

King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
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Your Majesty,

On 10 November, 10 Egyptian Nubian men are due to attend their first hearing before the [Specialized Criminal Court](#) (SCC), after having been detained for almost 16 months without charge. The Saudi General Directorate of Investigation (al-Mabahith) arrested the men on 14 July 2020, in relation to a cultural event they had planned on 25 October 2019 to mark the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

According to one of the detainees' relatives, the men were first arrested on the morning of the said event. Saudi security officials interrogated them about the event, namely accusing them of failing to include the photo of Egyptian President General Abdelfattah al-Sisi in the event's announcement poster, alongside other Egyptian army generals. The detained men explained that the event was not political but rather focused on celebrating Nubian soldiers who had taken part in that war. On 25 December 2019, after two months in detention without charge, the men were released on travel ban pending the case's resumption. On 14 July 2020, all 10 men were re-arrested and detained in al-Ha'ir prison in Riyadh, the Saudi capital. In April 2021, they were transferred to Assir prison in Abha city, where they have been denied access to lawyers of their choosing, appointed instead lawyers by the authorities, and have continued to be held without charge. The Egyptian consulate in Riyadh has failed to date to provide any consular assistance or facilitate the consular rights of those detained, despite the families' recurrent pleas for action. Instead, it issued a statement on 29 October 2020 supporting their detention.

A relative of one of the men told Amnesty International: "Some of the detainees are senior and suffer ailments like diabetes, gangrene and cardiovascular problems. They are rarely allowed to contact their families, and they fear speaking on the phone because of surveillance."

I urge you to release all ten men immediately as they are detained solely for peacefully exercising their human rights. Pending their release, I call on you to ensure that they have full access to medical care, lawyers of their choice and regular contact with their families. Furthermore, I urge you to protect minorities of all ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities, and grant them their basic human right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and association in Saudi Arabia.

Yours sincerely,