



FREEDOM NOW

Honorary Chair
The Most Reverend Desmond M. Tutu

Ms. Faith Pansy Tlakula
Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information
c/o African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
31 Bijilo Annex Layout, Kombo North District
Western Region P.O. Box 673 Banjul
The Gambia

August 26, 2016

Re: Allegation Letter Regarding Mohammed Shaikh Ould Mohammed Ould Mkhaitir

Dear Ms. Tlakula,

We write to you regarding the imprisonment of Mr. Mohammed Shaikh Ould Mohammed Ould Mkhaitir by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, where Mr. Mkhaitir is awaiting execution for crimes involving the exercise of his right to freedom of expression. Mr. Mkhaitir remains in prison because of his authoring of a critique which challenged the social and religious underpinnings of slavery. His imprisonment violates international law and is a clear violation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights ("African Charter").

As explained below, the Mauritanian government is arbitrarily depriving Mr. Mkhaitir of his liberty, and in so doing is placing his life and health in grave danger. Mr. Mkhaitir has been sentenced to death for exercising his fundamental freedoms of thought and expression, and he remains in prison pending the outcome of his appeal to the Supreme Court of Mauritania. Mr. Mkhaitir's incarceration engages your mandate. We respectfully request that you enquire into this matter and urge the Mauritanian government to release Mr. Mkhaitir in accordance with its obligations under the African Charter.

Mr. Mkhaitir would be sincerely grateful for the African Commission's advocacy on his behalf. Freedom Now, together with Dechert LLP, represents Mr. Mkhaitir as his international *pro bono* counsel and we maintain contact with him through his local counsel. We would welcome the opportunity to provide your offices with further information or to clarify any issues in relation to this matter.

Sincerely,

Kate Barth
Program Attorney
Freedom Now

I. Summary of the Facts Surrounding the Violation of the Right to Expression

Mohammed Shaikh Ould Mohammed Mkhaitir is a young accountant in Nouadhibou, an industrial city in the north of Mauritania. In December 2013, Mr. Mkhaitir published an anonymous article on www.aqlame.com, a Mauritanian news website whose anonymous posting format had given rise to a new forum for social and religious critiques.

The article, entitled “Religion, Religiosity and Blacksmiths,”¹ was a social commentary on the nexus between religion and discrimination. It denounced caste-based classism and racism, with the goal of challenging rampant discrimination against members of the Moulamine caste²—known as the “blacksmith” caste and considered the “lowest of the low.”³ Mr. Mkhaitir, a Moulamine himself, deplored the fact that the members of his caste were systematically denied any opportunity for socioeconomic advancement, due in part to deep-seated prejudices.⁴ Thus, he sought to shed light upon Mauritania’s practice of invoking religion “to sanction racism and slavery.”⁵

To this end, Mr. Mkhaitir’s article called attention to certain instances in which the Prophet Mohammed showed mercy toward those with whom he shared common ancestry. Mr. Mkhaitir pointed out that in certain similar circumstances, the Prophet Mohammed declined to extend the same mercy to members of other tribes.⁶ In Mr. Mkhaitir’s view, members of the Mauritanian ruling class had invoked the actions of the Prophet Mohammed to justify contemporary racism and even slavery.⁷ He professed that the culprit was not religion, but “*religiosity*.”⁸ He explained what he meant by these terms at the outset of his article: religion is the infallible divine truth—the actual teachings handed down by God;⁹ religiosity, on the other hand, is mankind’s imperfect attempt to apply God’s laws.¹⁰ As such, it is susceptible to human error and can sometimes stray from the Prophet’s intent.

¹ The original article can be found at <http://www.yennayri.com/news.php?extend.973>. For translated excerpts and commentary, see Alice Bullard, *Religion, Race, and Repression in Mauritania: The Ould Mkhaitir Apostasy Affair*, JADALIYYA (May 29, 2014), http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/17914/religion-race-and-repression-in-mauritania_the-oul.

