

To: Ms. Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; hrc-sr-freedex@un.org
Ms. Margaret Satterthwaite, Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; hrc-sr-independencejl@un.org
Ms. Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; hrc-sr-ct@un.org
Ms. Ana Brian Nougrères, Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy; hrc-sr-privacy@un.org
Ms. Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; hrc-sr-defenders@un.org

CC: Mr. Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; volker.turk@un.org
Ambassador Václav Bálek, President of the UN Human Rights Council; ohchr-registry@un.org

Subject: Follow-up Complaint Regarding the Detention of Mr. Craig Murray, Esq. under Section 7 of the UK Terrorism Act

23 October 2023

Dear Special Procedures Mandate Holders,

Justice for All International and Prof. Douwe Korff present their compliments to the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy.

We bring our follow-up complaint regarding the recent arbitrary detention, continued harassment, intimidation, and persecution of Mr. Craig Murray, Esq., to complement our complaint filed with the UN Human Rights Council's Special Procedures Mandate Holders on 22 August 2023.

During a recent incident involving Mr. Craig Murray, Esq., he was detained under Section 7 of the UK Terrorism Act upon his arrival at Glasgow Airport from Keflavik, Iceland, on 16 October 2023. We believe this constitutes a violation of his human rights, specifically his rights to freedom of expression, privacy, and due process under international law.

Summary of the Incident:

On 16 October, Mr. Murray was stopped by three police officers and taken to a detention room at Glasgow Airport upon his return from Iceland. He was informed that he was detained but not arrested, thereby denying him the right to legal representation and advice. He was also told that he had no right to remain silent and was obligated to answer all questions and surrender passwords to his electronic devices. Failure to do so would be considered a criminal offense.

During the detention, Mr. Murray's personal belongings, including his laptop and phone, were searched and seized. He was questioned about his recent travels, affiliations, and activities related to human rights campaigns, including his involvement in the campaign to free Julian Assange and his attendance at a pro-Palestinian rally in Iceland.

His detention lasted one hour; after that period, he was released, but his devices were kept by the police. Later, his laptop was returned, but his phone is still being kept by the police, as he was informed, "for the purpose of the ongoing investigation." However, he was not informed of any investigation or accusations against him. Shortly after this incident, Mr. Murray gave an interview to the Grayzone, which published [a detailed account of the incident](#).

Concerns:

We express our grave concerns about the arbitrary detention, continued harassment, intimidation, and persecution of Mr. Craig Murray, Esq. He was denied the right to consult a lawyer during his detention, which constituted a violation of the right to legal representation. Furthermore, we express our grave concern about the unfettered powers of the UK security authorities and police to download and keep information from private devices under the guise of fighting terrorism.

We express grave concerns about Mr. Murray's treatment, which we believe is part of a broader pattern affecting journalists and human rights defenders in the UK. For instance, [a British journalist](#) was detained under similar circumstances at Heathrow Airport in September 2023. Additionally, Ernest Moret, [a French publisher and political activist](#), was detained under the same powers as Mr. Murray and held for almost 24 hours on 17 April 2023.

The detention and interrogation appear to target Mr. Murray for his journalistic activities and political beliefs, thereby constituting an infringement on freedom of expression and the press. The conditions of the detention, including the denial of legal representation and the obligation to provide passwords, raise serious concerns about the lack of due process.

The use of Section 7 of the Terrorism Act in this context raises concerns about the misuse of anti-terror laws to intimidate and silence journalists and activists. The line of questioning included inquiries into his political affiliations, sources of income, and participation in human rights campaigns, among other topics.

The demand for passwords to access personal devices without a clear legal basis is deeply concerning, constituting an arbitrary invasion of privacy. Moreover, Mr. Murray was carrying documents related to Julian Assange, which he identified as privileged. Despite this, his belongings were searched, and his electronic devices were seized, constituting a violation of journalistic privilege.

We kindly request an urgent review of this incident as a follow-up to our previous complaint. We believe that the actions taken against Mr. Murray constitute serious violations of his human rights. Also, we believe that this incident is not isolated but is part of a pattern

of harassment and intimidation that Mr. Murray has been subjected to, and it has broader implications for the state of human rights and freedom of expression in the UK, particularly for journalists and human rights defenders.

Mr. Murray, the former UK ambassador to Uzbekistan-turned-whistleblower, is well known for exposing UK complicity in torture in that country. He has since become a prominent writer, blogger, investigative journalist, and campaigner. As previously reported, in 2021, Mr. Murray was subjected to SLAPP through conviction and imprisonment for contempt of court over his reporting on the trial of the former First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond.

Mr. Murray's conviction was based on an order issued under Section 11 of the UK Contempt of Court Act 1981 (the S.11 Order), applied in a flawed and arbitrary prosecution and trial. It effectively silenced him as a journalist and still prevents him – and indeed anyone in the UK – from reporting on credible evidence of abuse of power at the highest levels of the establishment, a matter of undoubtedly great public interest.

Please note that Mr. Murray gave in writing his consent to communicate his name and full identity to the UK Government. He also gave his consent that his name can be published in the Special Procedures' communications report to the Human Rights Council.

Furthermore, we would like to reiterate our request for the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression to consider seeking an invitation from the UK government to conduct an official country visit. It is worth reminding that such a visit has been overdue since 1999. The currently unfolding situation presents a timely opportunity to address this long-standing issue.

Should the Special Rapporteurs find it agreeable, we are open to engaging deeper into these matters. We would greatly appreciate the opportunity for Mr. Murray and ourselves to meet with you at a time of your choosing.

We look forward to your prompt attention to this urgent matter and are available for any further information or clarification you may require. We would appreciate an acknowledgment of the receipt of this follow-up complaint.

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Attachments:

A detailed account of the incident as narrated by Mr. Craig Murray.

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