

URGENT ACTION

BAHA'I MAN ARBITRARILY DETAINED SINCE AUGUST 2016
Keyvan Qadari, a Yemeni Baha'i, has been arbitrarily detained since 10 August 2016 and held incommunicado intermittently. Despite a release order, he remains detained without charge and is a prisoner of conscience.

Keyvan Qadari, 43, a member of Yemen's Baha'i community, has been detained without charge since 10 August 2016, despite the Prosecutor General having ordered his release on 17 January. Initially, Keyvan Qadari was held incommunicado at National Security Bureau (NSB) in Sana'a for six weeks before he was permitted his first phone call to his family on 23 September 2016. He was then held incommunicado again for nearly 10 weeks. On 1 December 2016, Keyvan Qadari's family were permitted to visit him at Political Security Organization's (PSO) detention facilities in Sana'a, where he had been moved to in October 2016. Keyvan Qadari is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his religious beliefs and peaceful activities as a member of the Baha'i faith, a religious minority in Yemen.

During his time at the NSB, officials threatened Keyvan Qadari and his family with deportation to Iran.

Please write immediately in English, Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the de facto Huthi authorities to release Keyvan Qadari immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely on account of his religious beliefs;
- Urging them to respect their international obligation to guarantee the right of all individuals, including those of the Baha'i faith, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 MARCH 2017 TO:

Ansarullah Representative at Peace

Mohamed Abdelsalam

Email: mdabdalsalam@gmail.com

Salutation: Dear Sir

Director of the Human Rights

Department at Ansarullah Office

Abdulmalik al-Ajari

Facebook page: <http://on.fb.me/1n1y4Mn>

Salutation: Dear Sir

Director of the Office of the Presidency

Mahmod Abdulqader al-Jounid

Fax: +967 1 274147

Email: mahmodaljounid@gmail.com

Salutation: Dear Sir

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Dr. Yassin Saeed Noman Ahmed, 57 Cromwell Rd, London SW7 2ED, 020 7584 6607, Fax 020 7589 3350, <https://www.yemenembassy.co.uk/contact-us.html>

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 266/16. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/5191/2016/en/

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2015, Amnesty International has documented a number of incidents in which members of the Baha'i community in Yemen were detained by the Huthi armed group, including those detailed below. The Huthis, mostly members of the northern Zaidi Shi'a minority, took over some army and security positions in Sana'a in September 2014. By the third week of January 2015 they had attacked military positions, the presidential compounds and government buildings. This led to President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his government resigning and the Huthis becoming the de facto administration of the capital and other parts of Yemen. Since then, the Huthis have maintained their hold on Sana'a and some parts of the country.

Keyvan Qadari was arrested along with 64 others on 10 August 2016 when armed officers in balaclavas from Yemen's National Security Bureau, which works hand in hand with the Huthi authorities, stormed a Baha'i youth workshop in Sana'a. They arrested 65 people, including six children, without warrants for arrest. Later that day, another two members of the Baha'i community in Yemen, Nadim al-Sakkaf and Nader al-Sakkaf were called into NSB and were also arrested and detained, bringing the number of detained up to 67. Amongst the 67 people arrested that day were Ruhiyeh Thabet and Nafha Sanai, the wives of Nadim al-Sakkaf and Nader al-Sakkaf respectively. Ruhiyeh Thabet was released on 6 September 2016 after being forced to sign a pledge stating that she "will not participate in any Baha'i inspired community service activities". Nafha Sanai was released on 21 August 2016 after also being forced to sign a pledge stating that she "should not have any Baha'i activities and should practice religion at home". Nadim al-Sakkaf and Nader al-Sakkaf (see UA 266/16 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/5191/2016/en/>) were arbitrarily detained for nearly four months before released without charge on 27 November 2016. All but Keyvan Qadari of those detained on 10 August 2016 were subsequently released.

Nadim al-Sakkaf and his brother Nader al-Sakkaf were previously arrested on two occasions. In March 2015, the two men were detained by Huthi authorities and interrogated about their faith and other members of the Baha'i community. They were released without charge after two days. On 11 January 2017, Nader al-Sakkaf and his father-in-law Heshmat Alah Sarvestani were arbitrarily detained by the internationally recognised government of President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi in Yemen's southern city of Aden, (see UA 17/17 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde31/5519/2017/en/>). The arrest of Nadim al-Sakkaf and his father-in-law Heshmat Alah Sarvestani marks the first time Amnesty International has documented the arrest of members of the Baha'i faith by the internationally recognised government of President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

Keyvan Qadari was previously arrested on 20 June 2008 and held by the Yemeni government for four months, during which time he was at imminent risk of being forcibly returned to Iran. He was held incommunicado for 40 days and released unconditionally without charge on 23 October 2008, before being detained again on 10 August 2016.

Amnesty International has obtained and reviewed a copy of the release order issued for Keyvan Qadari by the office of the Prosecutor General on 17 January 2017; the order has yet to be carried out by the detaining prison authorities at PSO.

Further information on UA: 266/16 Index: MDE 31/5572/2017 Issue Date: 27 January 2017