

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Joint statement

UAE: Call for the release of human rights defender and lawyer Dr. Mohammed Al-Roken

December 10, 2020

Eight years have passed since the unjust arrest of Dr. Mohammed Al-Roken by the UAE State Security services. On July 2, 2013, the Federal Supreme Court convicted and sentenced Dr. Al-Roken to 10 years imprisonment with additional administrative control measures and forbade him from practicing his profession as a lawyer. He has been denied the basic right to a fair trial and his enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment was never investigated. On November 22, 2013, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued an opinion recognizing the arbitrary nature of the detention of Dr. Al-Roken and 60 other defendants in the 'UAE94' trial (A/HRC/WGAD/2013/60).

Dr. Al-Roken is a prominent Emirati human rights defender and lawyer, and the former President of the Emirates Jurists Association. He has previously urged the UAE authorities to undertake political policy and legal reforms in the country. He has advocated to halt the violation of human rights and encouraged the government to join International covenants, agreements and related protocols protecting human rights. Moreover, he provided legal assistance to victims of human rights violations in the United Arab Emirates, including to other human rights defenders.

In recognition of his courageous human rights work, Dr. Al-Roken was awarded the 2017 Ludovic-Trarieux International Human Rights Prize.

Dr. Al-Roken was arrested on July 17, 2012 as part of the massive crackdown of the 'UAE94 Group', and he was charged with conspiracy against the government, after calling for political reforms in the country and signing an online reform petition in March 2011 to demand an elected national council with full supervisory and legislative powers. Following his arrest, Dr. Al-Roken was detained in solitary confinement at an undisclosed location for 8 months, without access to his lawyer and his family.

Consequently, the signatories below express their concern about the situation of Dr. Al-Roken and his current detention conditions in light of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Consequently, the signatories urge the UAE authorities to:

- ◆ Immediately and unconditionally release human rights defender and lawyer Dr. Mohammed Al-Roken.
- ◆ Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Dr. Mohammed Al-Roken, and disclose his health status.

Signatory organisations:



International Centre for Justice and Human Rights



Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain



International Campaign for Freedom in the UAE



International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders



Lawyers for Lawyers



MENA Rights Group



The Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers



World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders



ALQST for Human Rights