



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
2 September 2024

English only

---

## Human Rights Council

Fifty-seventh session

9 September–9 October 2024

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[12 August 2024]

---

\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Jordan: Six Members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light to Be Tried as Heretics**

We are deeply concerned about the arrest on 29 July 2024 and prosecution of six members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light in Jordan.

### **What is the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light?**

The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light (not to be confused with the Ahmadiyya Community founded in the 19th century by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad within a Sunni context, with which it has no relations) is a new religious movement founded in 1999 that finds its roots in Twelver Shia Islam.

The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light is a small community in Jordan. Their members face ongoing challenges, including harassment from authorities, threats of violence and exclusion from society due to their divergent beliefs from the traditional Muslim views.

### **Their followers believe that**

- the real Kaaba is not in Mecca (but in Petra, Jordan),
- all the prophets throughout the history of Islam made mistakes,
- fixed times for prayers are not necessary,
- Ramadan is in December,
- headscarves should not be mandatory for women,
- alcohol can be freely but moderately drunk.

In addition, they accept LGBTQ people in their community and believe they should not be stigmatized or persecuted.

### **Six people arrested and detained in Amman's Marka prison**

The names of the members of the community to be tried are:

- Issa Mahmoud Abd Al-Rahman Abu Shahin,
- Fadi Mostafa Mohamad Alyan,
- Yahya Hassan Abdullah Jabir,
- Omar Mahmoud Abd Al-Rahman Abu Shahin,
- Yahia Abdelmajeed Mahmoud Berjawi, and
- Maryam Jabir Sabir Al-Debaji

They were charged under Article 150 of the Jordanian Penal Code with "insulting religious feelings of others" and "inciting sectarian strife." They were detained while peacefully conducting missionary work in Amman's Tla Ali district.

They were forcibly taken to the police station, where they were interrogated by both the prosecutor and national intelligence about their beliefs and the Ahmadi community in Amman.

The interrogators accused them of sectarianism and insulting Islam, specifically targeting their belief that the true location of the Kaaba is in Petra, Jordan, rather than in Saudi Arabia.

The six members of the religious community reported being accused of being Iranian agents intent on sowing discord in the country and corrupting the faith of others.. Their beliefs about the Kaaba were mocked, and intelligence officers threatened them with losing their jobs if they persisted in their faith.

They were then placed in solitary confinement in Amman's Marka Prison, where they were prohibited from interacting with other inmates, reportedly to prevent the spread of their religious beliefs within the prison.

Furthermore, Maryam Jabir Sabir Al-Debaji, initially slated for release, had her release postponed and later denied by the governor of Amman after affirming her faith. She was subsequently charged as well.

The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light has condemned this blatant attack on religious freedom by the Jordanian government, demanding an immediate halt to all persecution, intimidation, and police harassment against its members as well as the dropping of all charges.

## **The Persecution of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light in Jordan**

The Jordanian constitution protects "the free exercise of all forms of worship and religious rites" and asserts that there should be no discrimination among citizens based on religion.

The right to manifest one's faith is enshrined in Article 18 of the UDHR. Several human rights organizations have raised concerns about the growing restrictions on religious freedom in Jordan and the use of Articles 278 and 150 to limit freedom of expression and religious practice.

Despite this, members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light in Jordan have been targeted by a systematic campaign of intimidation and harassment. Since 2016, the Jordanian authorities have arrested several members of the community and subjected them to repeated interrogation and intelligence investigation, including physical abuse and torture.

The Jordanian authorities launched a ruthless campaign to shut down the community and crack down on its members. In 2020, the Jordanian authorities even went as far as shutting down the satellite channel of the religious community, which was broadcasting to hundreds of thousands of homes in the MENA region.

Inside Jordan, the crackdown was even more severe, with harassment, social ostracism and violent attacks on the homes of followers of the Ahmadi Religion.

One family of believers, Basir Al Sqour's and his siblings, Omar, Amer, Soha and Reema for instance reported being called "impure apostates" and relatives refused to enter their homes or to eat and drink with them. Yet things escalated further when one day the extended family of Basir attacked his house. They came with sticks and even shot guns at the house.

According to their thinking it was permissible to kill him since he was a "murtad" (an apostate). Members were reportedly even forced to resign from their jobs, including Basir Al-Sqour who after 18 years was forced to resign from the Jordanian army where he was serving as a military officer with the rank of "major.

This climate of repression against adherents of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light is an outrageous violation of international human rights standards of freedom of religion and belief. Jordan must uphold its obligations to respect human rights and must guarantee freedom of expression and freedom of belief to all of its citizen without discrimination.

Jordan is a party to the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which protects freedom of religion or belief.

## **Recommendations**

### **We urge the Jordanian authorities**

- to immediately release the members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light arrested on 29 July 2024 and to put an end to their prosecution
- to safeguard the free exercise of religion for that religious community as protected by Article 6 and 14 their Constitution

- to abide by their commitments to international law, in particular the ICCPR (Article 18).

---

Human Rights Without Frontiers NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.