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First UA: 13/25 Index: MDE 25/9015/2025 United Arab Emirates of February 7, 2025

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES EGYPTIAN-TURKISH POET MISSING AFTER FORCED RETURN

Egyptian-Turkish poet Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi has been missing since January 8, 2025, after Lebanon extradited him to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Lebanese security forces arrested him on December 28 at the Masnaa border crossing between Lebanon and Syria. Authorities in Lebanon approved his extradition at the request of the UAE. He faces charges of spreading “fake news” and “disturbing public security” because of a video he posted on social media while in Syria. In the video, he criticized the governments of Egypt, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

His family is deeply concerned about his safety. They have not been able to get any information about his whereabouts, legal status, or well-being. Turkish authorities have also been denied consular visits.

Write to the President of the United Arab Emirates urging him to:

- Immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi and allow him to communicate with his family and lawyers.
- Ensure he has access to adequate healthcare and permit a consular visit from Turkish authorities.
- Release him immediately, as his detention is solely due to his peaceful exercise of free expression.
- Allow him to travel to Türkiye.

Write to:

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Twitter: @MohamedBinZayed
Salutation: Your Highness,

And copy:

His Excellency Abdulrahman Ali Almur Ali ALNEYADI
Ambassador
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
125 Boteler Street
Ottawa, ON K1N 0A4
Tel: (613) 565-7272
Email: OttawaEMB.OA@mofa.gov.ae

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian-Turkish poet, lives and works in Türkiye. He is the son of the late Egyptian Islamic scholar Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. In 2017, an Egyptian court sentenced him in absentia to five years in prison on politically motivated charges of spreading false news. That same year, his sister, [Ola Al-Qaradawi](#), was arrested in Egypt and spent four years in arbitrary detention on baseless terrorism-related charges.

On January 26, 2025, Egypt's Parliament approved a treaty with the UAE to transfer convicted prisoners between the two countries. If extradited to Egypt, Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi faces a high risk of [enforced disappearance](#), [torture](#), and an [unfair trial](#) that could lead to [prolonged imprisonment](#).

His detention followed his public criticism of the Egyptian, Emirati, and Saudi Arabian authorities. Amnesty International reviewed his posts and confirmed that his arrest and extradition request violate his right to free expression. Under international law, speech can only be restricted if it incites violence or discrimination. Sending him to a country where he risks persecution would violate the legal principle of non-refoulement, which protects individuals from being returned to places where they could face torture or inhumane treatment. On January 8, 2025, [UN Special Rapporteurs](#) urged Lebanese authorities not to extradite him, citing these dangers.

Since 2011, the UAE has jailed many individuals for peacefully expressing their views. In 2012, 69 people were convicted in an [unfair mass trial](#) known as the "UAE94" case. They received sentences ranging from seven to 15 years, mostly for advocating reform and democracy. Despite completing their sentences, [59 of them remain arbitrarily detained](#).

In another case, Turkish-Emirati citizen [Khalaf Al-Rumaithi](#) was forcibly deported from Jordan to the UAE on May 17, 2023. He had lived in exile in Türkiye for a decade but traveled to Jordan to find a school for his children. UAE authorities arrested him upon his return and announced he would face retrial for allegedly opposing the government. He was also a defendant in [another mass trial](#) involving 84 people, where 43 received life sentences, and others were sentenced to 10 or 15 years in prison after unfair proceedings.

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). However, many principles from these treaties are part of customary international law, making them binding on all states.

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