



**Middle  
East  
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November 13, 2002

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Your Excellency:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA). We are contacting you to express our concern regarding the case of Dr. Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim, who was until June 2000 a professor of political science at the UAE University in Al Ain.

The Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) comprises 2700 academics worldwide who teach and conduct research on the Middle East and North Africa, and is the preeminent professional association in the field. The association publishes the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, and is committed to ensuring respect for the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression in the region and in connection with the study of the Middle East and North Africa.

According to our information, Professor Al Alkim was forced to take early retirement from the university in June 2000 as a result of a plagiarism charge raised against him by a student. Professor Al Alkim has contended that his forced retirement was a consequence of positions he has taken in the past that were critical of the University administration.

On November 26, 2001 the civil section of the Abu Dhabi court in the Federal system of courts of first instance found in favor of Professor Al Alkim in his suit against the student who raised the plagiarism charge. This finding was upheld on March 19, 2002 by the civil section of the Abu Dhabi court of appeals in the Federal system of courts. It is our understanding that the student has appealed this decision to the Federal Supreme Court, but no date has been set for a hearing.

Given the fact that two levels of the UAE federal court system have found in favor of Professor Al Alkim, rejecting the charge of plagiarism against him, we urge the university administration to consider favorably Professor Al Alkim's request for reinstatement to the faculty.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Amy W. Newhall  
Executive director

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