

# URGENT ACTION

## LIFT MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI'S TRAVEL BAN

On 7 January 2025, human rights defender and former prisoner of conscience, Mohammed al-Qahtani, was conditionally released after spending 12 years in prison for his human rights work. Mohammed al-Qahtani finished serving his unjust 10-year prison sentence in 2022, yet he remained detained until this year. He was forcibly disappeared for two years, from October 2022 to November 2024. Mohammed al-Qahtani is the co-founder of the now disbanded Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), formerly one of Saudi Arabia's few independent human rights organizations. Mohammed al-Qahtani is now serving a 10-year travel ban, imposed as part of his sentence, which keeps him separated from his family who are based in the US. Saudi Arabian authorities must immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Mohammed al-Qahtani.

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

*Walid bin Mohammad AISama'ani*  
Minister of Justice  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Postal Code 11472, P.O. Box 7775  
Email: 1950@moj.gov.sa

Your Excellency,

*I am relieved that Mohammed al-Qahtani, human rights defender and co-founder of the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), has been released from prison, yet dismayed to learn that Mohammed al-Qahtani is unable to reunite with his family in the United States due to the 10-year travel ban imposed on him as part of his sentence.*

*Mohammed al-Qahtani's trial began in March 2012, when he was summoned for interrogation regarding his human rights activism with ACPRA. On 9 March 2013, the Criminal Court in Riyadh sentenced him to 10 years in prison to be followed by a travel ban of equal length on charges including "breaking allegiance to the ruler", "questioning the integrity of officials", "inciting disorder by calling for demonstrations" and "instigating international organizations against the Kingdom." The court also ordered the disbanding of ACPRA, confiscation of its property and the closure of its social media accounts.*

*Mohammed al-Qahtani was forcibly disappeared between 24 October 2022 and 3 November 2024, before his release from prison on 7 January 2025. He had completed his ten-year prison sentence in 2022. During the period of his enforced disappearance, Mohammed al-Qahtani suffered a serious deterioration in his vision. A doctor had ordered an eye surgery for him, but it was postponed four times throughout his detention.*

*I urge you to immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Mohammed al-Qahtani and thus allowing him to be reunited with his family. Saudi authorities must also release all human rights defenders and activists unjustly detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association.*

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In March 2012, Mohammed al-Qahtani and Dr. Abdullah al-Hamid, founders of the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), which was established in 2009, were interrogated for their human rights work. In March 2013, they were sentenced to 10 and 11 years in prison, respectively. Dr. Abdullah al-Hamid suffered from a stroke on 9 April 2020 and [remained in detention](#), despite being in a coma in the intensive care unit at al-Shumaisi Hospital in Riyadh. He later [died](#) on 24 April 2021.

Mohammed al-Bajadi, also one of the 11 founding members of ACPRA, was arrested in March 2011 and tried before the notorious [Specialized Criminal Court](#) for attending a peaceful protest outside the Ministry of Interior in Riyadh. In April 2012, he was sentenced to four-years in prison followed by a five-year travel ban based on a range of charges linked to his peaceful human rights activism. After being released and re-arrested on multiple occasions, Mohammed al-Bajadi was detained once again in May 2018 and remains in detention without charge or trial.

Members of the now disbanded ACPRA have been extensively targeted by the Saudi Arabian authorities over the past decade. ACPRA has reported on human rights violations and helped families of detainees held without charge to bring cases against the Ministry of Interior before the Board of Grievances, an administrative court with jurisdiction to consider complaints against the state and its public services.

As of January 2025, Amnesty International has documented the cases of 85 individuals who had been prosecuted since 2013 solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, including human rights defenders, peaceful political activists, journalists, poets and clerics, in Saudi Arabia. Amnesty International is aware that the real number of such prosecutions is likely much higher.

Amnesty International [documented](#) the use of travel bans against activists and human rights defenders following their release from prison. Arbitrary travel bans are also sometimes imposed without a court order, with people only finding out about it when they try to travel and are turned back by Saudi Arabian authorities at airports or border crossings. These bans also affect family members of Saudi activists, who may live abroad, preventing them from reuniting.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic and English.

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 5 August 2025.

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

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Mohammed al-Qahtani (he/him).

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/6180/2022/en/>.

## ADDITIONAL TARGETS

His Excellency Hrh Prince Khalid Bin Bandar Bin Sultan Al-Saud  
*Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary*  
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia  
15 Curzon Street, London W1J 5HW  
30 Charles Street, Mayfair, London, W1J 5DZ.  
15-16 Queen Street, London W1J 5PQ  
020 7917 3000  
Salutation: Your Excellency

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Mohammed Bin Salman Al Saud is the Prime Minister and Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, and the de facto ruler of the country. He is not present on social media but could be reached at:

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