

**Questionnaire for International Organizations and Civil Society by the  
UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders  
Mary Lawlor, 9 February 2021**

**Contact Details**

Please provide your contact details in case we need to contact you in connection with this survey. Note that this is optional.

Type of Stakeholder (please select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> International or Inter-governmental Organisations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil Society Groups or Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Individual human rights defender <input type="checkbox"/> Academic/training or research institution <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
Name of Stakeholder/ Organization (if applicable)	<b>International Center for Justice and Human Rights</b> Rue Pré-de-la-Bichette 1 1202 Geneva Switzerland Tel. +41 22 592 14 10 Email. info@ic4jhr.org
Name of Survey Respondent	<b>Safwa Aïssa, executive director</b>
Email	<b>info@ic4jhr.org</b>
Can we attribute responses to this questionnaire to you or your organization publicly*?  *On OHCHR website, under the section of SR on human rights defenders.	<u>Yes</u> No  Comments (if any):

## Questions

- 1) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) currently detained by States, who have been imprisoned on charges that carry a prison sentences of at least 10 years or more? Please provide a list of cases.**

The following is a list of Emirati prisoners of conscience serving ten-year sentences on charges related to their peaceful call for democratic reform in the country and for practicing the right to freedom of expression:

1. Dr. Mohammed ali Saleh al-Mansouri, arrested on 16 July 2012. He is a human rights lawyer, former head of the UAE Jurists' Association, and member of the International Bar Association. UAE authorities arrested him on 16 July 2012 after signing a petition calling for democratic reforms.
2. Dr. Mohammed al-Roken is a leading human rights lawyer who provides legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses in the UAE. He was a member of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA) and the International Bar Association, and the president of the UAE's Jurists Association. He was arrested on 17 July 2012, and faced charges including "plotting to overthrow the government". On 2 July 2013, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
3. Ahmed Mansoor, prominent human rights activist, engineer, and a member of the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division and is on GCHR's Advisory Board. He was arrested on 20 March 2017 and sentenced to 10 years in prison on 29 May 2019 for social media posts criticizing human rights violations carried out by the Emirati government.
4. Nasser Bin Ghaith is a prominent economist and former lecturer at the University of Paris IV Abu Dhabi. He has publicly called for political reform and human rights in the UAE. Authorities arrested him on 18 August 2015. On March 29, 2017, Dr. bin Ghaith was convicted by the Abu Dhabi Court of Appeals and sentenced to ten years in prison on charges apparently related to a series of tweets.
5. Mohammed Saeed al-Abdouli, former judge and a former head of an appeal-stage criminal court in Abu Dhabi, arrested in October 2012. He was sentenced on 2 July 2013 to 10 years in prison.
6. Ahmed Yousef Abdullah Abu Ataba al-Zaabi, former judge, former director of the judicial inspection in Abu Dhabi, and law professor. He was arrested on 26 March 2012 because he requested the security forces to present an arrest warrant that authorizes the arrest and detention of his friend Mr. Ahmed Ghaith Al-Suwaidi, which they did not have. He was subjected to enforced disappearance and torture. On 2 July 2013, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
7. Hadeef Rashed Abdullah al-Owais, lawyer and university professor. Arrested in September 2012. He publicly expressed his willingness to defend the detained HRDs in UAE. On 2 July 2013, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
8. Khalifa Hilal Khalifa Hilal was arrested on 16 July 2012 and sentenced to 10 years in prison on 2 July 2013.
9. Salim Hamdoon Al-Shehhi, lawyer dismissed from his job after a TV interview in which he criticized the arrest of seven activists, known as the "UAE 7", who had their

citizenship arbitrarily withdrawn in 201. He was arrested on 16 July 2012 and sentenced to 10 years in prison on 2 July 2013.

10. Mohammed Abdulrazzak Al-Sidiq, lecturer at the University of Sharjah and Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Jurists Association. He was one of the seven advocates of reform whose Emirati nationalities were revoked in December 2011. He was arrested on 29 May 2012 and sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2013.
11. Ali Saeed Al-Kindi, former judge, and member of the Jurists Association. He was arrested on 7 July 2012 and sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2013.