² See Jemal Oumar, *Mauritanians Condemn Call to Kill Author*, ALL AFRICA (Jan. 10, 2014), <http://allafrica.com/stories/201401120133.html> (last visited July 2015) (“They are inciting people to kill a young man just because he wrote an analytical article in which he referred to some of the positions of the Prophet Mohammed. This means that Mauritania is on the verge of entering an era of terrorism . . .”) (quoting researcher Salihy Ould Ab).

³ Bullard, *supra* note 1; see *supra* § IV.A.1.a; *Call for Young Blogger’s Death Sentence to be Quashed on Appeal*, REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS (Dec. 31, 2014), <http://en.rsf.org/mauritania-call-for-young-blogger-s-death-31-12-2014,47435.html> (“[H]e only wanted to defend the lowly ‘maalemine’ (blacksmith) caste, to which he belongs.”).

⁴ Zouhair Mazouz, *Mauritania. Writer, Blogger, “Apostate”*, Free Arabs (Jan. 13, 2014), <http://www.freearabs.com/index.php/politics/69-stories/937-jb-span-mauritania-jb-span-writer-blogger-apostate>.

⁵ Bullard, *supra* note 1.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Mohammed Ould Shaikh Ould Mkhaitir, *Religion, Religiosity, and Blacksmiths*, AQLAME (Dec. 2013).

¹⁰ *Id.*

Many Mauritanian Muslims took offense at Mr. Mkhaitir's characterization of the Prophet's actions. According to Mauritania's national news service, this was "the first time a text critical of Islam and of the Prophet has been published in Mauritania."¹¹ By his own admission, Mkhaitir is not an educated man in terms of his own faith, and he has recanted from the arguments made in his article. Still, it is far from clear that Mkhaitir's article was critical of Islam or of the Prophet. Although the article cited historical examples from Mohammed's life, it did not criticize Mohammed's actions themselves but rather the invocation of those actions today to justify racial discrimination.

Nevertheless, the Mauritanian government set out to make an example out of Mr. Mkhaitir. Although his article had been published anonymously, the authorities managed to obtain Mr. Mkhaitir's name. On January 2, 2014, he was summoned to the local police station, where he was arrested. He was charged with the crimes of (1) insulting the Prophet Mohammed and (2) apostasy, as set forth in Article 306, Title II, Section IV of the of the Mauritanian Penal Code.¹²

Only eight countries currently make apostasy a capital offense; Mauritania is one of them.¹³ The last death sentence for apostasy in Mauritania, however, was in 1960.¹⁴ The last execution for any crime was in 1987.¹⁵ Article 306 codifies the crimes of insulting the decency or customs of Islam; apostasy; hypocrisy (*zendegha*); indecent assault; and refusal to pray.¹⁶

Article 306 does not define the elements of the crime of apostasy.¹⁷ It requires, however, that a convicted apostate be invited to repent following his conviction.¹⁸ The statute provides for a maximum sentence of two years if the apostate repents within three days of his conviction.¹⁹ If the convicted person fails to repent within three days, the sentence is death – although one reading of Article 306 allows for the possibility that a convicted person could repent at any point before the date of his or her execution, even after the expiration of the three-day period.²⁰

¹¹ Bullard, *supra* note 1.

¹² The Mauritanian Penal Code, established in 1983, can be found (in French) here: <http://www.droit-afrique.com/images/textes/Mauritanie/Mauritanie%20-%20Code%20penal.pdf>. See *Free Mohamed Cheikh! African youths sign petition to free journalist sentenced to death in Mauritania*, AMEYAW DEBRAH, (Jan. 6, 2015), <http://ameyawdebrah.com/free-mohamed-cheikh-african-youths-sign-petition-free-journalist-sentenced-death-mauritania>. French and English versions are presented in parallel at Appendix III.

¹³ Hanibal Goitom, *Laws Criminalizing Apostasy in Selected Jurisdictions*, THE LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (May 2014), <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/apostasy/apostasy.pdf>.

