

Urgent Action Office 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 urgentaction@amnesty.ca
First UA: 27/25 Index: MDE 23/9162/2025 Saudi Arabia of March 19, 2025

SAUDI ARABIA FREE ARBITRARILY DETAINED BRITISH BUSINESS ANALYST

On August 31, 2024, Saudi authorities arrested British national Ahmed al-Doush, a senior business analyst at Bank of America, as he prepared to board a flight home at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. He had been visiting Saudi Arabia with his wife and children and was returning to the UK, where he lives.

After his arrest, Ahmed was held incommunicado and reportedly placed in solitary confinement for 33 days. He was denied UK consular assistance and legal representation for more than two months. When he was finally able to communicate with his family, he said he was told the charges against him were linked to a deleted social media post and an alleged connection to a Saudi critic in exile. However, his only known link to this individual is through the person's son.

Although a trial session has taken place, the evidence against him remains unclear. The judge has indicated that a verdict will be issued soon, yet Ahmed remains arbitrarily detained more than six months later.

Saudi authorities must immediately and unconditionally release Ahmed al-Doush and allow him to return to the United Kingdom.

Write to the Saudi Minister of Justice urging him to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Ahmed al-Doush.
- Ensure his fair trial rights are protected until his release.
- Allow him regular access to his family and legal representation.

Write to:

Walid bin Mohammad AlSama'ani
Minister of Justice
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Postal Code 11472, P.O Box 7775
Email: 1950@moj.gov.sa

Salutation: *Dear Prosecutor General,*

Send a copy to:

The Saudi Human Rights Commission
Dr. Hala bint Mazyad bin Mohammed Al-Tuwaijri
Email: po@hrc.gov.sa
Twitter: @HRCSaudi

And copy:

Her Excellency Amal Yahya Almoalimi
Ambassador
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
201 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 1K6
Canada
Tel: (613) 237-4100 Fax: (613) 237-0567
Email: caemb@mofa.gov.sa

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more than two months after his arrest on August 31, 2024, Ahmed al-Doush's family had no contact with him. Authorities refused to provide any information about his whereabouts, the reason for his arrest, or his well-being. His wife and children were left in the dark, not knowing if or when he might return home.

During this time, Saudi authorities also denied him access to UK consular representatives. This prevented both his family and the UK government from gathering crucial information about his detention and from taking steps to secure his release.

On November 17, 2024, Ahmed was finally allowed to call his wife. After that, he was permitted weekly phone calls with his family. However, in January, these calls became irregular and eventually sporadic. He later told his family that authorities restricted his communication as punishment for mentioning a recently released detainee during a call.

Ahmed was subjected to repeated interrogations without a lawyer present and before he was even informed of the charges against him. During questioning, officials reportedly told him that if not for his social media activity, he would be home with his family. However, his account on X had only 37 followers and a total of four posts.

Since his arrest, Ahmed has had only three consular visits from the British embassy in Riyadh. The first took place on November 21, 2025—nearly three months after his detention. Before this visit, the UK government withheld any details about his status, detention conditions, or well-being from his family, citing data protection laws.

Amnesty International has documented Saudi authorities' growing repression of free speech, targeting both citizens and foreign nationals. Many have been sentenced to long prison terms simply for peacefully expressing their views, criticizing government policies, or engaging in activism.

Legal proceedings in these cases often fail to meet international fair trial standards. Individuals are frequently held incommunicado, placed in solitary confinement, and denied access to lawyers or the courts to challenge their detention.

Since 2013, Amnesty International has recorded 86 cases of people prosecuted solely for exercising their rights to free expression, association, and peaceful assembly. These include human rights defenders, political activists, journalists, poets, and clerics. Of those, 40 were prosecuted for posts on social media. The real number of such cases is likely much higher.

Ahmed al-Doush's case is yet another example of this ongoing repression. Saudi authorities must release him immediately and ensure the protection of fundamental human rights.

Please take action as soon as possible until September 19, 2025. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.