

PRESS RELEASE

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FAMILY OF IRISHMAN UNJUSTLY DETAINED IN IRAQ CALLS FOR HIS IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Irish citizen **Yasser Eljuboori**, a renowned anti-corruption activist, has been detained by the Iraqi authorities and has been denied permission to leave the country to return to his family in Ireland. He is currently being imprisoned in Baghdad.

This evening Mr Eljuboori's wife, Laura Wickham, confirmed that he was detained at 2.30am Irish time on Monday 26th February 2024, over 36 hours ago. There was no initial reason given for his detention, and he was not permitted to contact his family. At approximately 6pm Irish time on Monday 26th February 2024 the family obtained information that Mr Eljuboori was being held in a police station in Baghdad and that he would appear in court this morning, Tuesday 27th February 2024. He and his family were not provided with details of any criminal charges against him. They were instead informed that he was being held due to "defamation" against political leaders.

At today's court hearing Mr Eljuboori was remanded in custody for a further two days. He and his family have now been informed that the allegation is that, through raising corruption concerns on social media, he has defamed the Prime Minister. He has also been informed that this is a civil and not criminal matter. Neither Mr Eljuboori nor his family have been provided with any specific information about what, if any, criminal charges he faces or the basis for his continued imprisonment.

Speaking tonight, **Laura Wickham** said:

"Yasser is the life and soul of our household: a much loved husband and dad to our three children. Our children are young and they miss their dad. He is in prison thousands of miles away for no good reason, simply because of his important anti-corruption work.

I call on the Iraqi authorities to release Yasser immediately. And I ask the Irish Government to do everything in their power to ensure that Yasser comes home to Ireland as soon as possible."

Ms Wickham's statement was made as the family launched a campaign to secure Mr Eljuboori's freedom, [#FreeYasser2024](#).

Ms Wickham has today instructed specialist international lawyers to act on her behalf given the urgency of the case, Caoilfhionn Gallagher KC and Tatyana Eatwell, Doughty Street Chambers.

Caoilfhionn Gallagher KC added:

“Yasser is a well-known and internationally respected anti-corruption activist, who has a proud history of holding Iraq’s leaders to account and raising corruption and human rights concerns. It is very troubling that he is now imprisoned, with no clear information about the legal basis for his detention. Given grave concerns recently raised by the United Nations regarding prison conditions in Iraq and flagrant disregard for fair trial rights, this case could not be more urgent. We call on the Iraqi authorities to comply with their international obligations and release him immediately and unconditionally, and allow him to return home to Ireland.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. Yasser Eljuboori and Laura Wickham have three children, aged five, four and two.
2. Mr Eljuboori is an Irish citizen and he entered Iraq as an Irish citizen, with an Irish passport.
3. Any press queries should be directed to Freeyasser2024@gmail.com.



Yasser Eljuboori and Laura Wickham. Photograph courtesy of Laura Wickham.