

The blogger and writer AHMED MANSOOR was born on October 22, 1969.

In 2015, he received the international “Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.” He is a member of the advisory board for the Middle East and North Africa division of the international nongovernmental organization “Human Rights Watch.” Since 2006, AHMED MANSOOR has been documenting the human rights situation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

On May 29, 2018, a court sentenced AHMED MANSOOR to 10 years in prison and a fine of 1,000,000 dirhams (the currency of the UAE; the amount was equivalent to approximately \$270,000). The court also ordered that he be placed under supervision for three years after serving his prison sentence. All of the charges on which he was convicted were based exclusively on his human rights activism, including his use of email and WhatsApp to communicate with Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and other human rights organizations.

In July 2024, the Abu Dhabi Federal Court of Appeal again sentenced Mansoor to 15 years in prison, apparently on the same charges.

Over the past eight years, the United Nations and independent human rights groups have documented that the UAE government has held Mansoor in solitary confinement without access to reading material, television, or radio.

On October 4, 2018, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the intimidation, persecution, and arrest of AHMED MANSOOR. The resolution also called for his release.

The resolution further stated that AHMED MANSOOR had appealed the verdict and was being held at the “al-Sadr” prison in Abu Dhabi.

Where to find us ...

At www.amnesty-augsburg.de, you'll find the dates of upcoming events—as well as our group meetings, to which anyone interested is always welcome.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

HUMAN RIGHTS IN
A VACATION PARADISE

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Human Rights in the UAE

Since 2011, the UAE authorities have severely restricted freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Many people—whether UAE nationals or not—who criticized the UAE, its policies, or its human rights situation have been harassed, arrested, tortured, or otherwise subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment, and have faced detention and unfair trials.

More than 100 people were affected—human rights defenders and government critics, including well-known lawyers, judges, and academics. Based on broad charges related to national security and cybercrime, trials were held that in no way met international standards for fair trials. Some individuals disappeared for a period of time. They subsequently testified that they had been tortured or otherwise subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment. They also stated that during the interrogations, they had been forced to make “confessions” without the presence of legal counsel. Contrary to international human rights agreements, the State Security Chamber of the Supreme Court often admits such “confessions” as admissible evidence and convicts the defendants on this basis, even if they have recanted these “confessions.”

Mansoor’s release would be a major step forward for freedom of expression

Our demands

- Ahmed Mansoor, as well as all human rights defenders, political activists, and other dissidents who are detained solely for exercising their fundamental human rights—including the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly—must be released immediately and unconditionally.
- Until his release, it must be ensured that Ahmed Mansoor and other human rights defenders, activists, and political prisoners are treated in accordance with the UN minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners. This includes ending solitary confinement, allowing regular family visits, and ensuring adequate medical care.
- UN experts and international NGOs must be allowed to visit Ahmed Mansoor in prison to monitor his condition, as well as that of others who have been wrongfully detained for their statements or following unfair trials.
- Upon Ahmed Mansoor’s release, his passport should be returned to him, all travel restrictions should be lifted, and he should be granted compensation for the mistreatment and other abuses he has suffered.

Other Human Rights Issues

Labor Rights

The kafala system (sponsorship system) in place in the UAE ties migrant workers very tightly to their employers, restricts their occupational mobility, and exposes them to systematic abuse, including wage fraud, excessive working hours, and crushing debt due to recruitment fees. Despite some legal protections, enforcement of the regulations remained inadequate, and migrant workers continued to be denied the right to form unions or to assemble peacefully.

Death Penalty

The United Arab Emirates retained the death penalty in law and resumed executions after a hiatus of several years. There were serious concerns regarding the fairness of the trials.

Irresponsible Arms Transfers

Before the International Court of Justice, Sudan accused the United Arab Emirates of violating the Genocide Convention by providing financial, military, and political support to the “Rapid Support Forces” (RSF)—a paramilitary rebel group engaged in armed conflict with the Sudanese Armed Forces.

An investigation published by Amnesty International found that the UAE had violated the UN Security Council’s arms embargo against Darfur in Sudan. Analysis of images and videos showing the aftermath of RSF attacks, in which at least 13 people were killed, confirmed the use of Chinese guided bombs and howitzers. Amnesty International concluded that the weapons, manufactured by a Chinese state-owned defense contractor, had almost certainly been reexported to Sudan by the UAE.

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