concerned by Morocco's apparent violation of the principle of *non-refoulement* under international human rights and refugee laws to which Morocco is a party, including the UN and African refugee conventions, the Convention against Torture, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Saudi Arabia's [human rights record](#) is particularly concerning, with due process violations, arbitrary and secret detention, enforced disappearance, torture and capital punishment being rampant practices.

Furthermore, al-Rabea's extradition may violate the Moroccan Code of Criminal Procedure, particularly article 721, which provides that: "extraditions shall not be granted when there are substantial grounds for believing that an extradition request apparently related to an ordinary offence has in fact been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on the grounds of his or her race, religion, nationality or political opinion, or may aggravate this person's situation for any of these reasons."

Al-Rabea's family has long been persecuted by the Saudi authorities: his brother Munir is wanted by the authorities for allegedly protesting in al-Awamiyah in 2011, and his brother Ali Mohammed is currently in detention facing the death penalty following his sentencing in November 2022. Two of al-Rabea's cousins, Hussein al-Rabea and Ahmed al-Rabea, were [executed](#) on April 23, 2019, in a mass [execution](#) of 37 men, 33 of them Shia, who had been convicted following unfair trials for various alleged crimes, including protest-related offences, espionage, and terrorism.

Al-Rabea and his family belong to the Shia minority, which the Saudi authorities have historically discriminated against and subjected to persecution. In fact, many Shia Saudi citizens have been sentenced to long years of imprisonment, have been executed or face the death penalty as a result of unfair trials. Furthermore, Shia Saudis convicted of protest-related

crimes in 2011 gave [confessions](#) allegedly tainted by the practices of torture and ill-treatment, such as beatings and prolonged solitary confinement.

We believe that Hassan's detention and extradition are part of the Saudi authorities' reprisals against the al-Rabea family, and that he is likely to face serious human rights abuses upon his arrival to Saudi Arabia.

Morocco extradited al-Rabea following a favourable opinion of the Court of Cassation issued on February 1, 2023. The Court's decision was issued following a single hearing that appears not to have allowed al-Rabea reasonable time to present his case for protection.

Al-Rabea's extradition represents the continuation of a worrying trend: in 2021, Morocco extradited another Saudi national, Osama al-Hasani. Although the UN Committee against Torture [requested](#) interim measures by suspending his extradition pending the review of his case, al-Hasani was swiftly extradited on board a private plane chartered by Saudi Arabia. On September 3, 2021, it was reported that the Saudi Specialised Criminal Court, known for its politicised and grossly unfair trials, sentenced al-Hasani to four years' imprisonment, despite him being cleared of wrongdoing in the case back in 2018.

In 2016, Morocco acted in accordance with international human rights standards by suspending the extradition of a Syrian national facing extradition to Saudi Arabia after the UN Committee against Torture [raised](#) concerns. Morocco had taken additional steps such as ratifying the Optional Protocol to the UNCAT and establishing a national preventive mechanism. More recently, you have refrained from validating the extradition of Yidiresi Aishan after the Court of Cassation ruled in favour of his extradition to China on December 15, 2021, after several hearings.

In light of the above, we, the undersigned, seek an explanation for the decision to extradite Hassan al-Rabea to Saudi Arabia.

#### **SIGNATORIES:**

Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT-France)  
ALQST for Human Rights  
Amnesty International  
Association Marocaine des Droits Humains (AMDH)  
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)  
Committee for Justice (CFJ)  
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)  
Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor  
European Saudi Organization for Human Rights (ESOHR)  
Freedom Forward  
Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Foundation (HRF)  
Human Rights Watch  
HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement  
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)  
MENA Rights Group  
Moroccan Collective Against the Death Penalty  
Moroccan Collective of Human Rights Instances  
Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)  
Salam for Democracy and Human Rights (Salam DHR)  
The Freedom Initiative  
World Alliance For Citizen Participation (CIVICUS)  
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)