

# URGENT ACTION

## EGYPTIAN-TURKISH POET FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED

Egyptian-Turkish poet Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi has been subjected to enforced disappearance since his extradition from Lebanon to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 8 January 2025. Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi was arrested by Lebanese security forces on 28 December at the Masnaa border crossing between Lebanon and Syria. The Lebanese authorities accepted the extradition request by the Emirati authorities on charges of spreading “fake news” and “disturbing public security”, in connection to a video he posted on his social media platforms while in Syria criticizing Egyptian, Emirati and Saudi Arabian authorities. Concerns for his safety and wellbeing are mounting as his family has been unable to obtain any information about his fate, exact whereabouts or legal status; and he has been denied consular visits by Turkish authorities.

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

**Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**  
President of the United Arab Emirates  
Twitter: @MohamedBinZayed

Your Highness,

*I write to you to express my grave concern over the enforced disappearance of Egyptian-Turkish poet Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi. Lebanese security forces arrested him on 28 December 2024 upon his return from a visit to Syria following the ousting of former Syrian president Bashar Al Assad. During a visit to Damascus in December 2024, Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi filmed himself walking around the Umayyad Mosque and criticizing the authorities of the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. According to his family and lawyers, this short clip widely shared on social media triggered his arrest, which followed a provisional arrest warrant issued by the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council, at the request of the Emirati authorities. The Egyptian authorities also made a separate provisional arrest request.*

*Following his arrest, he was interrogated on 30 December by Lebanese security forces in relation to a 2017 verdict issued in his absence by an Egyptian court as well as about the Emirati authorities' arrest request. According to his lawyer in Lebanon, who reviewed the Emirati request but was not permitted to obtain a copy, on 2 January 2025, the UAE requested Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi's extradition on charges of “spreading fake news and rumours, disturbing public security, and spreading information that seeks to disturb public order” based on a social media video he filmed while in Syria. On 7 January 2025, the Lebanese authorities approved the extradition of Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi to the UAE, citing the Lebanese Penal Code and the principle of reciprocity as legal grounds. On 8 January, he was flown to the UAE despite concerns that he would be at risk of human rights violations including [arbitrary detention](#) and [unfair trial](#). Since his extradition to the UAE, his family has been trying to locate him without success and have not had any communication with him. On 9 January 2025, the state-owned Emirates News Agency [confirmed](#) that Emirati authorities took Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi into custody, and that he “faces charges of engaging in activities that aim to stir and undermine public security”. Requests for a consular visit by the Turkish authorities have not been granted.*

***I urge you to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi, allow him to communicate with his family and lawyers and ensure he has access to adequate healthcare and is granted a consular visit from the Turkish authorities. Moreover, as his detention is solely related to the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression, I ask you to immediately release him and allow him to travel to Türkiye.***

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi is an Egyptian-Turkish poet living and working in Türkiye. He is the son of late prominent Egyptian Islamic scholar Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. His sister, [Ola Al-Qaradawi](#), was arrested in Egypt in June 2017 and has spent four years arbitrarily detained on bogus terrorism related charges. The Egyptian authorities sentenced him Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi in his absence in 2017 to five years in prison on charges of spreading false news among others, in a politically motivated case. On 26 January 2025, the Egyptian Parliament discussed and approved a new [treaty](#) to transfer convicted prisoners between Egypt and the UAE. If extradited to Egypt, Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi would be at real risk of [enforced disappearance](#), [torture](#) and [other ill-treatment](#) and [unfair trial](#) leading to [prolonged unjust imprisonment](#).

Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi's arbitrary detention came after he made comments critical of the Emirati, Saudi Arabian and Egyptian authorities. Amnesty International reviewed the content of his posts and found that the arrest and extradition request by the UAE is based on speech that is protected under the right to freedom of expression. Under international law and standards, freedom of expression applies to all kind of ideas, including deeply offensive ones, and speech can only legitimately be restricted under international law if it violates the rights of others, or, advocates hatred and incites discrimination or violence. Forcibly extraditing him to a country where he is likely to face persecution is a flagrant breach of the principle of non-refoulement, which under international human rights law guarantees that no one is to be returned to a country where he or she would face torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other irreparable harm. On 8 January 2025, several UN Special Rapporteurs issued a [press release](#) urging the Lebanese authorities not to extradite him "to a country where there are substantial grounds to believe that he would be in danger of torture, enforced disappearance or other grave human rights violations".

Since 2011, scores of people in the UAE have been detained in relation to the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association. In 2012, after a grossly unfair [mass trial](#) of 94 defendants, known as the UAE94, 69 people were convicted and sentenced to between seven and 15-year prison terms, scores of them for their demands for reform and democracy. Under UAE law at the time, the judgement was final and not subject to appeal, in violation of international law. Of the 69 men sentenced, five received a seven-year prison sentence, 56 a 10-year prison sentence and eight were sentenced to 15 years in their absence. Fifty-nine [of those imprisoned in the case](#) remain arbitrarily detained after completing their sentences.

On 17 May 2023, Turkish-Emirati citizen [Khalaf al-Rumaithi](#), was forcibly deported to the UAE from Jordan. He was one of the UAE 94 sentenced to 15 years in prison in his absence and had been living exile in Türkiye for the past decade, but had flown to Jordan on 7 May 2023 in search of an Arabic school for his children. The state-owned Emirates News Agency, announcing his deportation from Jordan and arrest in the UAE, said that he will face a retrial on the charge of affiliation with an organization "[that aims to oppose the foundational principles of the UAE government](#)". Khalaf al-Rumaithi was also a defendant in the another [mass trial](#) involving 84 defendants, including at least 26 prisoners of conscience. On 10 July 2024, 43 of the defendants were given life sentences, five were given 15-year sentences, and another five were given 10-year sentences, following proceedings that violated fair trial rights.

The UAE has yet to ratify key human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Nonetheless many of the provisions of the two covenants are drawn from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which have over time become part of customary international law and are therefore binding on all states.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic and English.

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 1 October 2025.

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

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi (he/him).

## ADDITIONAL TARGETS

His Excellency Mr Mansoor Abdullah Khalfan Juma Abulhoul  
*Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary*  
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Salutation: Your Excellency

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