¹⁴ *Call for Young Blogger's Death Sentence to be Quashed on Appeal*, REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS (Dec. 31, 2014), <http://en.rsf.org/mauritania-call-for-young-blogger-s-death-31-12-2014,47435.html>.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ AMEYAW DEBRAH, *supra* note 13 ("[d]espite the lack of clear parameters for what constitutes apostasy, and the absence of any precise or uniform decision in religious texts, one can agree that in its broadest sense, apostasy is the attitude of an individual who clearly and publicly renounces a religion or doctrine.").

¹⁸ *Id.* ("[e]very Muslim guilty of the crime of apostasy, either by word or by action apparent or obvious, will be invited to repent within three days.").

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Article 306, Mauritanian Penal Code ("If he repents before the execution of the judgment, the prosecutor will refer to the Supreme Court, which will decide on his full rehabilitation, without exclusion of correctional punishment as enshrined in the 1st paragraph of this article."); *Laws Criminalizing Apostasy*, Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/apostasy/#mauritania> ("It appears that article 306 of the Criminal Code also provides that if a person who has been sentenced to death for apostasy repents before his/her execution, the Mauritanian

Following widespread protests calling for Mr. Mkhaitir's arrest and prosecution, the Mauritanian government added its voice to the ongoing persecution of Mr. Mkhaitir. Speaking to protesters after Friday prayer, President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz said: "We will apply God's law on whoever insults the Prophet, and whoever publishes such an insult."²¹

While in custody, Mr. Mkhaitir was interrogated repeatedly. In one of those interrogations, he repented and apologized for writing the article. The interrogation was recorded, but the police later claimed to have lost the recording.²² On January 11, Mr. Mkhaitir issued a statement from prison again repenting and clarifying the intentions behind his article. He stated that his article had been misinterpreted and that his words had been twisted into a narrative that he did not intend.²³ Mr. Mkhaitir further emphasized his love and respect for the Prophet and asserted that he had never, intentionally or unintentionally, insulted the Prophet.²⁴ He concluded by reminding all those who are marginalized that they have "the right to live in freedom and dignity" and by reiterating the need for unity among the members of disenfranchised castes.²⁵

Still, Mr. Mkhaitir could not escape the public's outrage.²⁶ On January 26, a Mauritanian defense attorney offered his services to Mr. Mkhaitir. Within days, intimidating public protests – one of which ended in vandalism of shops owned by the employer of the attorney's sons – forced the attorney to withdraw his offer.²⁷

Mr. Mkhaitir was held for almost one year before his trial began on December 23, 2014 before the Criminal Court of Dakhlet Nouadhibou.²⁸ Mr. Mkhaitir was tried before a chamber of five judges, two of whom were popular designees selected by the Ministry of Justice and who were reportedly among the most fundamentalist and obscurantist members of the judiciary.²⁹ Mr. Mkhaitir was represented by two public defenders.³⁰ In contrast, seven attorneys from Islamic organizations appeared alongside the prosecution.³¹

Even though the contents of Mr. Mkhaitir's article formed the basis for the charges against him, the court prohibited the parties from discussing the contents of the article.³² The defense thus

Supreme Court can commute his/her death sentence to a jail sentence of between three months and two years, and a fine of UM5,000–60,000 (approximately US\$17–\$203)."

²¹ *Id.*

²² Bullard, *supra* note 1.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ Mazouz, *supra* note 4.

²⁷ U.S. DEP'T OF STATE, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR, MAURITANIA 2014 INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT, p. 4, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/238450.pdf>.

²⁸ *In Mauritania, Blogger Sentenced to Death for Apostasy*, COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS (December 26, 2014), <https://cpj.org/2014/12/in-mauritania-blogger-sentenced-to-death-for-apost.php> ("The trial began Tuesday but was postponed to Wednesday by the judge after an altercation broke out in court when the prosecutor admitted to being a member of the caste that the blogger criticized in his article . . . Mohamed belongs to a lower social class.").

²⁹ Private communication.

