



*Ludovic-Trarieux International Human Rights Prize 2017*  
*Prix International des droits de l'homme Ludovic-Trarieux 2017*  
*Premio Internacional de Derechos Humanos Ludovic Trarieux 2017*  
*Internationalen Ludovic-Trarieux-Menschenrechtspreis 2017*  
*Prêmio Internacional de Direitos Humanos Ludovic Trarieux 2017*  
*Premio Internazionale per i Diritti Umani Ludovic Trarieux 2017*  
*Ludovic Trarieux Internationale Mensenrechtenprijs 2017*

*Depuis/Since/Desde/Dal/Sinds 1984*

SPEECH BY  
MRS Madame Agaath S. REIJNDERS-SLUIS  
On behalf of Amsterdamse Orde van Advocaten

“Mister President, Dean, mister al-Saqer, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

Thank you very much for the opportunity to express, on behalf of the Amsterdam Bar Association, our great respect to mr. Mohammed al- Roken, and also to you, mr. al-Saqer, for all the efforts you made to defend human rights and the rule of law despite the serious risks and the increasing repression in the United Arab Emirates.



Among other things, due to a letter you, and many others, wrote to the president of the United Arab Emirates, in which you asked to perform the law, by organizing free elections for the parliament and to establish an independent judiciary, mr. Al-Roken was detained as part of a campaign of mass arrests of human rights defenders, judges, academics and student leaders.

On July 2, 2013 Mr. Al-Roken was sentenced to a 10-year prison term convicted of “establishing an organisation that aims at overthrowing the government”.

The trial, known as the “UAE 94” trial, was condemned by the international community for its lack of fairness and due process.

The United Arab Emirates are since its foundation member of the United Nations.

On this very moment they are member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

In 1990 the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders adopted the Basic Principles of the Role of Lawyers.

Article 23 says:

*Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly.*

*In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law,*

*the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings,*

*without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.*

This is exactly what Mr. Al-Roken did, he took part in the public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the protection of human rights and asked to perform the law, but although the Emirates are member of the Human Rights Council, they don't subscribe the rules.

May this Prize wake up the government of the United Arab Emirates to secure the rights of their citizens and lawyers and give a sign by an immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Al-Roken.

It is very cynical that the eyes of the world are focused this weekend on Abu Dhabi, because the annexe of the French museum “Louvre” will be opened, while there is no interest for the human rights situation at all.

All my respect to Mr. Al-Roken for his courage and persistence!!

Agaath Reijnders-Sluis

Venice, novembre 10, 2017