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AOHR UK Held an Online Seminar to Free Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari

On Wednesday, October 14, 2021, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) held an [online seminar](#) calling for the freedom on the elderly Palestinian detainee in Saudi Arabia Dr. Mohammed Al-Khudari, who had been detained along with his son Dr Hani and 60 others in an unfair trial and charged under the anti-terrorism law.

[Dr. Mohammed Al-Khudari](#), 83, suffers from cancer, and a catheter in his bladder. Since his detention, he has been denied adequate medical care and there are serious concerns over his life and health.

AOHR UK invited the following speakers to discuss the violations faced by the elderly political detainee, including Sue Willman – Human Rights Committee Chair of the Law Society and Assistant Director of the King’s College Legal Clinic, Haydee Dijkstra – International Counsel for Dr. Mohammed al-Khudari, Nicholas Squires – Solicitor, Linda Mansour – Attorney, and Raed Jarrar – Arab-American political analyst and advocate.

Haydee Dijkstra pointed out that she is representing the case before the UN working group on arbitrary detention to give their opinion on his arbitrary detention as he has been illegally detained and tried in a mass and [unfair trial](#) where they were all deprived of the right to defence, in addition to the discriminatory manner for which they were arrested for being [Palestinian citizens](#), despite residing legally in Saudi Arabia for long years.

Dijkstra stressed that the submission she made in December 2019 raised the attention of three mandates to the UN working to protect the right to health, right to free trial and



to prevent torture, where Saudi Arabia has been party to the Convention Against Torture, and other treaties which makes it obliged to apply and respect these treaties in dealing with detainees.

Dijskal added that those in the case were not informed of the reasons for their arrest and they only learnt it on the first day of their [trial](#) 11 months after their arrest, therefore they were unable to defend themselves due to the ambiguity of the reasons.

In addition to this Dr. Al-Khudari was detained for three months in solitary confinement and subjected to coercion during his interrogation and was denied access to a lawyer until a year after the trial had started, and even then, the lawyer did not have access to the file of the case nor was allowed to present his defence.

Raed Jarrar, the advocacy director for [DAWN](#), founded by the late Jamal Khashoggi, stressed that the Saudi Arabian government is committing gross violations of human rights on a daily basis including violations domestically, including Al-Khudari's case, and violations in the region like the war on Yemen, as well as its indirect funding to the Sisi regime in Egypt, in addition to Libya and Tunisia's upheaval now. All this happens amid complete silence by the USA and the EU for which a shift in policy has to be made in regard to the relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia via the application of a law prohibiting US support or US military sales to Saudi Arabia.

Jarrar highlighted that the record of human rights violation of Saudi Arabia is appalling, and efforts must be united to bring justice to all victims of this regime including redress for Jamal Khashoggi and the release of Dr. Al-Khudari and all those detained arbitrarily.

Sue Willman, who has been involved in legal interventions challenging the export of arms to Saudi Arabia from UK, pointed out that there is not much point in pursuing legal remedies, but rather political and diplomatic remedies with states like Saudi Arabia which constantly violate international law and international human rights law.

Saudi Arabia is one of the few countries which refused to sign the universal declaration of human rights and the ill-treatment received by Dr. Al-Khudari, his son and the other 60 detainees certainly doesn't comply with those basic rights, and the prolonged solitary confinement can amount to physical and psychological torture, added Sue.



Willman stated that the UK government and the foreign office has got the power to impose sanctions and it did impose sanctions under the regulations on 20 Saudi nationals who it's alleged were involved in the deaths of the journalists Jamal Khashoggi but given Saudi financial interests in the UK; sanctions can have an impact. For example, the purchase of [Newcastle United](#) football club which is now owned by crown prince Mohammed bin Salman who authorised the killing of Khashoggi, could have been prevented, pointing out that human rights should always come before economic investment.

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