



29 June 2018
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**UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-eighth session, 18 June – 6 July 2018**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mr. President,

Torture and other ill-treatment remain common in the UAE, including through denial of medical care to detainees.

While we welcome UAE's accept of a recommendation to reject evidence obtained by torture,¹ we sincerely regret its rejection of recommendations to investigate acts of torture, to prohibit the practice of secret detention,² and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.³

We call on the government to prohibit and prevent all forms of torture and other ill-treatment, and ensure that all allegations of torture or other ill-treatment are promptly and thoroughly investigated, and those responsible held to account. The practice of secret detention must be prohibited.

We are concerned that trials in the UAE remain flawed and unfair. The judicial system lacks independence, including through the appointment of judges of the Federal Supreme Court by executive decree. The courts are neither independent nor impartial, especially when trying cases under broad and sweeping national security provisions in the Penal Code or the cybercrimes or counter-terrorism laws.

¹ A/HRC/38/14, recommendation 141.134 (Czechia).

² A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.109-110 (Qatar, Italy).

³ A/HRC/38/14, recommendation 141.17-18 (Austria, Czechia), 141.23 (Denmark, Portugal).

We welcome UAE's support of recommendations to ensure the right to a fair trial for all,⁴ but regret that recommendations to ensure detainees are informed of the charges against them and have access to legal counsel have been rejected.⁵ This undermines any commitment to fair trial standards.

UAE must urgently ensure that no one is arbitrarily arrested or detained, that individuals are held only on the basis of internationally recognizable offences and brought promptly before an independent court, and must have immediate access to their lawyer and family, and to adequate medical care when required.

The UAE continues to convict and imprison human rights defenders and government critics. We are concerned that some of them are prisoners of conscience detained solely for their human rights work. This includes Ahmed Mansoor who was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in May merely for posting on Facebook and Twitter. We call for his immediate release and that of all other prisoners of conscience.

We welcome UAE's acceptance of recommendations to ensure the protection of human rights defenders,⁶ however, we are deeply concerned by its lack of support of recommendations to ensure a safe work environment for human rights defenders and to protect them from reprisals for cooperating with the UN.⁷

We were concerned that UAE resumed executions in 2017, the first executions since 2015. We also deeply regret that UAE rejected all 16 recommendations related to the death penalty.⁸ We call on UAE to immediately establish an official moratorium on executions, pending full abolition of the death penalty.

Thank you, Mr. President,

⁴ A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.134 (Czechia), 141.141 (Australia).

⁵ A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.142-143 (Chile, USA).

⁶ A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.127-129 (France, Norway, Latvia).

⁷ A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.130-132 (Belgium, Austria, Ghana).

⁸ A/HRC/38/14, recommendations 141.13-15 (Chile, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Australia, Ghana, Moldova, Slovakia), 141.96-108 (Mozambique, Austria, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Slovenia, Australia, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Montenegro, UK, Mexico).