Justice for Zeynab

Key facts and contacts for journalists #JusticeForZeynab #WomensRights

Key facts

- **Who:** Zeynab Javadli, 35, born in Baku, Azerbaijan. A rhythmic gymnast who won world championship medals with Azerbaijan in 2007 and 2009. Zeynab on Wikipedia.
- **Her former husband:** Sheikh Saeed bin Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, a former Olympic clay shooter and a nephew of the Ruler of Dubai. They married in 2015 and he divorced her in 2019.
- **Her children:** three daughters, aged 10, 8 and 7.
- **The raid:** on the night of 2 June 2026 around eighteen armed, masked officers of Dubai Police and Dubai State Security broke into her home. Her daughters were taken from their beds. She has not seen or spoken to them since.
- **Her detention:** Zeynab was beaten, injected with drugs against her will and held for six days without a lawyer.
- **The charges:** the kidnapping of her own children, and cybercrime offences for the online posts in which she asked the UN and the world for help. Her 66-year-old mother is on trial with her.
- **The trial:** opened on 11 November 2026 behind closed doors. On 18 November the judge withdrew, recording "a sense of embarrassment". On 25 November 2026 Zeynab and her mother appeared before a new judge, in a hearing that lasted about a minute, and the case was adjourned for judgment on 9 December 2026.
- **Custody:** a Dubai court hears Zeynab's new application for custody of her children on 30 November 2026.
- **The United Nations:** on 18 November 2026 Rodney Dixon KC filed an urgent complaint to five UN human rights experts. Zeynab first complained to the UN in October 2022.
- **What Zeynab asks:** that the UN ask the UAE where her daughters are, check on their safety, arrange an urgent humanitarian visit, reunite her with her daughters and the girls with their grandparents, and press for a fair hearing.

Contacts

Press contact

David Haigh, international human rights lawyer, for Zeynab
+44 (0)7488 868000
david@davidhaigh.co.uk

Find out more

Campaign site, with video, transcripts, photographs, timeline and news coverage: **justiceforzeynab.com**

Press pack and video downloads: justiceforzeynab.com/press

The full case: dubaiwatch.org/zeynab-javadli and davidhaigh.co.uk

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