

URGENT ACTION

SYRIAN REFUGEE AT RISK OF EXTRADITION

On 27 December 2024, Turkish authorities arrested Syrian refugee Mohamad Alkayali based on a 2016 INTERPOL Red Notice requested by Saudi Arabia. He is charged with “forgery of seals,” a charge brought against him three years after his departure from Saudi Arabia, where he had faced harassment for criticizing the government’s treatment of Syrian refugees. Mohamad Alkayali, who is not a Saudi national, has since challenged the Red Notice on legal grounds. Extraditing him to Saudi Arabia would expose him to the risk of arbitrary detention or other, potential serious human rights violations. Turkish authorities must immediately halt the extradition and release him from detention.

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

Mr. Hüseyin Kök
Presidency of Migration Management
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Dear Mr. Hüseyin Kök,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the detention of Syrian refugee **Mohamad Alkayali**, who was arrested in Türkiye on 27 December 2024 based on a 2016 INTERPOL Red Notice requested by Saudi Arabia. He is currently held at the Pehlivan Köy Removal Centre in Kırklareli, Türkiye.

In 2018, Mohamad Alkayali, while applying for Turkish citizenship, was informed by Turkish authorities that an INTERPOL Red Notice has been issued against him, which was officially confirmed by INTERPOL in 2023. The Red Notice, issued by Saudi Arabia on 18 March 2016, accuses him of “forgery of seals”. However, Saudi authorities have not provided formal charges or court documents to substantiate the accusation.

Saudi Arabia has a well-documented history of using politically motivated charges, unfair trials and lengthy prison sentences to silence critics. Amnesty International is deeply concerned that this case maybe be a targeted attempt to punish Mohamad Alkayali for his criticism of Saudi authorities.

Mohamad Alkayali suffers from a severe cervical herniated disc and chronic pain, which requires surgery. His extradition to Saudi Arabia would expose him to a serious risk of human rights violations, including arbitrary detention, an unfair trial, and torture or other ill-treatment.

I urge you to take immediate action to halt Mohamad Alkayali’s extradition and ensure that Turkish authorities release him so he can be reunited with his family. Additionally, I call on you to ensure that Türkiye upholds its international human rights obligations and protects Mohamad Alkayali from refoulement. Finally, I request that an urgent travel permit be issued for his wife so that she can visit him.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mohamad Alkayali left Saudi Arabia in early 2013 after facing harassment online for publicly criticizing Saudi authorities' policies on Syrian refugees. He relocated to Türkiye, where he has legally resided as a refugee under temporary protection for over ten years. In 2015, while living in Türkiye, he and his family continued to face what his wife described as an "online harassment campaign" due to his criticism of Saudi Arabia's human rights practices.

In 2018, Mohamad Alkayali was informed by Turkish authorities, while applying for Turkish citizenship, that an INTERPOL Red Notice had been issued against him. INTERPOL confirmed the notice in 2023. The Red Notice, issued by Saudi Arabia on 18 March 2016, is based on an arrest warrant issued on 3 January 2016 by the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution in Saudi Arabia charging him of "forgery of seals", a charge he denies and has no knowledge of. Saudi authorities have not provided any formal charges or court documents to substantiate the accusations. He has challenged the Red Notice on legal grounds with INTERPOL, and while his request was deemed admissible in May 2024, no final decision has yet been made.

Despite the Red Notice being issued in 2016, Turkish authorities did not act on it for nearly nine years. On 27 December 2024, they arrested Mohamad Alkayali based on the Red Notice. Red Notices have been abused by governments to target people living abroad. Given Saudi Arabia's documented use of transnational repression, Turkish authorities and INTERPOL must exercise increased scrutiny over this Red Notice and all Red Notices where they are requested by states that have a history of engaging in transnational repression.

Mohamad Alkayali's wife has been unable to visit him due to travel restrictions placed on refugees in Türkiye. As a resident of Istanbul, she requires a special travel permit to leave the city, and her requests have been denied three times.

Amnesty International has [documented](#) Saudi authorities' increasing crackdown on freedom of expression, including the prosecution of individuals for criticizing the government. Many have faced lengthy prison sentences for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. Legal proceedings in these cases fall far short of international fair trial standards. Individuals are often held incommunicado without charge, in solitary confinement, and denied access to lawyers or the courts to challenge the lawfulness of their detention.

Since 2013, Amnesty International has documented the cases of 86 individuals prosecuted solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, including human rights defenders, peaceful political activists, journalists, poets, and clerics. Of those, 40 were prosecuted for expressing their views on social media. Amnesty International is aware that the real number of such prosecutions is likely much higher.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Turkish, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 23 May 2025

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Mohamad Alkayali (He/him)

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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