200 Days of Abdulrahman Yusuf's Enforced Disappearance: Reveal His Whereabouts. Ensure His Safety. Release Him Now.

Joint Statements · Egypt · Lebanon · United Arab Emirates · 5 August 2025

The undersigned organizations are extremely concerned over the continued enforced disappearance of Turkish-Egyptian poet and political dissident Abdulrahman Yusuf Al-Qaradawi for more than 200 days. Abdulrahman Yusuf was arrested in Lebanon on 28 December 2024 and forcibly extradited to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 8 January 2025, in flagrant violation of due process guarantees and other international human rights obligations, notably the principle of *non-refoulement*. His whereabouts and fate remain unknown amid an alarming silence from Emirati authorities and their ongoing refusal to permit him any communication with the outside world.

The Lebanese authorities accepted the extradition request by the Emirati authorities on charges of spreading "fake news" and "disturbing public security". The charges are linked to a video that he posted on his social media platforms while in Syria, in which he criticized Egyptian, Emirati and Saudi Arabian authorities. Abdulrahman's initial arrest in Lebanon followed a provisional arrest issued by the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council (AIMC) within the League of Arab States, at the request of the Emirati authorities, according to his family and lawyers. The AIMC is mandated to circulate arrest warrants issued by Member States of the League of Arab States to other member states in order to facilitate the apprehension of wanted individuals.

The last known contact with Abdulrahman occurred on 23 March 2025, during a short and heavily monitored visit in Abu Dhabi by his family that lasted less than ten minutes in a facility not officially recognized as a place of detention. Since then, neither his family nor the lawyer appointed by the UAE authorities have received any official information regarding the legal proceedings, conditions of detention, or whereabouts, effectively subjecting him to enforced disappearance.

The ongoing enforced disappearance of Abdulrahman Yusuf for this extended period constitutes a grave violation of his rights under international law. It also raises serious concerns that he may be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment.

Abdulrahman's case illustrates an increasingly prevalent pattern of transnational repression, in which states collaborate to target dissidents and human rights defenders across borders. He did not voluntarily enter the UAE at any point, holds neither its nationality nor residency, and has never been convicted by any court. His transfer to a third country of which he is not a citizen or resident sets a dangerous precedent. It exemplifies the misuse of cross-border security cooperation as a tool to silence dissent.

In January and March 2025, several UN experts issued two press releases calling for the stop of Abdulrahman's extradition from Lebanon to the UAE and demanding urgent clarification of his status in the UAE, respectively. His case is currently pending before the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, which sent a communication on 20 February 2025 to the UAE requesting information on Abdulrahman's fate and whereabouts. To date, the UAE has failed to provide a response.

We, the undersigned organizations, call for the following:

To the Emirati Authorities:

- Release him without delay, as his detention appears solely related to the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression.
- Immediately end the enforced disappearance of Abdulrahman Yusuf.
- Ensure his physical and psychological safety and protect him from any form of torture or other ill-treatment as prohibited under international human rights law.
- Ensure immediate access to legal counsel of his own choosing, family, and Turkish consular representatives.

To the Turkish Authorities :

- Demand from the UAE authorities for the immediate disclosure of Abdulrahman Yusuf Al-Qaradawi's whereabouts and conditions of detention, as a Turkish citizen.
- Request official information from the UAE authorities regarding the current legal status of the proceeding he is facing and his detention, and guarantee his right to consular access in line with international standards.
- Continue diplomatic efforts to secure his release and ensure the protection of his fundamental rights during detention.

To the Lebanese Authorities:

- Publicly acknowledge the arbitrariness of Abdulrahman Yusuf Al-Qaradawi's extradition to the UAE, which violated Lebanon's international obligations under human rights law.
- Undertake diplomatic efforts to seek information on his whereabouts and the protection of his rights.
- Ensure future extradition procedures are subject to independent judicial review and aligned with international human rights standards.

To the League of Arab States:

- Launch an independent investigation into the role of the Arab Interior Ministers Council (AIMC) in facilitating transnational repression, including the use of shared databases, arrest warrants, or security cooperation to carry out politically motivated arrests and extraditions.

- Establish safeguards to ensure that mechanisms of the AIMC are not misused to execute politically motivated prosecutions, extraditions, or cross-border surveillance targeting dissidents and human rights defenders.

Signatories:

1. Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)
2. Al Nadeem Center
3. Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)
4. Arab Center for Law and Society Studies
5. Law and Democracy Support Foundation (LDSF)
6. Egyptian Front for Human Rights
7. The Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF)
8. REDWORD for Human Rights & Freedom of Expression
9. Democratic diwan
10. Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression for Human Rights (AFTE)
11. HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement
12. MENA Rights Group
13. Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-Violence Studies
14. Cedar Centre for Legal Studies
15. Their Right – To Defend Prisoners of Conscience
16. EuroMed Rights Network (EMR)
17. EgyptWide for Human Rights
18. Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
19. Refugees Platform In Egypt (RPE)
20. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
21. Gulf Centre for Human Rights
22. Najda for Human Rights
23. Arab Foundation for Supporting Civil Society and Human Rights
24. Fair Square
25. Legal Agenda
26. Amnesty International
27. Sinai for Human Rights
28. PEN International

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