

URGENT ACTION

RAIF BADAWI'S PROSPECTS UNCLEAR

Raif Badawi was scheduled to be flogged in public on 6 and 13 February, but he was spared, without explanation. He is a prisoner of conscience, serving a sentence of 10 years in jail and 1,000 lashes.

Raif Badawi was expected to be publicly flogged on 6 and 13 February, but the punishment was not carried out on these two Fridays, without any reason being given. As on the previous week he was not called from his cell or examined by the prison doctor.

The Supreme Court had referred his case back to the Criminal Court on 3 February. However, no further details of this transfer are available yet, and it is unclear whether it means his flogging has been halted or postponed.

Raif Badawi is likely to be called to the Criminal Court for a hearing where he will be told of the court's decision in the light of the Supreme Court's recommendation. The date of this session has not been made available. The Supreme Court could have upheld the conviction and sentence, overturned them and called for a retrial or by making observations and recommendations. The Saudi Arabian authorities have not yet made an official statement on the case despite the international outcry.

Raif Badawi remains at risk of flogging, in accordance with the sentence handed to him by the Criminal Court in Jeddah on 7 May 2014, of 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes. The conviction and sentence stemmed from Raif Badawi's creation of the Saudi Arabian Liberals website (which the court ordered to be closed down) and the accusation that he had "insulted Islam".

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to put a stop to any further flogging of Raif Badawi;
- Calling on them to release him immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Calling on them to ensure that his conviction and sentence are quashed.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 MARCH 2015 TO:

King

Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King
Royal Court, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: (via Ministry of the Interior)
011 966 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
Minister of Interior
Ministry of the Interior, P.O. Box 2933,
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: 011 966 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Your Excellence

And copies to:

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr Walid bin Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Samaani
Ministry of Justice University Street,
Riyadh 11137 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: 011 966 11 401 1741 011 966 11 402 031

Also send copies to:

Ambassador Adel A. Al-Jubeir, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
601 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington DC 20037
Fax: 1 202 944 5983 | Phone: 1 202 342 3800 | Email: info@saudiembassy.net

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! EITHER send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with "UA 3/13" in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, OR fill out this [short online form](#) (press Ctrl + click on link) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the twelfth update of UA 3/13. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/013/2015/en>.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Raif Badawi's trial began in July 2012 before the General Court in Jeddah. The General Court sent the case to the Criminal Court in Jeddah on 21 January 2013, saying it did not have jurisdiction to examine the case because it did not find that Raif Badawi had insulted Islam and therefore an "apostasy" charge did not apply. The General Prosecutor, however, insisted that Raif Badawi should be tried for "apostasy". The case was then sent to an appeal court to determine whether it should be heard by the Criminal Court in Jeddah or another tribunal, in particular the General Court in Jeddah, which has jurisdiction over "apostasy" cases. The Court of Appeal in Jeddah referred the case to the Criminal Court and on 29 July 2013 Raif Badawi was sentenced to seven years in prison and 600 lashes. His lawyer appealed the decision, arguing that the case had been dealt with by a temporary judge who was not impartial. The Court of Appeal ruled on 11 December 2013 that the case should be reviewed again and sent it back to the Criminal Court in Jeddah. The judge in the Criminal Court ruled two weeks later that he did not have jurisdiction to review the case, arguing that the charges related to "apostasy". The case was sent back to the Court of Appeal in Jeddah to decide whether to send the case back to the Criminal Court or to examine it itself. The Court of Appeal sent the case back to Jeddah's Criminal Court which sentenced Raif Badawi on 7 May 2014 to 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes and a fine of 1 million Saudi Arabian riyals (about US\$266,600). Raif Badawi appealed, but on 1 September the Court of Appeal upheld the sentence. In December, his case was reportedly referred to the Supreme Court and is now back with the Criminal Court.

Raif Badawi received his first 50 lashes in public on 9 January, in front of al-Jafali Mosque in Jeddah. The second set of 50 were expected to be administered the following Friday, 16 January, but a doctor examined him and concluded that his wounds had not sufficiently healed and he could not withstand another round of lashes. Raif Badawi was taken to King Fahad Hospital in Jeddah on 21 January and was thoroughly examined by a medical committee of eight doctors. After hours of examinations, the committee concluded that he had high blood pressure and recommended to the authorities that he not be flogged. However, on Friday 23 February he was taken from his cell and examined by a prison doctor he had not previously seen. This doctor found him fit to be flogged. It was brought to the doctor's attention that a medical committee had recommended two days earlier that Raif Badawi not be flogged. Only then did the doctor recommend that Raif Badawi be sent back to the medical committee for further examination, instead of signing the papers recommending that he be flogged.

The Saudi Arabian authorities have continued their widespread campaign to persecute civil society activists and human rights defenders with complete impunity, using both the courts and extrajudicial means such as the imposition of travel bans. Raif Badawi's lawyer, prominent human rights defender Waleed Abu al-Khair, was sentenced by the Specialized Criminal Court on 6 July 2014, to 15 years in prison, of which he will only serve 10 years, to be followed by a 15-year travel ban. He was found guilty of "disobeying the ruler and seeking to remove his legitimacy", "insulting the judiciary and questioning the integrity of judges", "setting up an unlicensed organization", "harming the reputation of the state by communicating with international organizations" and "preparing, storing and sending information that harms public order". On 12 January 2015, his sentence upheld upon appeal by the SCC in Riyadh. The judge has also ordered that he now must serve the full 15-year prison sentence because he has refused to apologize for his "offenses" (see UA 98/14, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/003/2015/en>)

Name: Raif Badawi (m)

Issues: Torture/ill-treatment, Prisoner of conscience, Freedom of expression

Further information on UA: 3/13(4 January 2013) and updates (8 July 2013, 31 July 2013, 20 January 2014, 23 May 2014, 1 September 2014, 8 January 2015, 9 January 2015, 19 January 2015, 22 January 2015, 26 January 2015, 4 February 2015)

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Country: Saudi Arabia