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Second UA: 26/24 Index: MDE 16/9020/2025 Jordan of February 7, 2025

JORDAN POLITICAL ACTIVIST SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS

On January 7, 2025, Jordan's State Security Court sentenced political activist and mathematics professor Ayman Sanduka to five years in prison. He was convicted of "incitement to oppose the political regime" because of an October 2023 Facebook post criticizing Jordan's diplomatic ties with Israel.

Ayman Sanduka was sentenced solely for exercising his right to free expression. The Jordanian authorities must drop all charges and release him immediately and unconditionally.

Write to the Jordanian King urging him to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Ayman Sanduka, as he was convicted solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.
- Ensure that, while he remains in detention, he is protected from torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Guarantee that he has access to adequate medical care whenever needed or upon request.

Write to:

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein
Royal Hashemite Court
Amman, Jordan
Twitter: @KingAbdullahII
Salutation: Your Majesty,

And copy:

Her Excellency Sabah Nizar Rashid AL RAFIE
Ambassador
Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
100 Bronson Avenue, Suite 701
Ottawa, ON K1R 6G8
Tel: (613) 238-8090 Fax: (613) 232-3341
Email: ottawa@fm.gov.jo

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On December 18, 2023, authorities summoned Ayman Sanduka over Facebook posts supporting Palestine, including a call for a general strike in solidarity with Gaza. A few days later, on December 21, Jordan's State Security Court prosecutor detained him over another Facebook post. In October, he had written a letter to the King criticizing Jordan's diplomatic ties with Israel.

On January 24, 2024, a criminal court sentenced him to three months in prison for "defaming an official body" under Jordan's new Cybercrime Law. On February 12, 2024, the State Security Court charged him with "incitement to oppose the political regime" under Article 149 of the Penal Code.

On January 23, 2024, authorities transferred Ayman Sanduka from Marka prison in Amman to Al-Tafilah prison, nearly 300 km from his hometown. This move made it difficult for his family to visit him. Security forces subjected him to verbal humiliation and restrained his hands and feet tightly during the transfer.

On January 7, 2025, the State Security Court convicted Ayman Sanduka of "incitement to oppose the political regime" under Article 149 of the Penal Code and Article 15 of the Cybercrime Law. The court sentenced him to five years in prison, officially calling it "five years of labor," which in practice means imprisonment.

Since Israel's October 2023 offensive in Gaza, Jordanian authorities have used vague laws, including the Cybercrime Law, to target activists, journalists, and others who criticize the government's policies toward Israel. Amnesty International documented 15 cases where individuals faced prosecution under the Penal Code and Cybercrime Law for online criticism. Many were arrested without warrants, denied access to legal counsel, or subjected to intimidation and coercion during interrogations and trials.

Please take action as soon as possible until August 7, 2025! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.