Alaa Al-Siddiq, freedom fighter

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One year ago, the human rights community was shocked to hear of the death of Emirati human rights defender Alaa Al-Siddiq in a tragic car accident, the day after she celebrated her 33rd birthday. We, the undersigned organisations, are taking the occasion of her birthday to announce the designation of this day, 18 June, as "Alaa Al-Siddiq Day".

18 June is the birthday of the late Alaa Al-Siddiq, a prominent Emirati campaigner for human rights whose fate it was to die in a tragic car accident on 19 June 2021, the day after her birthday. To commemorate her and her dedicated work in the struggle for human rights, the undersigned organisations hereby announce the naming of her birthday as "Alaa Al-Siddiq Day".

Alaa Al-Siddiq was an Emirati human rights campaigner whose family were stripped of their citizenship after her father Mohammed Abdulrazzaq Al-Siddiq's arrested in 2012. A year before that, she had signed the 3 March petition in which a number of Emiratis called for democratic and political reform. After her father's arrest, Alaa's family moved to Qatar, where she continued her education and obtained an MA in Public Policy from Hamad Bin Khalifa University. Alaa moved to London in 2019 and worked there as Executive Director of Diwan London, later becoming Executive Director of ALQST for Human Rights.

Alaa dedicated her life to defending prisoners of conscience in the UAE and the Gulf, foremost among them her father Mohammed Al-Siddiq, who remains detained to this day despite his prison term having expired in April 2022. Alaa was also known for her opposition to the normalisation of relations with Israel, and her defence of the Palestinian cause and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people; she took part in several demonstrations denouncing the crimes of the Israeli occupation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Alaa paid dearly for her freedom fighting, as she was constantly being harassed by the UAE authorities and having her electronic devices hacked, including her mobile phone, by means of the Pegasus spyware created and developed by Israeli cyber surveillance firm NSO Group.

And so in memory of Alaa's struggle to defend prisoners of conscience we, the undersigned organisations, call for the immediate release of her father Mohammed Al-Siddiq, and all prisoners of conscience in the UAE, the Arab Gulf, and other countries across the Middle East and North Africa region.

Signed

ALQST for Human Rights

Diwan London

Emirates Detainees Advocacy Centre (EDAC)

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor

Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)

HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement

International Campaign for Freedom in the UAE (ICFUAE)

International Centre for Justice and Human Rights (ICJHR)

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

MENA Rights Group

Omani Association for Human Rights

The Omani Centre for Human Rights

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