**Ahmed Mansoor – summary of concerns.**

Amnesty International has reported many concerns regarding human rights abuses in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). More than 25 prisoners of conscience remain in prison on account of their peaceful political criticism and at least ten people continue to be detained after the end of their sentences. These convictions followed unfair trial procedures including denial of access to lawyers, incommunicado detention for months and the use of coerced ‘confessions’ as evidence.

Amongst those imprisoned is Ahmed Mansoor, an internationally recognised human rights defender. He is a member of the advisory committee of the Middle East and North Africa Division of Human Rights Watch, as well as of the advisory board of the Gulf Centre for Human Rights. He has documented the human rights situation in the UAE since 2006 and has spoken out publicly in defense of human rights in his blog, via social media and in interviews with international media. As a result, he faced repeated intimidation, harassment, physical assault and death threats from the UAE authorities who also placed him under electronic surveillance.

He was arrested in 2017 and held for a year without charge in an undisclosed location. In 2018 he was sentenced to 10 years in prison for ‘defaming the UAE through social media channels’. He was denied a lawyer and had only two very brief visits from his family. He is currently detained in Abu Dhabi’s al-Sadr prison, a prison that does not meet the UN’s Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners due to its insufficient medical care and unsanitary conditions. He is held in solitary confinement without a bed, toilet or running water. Following two hunger strikes in protest of the conditions of his detention, he has been allowed short periods in the open air to exercise and marginally improved family access.

The Manchester Amnesty group campaign for the release of Ahmed Mansoor because of the strong links between our city and the UAE.

For many years, Manchester City Council has had a close commercial relationship with senior figures in the UAE government through the Manchester Life Development Company, ultimately controlled by Abu Dhabi United Group. Our city has gained significantly from this investment with regeneration of parts of the city. Manchester City Football club is owned by senior members of the UAE government and enjoys great success as a result. We have approached members of our council to raise our concerns about human rights in the UAE, requesting that they in turn discuss these concerns with their contacts in the UAE and ask for the release of Ahmed Mansoor.

For further information about Amnesty International’s concerns about human rights abuses in the UAE see the recently released global report for 2020-2021 at:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/3202/2021/en/>

Manchester Group of Amnesty International

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