**Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**

President of the United Arab Emirates

Your Highness,

I am concerned that 26 prisoners of conscience including Ahmed Mansoor, Nasser bin Ghaith and Mohammed al-Roken are among 87 Emirati men prosecuted on new trumped up charges. Their mass trial started on 7 December 2023 before the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi. Among other defendants are 62 political dissidents unjustly convicted and sentenced to imprisonment in the grossly unfair mass trial known as the UAE94 that concluded in 2013. Fifty-nine of them remain arbitrarily detained following the completion of their sentences.

According to the [Emirates Detainees Advocacy Center](https://en.edacrights.com/post/675) (EDAC), a human rights group, the court charged 43 individuals with establishing a “terrorist organization,” while 44 others were charged with supporting and endorsing the organization. The “terrorist organization” referred to is the Justice and Dignity Committee, formed by defendants in the UAE94 case in 2010-2011 to call for the respect of human rights in the UAE. Defendants from the earlier UAE94 mass trial were already convicted and sentenced to prison terms in relation to their involvement in the Justice and Dignity Committee in 2013. This contravenes article 19(1) of the [Arab Charter for Human Rights](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/551368?ln=en), to which the UAE is party, which states: “No one may be tried twice for the same offence. Anyone against whom such proceedings are brought shall have the right to challenge their legality and to demand his release.” Defendants’ rights to a fair trial have been violated, including the right to a public hearing in front of an independent and impartial tribunal, their right to adequate defence, their right to be protected from torture and other ill-treatment and their right not to self-incriminate. During the second court session on 14 December, family members of prisoners were taken to a separate room to watch the proceedings on a screen; there was no sound, preventing them from hearing proceedings. Since July 2023, the authorities have held the majority of the UAE94 defendants in incommunicado detention and in prolonged solitary confinement. Salim al-Shehhi, a prisoner of conscience, told the court at the 7 December hearing that authorities had compelled him to sign a “confession” while holding him in solitary confinement. The next hearing is scheduled for 21 December.

**I call upon your Highness to immediately and unconditionally release prisoners of conscience Ahmed Mansoor, Mohammed al-Roken, Nasser bin Ghaith and all others arbitrarily detained and prosecuted in the ongoing mass trial solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association; and to** **drop all charges against them stemming from their exercise of their human rights.**

Yours sincerely,

CC - Mr Mansoor Abdullah Khalfan Juma Abulhoul

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