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Lebanese gov't must be pressured to cancel the extradition of Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi to the UAE

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK) emphasised that the Lebanese Cabinet's decision to extradite Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi to the UAE is a moral and legal failure, given the UAE's horrific record in human rights violations.

AOHR UK had reviewed the text of the decision, which was taken unanimously without any rejection, and is based on flimsy reasons, one of which is that the UAE has been elected several times to the Human Rights Council, indicating its clean human rights record, but the reality is that the election of countries to become members of the council is subject to geographical criteria and political balances, not human rights records.

AOHR UK pointed out that the UAE's request to extradite a person who does not hold its nationality, simply because he expressed an opinion, indicates the level of extreme hostility to anyone who opposes its policies in the region. This fact alone should have been sufficient to reject the UAE's request, in addition to the country's poor record in human rights which cannot be denied, as reports issued by the Council itself and international human rights organisations confirm that the UAE has committed serious crimes at the domestic and international levels.

AOHR UK stressed that the text of the decision reveals the political pressures and the blackmailing Lebanon was subjected to in this case, as it referred to a phone call between Prime Minister Najib Mikati and the UAE Foreign Minister, who pledged to treat Al-Qaradawi well upon receiving him. This reveals the political weight the UAE



has placed in the case to set an example to all its critics, even those who do not hold its nationality, that it can get hold of them.

AOHR UK noted that the UAE's poor record, which cannot be fully listed here, includes famous cases which should have been used as a guidance in dealing with the UAE in such cases, most notably combatting all forms of peaceful change in Arab countries, the assassinations and torture in Yemen, fuelling the civil war in Sudan, arresting, torturing and forcibly disappearing Emirati opponents, arresting and torturing residents, some of whom were killed under torture, most notably Lebanese citizen Ghazi Ezzedine, and kidnapping opponents from abroad in collusion with influential figures in corrupt regimes.

AOHR UK stressed that the extradition decision is a death sentence for Al-Qaradawi. The journey wouldn't stop at his extradition to the UAE, his sentencing and serving his sentence, as he will certainly be extradited to Egypt, which is also demanding his extradition to implement an in absentia ruling issued against him. It is well known now that whoever enters Egyptian prisons will not leave it, and the thousands of detainees still held inside are the best proof of that.

AOHR UK held Prime Minister Najib Mikati fully responsible for the serious repercussions of this decision. The organisation called on all parties concerned with the proper application of the correct law and the Charter of Human Rights to intervene quickly and pressure the Lebanese authorities to cancel the decision and prevent the extradition process.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK