

URGENT ACTION

JORDANIAN JOURNALIST RELEASED

On 12 February 2019, Jordanian journalist and poet, Tayseer Salman al-Najjar was released from al-Wathba prison in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE authorities waived the fine imposed on him and he was flown back to Jordan on the same day. A prisoner of conscience, Tayseer had been due for release on 13 December 2018, having served his three-year prison sentence, but as his family could not pay the fine imposed by the court, his detention was extended

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

On 12 February 2019, Tayseer Salman al-Najjar was released from al-Wathba prison in Abu Dhabi, two months after he had finished serving his three-year prison sentence. The UAE authorities waived the fine imposed on him, and he was immediately flown back to Jordan the same day.

Amnesty International has worked on the case of Tayseer al-Najjar through its Urgent Actions network and on social media, highlighting his case at every opportunity. After Tayseer's release, his wife said to Amnesty: "You have been like a family to Tayseer and me. Thank you for your continuous support".

On 13 December 2015, Tayseer al-Najjar was arrested at the Security Department in Abu Dhabi, after he was summoned earlier that day. On 18 February 2016, after 68 days spent in incommunicado detention, he called his family and told them that he was being held at a State Security facility in solitary confinement and put under "heavy pressure" to confess. Amnesty International believes that he was tortured. About 10 days later, he made another call to his wife stating that he had been transferred to al-Wathba prison. Tayseer al-Najjar had no access to a lawyer until his trial began on 18 January 2017, when he appeared before the Criminal Chamber of the Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi, for the first time since his arrest, to be officially charged.

On 15 March 2017, Tayseer was sentenced to three years in prison and a fine of 500,000 Dirham (about US\$ 136,130). He was convicted of "publishing information with the aim of damaging the reputation and prestige of the Emirati state", in connection with a comment he posted on his Facebook account in 2014. In this comment, he praised the "Palestinian resistance" in Gaza and criticized the position of Arab countries towards it, including the UAE. Tayseer denied "insulting" the UAE. On 19 June 2017, the Federal Supreme Court upheld his conviction and sentence.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Tayseer Salman al-Najjar (he/him)

THIS IS THE FOURTH AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 112/16

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/6553/2017/en/>