

Oman: six activists' appeals rejected

Saturday 8 December 2012, by [Amnesty International](#) (Date first published: 7 December 2012).

URGENT ACTION

SIX ACTIVISTS' APPEALS REJECTED

Five men and a woman who were sentenced in August are to be sent to jail for insulting the Sultan. At least 14 more activists are also likely to be jailed when their cases go to an appeal court in Muscat over the next two weeks.

An appeal court in Muscat rejected on 5 December the appeals lodged by five men and a woman convicted of insulting the Sultan and using the internet to publish defamatory material. The five men, Bassam Abu Qasida, Hilal al-Busa'idi, Issa al-Mas'udi, Abdullah al-Abdali and Muhammad al-Kiyumi, had been sentenced to one year's imprisonment and a fine of 1,000 riyals (around US\$2,600) by Muscat's court of first instance on 6 August 2012. The court had imposed the same sentence on Maymouna al-Badi on 26 August, but reduced her prison term to 20 days. Yesterday's court of appeal ruling upheld all convictions.

Three other men convicted on the same charges and similarly sentenced on 6 August are expected to receive the decision of the court of appeal in the next two weeks. Decisions on the appeals of 11 other activists who were sentenced to one year's imprisonment on 8 August for protesting are expected next week.

Trials began after numerous writers, activists and bloggers were arrested in late May and early June. So far at least 35 people have been sentenced or are standing trial in relation to the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

If, as it appears, the six activists have been convicted solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression, Amnesty International would consider them to be prisoners of conscience and call on the authorities in Oman to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

Calling on the authorities to release, immediately and unconditionally, all detainees held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly, as Amnesty International considers them to be prisoners of conscience;

Calling on them to drop all charges, and overturn all convictions, related solely to the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and assembly;

Urging them to ensure that any legal proceedings in these cases conform to international fair trial standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 JANUARY 2013 TO:

Head of State and Prime Minister
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id
Diwan of the Royal Court

The Palace
Muscat 113
Sultanate of Oman
Fax: +968 24 735 375
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior
His Excellency Hamoud bin Faisal bin Said Al Busaidi
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of Interior
P.O. Box 127
Ruwi 112
Muscat
Sultanate of Oman
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Mr Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Riyami
Chairman
National Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 29, Postal Code: 103
Bareq A' Shati
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Fax: +968 24 648 801
Email: enquiry nhrc.om

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.
Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

This is the fourth update of UA 174/12. Further information:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/mde20/004/2012>

See also on ESSF (article 27212): [Background Information on the Repression in Oman](#)
