

URGENT ACTION

BAHRAIN REFUGEE AT RISK OF FORCIBLE RETURN

Hakeem al Araibi, is a known footballer who was granted asylum in Australia after being tortured, detained and subject to an unfair trial in Bahrain. He has been detained by Thai authorities since 27 November, when he arrived in Bangkok on his honeymoon. Under international law, Thailand must not forcibly send him to Bahrain, where he faces a real risk of torture and other human rights violations. Thailand should immediately drop extradition charges, release Hakeem and allow him to return to Australia.

TAKE ACTION:

1. Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
2. [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 206.18**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

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Ambassador Virachai Plasai
Royal Thai Embassy
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Contact form: <https://bit.ly/2DYwCp1>
Twitter: [@ThaiEmbDC](https://twitter.com/ThaiEmbDC)
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Salutation: His Excellency

Your Excellency,

Hakeem al Araibi, a refugee who lives in Australia, is at risk of torture if he is forced to return to Bahrain. On 27 November 2018, Hakeem was detained in Bangkok, Thailand, since his arrival on honeymoon, and is currently being held in Klong Prem Remand Prison pending an extradition hearing. Since Hakeem's detention, Interpol has withdrawn its red notice on him, but the Bangkok Criminal Court has twice extended 60-day detention orders. Thailand has an obligation to comply with international human rights law, including customary international law, which overrides any extradition agreement with Bahrain. Hakeem cannot be returned to Bahrain because he faces a real risk of torture and other human rights violations. If forced to return, Thailand would breach international obligations prohibiting the transfer of persons to any country where they would face a real risk of serious human rights violations. Extradition proceedings against Hakeem should be dropped, and he should be immediately released from custody and allowed to return to Australia.

In 2012, Hakeem was arrested in Bahrain and has reported that he was tortured in detention. He was conditionally released and was then sentenced in absentia to 10 years in prison in an unfair trial. Hakeem was convicted of attacking a police station, although he was playing in a televised football match at the time of the alleged incident. In 2014, he fled Bahrain and was recognized as a refugee by Australia in 2017.

I urge that you immediately release Hakeem Ali al-Araibi, allow him to return to Australia, and under no circumstances remove him to Bahrain or to any other country in which he would be at real risk of serious human rights violations. I further request that your government take legislative and procedural measures to uphold and protect Thailand's international human rights obligation not to transfer anyone to a place where they would be at real risk of serious human rights violations.

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If deported to Bahrain, Hakeem faces imprisonment based on his prior unjust conviction and is in serious danger of torture and other ill-treatment. Hakeem has been outspoken about human rights violations in Bahrain since reaching safety in Australia. He has spoken out publicly about his torture in Bahrain, most notably in a 2016 interview with The New York Times, where his family name was spelled "al-Oraibi": <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/25/sports/soccer/sheikhs-candidacy-opens-new-door-to-criticism-of-fifa-human-rights.html>.

Bahrain has a known record of detaining dissidents upon arrival at Manama International Airport. One of the most recent examples is that of Ali Mohamed al-Showaikh, who was deported by Holland on 20 October 2018. Ali Mohamed al-Showaikh was arrested at the airport and has been held in detention without meaningful access to an attorney since that date, in circumstances raising grave fears of ill-treatment.

Another case example involves Ali Ahmed Ibrahim Haroon, 21, a Bahraini national, who was forcibly returned to Bahrain from Thailand on 18 December 2014, in response to an Interpol notice raised by the Bahraini authorities. There are credible reports that he was tortured after he returned to Bahrain. According to Haroon's family, both the Thai and Bahraini authorities physically assaulted him during the course of his detention in Thailand and forcible return to Bahrain. He had fled Bahrain in 2013 after being reportedly subjected to torture in detention there.

Thailand is bound by the international legal principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the transfer of persons to any country or jurisdiction where they would face a real risk of serious human rights violations. Thai officials have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to the principle of non-refoulement and to ensuring its protection. Nevertheless, the Thai government has on several occasions acquiesced to pressure from other governments and forcibly returned people to countries where their lives and well-being are at serious risk.

This principle is protected in numerous international instruments, and has achieved the status of customary international law, binding on all states regardless of whether they have ratified the relevant treaties. The forcible return of persons to a country where they could face torture and other ill-treatment would also constitute a violation of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which Thailand is a state party.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Thai

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 21 March 2019

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Hakeem Al Araibi (he/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa39/9518/2018/en/>