³⁰ *See id.* (explaining that Mkhaitir's first lawyer, Maitre Icheddou, was the subject of numerous threats and resigned early on in his representation of Mkhaitir and that the two lawyers described here resigned post-conviction).

³¹ Mauritanian law does not permit human rights organizations to take part in criminal proceedings. An exception to this rule allows Islamic organizations to participate at the trial.

³² *Id.*

focused its argument on the fact that Mr. Mkhaitir had repented and should be pardoned pursuant to the terms of Article 306.³³ The defense formulated these submissions as a simple request for forgiveness, for fear of further enraging the crowd that packed the courtroom and the courthouse square. At the close of oral arguments, Mr. Mkhaitir repented once again in open court.

On December 24, the court declared Mr. Mkhaitir guilty of the crimes of (1) hypocrisy and (2) insulting the Prophet, and sentenced him to death by firing squad.³⁴ When the verdict was read aloud, Mr. Mkhaitir fainted³⁵ as the crowd cheered.³⁶

Mr. Mkhaitir's defense team was shocked. Article 306 provides for leniency in the case of repentance, and despite the court's failure to invite Mr. Mkhaitir to repent at the time of conviction, Mr. Mkhaitir had already repented numerous times. He had done so while being interrogated by the police; he had done so in his written clarification; he had done so while speaking with his attorneys; and he had done so twice before the court. However, the court had sentenced Mr. Mkhaitir for a different crime than the one with which he was charged – without ever notifying his defense team.

The crime for which Mr. Mkhaitir was ultimately sentenced was the crime of *zendegha*, or hypocrisy. This crime, also set forth in Article 306, is distinct from the crime of apostasy. Although the elements of the crime are not set forth in the statute, a hypocrite is reportedly one who, having committed the crime of apostasy, repents insincerely.³⁷ Unlike the provision governing apostasy, this provision excludes the death penalty only for the “prior” repentance of the accused and does not mandate the court to invite the convicted person to repent. It is unclear how a court is to determine whether a repentance is sincere or insincere and what precisely is intended by “prior” repentance, but one might infer that this refers to a “genuine” repentance made before conviction.

The reasoning of the court's written judgment was opaque and illogical. The court found Mr. Mkhaitir guilty of insulting the Prophet because (1) Mr. Mkhaitir had acknowledged authoring the article, and (2) the article contained expressions and questions representing “a clear insult and offense to the Prophet.” The judgment explored at length the supposed “falsehoods, inaccuracies, and ‘hidden truths’” of the article. A large portion of the judgment was devoted to recounting stories from the Quran and dissecting the ways in which Mr. Mkhaitir's recollection of those stories differed from the court's version. The court emphasized that the article mentioned the name of the Prophet a number of times without praying over him. The court took this to be a sign of “intentional disdain.”

Mr. Mkhaitir was represented in his appeal by one Mauritanian attorney and two attorneys from Tunisia. Mr. Mkhaitir's counsel filed an appeal on his behalf in October 2015, but the

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *The Islamic Republic of Mauritania*, THE ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (Nov. 2015), http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/mauritania_hrc_dp_march_2015_2.pdf.

³⁵ *Lawyers Appeal Death Sentence in Mauritania Apostasy Case*, AFRICA REVIEW (Dec. 29, 2014), <http://www.africareview.com/News/Lawyers-appeal-death-sentence-in-Mauritania-apostasy-case/-/979180/2572118/-/jf89oy/-/index.html>.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ Private communication.

proceedings were delayed several times due to the court repeatedly requiring Mkhaitir's counsel to resubmit their requests for an appellate hearing.

