

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST HELD INCOMMUNICADO SINCE 2 SEPTEMBER

Saudi Arabian human rights activist Salim al-Maliki has been arbitrarily detained and held incommunicado for four weeks. He appears to have been detained solely for his peaceful activism against evictions in south-west Saudi Arabia.

Salim al-Maliki, a 32-year-old Saudi Arabian teacher and human rights activist, was arrested on 2 September in Bani Malik (also known as al-Dayer) governorate in the Jazan region of south-west Saudi Arabia, which borders Yemen. He is being held incommunicado at the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in Jazan city, the capital of the region.

According to information provided to Amnesty International, Salim al-Maliki was arrested by members of the border guard, who did not present a warrant, at al-Qahda checkpoint in Bani Malik governorate. He was taken to a police station in al-Zaydan, another town in Bani Malik governorate, where he was held for approximately 24 hours before being transferred to the CID in the city of Jazan on 3 September. Salim al-Maliki has not been charged and has had no legal representation since his arrest. He has been denied contact with his family throughout his detention.

It appears that Salim al-Maliki has been arrested solely because of his peaceful human rights activism against the eviction of tribes in the Jazan region, including in posts on Twitter in which he published among other things a video apparently showing the eviction of a tribe from their homes in August 2016.

Salim al-Maliki's incommunicado detention places him at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

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

- Calling on the Saudi Arabian authorities to release Salim al-Maliki immediately and unconditionally, unless he is to be promptly transferred to proper judicial authorities and charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- Urging them to ensure that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and is granted regular access to his family and a lawyer of his choice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 NOVEMBER 2016 TO:

King and Prime Minister

His Majesty Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al
Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King
Royal Court, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: (via Ministry of the Interior)
+966 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)
Twitter: @KingSalman

Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed
bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
Minister of Interior
Ministry of the Interior, P.O. Box 2933,
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 11 403 3125
Twitter: @M_Naif_Alsaud

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Human Rights Commission

Bandar Mohammed 'Abdullah al-Aiban
P.O. Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahd Road
Building No. 3, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 11 418 510

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Abdul Aziz - Ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in London, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 30 Charles Street, Mayfair, London, W1J 5DZ tel: 020 7917 3000 or 02079173288, fax 02079173113 email: ukemb@mofa.gov.sa complete the webform here:

<http://embassies.mofa.gov.sa/sites/uk/EN/ContactDiplomaticMission/Pages/ContactWithDiplomaticMission.aspx>; twitter: @SaudiEmbassyUK,

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to information provided to Amnesty International, Salim al-Maliki began his activism against evictions around May 2016. He has documented through videos and posts on Twitter the eviction of tribes in the region and, prior to his arrest, received phone calls from the border guard and officials from the General Directorate of Investigations (GDI, also known as al-Mabahith), threatening him with arrest if he did not stop his activism and delete his Twitter account.

In 2012, Issa al-Nukheifi, another human rights activist, was arrested after he appeared on TV and accused the local authorities in the region of Jazan of corruption and numerous human rights violations, especially forcibly evicting residents of the border areas of Jazan with northern Yemen in 2009. Issa al-Nukheifi was sentenced on 29 April 2013 by the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC), a special security and counter-terrorism court, to three years in prison and a four-year travel ban after being found guilty of, among other things, “inciting disobedience against the ruler and questioning his legitimacy” and “accusing institutions and officials of shortcomings in performing their duties towards the people”. The court also ordered that his Facebook and Twitter accounts be closed down. He was brought before an SCC appeal judge in June 2013. The judge told him that his conviction had been upheld and that his prison sentence had been increased to three years and eight months in prison. Issa al-Nukheifi was released on 6 April 2016 after serving his prison sentence in full. He remains banned from travelling for four years and from using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Since 2011, the Saudi Arabian authorities have been targeting civil society activists and human rights defenders, using arbitrary detention, court cases and administrative measures such as the imposition of travel bans as a means to harass, intimidate and impede their human rights work. This repression of human rights defenders is part of a larger campaign to silence all forms of criticism that have revealed, directly or indirectly, human rights violations committed by the authorities.

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