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Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK publishes a letter calling for decision makers in the world to pressure Saudi Arabia to release the scholar Salman Al-Odah.

**The letter:**

**To whom it may concern**

**Re: Salman Alodah, political detainee by Saudi Authorities**

After the death of his wife in an accident in 2017, Salman Alodah became everything for the family specially for the young kids.

Despite this agony, the Saudi regime arrested Alodah in September 2017. Alodah is one of the most popular scholars in Saudi Arabia and the Muslim world. He has advocated for reforms in Islamic discourse and campaigned for political participation, especially in Saudi Arabia. His books include 'A Budding Heart (Autobiography)', 'Questions on Revolution' and 'Questions on Violence'.

Alodah has long faced persecution by successive Saudi governments for his criticism. The General Investigation forces (al-Mabahith al-Ammah) detained him from September 1994 until July 1999 without trial over his criticisms of the Saudi government. Saudi State Security forces next arrested him in September 2017. The state prosecutor brought charges against him one year later, in September 2018, at the Specialized Criminal Court, seeking the death penalty on 37 charges related to Alodah's peaceful speech advocating reforms. His trial is ongoing.

State Security interrogators have mistreated Alodah in detention and deprived him of sleep and necessary medications. Beginning in January 2018, the family received reports of mistreatment and deterioration in his health. On January 17, 2018, a source with direct knowledge of Dhahban Prison where Alodah was being held told his family



that he was very ill. On February 13, 2018, the family visited him for the first time, after he had been held incommunicado for five months.

During the visit, he reported mistreatment. He said during the first three to five months of his detention, while in Dhahban prison, guards shackled his feet with chains and blindfolded him when moving him between interrogation rooms and his cell. Interrogators interrogated him for more than 24 hours continuously on several occasions, not allowing him to sleep. On one occasion, when he was handcuffed, the guards threw a plastic bag of food at him without removing his handcuffs. He had to open the bag and remove the food with his mouth, causing damage to his teeth. Prison officials denied him the necessary medication until January 2018.

Following this prolonged mistreatment, in mid-January 2018 he was hospitalized for a few days for dangerously high blood pressure.

Furthermore, he was mistreated in Haer prison, during his confinement there, he was brought for trial hearings, he was held in a tiny cell, approximately two meters by two meters (six feet by six feet), with no bathroom, for up to a day. During the transfers between Dhahban and Haer prisons, he was blindfolded, handcuffed, lifted in the air and thrown into the back of a transfer vehicle. He was not secured in a seat and was thrown around the back of the vehicle as it traveled, hitting its ceiling and floor.

Once he was transferred to Haer in late 2019, he continued to be held in solitary confinement. From mid-May 2020 to mid-September 2020, he has been held incommunicado and deprived of contact with the outside world.

In November 2020, he informed the family that when he visited the doctor, the doctor told him that he lost half of his vision and half of his hearing. His condition is deteriorating due to medical negligence.

Mr Alodah did not commit any crime, he is a Prisoner of conscience, so We urge you to take the decisive measures to secure his release and enable him to access proper medical care.

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