

Richard Mintz

RE: Huffington Post: Trouble in Paradise: How U.S. Ally UAE Crushes Dissent

To: Yousef Al Otaiba

Inbox - Yousef Al Otaiba April 28, 2015 at 9:30 AM

RM

See below.

As director of the Human Rights Defenders program, Brian leads Human Rights First's efforts to ensure that human rights defenders can work free from harm and interference, engaging with the U.S. government and with other partners to end threats and obstacles to human rights work.

For the 20 years prior to joining Human Rights First, Brian worked for U.S., Irish and international NGOs. Most recently, Brian led Amnesty International's work on partnering with national NGOs in the global South. Brian has also worked as Head of Media for Amnesty International in London and in Dublin, and as Director of Communications for Public Citizen in Washington, D.C. He is the author of several books about civil rights and U.S. politics, and had early experience on the Hill, interning for Senator Edward Kennedy in the mid-80s as a legislative researcher, contributing to what ultimately became the 1986 Anti-Apartheid Act. Before that, he lived and worked as an English teacher and community organizer in a black township in South Africa in 1981-82, which was prohibited under apartheid's racial segregation laws.

Brian has an MPhil in Government and Politics from The Open University in London, and a B.A. with honors in Political Science from the University of East Anglia.

From: Yousef Al Otaiba [mailto:otaiba7@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 12:27 PM

To: Richard Mintz

Subject: RE: Huffington Post: Trouble in Paradise: How U.S. Ally UAE Crushes Dissent

Do we know who Brian Dooley is?

From: richard.mintz@harbourgrp.com

To: otaiba7@hotmail.com; omar@uaembassy-usa.org; DAlfaham@uaembassy-usa.org

CC: matthew.triaca@harbourgrp.com

Subject: Huffington Post: Trouble in Paradise: How U.S. Ally UAE Crushes Dissent

Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2015 16:18:04 +0000

FYI. (Note – this is on HuffPo.)

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brian-dooley/trouble-in-paradise-how-u_b_7159726.html

Trouble in Paradise: How U.S. Ally UAE Crushes Dissent

By Brian Dooley

28 April 2015

Huffington Post (Blog)

Abu Dhabi - Backed by an impressively lavish lobbying and PR machine - more expensive than any other middle eastern country - the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is eager to show that it's a safe and stable business environment, and a dependable U.S. military ally. "United in Security" with the U.S., declared the UAE state media this week, reminding readers it's the "only Arab country to join the U.S. on six military operations over the last 25 years" (First Gulf war, Afghanistan, Somalia, Kosovo, Libya and ISIL).

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan met with President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Defense Secretary Carter in Washington last Monday to discuss, according to him, "new steps to enhance the already deep security between the U.S. and the UAE."

Sheikh Mohammed is a regular visitor to DC, commanding red carpet treatment and access to the highest possible levels of the U.S. government. He is likely to be back in a couple of weeks representing UAE at the Camp David conference of Gulf leaders.

He's also head of the feared state security system, the UAE's Stasi, which regularly suppresses freedom of speech and ruthlessly suffocates civil society voices of those who are critical of the regime. In recent months, the attacks on dissidents have intensified. In November 2014 the UAE cabinet announced a list of 83 "terrorist organizations." These included two American NGOs, the Council on Islamic-American Relations and the Muslim American Society.

Previously tolerated local civil society organizations have been disbanded, including the Association of Teachers and the Association of Jurists. Former heads of the Jurists Association are now political prisoners, including renowned constitutional scholar Dr. Mohammed al Roken. He's one of

☆ Yousef Al Otaiba

Sent - Yousef Al Otaiba November 28, 2011 at 6:59 AM

YO

Re: Al Arabiya: UAE president pardons jailed internet activists
To: Elliott Abrams

Agreed. And not a word from the human rights groups so far.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

-----Original Message-----

From: Elliott Abrams <EAbrams@cfr.org>

Date: Mon, 28 Nov 2011 14:57:38

To: <otaiba7@hotmail.com>

Subject: FW: Al Arabiya: UAE president pardons jailed internet activists

Smart smart smart.

UAE president pardons jailed internet activists

Monday, 28 November 2011

By Al Arabiya with Agencies

Dubai

Five Emirati Internet activists, jailed for up to three years over charges including insulting the Gulf state's leaders, have been pardoned, their lawyer said on Monday.

