

**Fra:** Euro-Med Monitor [mailto:uk@euromedmonitor.org]

**Sendt:** 23. marts 2020 12:33

**Til:** uk@euromedmonitor.org

**Emne:** Invitation to sign: Petition: Free political prisoners in the Middle East due to the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic

**Dear MP,**

We are writing to you **to seek your support and signature** for the below-petition which aims to make sure political prisoners in the Middle East have the freedom and health care they need in light of the spread of the Coronavirus, as jailers in some prisons have tested positive while prisoners continue to live in miserable conditions in these prisons which put their lives at risk. Your support to matter, the since the launch of this petition a week ago, Egypt decided to free 15 political prisoners.

You could sign by replying to this e-mail.

Thank you for your commitment and leadership.

**Euro-Med Monitor**

**Sky Line International**

**Petition: Free political prisoners in the Middle East due to the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic**

**We, the undersigned members of parliaments,** call on our governments and the European Union to pressure governments in the Middle East to release political prisoners whose lives are at risk following the spread of the novel Coronavirus pandemic.

As of now, tens of thousands of political prisoners are held in the Middle East. This includes hundreds of political prisoners in Israel, where a psychiatrist in touch with prisoners was tested positive for Coronavirus as well as another jailer. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of political prisoners are held in Egyptian jails in dire conditions. The Cairo-correspondent of the New York Times noted that estimates suggest 19,000 Egyptians are infected with the virus, while the Egyptian government speak of 110 infections only.

Following the announcement of the first death due to the novel Coronavirus in Bahrain, the King issued a decree pardoning 901 prisoners. Iran, which is the third largest resource of the virus in the world announced a plan to release 70,000 inmates. In Saudi Arabia, where 118 cases of Coronavirus have been confirmed, dozens of activists are still in prison with almost no contact with their families, including women activist Loujain Alhathloul. In the UAE, Ahmad Mansour, an award-winning human rights defender serves a 10-year sentence in jail.

The conditions of prisoners in the Middle East raise serious concerns. Leaked photos have shown hundreds of them stockpiled on the top of each other in Egypt. While in countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, prisoners get no family visits and they rarely get to see their

lawyers. Not only this, prisoners have passed away in Egyptian and Saudi prisoners due to the lack of medical care and many infectious skin diseases have spread among them.

With middle eastern governments lacking the infrastructure to combat the spread of Coronavirus and with the existence of a serious threat to the lives of political prisoners in Middle East, we call for:

1. Releasing all political prisoners in the Middle East in light of the spread of the novel Coronavirus.
2. Providing political prisoners with the needed protection and medical care to make sure their lives are valued equally.
3. Ending the policy of detaining people and activists in the Middle East over their political opinions.
4. Sharing information and data about the spread of Coronavirus in prisons in the Middle East in a transparent manner.

### **Euro-Med for Human Rights Monitor**

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### **Sky Line International**

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Undersigned:

1. Baroness Meacher (British House of Lords)
2. David Alton (British House of Lords)
3. Margrete Auken (Member of the European Parliament)
4. Salima Yenbou (Member of the European Parliament)
5. Thomas Hammarberg (Swedish MP)
6. Baroness (Ruth) Lister of Burtersett (British House of Lords)
7. Janet Daby MP (British House of Commons)