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## **SAUDI ARABIA TEACHER FREED AFTER UNJUST IMPRISONMENT**

On February 13, 2025, Saudi teacher Asaad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi was released after spending over two years in prison for peaceful online expression. He was arrested in November 2022 and sentenced to 20 years—later reduced to 15—simply for posting criticism of government policies and mourning the death of a jailed human rights defender. His release is a victory, but the broader crackdown on freedom of expression in Saudi Arabia continues. Amnesty International thanks everyone who took action and urges continued pressure to free others still behind bars for speaking out.

**NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.**

Asaad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi, a 47-year-old teacher, was arrested on November 20, 2022, after a raid on his home. He was held in solitary confinement for three months and denied medical care for epilepsy, according to reliable sources. He also spent nine months without legal representation while being interrogated—violating his right to a fair trial. When eventually assigned a state-appointed lawyer, the lawyer reportedly refused to meet him in advance to prepare a defense. On May 29, 2024, the Specialized Criminal Court sentenced him to 20 years in prison, later reduced to 15 years, based solely on peaceful social media posts criticizing Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 program and expressing sympathy for the late activist Abdullah al-Hamid.

On October 3, 2024, an appeals court confirmed the 15-year sentence along with a 15-year travel ban, again based solely on posts made on X (formerly Twitter). Asaad's release highlights the impact of international solidarity, but also the ongoing repression of dissent in Saudi Arabia. His case is part of a larger pattern: his brother, Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi, a 56-year-old retired teacher, remains imprisoned—sentenced to 30 years for expressing criticism on X and YouTube. Amnesty International continues to demand the immediate and unconditional release of Mohammad and all others jailed for peacefully speaking their minds.