"An official has informed me that a presidential pardon has been issued to release them," Mohammed al-Roken said a day after the five activists were sentenced by the Federal Supreme Court.

"The order has been delivered to al-Wathba prison and it is being processed to release them," he said, adding he hoped they would be freed by the end of the day.

The top court in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday handed blogger Ahmed Mansoor a three-year prison sentence, while four others each received two years each.

Mansoor, a communications engineer, was accused of running a website that gave Nasser bin Ghaith who lectures at the Abu Dhabi branch of the Sorbonne University, and activists Fahid Salim Dalk, Hassan Ali Khamis and Ahmed Abdul Khaleq, a venue to express anti-government views. The court ordered the website closed.

The five, who were arrested in April, were accused of using the Internet to insult UAE leaders, of calling for a boycott of September's Federal National Council elections and over anti-government demonstrations.

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.

For more information please visit <http://www.symanteccloud.com>

☆ Yousef Al Otaiba
RE: urgent request please
To: humanrightsuk@aol.com

Sent - Yousef Al Otaiba November 11, 2011 at 12:57 PM

YO

Unfortunately sir I do not have access to any details on this case. Its being kept close hold.

To: otaiba7@hotmail.com
Subject: urgent request please
From: humanrightsuk@aol.com
Date: Fri, 11 Nov 2011 11:58:16 -0500

Excellency,

I will appreciate if some details on the arrest in April of Ahmed Mansoor, Nasser bin Chaith, Fahad Salim Dalk, Ahmed Abdul-Khaleq, and Hassan Ali al-Khamis may please be send to me on urgent basis. The five UAE Nationals are charged under article 176 of the penal code.

One of the US human rights organisation has contacted me and as per their report the UAE court has not allowed the defendants to review the evidence and charges against them even the court did not allow defencee lawyers to cross-examine prosecution witness and did not provide sufficient time to cross-examine.

As per them; without explanation, the UAE authorities closed the first four hearings to the general public, human rights defenders, journalists, international observers, and the families of the accused persons. On multiple occasions, the court has denied or failed to rule on motions to release the defendants on bail, even though none of the defendants are charged with a violent offense, and authorities have not suggested that they pose a flight risk.

Regards

AB

☆ Yousef Al Otaiba

Sent - Yousef Al Otaiba September 21, 2011 at 2:20 PM

YO

Re: UAE: Free Activists Before Elections
To: Judith Miller

It was great to see you too, thanks for coming. Glad you got a brief chance to chat with our foreign minister.

They are using the term 'activists' very loosely.

And HRW came to our embassy and blackmailed us. Basically said that if they weren't allowed to observe the trial they would turn up the heat on us.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

-----Original Message-----

From: Judith Miller <judymillerfreespeech@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, 21 Sep 2011 21:10:52
To: <otaiba7@hotmail.com>
Subject: Fw: UAE: Free Activists Before Elections

Yousef, great shindig last night.
And I assume you have a different take on these democracy activists?
Looking forward to seeing you when things calm down in our fair city.
Judy

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/22/uae-free-activists-elections>

For Immediate Release

UAE: Free Activists Before Elections
International Rights Groups Seek to Monitor Trial

(Dubai, September 22, 2011) - Emirati authorities should immediately drop all charges against five activists imprisoned after calling for greater political rights and freedoms and free them ahead of national elections on September 24, 2011, four international human rights organizations said today. Amnesty International, the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI), Front Line Defenders, and Human Rights Watch have requested permission to attend the trial of the five if it resumes as scheduled on September 26 in Abu Dhabi's Federal Supreme Court.

The renewed call to free the activists comes five months after authorities arrested them and later charged them with "publicly insulting" the United Arab Emirates president and other top officials.

"These activists remain in jail and on trial solely for peacefully expressing their political views and calling for greater democratic freedoms," said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "Continuing this sham trial two days after elections undermines any claim that UAE authorities really want to expand political participation in the country."

The four rights groups have asked the authorities to allow two independent legal observers to monitor the closed hearings. The authorities have not yet responded to the request.

