

21 April 2016

Oman – Deteriorating health of human rights defender Saed Jadad

Front Line Defenders is concerned at the deteriorating health of detained human rights defender Mr **Saed Jadad**, who was sentenced to one year's imprisonment in November 2015. The human rights defender suffered severe heart pain and fatigue, relating to an underlying heart condition, for which the prison authorities failed to provide adequate medical care.

[Saed Jadad](#) is a prominent human rights activist and blogger who has led several protests in Dhofar, southern Oman. The human rights defender called for government reform in 2011 and urged Sultan Qaboos to expand the Omani consultative assembly. Mr Jadad has been documenting human rights violations in Oman and has been critical of the government's respect for human rights both on social media and in newspaper articles. He has officially been banned from publishing in Omani newspapers, including in *Al Zaman* and *Ruaya* newspapers to which he contributed.

On 17 April 2016, Saed Jadad suffered a serious health deterioration while in detention at Arzat central prison, west of Salalah. Prison management initially refused to transfer the human rights defender to hospital despite the urgency of his condition. Two days later, on 19 April 2016, prison authorities eventually agreed to bring Saed Jadad to an emergency department in Salalah. At the hospital, a general practitioner recommended that the human rights defender be referred to a heart specialist. However, the human rights defender was brought back to Arzat prison an hour later.

In November 2015, Saed Jadad was [arrested](#) after security forces raided his home, and took him to Arzat prison. His detention occurred after the Court of Appeal in Salalah upheld the sentence of one year's imprisonment and a fine of 1000 Omani Rials on 18 November 2015. The human rights defender was charged with “the use of an information network in the dissemination of material that would prejudice public order”, following a blog post that he wrote in which he compared the 2014 protests in Hong Kong to the 2011 protests in Dhofar.

In a separate case, in September 2015, the Appeals Court in Muscat upheld a three year prison sentence, suspended for three years, and a fine of 2000 Omani Rials. Saed Jadad had been charged with “undermining the prestige of the state”, “incitement to protest” and “using social media to disseminate information that infringed on the sanctity of public order”, following an open letter which he wrote to U.S. President Barack Obama, in 2013, about human rights abuses in Oman. The Court of First Instance ordered on 8 March 2015, that Saed Jadad should serve the three aforementioned sentences simultaneously and pay the combined fine of 1700 Omani Rials.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the health of human rights defender Saed Jadad and the limited and delayed medical care that he received.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Oman to:

1. Ensure immediate specialist medical care for Saed Jadad and that his treatment in detention fully adheres to the conditions set out in the '*Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment*', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
2. Quash the sentence against Saed Jadad and release him, as Front Line Defenders believes that his sentencing is solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Oman are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.