

19 August 2018

## **Yemen - Human rights defender Kamal Qishrah abducted and held in unknown location**

On 14 August at around 8:30 pm, two armed men affiliated to the Houthi rebel group abducted human rights defender Kamal Qishrah Al Shawish in Al-Hudaydah city and took him to an unknown location.

**Kamal Qishrah Al Shawish** is a field human rights researcher and staff member of Mwatana for Human Rights, an independent Sana'a based organisation monitoring and documenting human rights violations in Yemen. He works and lives in Al-Hudaydah city which is under the *de facto* control of the Houthi rebel group, but which is under sustained attack by the Saudi-led coalition.

Two armed men from the Houthi armed group detained Kamal Qishrah Al-Shawish from a coffee shop on Sana'a street in downtown Al-Hudaydah city. They blindfolded the human rights defender and forced him into a gold-coloured car and took him into unknown location. Mwatana has not received any information to date on the reasons behind his detention or his whereabouts.

The Mwatana Organisation for Human Rights has been regularly [targeted](#) by warring parties in Yemen as it has been reporting human rights abuses in the country. In 2016, a campaign was launched against the organisation on social media. In June 2018, Abdulrasheed al-Faqih, the Executive Director of Mwatana was briefly detained in the Ma'rib Governorate, which is under the control of the government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. He was also interrogated for brief periods in 2015 and 2016 by Houthi authorities.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned about the detention of human rights defender Kamal Qishrah Al-Shawish and is worried about his safety and physical well being. Front Line Defenders believes that his abduction and detention are acts of retaliation for his documentation of human rights abuses and crimes in Yemen and his affiliation with the Mwatana Organisation for Human Rights.

### **Front Line Defenders urges the *de facto* authorities in Al-Hudaydah Governorate to:**

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Kamal Qishrah Al-Shawish, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful human rights work;
2. Disclose the whereabouts of Kamal Qishrah Al-Shawish and ensure that his treatment, while in detention, 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;
3. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Kamal Qishrah Al-Shawish;
4. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in all circumstances, so that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.