

# URGENT ACTION

## DR NASSER BIN GHAITH'S CASE ADJOURNED AGAIN

**Dr Nasser bin Ghaith appeared before the State Security Chamber of the Supreme Court in Abu Dhabi on 20 June for his fourth hearing. The case has been adjourned until 26 September. He is a prisoner of conscience and faces charges relating solely to the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and association.**

On 20 June **Dr Nasser bin Ghaith**, a prominent academic and economist, had his fourth trial session before the State Security Chamber of the Supreme Court. The court heard the testimonies of prosecution witnesses, including an officer from the State Security and another from the Department of Criminal Laboratory, tasked with examining electronic equipment. During a limited cross-examination of the witnesses Dr Nasser bin Ghaith's lawyer was interrupted when he raised questions in relation to the charge of "communicating and co-operating with members of the banned al-Islah organization". This charge relates to meetings between Dr Nasser bin Ghaith, Dr Mohammed al-Roken, one of the "UAE 94", and Amnesty International's Secretary General in December 2011. The judge did not grant Dr Nasser bin Ghaith permission to speak in court and he has not been allowed to meet with his lawyer since the previous hearing on 23 May. In June Dr Nasser bin Ghaith was transferred to al-Sadr prison in Abu Dhabi.

The Prosecution attempted to draw a connection between Dr Nasser bin Ghaith and Hassan al-Doqqi, the Secretary General of the Emirates Ummah Party, who is on trial in the same case. This included an email sent by Hassan al-Doqqi to Dr Nasser bin Ghaith in 2012 asking him for advice prior to establishing the party, which, when questioned, one of the witnesses confirmed that Dr Nasser bin Ghaith had not responded to. No independent investigation into the allegations of enforced disappearance and torture and other ill-treatment made by Dr Nasser bin Ghaith at his first and second hearings has yet been initiated.

### **Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Dr Nasser bin Ghaith as he is detained solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly;
- Calling on them to order a full and independent investigation into his allegations of enforced disappearance and torture and other ill-treatment, and to ensure that any proceedings against him exclude statements extracted from him under torture and other ill-treatment or while subjected to enforced disappearance;
- Urging them to ensure that, while he is detained, Dr Nasser bin Ghaith is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and has regular access to a lawyer of his choice and his family.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 AUGUST 2016 TO:**

Vice-President and Prime Minister  
 HH Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid al-Maktoum  
 Prime Minister's Office  
 PO Box: 212000  
 Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
 Fax: +971 4 330 4044  
 Email: [info@primeminister.ae](mailto:info@primeminister.ae)  
 Twitter: @HHShkMoh  
**Salutation: Your Highness**

Minister of Interior  
 Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
 Zayed Sport City, Arab Gulf Street, Near  
 to Shaikh Zayed Mosque  
 PO Box: 398, Abu Dhabi  
 United Arab Emirates  
 Fax: +971 2 402 2762 / +971 2 441 5780  
 Email: [moi@moi.gov.ae](mailto:moi@moi.gov.ae)  
**Salutation: Your Highness**

### **And copies to:**

Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi  
 HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
 Crown Prince Court  
 King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz  
 Al Saud Street,  
 PO Box: 124  
 Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
 Fax: +971 2 668 6622  
 Twitter: @MBZNews

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** HIS EXCELLENCY MR ABDULRAHMAN GHANEM ALMUTAIWEE CVO, Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, 30 Prince's Gate, London SW7 1PT, 020 7581 1281, email [pressuk@mofa.gov.ae](mailto:pressuk@mofa.gov.ae)

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 183/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE25/4069/2016/en/>

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## DR NASSER BIN GHAITH'S CASE ADJOURNED AGAIN

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr Nasser bin Ghaith was subjected to enforced disappearance on 18 August 2015, kept in secret detention and subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. He raised this with the judge at two hearings on 4 April and 2 May 2016. He told the court that, over nearly eight months, UAE officials held him in secret detention and tortured him by both beating and depriving him of sleep. The judge dismissed these allegations and did not order an independent investigation into his allegations of torture and other ill-treatment. He was transferred to al-Sadr Prison in Abu Dhabi in June 2016.

Dr Nasser bin Ghaith faces several charges including: "committing a hostile act against a foreign state", in relation to comments he made on Twitter criticizing the government of Egypt; "posting false information in order to harm the reputation and stature of the State and one of its institutions", based on comments he made on Twitter stating that he had not been given a fair trial in a case known as the "UAE 5" case; "posting false information" about UAE leaders and their policies; "offensively criticizing the construction of a Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi and inciting UAE citizens against their leaders and government", in reference to a Twitter posting that he told the court had been misinterpreted and had been intended to promote tolerance. Finally, he is charged with "communicating and co-operating with members of the banned al-Islah organization" because of meetings he had with individuals who were tried in the "UAE 94" case; and with "communicating and co-operating with the banned Emirates Ummah Party". Amnesty International has reviewed a selection of Nasser bin Ghaith's tweets prior to his arrest and none of them advocated violence or hatred.

In November 2013 Dr Nasser bin Ghaith was invited by the Emirates Ummah Party to give a speech on Islamic economy to its members. Dr Nasser bin Ghaith has no formal affiliation to this party, which was designated by the UAE as a "terrorist organization" in November 2014. On 1 May 2016 the Emirates Ummah Party announced that he had been named as the Chairman of the party. The family of Dr Nasser immediately issued a statement on his behalf refuting this announcement. During his detention, Dr Nasser bin Ghaith told his interrogators that the Ummah Party had offered him the chairmanship of the party and that he had declined this offer.

In 2011 Dr Nasser bin Ghaith and four Emiratis (known as the "UAE 5") were tried for statements they had made on the UAE Hewan website, which was an on-line political discussion forum. The authorities prosecuted the men on charges of "publicly insulting" the UAE's President, Vice-President and Crown Prince in comments posted on the on-line discussion forum. Amnesty International designated all five men as prisoners of conscience as the UAE unlawfully prosecuted them for exercising their legitimate right to free speech, thereby violating international human rights law. Amnesty International also argued that the case, having no legitimate legal or factual basis, was brought to suppress and/or deter political dissent and therefore the trial, including its basis and procedures, was fundamentally unfair. See Amnesty International, *United Arab Emirates (UAE): Summary trial observation briefing paper on the UAE5 case* (Index: MDE 25/008/2011), 3 November 2011, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/008/2011/en/>

Between March and July 2013, the UAE tried 94 Emirati nationals, said to be linked to al-Islah, in the State Security Chamber of the Federal Supreme Court. The proceedings in the trial, which became known as the "UAE 94" trial, violated international fair trial standards. One of the "UAE 94", Dr Mohammed al-Roken, a prominent human rights lawyer from the emirate of Dubai, and former president of the UAE's Jurists Association is serving a 10-year sentence for "attempting to overthrow the government". He is a prisoner of conscience. Amnesty International documented the UAE 94 trial in its November 2014 report "There is no freedom here" – Silencing dissent in the United Arab Emirates (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE25/018/2014/en>).

Further information on UA: 183/15 Index: MDE 25/4328/2016 Issue Date: 4 July 2016