

URGENT ACTION

EMIRATI SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS' IMPRISONMENT

Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment by the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 14 November 2016.

Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih (also known as al-Suwaidi) was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment followed by three years' probation by the State Security Chamber of the UAE Federal Supreme Court on 14 November 2016 in an unfair trial, with no right of appeal. He was found guilty of having joined al-Islah, an organisation the government claims is linked to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

The trial began on 28 March 2016, 101 days after he was forcibly deported from Indonesia to the UAE and disappeared by Emirati authorities. During the hearing, the judge reopened the 2013 trial of 94 UAE nationals (the "UAE 94" case) under which Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih had been convicted in absentia in July 2013 to 15 years' imprisonment on charges including "establishing and managing an organisation under the name of "Dawat al-Islah" [or al-Islah] which aims to oppose the fundamental principles of the state; "cooperating with the defendants in the July 2013 case [also known as the UAE 94 case]"; and "communicating with the international organisation of the Muslim Brotherhood, requesting their help and experience." The judge quashed the conviction so that he could be re-tried. He was then tried again on the same charges.

A total of 69 out of the 94 defendants in the UAE 94 case were convicted after a grossly unfair mass trial, in which 71 defendants had complained of torture and other ill-treatment while in detention. They had no right to appeal the verdict and sentences. Those convicted included prisoners of conscience.

Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih was detained by Indonesian authorities on 20 October 2015 for possession of false identity papers in Indonesia. He was made to board a private plane bound for the UAE and forcibly deported on 18 December 2015. His whereabouts after this date were unknown until he appeared in court on 28 March 2016.

On 29 November 2016, Federal Law No.11/ 2016 concerning the Federal Judicial Authority came into force. The law introduced an appeals procedure for cases relating to state security. However, this appeals procedure does not apply to Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih's case, as it came in to force after his conviction and does not apply retroactively.

Abdulrahman Bin Sobeih is not eligible for an appeal as Federal Law No.11/ 2016 concerning the Federal Judicial Authority came into force after his conviction and does not apply retroactively.

In light of this, Amnesty International will continue to monitor the case for any further developments and opportunities for influence, and reopen the action if necessary but for now no further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 4/16. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/3796/2016/en/

Further information on UA: 4/16 Index: MDE 25/5869/2017 Issue Date: 14 March 2017

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