

URGENT ACTION

DEATH SENTENCE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS COMMUTED

On September 24, 2024, the appeals chamber of Saudi Arabia's Specialized Criminal Court (SCC) commuted Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi's death sentence for his social media posts, resentencing him to 30 years in prison, a ludicrously harsh punishment for exercising his right to free expression. Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi, a 55-year-old retired teacher, was sentenced to death by the SCC on July 9, 2023 for his peaceful online activity on X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube. He was convicted on trumped up terrorism charges for posts in which he criticized the Saudi King and Crown Prince and Saudi's foreign policy, called for the release of detained religious clerics and protested increased prices. Amnesty International calls on Saudi authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi.

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 31.24**. 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.

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

CC: Embassy of Saudi Arabia in the United States
Her Royal Highness Princess Reema bint Bandar bin
Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
601 New Hampshire Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20037
Contact Form: <https://www.saudiembassy.net/contact-us>

Your Excellency,

While I welcome the news that the unjust death sentence against **Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi** has been commuted, I am distressed to learn that the appeals chamber of the SCC has resentenced him to 30 years in prison and that he remains in detention for his online expression.

According to the verdict and charge sheet reviewed by Amnesty International, Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi was convicted under articles 30, 34, 43 and 44 of Saudi's counterterrorism law, including for posts in which he criticized the Saudi King and Crown Prince and Saudi's foreign policy, called for the release of detained religious clerics and protested increased prices, all of which are views protected under his right to freedom of expression. He is not accused of any violent crime.

I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi as he has been convicted solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to well-informed sources, the appeals chamber of the SCC commuted the death sentence against **Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi** on September 24, 2024, and resented him to 30 years in prison. Saudi Arabia's judicial system lacks transparency, and court proceedings are often shrouded in secrecy, leaving families and defendants in agonizing limbo. The SCC Appeals Court does not explain its judgements or issue written judgments, and defendants and their lawyers are often not informed promptly of the outcome of their appeal until they repeatedly inquire with court officials, sometimes over several weeks or months.

The Specialized Criminal Court had sentenced 55-year-old Saudi retired teacher, Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi, to death on July 9, 2023, on trumped-up terrorism-related charges solely related to his online activity on X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube. Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi's brother, Dr Saeed bin Nasser al-Ghamdi, is an Islamic scholar and government critic living in self-imposed exile in the United Kingdom. He told Amnesty International that he believes that his brother's death sentence was a reprisal for his own activism.

Amnesty International has documented acts of reprisal against family members of dissidents, activists, and human rights defenders in exile, including 40 cases of relatives of activists who found themselves – by no official order or other form of notification – [under travel bans](#), effectively forcibly separating families.

Over the past three years, Amnesty International has documented an escalating crackdown in Saudi Arabia against individuals who voiced their opinions on social media. The Specialized Criminal Court, the country's notorious counter-terror court, has imposed punishments of imprisonment up to 45 years using vague provisions under anti-cybercrime and counterterrorism laws.

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

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: May 13, 2025

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Mohammad bin Nasser al-Ghamdi (he/him).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/7162/2023/en/>.