



Date: 30/12/2024

## **Lebanese authorities must immediately release Abdel Rahman Al-Qaradawi and end security cooperation with Egypt**

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK) condemned the arrest of Egyptian poet Abdel Rahman al-Qaradawi, son of the late scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi, at the hands of the Lebanese authorities, after he crossed from Syria to Lebanon, describing this as a serious violation of Lebanon's international obligations. AOHR UK also warned that his extradition to Egypt exposes him to grave danger and puts his life and safety at risk, in light of Egypt's record of torture and unfair trials of political opponents.

Al-Qaradawi was arrested on Saturday, December 28, by Lebanese General Security, based on a security cooperation memorandum between Lebanon and Egypt, despite the fact that he did not commit any crime to justify his arrest. He was sentenced in absentia to five years in prison by an Egyptian court known for fabricating political cases and using the judiciary as a tool to persecute opponents.

The Egyptian authorities have previously used security agreements with other countries to extradite political opponents, thus reflecting the collapse of the justice system in Egypt, where torture is practiced systematically, and confessions are extracted under duress, amidst a complete absence of independent judicial oversight.

AOHR UK warned that handing over al-Qaradawi to the Egyptian authorities constitutes a clear violation of international law, including the Convention against Torture, which prohibits the extradition of any person to a country where he may be at risk of torture. The organisation pointed out that the Lebanese authorities bear full legal responsibility for any violation that al-Qaradawi may be subjected to if he is extradited to Egypt.



AOHR UK called on the Lebanese authorities to immediately release al-Qaradawi and stop security cooperation with the Egyptian regime, stressing that the ongoing use of such agreements in light of the collapse of the Egyptian judiciary would tarnish Lebanon's international reputation and make it a partner in serious human rights violations.

AOHR UK stressed that the Lebanese government's continued security cooperation with authoritarian regimes such as the Egyptian regime not only harms Lebanon's reputation, but also threatens to classify Lebanon as a country that lacks respect for the law and human rights, which deepens the crises the country already suffers from at various levels.

Respecting and applying international laws and conventions is not an option subject to political deals based on mutual interests, but rather an imperative necessity which reflects a commitment to protecting human rights and the rule of law, thus enhancing the trust in the state's sovereign institutions at the domestic and international levels.

AOHR UK called on the international community, including the United Nations and international human rights organisations, to pressure the Lebanese authorities to stop the extradition of al-Qaradawi, and to ensure its respect for its international obligations. It also called on the Turkish authorities and the concerned countries to intensify their efforts to prevent any attempt to deport him to Egypt, and to work on releasing him immediately.

AOHR UK stressed that the case of Abdel Rahman al- Qaradawi is a clear example of the cross-border policies through which oppressive regimes seek to eliminate their opponents abroad. It also stressed that Lebanon, which has long been a safe haven for those persecuted, must adhere to human rights principles and not be involved in handing over citizens to a regime known for its brutality and gross violations.

**Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK**