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**Saudi Arabia refers 21 Jordanian and Palestinian detainees to the criminal court after a year of unlawful detention**

**The detainees were subjected to enforced disappearance and did not have access to lawyers**

**The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not provide any consular services for the detainees**

**The Jordanian government should put pressure on the Saudi government to release the detainees**

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in UK (AOHR UK) condemns the decision of the Saudi authorities to refer 21 Jordanian and Palestinian detainees to the criminal court, most of them have been arbitrarily detained, with no charges brought against them. Furthermore those detained have not been brought before any judicial body and have been denied access to a lawyer.

AOHR UK expressed that the Saudi authorities have launched a campaign of arrests amongst Jordanians and Palestinians residing in Saudi Arabia. Since February 2019 more than 60 people have been arbitrarily detained, without formal charges being filed against them.

AOHR UK added that some of those detained have been subjected to enforced disappearances for more than three months; neither the reasons of detention nor the location of their detention were provided to their families. Furthermore, they



have been imprisoned in different prisons, including al-Ha'ir, Asir, Abha, and Dhahban prisons.

AOHR UK stressed that the detainees have been denied access to a lawyer, and access to family throughout their arbitrary detention.

AOHR UK draws attention to the political nature of the arrests. Following information provided by the families of the detainees, investigations demonstrate that Palestinian and Jordanian detainees are being questioned mostly about their personal lifestyle, their opinion on the Palestinian cause, and any affiliation to political parties and movements in Palestine. However, they have not been charged for violating any of the articles of Saudi law.

The wife of one detainee has provided a testimony detailing her husband's arrest, stating:

"my husband was arrested from Jeddah airport in February 2019 while he was heading to Jordan, on the next day, a State Security force stormed our house, searched and confiscated some mobile phones and a computer. They asked us about him and his work, and told us that he is being held at the State Security headquarters in Riyadh, without disclosing any further information. In Jeddah, he was unable to tell us the conditions of neither his detention nor the reasons for his arrest and the charges against him. Likewise, he was not allowed to hire a lawyer neither to be brought before to any official judicial authority. On February 2, 2020, the Criminal Court in Saudi Arabia informed us that a session had been set on March 08, 2020 for a trial, without knowing the charges against him."

AOHR UK emphasised that the detainees were arbitrarily detained. None of the detainees' families have been informed of any accusations that allow their detention, where dozens of detainees have had no hearings scheduled for their trial.

AOHR UK indicated that the Jordanian government has not put any pressure on the Saudi authorities to release those who hold Jordanian citizenship. Nevertheless, the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs ignored the requests of the



families of the detainees to visit their detained relatives and provide them with the necessary consular services.

AOHR UK expressed that a number of those who were released and returned to Jordan were subjected to long interrogations at the airport.

AOHR UK called on the working group on Arbitrary Detention to put pressure on the Saudi authorities to release all Palestinian and Jordanian detainees who were unlawfully arrested, and to establish a special committee to investigate the violations committed against them. As well as, to ensure that they obtain all their rights protected under international law and treaties.

Moreover, AOHR UK called on the Jordanian government to carry out its duties towards the detainees and their families, by arranging consular visits, to check up their conditions, and to put pressure on the Saudi government to release them all.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)



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