After months of delay, the court of appeal heard the appeal and rendered a decision on April 21, 2016.³⁸ In its decision, rendered the same day as the appellate hearing, the court of appeal confirmed the decision of the trial court, but also referred the case to the Supreme Court for consideration of the issue related to the qualification of the offense (*i.e.*, apostasy versus hypocrisy). The court of appeal indicated that after consideration of the facts, the appropriate offense would have been that of apostasy rather than hypocrisy, and that in cases of apostasy, the case should be referred to the Supreme Court to assess the sincerity of repentance.³⁹

II. Legal Analysis Engaging the Special Rapporteur's Mandate

Mr. Mkhaitir's arrest, prosecution, conviction, and sentence violate his right to freedom of expression as safeguarded by the African Charter. Article 9 of the African Charter guarantees that "[e]very individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law."⁴⁰ The African Commission has repeatedly emphasized its commitment to promoting freedom of expression, calling it a "cornerstone of democracy" and "a means of ensuring respect for all human rights and freedoms."⁴¹ The African Commission has gone further in its Resolution on the Adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa ("Declaration of Principles"), calling the freedom of expression a "fundamental and inalienable human right."⁴² In the same Declaration of Principles, the African Commission guaranteed that "no one shall be subject to arbitrary interference with his or her freedom of expression."⁴³

Mr. Mkhaitir's article falls squarely within the protection of Article 9 of the African Charter and the Declaration of Principles. Although the Mauritanian laws regarding apostasy and hypocrisy are restrictions of expression that have been codified by the Mauritanian penal code, such restrictions are impermissible under both national and international law. The Mauritanian Constitution itself guarantees a right to free expression.⁴⁴ Moreover, under Article II(2) of the Declaration of Principles, restrictions on freedom of expression must "serve a legitimate interest and be necessary and in a democratic society."⁴⁵ Article XIII(2) of the Declaration of Principles further confirms that "[f]reedom of expression should not be restricted on public order or national security grounds unless there is a real risk of harm to a legitimate interest and there is a close causal link between the risk of harm and the expression."

Here, the restriction on Mr. Mkhaitir's freedom of expression was neither serving a legitimate interest nor necessary. Because Article 8 of the African Charter guarantees an individual's right

³⁸ Private communication.

³⁹ Private communication.

⁴⁰ African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, art. 9(2) [hereinafter African Charter].

⁴¹ ACCHPR /Res.62(XXXII)(02): Resolution on the Adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa (2002).

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ CONSTITUTION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA, 2012, art. 13, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Mauritania_2012.pdf.

⁴⁵ Resolution on the Adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, *supra* note 44.

to freedom of conscience and religion, the promotion of a single religious ideology or interpretation cannot be considered a “legitimate interest” of a state. Moreover, any public security risk was caused not by Mr. Mkhaitir’s article, but rather by the demonstrations that erupted in protest to such article. There was therefore no “close causal link” between Mr. Mkhaitir’s article and the risk of harm, rendering it unnecessary to criminalize his expression.

In June 2016, the African Commission reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of expression and decided to revise the Declaration of Principles in Africa through your office.⁴⁶ In light of the Commission’s decision to urge all stakeholders to contribute to the revision of the Declaration of Principles, this case stands as an opportunity for your office to make clear that the freedom of expression must be enforced throughout the states that are members of the African Charter.

The African Commission has repeatedly cited the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (“UDHR”), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (“ICCPR”), and other international resolutions in discussing the contours of the freedom of expression guarantee under the African Charter.⁴⁷ Because the African Commission has relied on the interpretation of the right to free expression under international law, it is instructive to consider the legality of Mr. Mkhaitir’s detention under such jurisprudence as well.

Article 19(2) of the ICCPR provides that “everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression.”⁴⁸ Article 19 of the UDHR provides an analogous guarantee of freedom of opinion and expression.⁴⁹ The UN Human Rights Committee (“HRC”) has clarified that article 19 of the ICCPR “protects all forms of expression and the means of their dissemination.”⁵⁰ This includes “all forms of audio-visual as well as electronic and internet-based modes of expression.”⁵¹

Political discourse, discussion of human rights, and religious discourse are all protected speech, and the “scope of [the ICCPR provision protecting speech] embraces even expression that may be regarded as deeply offensive.”⁵² The implementation of Islamic law in a way which limits an individual’s fundamental right of expression has also been condemned by international tribunals.⁵³ The HRC has explicitly stated that national laws that infringe on an individual’s rights of opinion and expression may not “prevent or punish criticism of religious leaders or

⁴⁶ Resolution to Revise the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, ACHPR/Res. 338 (EXT.OS/XX) (2016).

