

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE ARBITRARILY DETAINED EDUCATION EXPERT

Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi, a Yemeni education expert and trainer, has been arbitrarily detained by the Huthi de facto authorities since 10 October 2023 in Sana'a, Yemen. On 1 September 2024, a Huthi-affiliated TV featured him in what was portrayed as a "confession" video indicating that he was a member of "a spying network" aimed at targeting the education sector in Yemen. If charged with spying, Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi would face the death penalty. Since his arrest, Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi was subjected to a litany of human rights violations including enforced disappearance, incommunicado detention and denial of his right to legal counsel. He was held in solitary confinement for at least three months, which constitutes ill-treatment and may amount to torture. He must be immediately released.

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

Ansarullah Spokesperson Mohamed Abdelsalam

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Dear Mohamed Abdelsalam,

We are extremely concerned about the recent developments on the case of Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi, a 49-year-old education expert and trainer on the rights of the child, peace building, dialogue and nonviolent communication, who has been arbitrarily detained since 10 October 2023 at the Huthi-run security and intelligence detention centre in Sana'a. Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi was featured in a video published on 1 September 2024, which the Huthi portrayed as a "confession" video indicating that he was a member of a "a spying network" aimed at targeting the education sector in Yemen.

The video, which was broadcasted on Al Masirah TV, a Huthi-affiliated channel, and examined by Amnesty International, featured four detainees including Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi, who were all framed as part of "a spying network" enabling and facilitating the destruction of the education sector in Yemen by the US.

However, to date, Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi has not been transferred to the prosecution or formally charged and is still denied his right to legal counsel. If charged with spying, he would face the death penalty under Yemeni criminal law.

Huthis have a track record of using torture to extract confessions, raising fears that detainees, including Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi, may have been coerced into making the statements recorded in these videos. Broadcasting forced "confessions" undermines detainees' rights to the presumption of innocence and to not self-incriminate.

Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi was arrested by Huthi security and intelligence forces on 10 October 2023 as he was on his way to Ibb governorate in Southern Yemen to give an education training to education staff of local schools. According to a family member, security and intelligence forces then raided his house on the same day without a warrant and confiscated two mobile phones, two iPad tablets and work-related papers. They refused to tell the family the reason for their raid or disclose the whereabouts of Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi.

Following his arrest, Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi was subjected to enforced disappearance for 21 days, until the security and intelligence service department acknowledged to the family that he was held at the security and intelligence detention centre in Sana'a, where he remains to date. According to a family member, he was then held incommunicado for two weeks before he was allowed to call his family on 15 November 2023. He was held in prolonged solitary confinement for at least three months in violation of the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

We urge the Huthi de facto authorities to immediately release Moujib al-Mikhlaflafi. Pending his release, the authorities must ensure he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that he has access to legal counsel, regular family contact and adequate healthcare.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Moujib al-Mikhlaifi is an education expert and trainer who has been working at the Ministry of Education in Sana'a for 24 years until he was detained on 10 October 2023. His work included trainings targeting education staff at schools on the rights of the child, peacebuilding and conflict resolution, dialogue and nonviolent communication.

Following his arrest, his family submitted an appeal to the head of the Supreme Political Council and the head of the security and intelligence service, and a complaint to the head of the legal unit at the office of the Huthi leader Abdul Malik al-Huthi; they have not received a response to date. Arbitrary detention violates the Yemeni Criminal Procedure Law and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Yemen is a state party.

His family's concerns about his health mounted after they learned, in March 2024, that his health was deteriorating. Moujib al-Mikhlaifi suffers from pre-existing health conditions including diabetes and high blood pressure. According to Amnesty International's research, detainees at the Huthi-run security and intelligence detention centres are often held in horrific and punitive conditions and are denied access to adequate healthcare.

On 10 June 2024, the Huthi security and intelligence service announced the "discovery" of what they called "a spying network". Since then, they have been broadcasting a series of videos on the Huthi-affiliated Al Masira TV featuring a number of detainees "confessing" to spying. Moujib al-Mikhlaifi was featured in one of those videos, published on 1 September 2024 and titled "The US targeting of education in Yemen".

Since 2015, Amnesty International has documented scores of cases involving journalists, human rights defenders, political opponents and members of religious minorities who were subjected to unfair trials before the Sana'a based Specialized Criminal Court on trumped up spying charges, which are mandatorily punishable by death under Yemeni law. In all these cases, the Huthis' prosecution authorities appeared to have brought the spying charges as means to persecute political opponents and silence peaceful dissent.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic and English.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 25 December 2024.

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Moujib al-Mikhlaifi (he/him).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/8037/2024/en/>.

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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