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International Law in the Face of Autocracy: Examining the UAE's role



Brussels (ots) -

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) portrays itself to the world as a progressive Arab state, but a closer look behind the glittering scenes of the Gulf state reveals sheer disregard for human rights and international law. British human rights lawyers Ben Keith and Rhys Davies from IHR Advisors in London highlight this concerning trend, observing that autocratically governed states like the UAE increasingly scorn international law. At the 2nd European Legal Debate in Brussels, the two award-winning human rights lawyers will present evidence supporting their observation under the event title "International Law in the Face of Autocracy: Examining the UAE's role" and provide a platform for victims of legal abuses in the UAE to speak out.

This seminar, chaired by barrister Rhys Davies, brings together a panel of human rights experts, activists, and victims to discuss the UAE's human rights situation and explore the alarming trend of political persecution and repression beyond its borders. The seminar will shed light on specific cases, analysing the broader implications for human rights and discussing potential avenues for advocacy and change.

Recently, the UAE indicted 84 individuals in a mass trial on charges related to terrorism, with potential sentences ranging from life imprisonment to the death penalty. Most of the 84 individuals who were convicted in the "UAE94" mass trial in 2012 remain imprisoned despite having served their sentences.

Barrister Ben Keith and Rhys Davies argue that autocracies like the UAE pose a threat to international law by exploiting deficiencies in the rule of law to exert their control over society. Thus, transnational oppression leads the assault on legal norms and values, exploiting loopholes to consolidate control and suppress dissent around the world. They point to systematic human rights violations, at home and abroad, and the manipulation of legal frameworks that enable autocracies to commit serious violations of international law.

The human rights lawyers argue that the UAE stands out as a leader in this international development. The case of former Inspector General of the UAE Ministry of Interior, and current Chairman of INTERPOL, Major General Ahmed Nasser al Raisi, illustrates how autocratic states leverage international institutions for their own agendas. Despite accusations of torture and human rights abuses, the Gulf state's top police officer was elected Chairman of INTERPOL in November 2021 after the Emirates donated 54 million USD to notoriously cash-strapped INTERPOL. Accusations by Human Rights organisations against al Raisi, who facilitated numerous extraditions during his tenure as INTERPOL chief despite serious human rights concerns, raises concerns

about the abuse of power.

About the Event:

For more information on the 2nd European Legal Debate, May 28, 2024, from 9:30 to 12:30 at FULL CIRCLE, Chaussee de Vleurgat 89, 1050 Brussels, Belgium. Free registration at: www.european-legal-debate.eu

About IHR Advisors:

IHR Advisors was set up by Ben Keith and Rhys Davies in 2019 as a unique human rights boutique in London both leading international lawyers and human rights experts. They advise governments, individuals, NGOs and companies. They draw upon decades of experience acting in international law, in jurisdictions around the world, as well as campaigning and political expertise to develop strategies that shape narratives and opinions for their clients. IHR Advisors operates a full crisis-response service, encompassing media relations and real-time, legally integrated messaging development. In 2021/2022, Ben and Rhys were jointly named International Pro Bono Barrister of the Year. They were nominated for their work on the case of Ryan Cornelius, a British national who has been arbitrarily detained in prison in Dubai

About NAİMA Strategic Legal Services:

NAİMA Strategic Legal Services is a highly specialised communications firm whose core competence lies in strategic legal communications (Litigation-PR). Based in Berlin/Germany, the firm develops complex communications strategies for companies (NG)organisations, associations, and their top representatives involved in a legal dispute. Founded in New York City NAİMA has operated in various countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Today, after over 20 years of practice, NAİMA can point to a highly diversified portfolio of national and international companies and institutions that have been successfully represented together with national and international law firms. Founder Uwe Wolff is considered the consultant with the most prolonged and most profound experience in strategic Litigation-PR. He lectures and regularly publishes on Litigation PR and disinformation attacks. Uwe Wolff is also one of the three directors of the international Crisis & Litigation Communicators Alliance (CLCA) in London.

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