

18 August 2017

Saudi Arabia – Prison sentence of human rights defender Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili upheld

On 14 August 2017, the Specialised Criminal Court of Appeal in Riyadh upheld the 8-year prison sentence of human rights defender **Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili**.

[Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili](#) is a human rights defender and leading member of the **Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA)**. He is a social media activist on human rights in Saudi Arabia, and has been actively involved in the defence of his fellow colleagues at ACPRA who have been subjected to judicial harassment, travel bans, and who were charged in relation to their human rights work.

On 14 August 2017, the Specialized Criminal Court of Appeal in Riyadh upheld the 8-year sentence of Saudi Arabian human rights defender Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili. On 10 January 2017, he was sentenced to eight years imprisonment, a travel ban and a prohibition of social media equal to 8 years following the completion of his sentence. The human rights defender was charged under the “Law for Crimes of Terrorism and its Financing”, for ‘*inciting demonstrations*’, ‘*obstructing the public order*’, ‘*participating in and drafting statements for an unauthorized organization*’.

Saudi authorities have targeted members of ACPRA for many years, with human rights defenders Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Hamed, Mohammed Saleh al-Bajadi, Fawzan al-Harbi, [Dr. Mohammed Fahd Al-Qahtani](#) and Dr. Abu Bilal Abdullah al-Hamid having been sentenced to prison terms and travel bans ranging from 6 to 10 years. On 8 August 2017, the Specialized Criminal Court of Riyadh also sentenced Omar Al-Hamid, a relative of some of the members of the ACPRA, to a three year prison sentence. The human rights defender was charged under the “*Anti-Cyber Crime Law*” for his activism in relation to calls for a release of the ACPRA members. On 9 March 2013, the Riyadh Specialized Criminal Court dissolved the ACPRA during its ruling on the cases of human rights defenders Dr. Mohammed Fahd Al-Qahtani and Dr. Abu Bilal Abdullah al-Hamid.

Front Line Defenders condemns the sentence against Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili and other members of ACPRA, as it believes that the human rights defenders are being targeted solely for their peaceful and legitimate human rights activities in Saudi Arabia.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Saudi Arabia to:

1. Immediately release Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili and quash his conviction as Front Line Defenders believes that he has been targeted solely as a result of his legitimate human rights work;
2. Immediately and unconditionally repeal the sentences, and remove the travel ban and other measures imposed against Abdulaziz Al-Shubaili and all other members of ACPRA facing judicial harassment in Saudi Arabia;

3. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Saudi Arabia and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.