



Subject: Call on Saudi Arabia to Release Saudi Academic and Economist, Dr. Abdulaziz al-Dakhil

Saudi Royal Court
Riyadh, 11111
Saudi Arabia
Tel: 8004000000
Email: admin@cpc.gov.sa

H.E. King Salman Bin AbdulAziz of Saudi Arabia

26 April 2021

Dear King Salman,

As academics in some of the world's leading universities, we are writing to call on the Saudi government to abide by its own domestic and international obligations and disclose the fate of detained economist and writer, Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Dakhil, and ensure full respect for his rights; including humane treatment and immediate release if no charges are pressed against him.

Dr. Al-Dakhil has been detained by Saudi Authorities since April 2020 for tweeting about the death of the Saudi human rights defender and founder of the reform movement Abdullah Al-Hamid in prison, allegedly due to deliberate medical neglect. The whereabouts of Dr. Al-Dakhil remain unknown to his family.

Dr. Al-Dakhil, a former undersecretary of the Saudi Ministry of Finance, has previously been arrested multiple times by Saudi authorities for criticizing the governments' economic policies and for campaigning against corruption.

According to a testimony obtained by Euro-Med Monitor from Dr. Al-Dakhil's family, he was arrested without a warrant at midnight. His personal belongings and money were confiscated, his bank accounts in Saudi Arabia were frozen, and he has been deprived of legal representation. The family attempted to contact official authorities and the royal court to learn about the fate of Dr. Al-Dakhil, but to no avail. The family fears for Dr. Al-Dakhil's life as he suffers from diabetes and high blood pressure.

The number of prisoners of conscience in Saudi prisons is estimated at over 144 detainees, including writers, activists, academics, clerics, and human rights defenders, who have been arrested and detained for exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression and speech. Saudi authorities have a long and concerning practice of denying prisoners of conscience their rights, such as legal representation, subjecting them to secret trials, and bringing them to trial without any indictment being presented against them, in violation of relevant domestic and international laws.



We believe it is our shared duty to raise the issue of Dr. Al-Dakhil to demand that Saudi authorities disclose his fate, provide him with his basic rights, including guaranteeing a fair trial if any charges are pressed against him or otherwise his immediate release.

Sincerely,

Prof. Noam Chomsky, Institute Professor (emeritus) MIT, Laureate Professor U. of Arizona, US

Prof. Garance Genicot, Georgetown University, US

Prof. Axel Anderson, Georgetown University, US

Prof. John E. Roemer, Yale University, US

Prof. Peter A. Swenson, Yale University, US

Assistant Prof. Jose-Antonio Espin-Sanchez, Yale University, US

Prof. Stephen Van Evera, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), US

Prof. Raquel Fernandez, New York University, US

Prof. Jin Ho Kim, Oxford University, UK

Prof. Ann Schofield, Oxford University, UK

Prof. Marcos Vera-Hernández, University College London, UK

Prof. Gilbert Achcar, SOAS, University of London, UK

Dr. Marilyn Kendall, University of Edinburgh, UK

Dr Anne Hollows, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Prof. Katrin Beyer, EPFL, Switzerland

Prof. Philippe Marchesin, Pantheon-Sorbonne University, France

Prof. Victor Aguirregabiria, University of Toronto, Canada

Prof. Samuel Hollander, University of Toronto, Canada

Dr. Jeremy Wildeman, Ottawa University, Canada

Prof. Nils-Henrik von der Fehr, University of Oslo, Norway

Prof. Tore Schweder, University of Oslo, Norway

Anna Pauls, Research Fellow, University of Oslo, Norway