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Resolution on the Adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, *supra* note 44 (“Recalling that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”); ACHPR/Res.222 (LI) 2012: Resolution to modify the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression to include Access to Information and Request for a Commemorative Day on Freedom of Information.

⁴⁸ ICCPR, art. 19(2). As noted above, Mauritania acceded to the ICCPR in 1994 and entered no reservations to this provision.

⁴⁹ UDHR, art. 19.

⁵⁰ Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression, ¶ 12, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/G/34 (Sep. 12, 2011).

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression, ¶ 12, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/G/34 (Sep. 12, 2011); ¶ 11.

⁵³ Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Mauritania, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/MRT/CO/1, ¶ 17 (21 Nov. 2013).

commentary on religious doctrine and tenets of faith.”⁵⁴ Additionally, “[l]aws that penalize the expression of opinions about historical facts are incompatible with the obligations that the [ICCPR] imposes on State parties in relation to the respect for freedom of opinion and expression.”⁵⁵ The HRC has explained that the ICCPR “does not permit general prohibition of expressions of an erroneous opinion or an incorrect interpretation of past events.”⁵⁶

In his article, Mr. Mkhaitir discussed his views on the use of Islam to perpetuate the Mauritanian caste system and slavery. He took the position that it was wrong to use Islam to justify practices that discriminate against individuals. The article did not advocate violence or disorder and therefore posed neither a threat to others’ rights or reputations nor a threat to national security or public order, health or morals; rather, the article bravely called for a reconsideration of the justifications behind the abhorrent practice of slavery. Above all, Mr. Mkhaitir’s point was a political one, in support of which he—rightly or wrongly—employed religious allegories. Although Mauritania is a deeply religious country and Mr. Mkhaitir’s statements may have been offensive to some, a public outcry cannot excuse depriving a person of liberty for exercising his freedoms of opinion and expression.

III. Request for Urgent Action

In accordance with your mandate to “make public interventions where violations of the right to freedom of expression [have] been brought to [your] attention,”⁵⁷ we request that your office enquire into this matter and take the appropriate steps to urge Mauritania to urgently remedy the continuing violation of Mr. Mkhaitir’s right to free expression. Specifically, we seek the following actions from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania:

- that the government release Mr. Mkhaitir immediately, void all criminal convictions against him and make the adequate reparation to him;
- that the government repeal Article 306 of the Mauritanian Penal Code and otherwise repeal any provisions of the legislation that can be used to criminalize the right to freedom of expression;
- that the government review its legislation to ensure that any limitations on the right to freedom of expression are in full compliance with Article 13 of the Mauritanian Constitution, Article 9 of the African Charter and the Declaration of Principles, Article 19 of the ICCPR, Article 19 of the UDHR and all other relevant international resolutions; and
- That the government ensure that the judicial and law enforcement system is not abused to harass individuals for expressing their political or religious views.

⁵⁴ *Id.*, ¶ 48.

⁵⁵ *Id.*, ¶ 49.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ Resolution on the Mandate and Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression in Africa (2004), ACHPR /Res.71(XXXVI)04.

IV. Information concerning Authors of Present Letter of Allegation

Freedom Now is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that works to free individual prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts. Along with Dechert LLP, Freedom Now has been retained by Mr. Mkhaitir as his international counsel.

Maran Turner
Kate Barth
Freedom Now
1776 K Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
United States of America
+1 (202) 223-3733 (tel)
+1 (202) 223-1006 (fax)
kbarth@freedom-now.org
<http://www.freedom-now.org/>

Jeremy Zucker
Hrishikesh Hari
Darshak Dholakia
Dechert, LLP
1900 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
United States of America
+1 (202) 261-3322
jeremy.zucker@dechert.com
hrishikesh.hari@dechert.com
darshak.dholakia@dechert.com