

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST RELEASED

**Saudi Arabian prisoner of conscience, Issa al-Nukheifi, was released after serving a prison sentence for his human rights activism.**

Prisoner of conscience, **Issa al-Nukheifi**, a human rights activist and member of the independent Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), was released on 6 April after serving his prison sentence of three years and eight months. He remains banned from travelling for four years and from using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Issa al-Nukheifi was arrested on 15 September 2012, three weeks after he appeared on TV accusing the local authorities in the south-western region of Jazan of corruption and numerous human rights violations, especially forcibly evacuating residents of the border areas of Jazan with northern Yemen in 2009. He was detained for five months before his case was moved first to the Criminal Court in Mecca, which refused to try him, and later to the Specialized Criminal Court in Riyadh, which sentenced him to three years in prison and a four-year travel ban on 29 April 2013, mainly for violating Article 6 of the Anti-cyber Crime Law. The court also ordered that his Facebook and Twitter accounts be closed down. The appeal judge at the same court told him in June 2013 that his conviction had been upheld and his sentence increased by eight months.

During his detention, Issa al-Nukheifi suffered from a medical condition related to his blood circulation, believed to have been caused by torture and other ill-treatment, and for which he was denied adequate medical attention. For most of his time in prison he was kept in tight handcuffs and leg irons, sometimes for hours at a time, which might have directly caused his medical condition. He was moved several times to different prisons and had complained of torture and other ill-treatment, such as being kept in solitary confinement for two weeks and being intentionally exposed to cold temperature without adequate clothing. He had also claimed that the authorities used convicted criminals to punish and even attempt to kill him for helping other prisoners, and that he was subjected to constant verbal abuse and almost daily strip-searches. He was allowed only limited access to his family.

**No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.**

This is the first update of UA 35/15. Further information: [www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/0017/2015/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/0017/2015/en/)

Name: Issa al-Nukheifi

Gender m/f: m

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