

URGENT ACTION

MINOR ON TRIAL OVER SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Tujan al-Bukhaiti is a 17-year-old Yemeni refugee in Jordan who is being tried over charges of “blasphemy” and “insulting religious feelings”, over her social media posts. On 19 December 2019, she was called in for questioning by the Juvenile Police, following a report by the Jordanian Cybercrime Unit. Police took her statement without the presence of her lawyer or parents, violating her fair trial rights. Tujan al-Bukhaiti’s trial started on 16 January 2020, with three sessions adjourned so far. Charging Tujan is a violation to her constitutional right to freedom of expression and a contradiction to Jordan’s obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. If convicted, she could face one month in prison. Authorities must immediately drop all charges.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Minister of Justice Bassam al-Talhouni
Ministry of Justice
Amman, third round-about, 6040
1188
Email: info@moj.gov.jo
And
feedback@moj.gov.jo

Your Excellency

Tujan al-Bukhaiti is a 17-year-old Yemeni refugee being tried over charges of “blasphemy” and “insulting religious feelings”, over her social media posts expressing her opinion on religious and intellectual topics and sharing her father’s posts. On 19 December 2019, she was interrogated by the Juvenile Police following a report by the Jordanian Cybercrime Unit. Police forces took her statement without the presence of her lawyer or parents, violating her right to a fair trial. During the interrogation, the officer in charge opened her Facebook page, and made insulting comments about Tujan al-Bukhaiti’s family. Tujan al-Bukhaiti’s trial started on 16 January 2020, with three sessions adjourned so far. If convicted, she could face one month in prison.

Jordan has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and thus has an international obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the right to freedom of expression. Tujan al-Bukhaiti is being prosecuted under Article 11 of the 2015 Cybercrime Law, which prohibits spreading allegedly “defamatory” content. However, Article 15 of the Jordanian Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of expression. Therefore, criminalising Tujan al-Bukhaiti’s social media posts would set a dangerous precedent of curtailing that right.

Due to the ongoing proceedings, Tujan al-Bukhaiti has had to miss at least three days of school to attend her court hearings. Those court hearings were later adjourned because representatives of the Cybercrime Unit, the plaintiffs, did not attend. Tujan al-Bukhaiti was also forced to take her exams on different dates than her classmates because the administration would not allow her to take them.

I urge you to ensure that all charges against Tujan al-Bukhaiti are immediately dropped, as they constitute a violation of her right to freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tujan al-Bukhaiti is a 17-year-old Yemeni refugee being tried in Jordan on charges of “blasphemy” and “insulting religious figures” over her social media posts.

On 11 December 2019, Al Jazeera school, the school that Tujan al-Bukhaiti attends, summoned her from her classroom and threatened to expel her if she continued to post what they referred to as, “beliefs that do not represent the school”, on her social media. On 16 December 2019, the school barred Tujan al-Bukhaiti from attending classes after she refused the school’s ultimatum to either stop posting or transfer schools. On that day, she posted about the incident on her social media, explaining that the school had barred her from continuing classes. The school then published a statement on their official Facebook page denying Tujan al-Bukhaiti’s claims, saying that she “spreads toxic thoughts” among her fellow students. Tujan was not allowed to take her tests the following week.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Arabic or English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 24 March 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Tujan al-Bukhaiti (she/her)

ADDITIONAL TARGETS: Ambassador Omar Nahar, Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in London, 6 Upper Phillimore Gardens, Kensington, London W8 7HA