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AOHR UK Held a Panel on UAE's Al-Raisi's Candidacy to Head Interpol Despite Allegations of Torture

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in UK ([AOHR UK](#)) held an [online panel](#) on Wednesday, 17 November 2021, addressing the candidacy of UAE's police chief Major General [Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi](#) to the position of president of Interpol which is scheduled to hold its 89th annual meeting on 23-25 November in Istanbul, Turkey.

Al-Raisi's [candidacy](#) sparked widespread controversy due to the UAE's poor human rights record, given that Al-Raisi himself is accused of being responsible for the torture of dozens of prisoners in UAE jails.

Louisa Collins, a barrister specialising in extradition, international crime and human rights law chaired the [panel](#) joined by the guest speakers, Roger Sahota – Solicitor specialising in criminal defence, fraud and human rights law, Glenn Carle – American writer and security specialist, and Rhys Davies– British barrister specialising in international criminal law and human rights law

Roger Sahota highlighted that Member States of Interpol over 190 countries can share information between themselves and red notices are notices of an accusation of criminal conduct committed by an offender, without the need for any evidence to support it.

Sahota pointed out that in recent years political manipulation of Interpol and the use of Red Notices are now issued by some countries as a tool to target dissidents and critics of various regimes and their unlawful practices.

Sahota referred to a report published in 2019, an investigation by the Council of Europe, which confirmed that Interpol's procedures had been frequently [abused](#) for



political or corrupt reasons by certain countries and the fact that this happens is in clear contravention of Interpol's constitution. Article (3) of the Constitution makes it clear that Interpol is not engaged in any activities of a political nature, and furthermore, it's also the case that Interpol is supposed to restrict its activities to dealing with ordinary law crimes, rather than allegations which are politically motivated.

Glenn Carle also referred to Sir David Calvert Smith, former director of Public Prosecutions in the UK, who published an assessment documenting large expenditures from the UAE contributions to Interpol since 2017, stressing that the UAE is trying to buy respectability and influence, and to use the Interpol for its own interests.

Carle added that the UAE has engaged for a number of years in substantial efforts to Polish its reputation in its image as a government of laws respectful of human rights and international agreements, while many individuals in the UAE are held for their use of the freedom of speech or freedom of assembly.

Carle added that many international reporters spoke about many restrictions during their work in UAE, which should be alarming for Interpol.

Carle stressed that the UAE has consistently blocked any attempt for human rights organisations or United Nations officials from visiting detainees to verify their conditions.

Carle added that The European Parliament itself has urged everyone not to participate in the Dubai Expo 2020 because it would give a positive sanction to the regime, which is actually misrepresenting itself.

Carle emphasised that the UAE has been extensively involved in both Libya and in Yemen, supporting and funding around 5000 mercenaries from Sudan and Chad but that UAE money has purchased services or funded the services of the Wagner Group. There are allegations that they have engaged in torture. They have indiscriminately mind around towns that were in combat, which itself is an international crime. They've used bombing campaigns that have ignored any of the "No strike lists" where there are civilians noted. They have detained people who they are then allegedly tortured.", all of these issues have human rights aspects that could involve the neutral Interpol organisation either investigating events or individuals.



As to the approaching elections of the president of Interpol, Carle stressed that if Major General Raisi wins the position, it will be an opportunity for the UAE to control Interpol and tell the world “We are the good guys we run the world's international organization”.

Rhys Davies stressed that the UAE is a serial abuser of fundamental human rights, and that abuse is pervade throughout the criminal justice system, where the opposition get arrested, with a lack of due process and the rule of law, in addition to the violations of women of migrant workers.

People in the UAE are arrested, detained, prosecuted, convicted, and sentence at every level of the criminal justice system, on the flimsiest or wholly lacking basis.

In addition to the human rights breaches and abuse of red notices that one needs to consider what's going on with the UAE.

Davies stressed that their allegations have been made against Al-Raisi on torture. “I believe that that the allegations made against him at a United Nations level I understand, and there is a request for his arrest in Turkey on the basis of torture within universal jurisdiction principles.” He has been accused of torture, have been accused of presiding over a broken criminal justice system.

Davies confirmed that choosing UAE’s candidate for the presidency of Interpol would severely impact Interpol’s credibility and damage it, as he would be the President, who played to be more than one convicted of corruption.

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