

# URGENT ACTION

## SHAM MASS TRIAL OF 84 EMIRATI MEN ONGOING

The unfair mass trial of 84 Emirati men, including human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience Ahmed Mansoor, Mohammed al-Roken, and Nasser bin Ghaith, on charges under an indictment that has so far been kept secret, is ongoing. On February 7, 2024, during the fifth trial session before the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi, defendants stated that they continued to be held in solitary confinement and disputed the Prosecution's arguments that the new case against them is different from the one they had previously been convicted and sentenced for in 2013.

### TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Second Urgent Action 120.23**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

**Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**  
President of the United Arab Emirates  
Twitter: [@MohamedBinZayed](#)

**Embassy of UAE in the United States**  
**His Excellency Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba**  
3522 International Court,  
NW, Suite 400, Washington DC 20008  
[info@uaeembassy-usa.org](mailto:info@uaeembassy-usa.org)

Your Highness, or Dear Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba,

I am concerned that the ongoing mass trial of **84 Emirati men**, including **26 prisoners of conscience**, among them **Ahmed Mansoor, Nasser bin Ghaith, and Mohammed al-Roken**, is politically motivated and disregards the defendants' right to a fair trial.

The new mass trial began on December 7, 2023, before the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi, on charges of establishing a "terrorist organization", the Justice and Dignity Committee, and supporting and funding this organization. At least 66 of the defendants in the ongoing mass trial face double jeopardy as they were previously convicted in 2013 in the UAE94 mass trial on charges related to establishing the Justice and Dignity Committee, to call for the respect of human rights in the UAE.

The latest trial session took place on February 7 and unlike the previous four hearings, family members of the defendants were finally allowed to enter the court room to follow the proceedings. They reported that the prosecution accused the UAE94 group of initiating the March 2011 petition calling for democratic reform, to which Ahmed Mansoor responded that he was the one who had initiated and worked on it. The next trial session is scheduled for February 15.

I urge your Highness to take all necessary measures to secure the immediate and unconditional release of prisoners of conscience Ahmed Mansoor, Mohammed al-Roken, Nasser bin Ghaith, and all others arbitrarily detained and prosecuted in the ongoing mass trial solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association; and for all charges against them stemming from their exercise of their human rights to be dropped. In the meantime, I call on you to ensure that they are detained in conditions that comply with international standards; and have immediate and regular access to their families and lawyers and any health care they may require.

Yours sincerely,

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The total number of defendants in this new mass trial was initially reported to be 87, however it is only on January 6, 2024, when the UAE authorities finally [announced](#) the trial on the official news agency WAM, that their number was confirmed as 84.

Multiple gross violations of the defendants' fair trial rights have been observed since the beginning of the new mass trial on December 7, 2023, including authorities directing witness testimony, failure to disclose key details such as the exact charges, restrictions on lawyers sharing documents relating to the case with the defendants and their families, and barring family members from attending hearings. During the second court session on December 14, 2023, family members of the defendants were taken to a separate room to watch the proceedings on a screen; there was no sound, preventing them from hearing proceedings. Following the families' protests, they were finally allowed to attend the court proceeding inside the court room on February 7, 2024.

By 2014, the UAE effectively succeed in shutting down the limited space that had existed for dissent in the country by arbitrarily detaining scores of Emirati nationals, including dozens who had signed a March 2011 petition for democratic reform addressed to the country's rulers. In 2013, after a grossly unfair [mass trial](#) of 94 defendants, known as the UAE94, 69 people were convicted and sentenced to between seven and 15-year prison terms, scores of them for their demands for reform and democracy.

Prominent human rights lawyer and former president of the UAE's Jurists Association, **Mohammed al-Roken**, was arrested on July 17, 2012. He was sentenced in July 2013 to 10 years' imprisonment, followed by three years' probation, at the end of the UAE 94 trial. He should have been released from prison on July 17, 2022.

Human rights defender [Ahmed Mansoor](#) was arrested on March 20, 2017, and sentenced in May 2018 to 10 years' imprisonment. He was convicted on charges including having ["insulted the 'status and prestige of the UAE and its symbols', including its leaders"](#). Since his arrest, Ahmed Mansoor has been held in solitary confinement. Up until his arrest, he was the only independent voice still brave enough to speak out against human rights violations from inside the country after the end of the 2013 mass trial.

Human rights defender [Nasser bin Ghaith](#) is serving a 10-year prison sentence handed to him on March 29, 2017 by the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi. He was convicted on charges including "posting false information" about UAE leaders and their policies, based on comments he made on X (formerly Twitter), stating that an earlier trial of himself and four other Emiratis was unfair. During his trial in 2017, the authorities restricted his access to his lawyer, and he was unable to prepare adequately for his defense.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic, English, or your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** April 10, 2024

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Ahmed Mansoor (he/him); Mohammed al-Roken (he/him); Nasser bin Ghaith (he/him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/7553/2023/en/>