

# WALEED ABU AL-KHAIR

Al Ha'ir prison in Riyadh Saudi Arabia, Jeddah

## CONTACT DETAILS OF NOMINATORS:

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

### EDUCATION

#### Degrees

2003 Bachelor of Arabic Language of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah

2009 Master of Jurisprudence from Yarmouk University in Jordan

#### License

Memorized the Holy Quran and granted a license by Sheikh Obaidullah Al-Afghani and approved by the presidency of the teaching in the mosque of the Prophet in Medina.

### OTHER EDUCATION

2010 Prepared for a PhD in comparative law and a thesis entitled: "*The problem of the rule of law at the national level between Islamic law and general international law and its applications in Saudi Arabia*" for 8 months in Britain

- Was then summoned back to Saudi Arabia for investigations of his activities.

2011 Registered in a six-week course on "Democratic leaders" at Syracuse University in New York. The Saudi Arabia Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution in Jeddah summoned him and told him that he was banned from traveling.

### PRACTICE OF LAW

2007 Practice of law with the firm of Essam Basrawi

### LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Represented people facing criminal charges for exercising internationally protected rights including:

- Samar Badawi a Saudi woman sentenced for not obeying her father;
- Raif Badawi, founder the Saudi Liberal Network Internet discussion group; defendants in the case of Jeddah reformers,
- Including Dr. Mossa bin Mohammed Al-Qarni and Dr. Saud al-Hashimiand; and, Dr. Abdul Rahman al-Shumaimri, who were arrested in February 2007.

### LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY

- In 2007 he signed the *Features of a Constitutional Monarchy*, a petition calling for a constitutional monarchy;
- In 2008 he founded the Monitor for Human Rights in Saudi Arabia (MHRSA). MHRSA and the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA) and became the first to highlight the plight of prisoners of conscience in Saudi Arabia; After registration of the

MHRSA in Saudi Arabia was refused, the nominee obtained registration with Canada's Ministry of Labour and asked the King to allow recognition of the organization in Saudi Arabia. The Royal Court replied by transmitting the request to the Interior Ministry, which opened an investigation into the organization;

- In 2008 he initiated a 48-hour hunger strike for prisoners of conscience which led to sit-ins and demonstrations; In 2011 he signed *Towards a State of Rights and Institutions*, a 9-point petition calling for elections, an independent judiciary and the establishment of civil society institutions and labour unions. The petition was posted on a dedicated website and Facebook and signed by over 9,000 before it was removed online;
- In 2009, he contributed to the creation of a social media presence for the “Save Jeddah Campaign” to enable communications between people assisting with rescues during the flood;
- In June 2009 he filed a lawsuit against the Interior Ministry because of detention for his client without charge.
- In 2011 he was named as one of the top 100 Arab activists on Twitter, having more than 40,000 followers, according to Forbes Middle East.
- In 2012 he began hosting weekly meetings in his home called ‘samood’ (which connotes resistance or steadfastness) to discuss social, political and philosophical issues. The nominee was arrested temporarily in October 2013 as a result of these meetings. These meetings began in reaction to the clamp down by the Government of Saudi Arabia on gatherings in public places following the 8 February 2012 arrest of journalist Hamza Kashgari;
- In 2012 he publically criticized the “war” on freedom of expression and the “criminalization” of thought in Saudi Arabia;
- In 2013 he publically criticized the lack of codified laws and interference by the Minister of the Interior as factors contributing to “religious extremism and intolerance among the judiciary” and the conviction of human rights and civil society advocates;<sup>1</sup>
- He represented a number of defendants in the case of Jeddah reformers, including Dr. Mossa bin Mohammed Al-Qarni, Dr. Saud al-Hashimi and Dr. Abdul Rahman al-Shumaimri;
- He represented Raif Badawi, organizer of the Saudi Liberal Network internet discussion group, after he was arrested and charged with ‘committing violations of legitimacy’ and ‘insulting the Divine self’. Raif Badawi was sentenced to 10 years in prison, a fine, and 1,000 lashes to be administered 50 lashes at a time;
- He has attended meetings regarding human rights concerns with the Gulf Cooperation Council.

## PUBLICATIONS

Written many articles on legal and social reform including:

- *Saudis stymied by fear*, Institute for War & Peace Reporting, July 2011;
- *Steadfast in pursuing a freer Saudi Arabia*, Washington Post, April 2012;
- *Jailed in Saudi Arabia for peaceful activism*, Washington Post, November 2013;
- *Saudi Arabia is stifling dissent in the name of counter-terrorism*, MSNBC, June 2014;
- over 300 articles in Saudi newspapers concerning legal reforms and human rights issues.

Additionally, Waleed Abu al-Khair has published over 300 articles in Saudi newspapers concerning legal reforms and human rights issues.

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<sup>1</sup> “The legal system is based on uncodified principles of Islamic law, which leaves judges largely free to decide what actions, in their view, are crimes, as well as the appropriate punishments. I believe that the Interior Ministry actively encourages religious extremism and intolerance among the judiciary, recognizing that judges with these views are far more willing to convict human rights and civil society advocates of vague religious and social offenses.” Waleed Abu Alkhair, *Sentenced in Saudi Arabia for peaceful activism*, Washington Post, 26 November 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/sentenced-in-saudi-arabia-for-peaceful-activism/2013/11/26/95fbcc6e-507b-11e3-9fe0-fd2ca728e67c\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/sentenced-in-saudi-arabia-for-peaceful-activism/2013/11/26/95fbcc6e-507b-11e3-9fe0-fd2ca728e67c_story.html)

**PARTICULARS of the NOMINEE**

Family name: Abu Al-khair

First name: Waleed

Sex: Male

Birth date: 17 June 1979

Nationality: Saudi Arabia