**2) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) currently detained by States, who have been imprisoned on continuous sentences amounting to 10 years or more? For example, a defender who completes a sentence of four years in detention but instead of being released is given another six-year sentence? Please provide a list of cases or examples if possible.**

The UAE Federal Law No. 7 of 2014 on Combating Terrorism created Munasaha centers (counselling centers) to guide and rehabilitate detainees accused of terrorism. However, these centers are actually used to arbitrarily imprison human rights defenders who have completed their prison sentence beyond the date of release. There are at 13 activists who are arbitrarily detained in UAE jails beyond sentence for years and months, but we are not sure if they will languish there for another 6 years. ( It is most likely to be the case).

1 - Ahmad Al-Mulla, detained on 01 May 2014, and sentenced to three years in prison. His sentence ended on 01 May 2017.

2 - Faisal Al-Shehhi, detained on 01 May 2014, and sentenced to three years in prison. His sentence ended on 22 April 2017.

3 - Abdullah Al-Helou, detained on 22 April 2014, and sentenced to three years in prison. His sentence ended on 22 April 2017.

4 - Saeed Al-Buraimi, detained on 26 March 2013, and sentenced to five years in prison. His sentence ended on 26 March 2018.

5- Abdel Wahed Hassan Badi, detained on 26 March 2013, and sentenced to five years in prison. His sentence ended on 26 March 2018.

6 - Khalifa Rabiaa, detained on July 23, 2013, and sentenced to five years in prison. His sentence ended on 23 July 2018.

7 - Abdullah Al-Hajri, detained on 16 July 2012, and sentenced to seven years in prison. His sentence ended on 16 July 2019.

8 - Imran Al-Radwan Al-Harthy, detained on 16 July 2012, and sentenced to seven years in prison. His sentence ended on 16 July 2019.

9 - Fahad Al-Hajri, detained on March 02, 2013, and sentenced to seven years in prison. He has ended his sentence since March 2, 2020.

10 - Mahmoud Al Hosani, detained on 16 July 2012, and sentenced to seven years in prison. His sentence ended on 16 July 2019.

11- Mansour Al-Ahmadi, detained on 12 October 2012, and sentenced to seven years in prison. His sentence ended on 13 October 2019.

12 - Maryam Sulaiman Al-Ballushi, detained on 19 November 2015, and sentenced to five years in prison. Her sentence ended on 19 November 2020.

13- Amina Mohammed al-Abdouli detained on 19 November 2015, and sentenced to five years in prison. Her sentence ended on 19 November 2020.

- 3) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) whose time in pre-trial detention and/or administrative detention by States combines with a sentence that amounts, or would amount to 10 years or more? Please provide a list of cases.**

No

- 4) Do you know of any human rights defender(s) falling under any of the previous categories above, who were released before ending their long-term prison sentences for any reasons (e.g. granted a pardon, as a result of an appeal, or released on humanitarian or other grounds)? Please provide a list of cases.**

On May 16, 2019, the president of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) pardoned and released activist Abdul Rahman Bin Sobeih Al-Suwaidi after his appearance in different Emirati television channels for a 30-minute long interview in which he denied the torture and mistreatment he endured in prison.

In 2013, Mr Abdurrahman Bin Sobeih Al-Suwaidi was sentenced in absentia to 15 years in prison within the "UAE 94" trial. He was arrested in 2015 in Indonesia and later deported to the UAE, where he was tried again and sentenced, on March 28, 2016, to 10 years in prison.

- 5) What actions do you suggest the Special Rapporteur can take to:**

- a) Prevent defenders from being detained for long terms in connection to their human rights work? and**

The UAE authorities should respect their commitments, such as:

- 1- The implementation of the recommendations of the UPR, the UN bodies and conventions, especially respect the convention against torture.
- 2- The authorities have the obligation to accept requests for visits from special rapporteurs
- 3- The authorities should start a sincere and serious dialogue with civil society, human rights defenders and opponents in general.

We urge the Special Rapporteur to intervene and call on the UAE authorities to stop detaining people in relation to their peaceful human rights work.

We also urge him to make sure that the injustice against HRD must be prioritized justly and with urgency by calling for their immediate release.

***b) Have those human rights defenders arbitrarily detained under long sentences released?***

No.