"It's not enough that people can go out and vote," added Rawda Ahmed, deputy executive director of ANHRI. "They must be free to have a say in the political process without fear of being jailed."

The five activists, whose trial opened on June 14, are: Ahmed Mansoor, an engineer and blogger who is also a member of Human Rights Watch's Middle East advisory committee and of ANHRI's network; Nasser bin Ghaith, an economist, university lecturer, and advocate of political reform; and online activists Fahad Salim Dalk, Ahmed Abdul-Khaleq, and Hassan Ali al-Khamis.

The five are charged under article 176 of the Penal Code, which makes it a crime to publicly insult top officials. Mansoor and bin Ghaith are also accused of having used the online political forum UAE Hewarto "conspire against the safety and security of the State in association with foreign powers."

The rights groups said that the government has presented no legitimate evidence to support these allegations.

None of the messages allegedly posted by the accused to the now banned UAE Hewarto site do more than criticize government policy or political leaders, said the four human rights groups, which have reviewed the posts. There is no evidence that the men used or incited violence in the course of their political activities.

"The comments for which these men are being tried do not constitute an internationally recognizable criminal offence, yet they are being tried behind closed doors in a court from which there is no right to appeal," said Malcolm Smart, Middle East and North Africa director at Amnesty International. "UAE authorities should end this travesty of justice and release the five now and unconditionally."

Mansoor faces additional charges of inciting others to break the law, calling for an election boycott, and calling for demonstrations. In March, shortly before his arrest, he publicly supported a petition signed by more than 130 people advocating universal, direct elections for the Federal National Council (FNC), a government advisory board, and to give the body legislative powers.

Since his arrest, UAE authorities have increased the number of eligible voters for the FNC elections to 129,000, from about 7,000 in the previous election in 2006. Voters will choose only 20 of the 40 FNC seats; the rulers of the seven emirates appoint the other half.

Reports suggest that in trial sessions held to date, the Supreme Court has not allowed defense lawyers to question one of the four state witnesses and allocated insufficient time to question the other three. According to a letter smuggled out of prison in late August and signed by four of the activists, the activists said that procedural flaws have led them to be "certain that we have not and will not obtain a fair trial, which every defendant deserves." In the letter, the activists demanded that the court cease trying them in secret and allow observers and citizens to attend the hearings. They also urged the court to release them on bail, allow them to review the charge sheet against them, and allow their lawyers to do their job in court and question prosecution witnesses.

After the letter's release, bin Ghaith, one of the signatories, complained that prison authorities encouraged inmates to harass him. After an altercation with another prisoner, prison authorities chained him in solitary confinement in a cell without air conditioning despite the 40-degree heat.

"Regardless of their innocence or guilt, prison authorities have a duty to protect the activists and not abuse them," said Andrew Anderson, deputy director of Front Line Defenders. "The alleged ill-treatment of bin Ghaith is unacceptable and should be thoroughly investigated, with those responsible held to account."

For more information, please contact:

For Human Rights Watch, in Dubai, Samer Muscati (English): +971-509237654; or

muscats@hrw.org <<https://mail.hrw.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=c12494b4c72a45069613dc92eae21921&URL=mailto%3Amuscats%40hrw.org>>

For Amnesty International, in London, the press office: +44-20-7413-5566; or james.lync@amnesty.org <<https://mail.hrw.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=c12494b4c72a45069613dc92eae21921&URL=mailto%3Apress%40amnesty.org>>

For the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, in Cairo, the press office: +20-223964058; or rawdaahmed@anhri.net <<https://mail.hrw.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=2dc592aa5a964be58ceea7f138ad5d698&URL=mailto%3Arawdaahmed%40anhri.net>>

For Front Line Defenders, in Dublin, Jim Loughran: +353-1-212-3750; or

jim@frontlinedefenders.org <<https://mail.hrw.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=c12494b4c72a45069613dc92eae21921&URL=mailto%3Ajim%40frontlinedefenders.org>>

Lana Nusseibeh

Re: UN rights experts urge UAE: "Immediately release Human Rights Defender Ahmed Mansoor"
To: Yousef Al Otaiba Cc: SGargash@uaeembassy-usa.org, Shaima Hussain Gargash

Inbox - Yousef Al Otaiba March 28, 2017 at 7:33 AM

LN

She did thanks last week just sharing back :)

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 28, 2017, at 8:17 AM, Yousef Al Otaiba <otaiba7@hotmail.com> wrote:

Shaima,

Please share the statement we issued with Lana and her team. Our statement addresses much of the false claims in this statement.

From: Lana Nusseibeh
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 8:15 AM
To: otaiba7
Cc: SGargash@uaeembassy-usa.org; Shaima Hussain Gargash
Subject: Fwd: UN rights experts urge UAE: "Immediately release Human Rights Defender Ahmed Mansoor"

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laura Coquard-Patry <research6.ny@mofaic.gov.ae>
Date: March 28, 2017 at 7:42:35 AM EDT
To: Lana Nusseibeh <lana.nusseibeh@mofaic.gov.ae>; Saod Rashid Alwali AlMazrooei <s_almazrooei@mofaic.gov.ae>; Majid Mohammed Al Mutawa <majid.almutawa@mofaic.gov.ae>; "Daniel A. Berghelm" <senioradvisor.ny@mofaic.gov.ae>; Hamed AIGHazali <research3.ny@mofaic.gov.ae>; Laila Manji <lm@macroadvisorypartners.com>; Ruba Shweihat <specialassistant.ny@mofaic.gov.ae>
Subject: UN rights experts urge UAE: "Immediately release Human Rights Defender Ahmed Mansoor"

See press release below

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: UN Human Rights <media@ohchr.org>
Date: March 28, 2017 at 3:48:22 AM EDT
To: Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_Geneva <Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_Geneva@ohchr.org>; Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_New_York <Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_New_York@ohchr.org>; Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_Field <Staff_Messaging_For_OHCHR_Field@ohchr.org>; Staff_Messaging_For_Peace_Mission_HR_Components <Staff_Messaging_For_Peace_Mission_HR_Components@ohchr.org>; "Special Procedures Mandate Holders" <special_procedures_mandate_holders@ohchr.org>
Subject: NEWS RELEASE - UN rights experts urge UAE: "Immediately release Human Rights Defender Ahmed Mansoor"

NEWS RELEASE



UN rights experts urge UAE: "Immediately release Human Rights Defender Ahmed Mansoor"

GENEVA (28 March 2017) – United Nations rights experts* are urging the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to immediately release the renowned human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor, who was arrested last week.

Mr. Mansoor, who is 47 and married with four children, was taken away in the early hours of 20 March by security agents who broke into his home. His whereabouts remain unknown, and there is no information on whether any charges have been brought against him.

"We regard Mr. Mansoor's arrest and detention as a direct attack on the legitimate work of human rights defenders in the UAE," the experts said. "Mr. Mansoor's outstanding work in the protection of human rights and the advancement of democracy, as well as his transparent collaboration with UN mechanisms, is of great value not only for the UAE but for the whole region," they emphasized.

"We fear that his arrest and secret detention may constitute an act of reprisal for his engagement with UN human rights mechanisms, for the views he expressed on social media, including Twitter, as well as for being an active member of organizations such as the Gulf Centre for Human Rights, and an active supporter of others, including Human Rights Watch."

The experts urged the authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts of Mr. Mansoor, a recent winner of the Martin Ennals Prize for human rights, stressing that secret detention is a form of enforced disappearance. They also gave a warning that "the fact that Mr. Mansoor is being held in an unknown location puts him at serious risk of ill treatment and torture."

They stressed that: "The lack of an arrest warrant or any judicial oversight of his arrest and detention, represents a breach of fundamental principles of due process under international human rights law."

The UN rights experts are also urging the Emirati authorities to end the harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders in the UAE, and to respect the right of everyone to freedom of opinion and expression, including on social media and the internet.

ENDS

(*) The UN rights experts: *The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Mr. Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Mr. David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and Mr. Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association.*

Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures' experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

For more information and press inquiries, please contact Ms. Amanda Flores (+41 22 917 9790 / aflores@ohchr.org) or write to Ms. Lucía de la Sierra (+41 22 917 9741 / ldelasierra@ohchr.org)

For media inquiries related to other UN independent experts:
Bryan Wilson, UN Human Rights – Media Unit (+ 41 22 917 9826 / Mediaconsultant1@ohchr.org)

You can access this news release online