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Waleed Mohammed AlSama'ani
Minister of Justice
Postal Code 11472
P.O. Box 7775
Riyadh
Saudi Arabia

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Your Excellency,

**I am relieved that Mohammed al-Qahtani, human rights defender and co-founder of the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), has been released from prison, yet dismayed to learn that Mohammed al-Qahtani is unable to reunite with his family in the United States due to the 10-year travel ban imposed on him as part of his sentence.**

Mohammed al-Qahtani’s trial began in March 2012, when he was summoned for interrogation regarding his human rights activism with ACPRA. On 9 March 2013, the Criminal Court in Riyadh sentenced him to 10 years in prison to be followed by a travel ban of equal length on charges including «breaking allegiance to the ruler», «questioning the integrity of officials», «inciting disorder by calling for demonstrations» and «instigating international organizations against the Kingdom». The court also ordered the disbanding of ACPRA, confiscation of its property and the closure of its social media accounts.

Mohammed al-Qahtani was forcibly disappeared between 24 October 2022 and 3 November 2024, before his release from prison on 7 January 2025. He had completed his ten-year prison sentence in 2022. During the period of his enforced disappearance, Mohammed al-Qahtani suffered a serious deterioration in his vision. A doctor had ordered an eye surgery for him, but it was postponed four times throughout his detention.

**I urge you to immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Mohammed al-Qahtani and thus allowing him to be reunited with his family. Saudi authorities must also release all human rights defenders and activists unjustly detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association.**

Yours sincerely,

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Botschaft des Königreichs Saudi-Arabien, Kirchenfeldstrasse 64, 3005 Bern

Fax: 031 351 45 81 / E-Mail: cemb@mofa.gov.sa ; saudia.be@bluewin.ch