

# International Organization for Animal Protection



**Organizzazione Internazionale per la Protezione degli Animali - Onlus**

NGO associated with the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC)

UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Accredited at UN Environment Assembly (UNEA)

Accredited in the Register of Representatives of Interest of the European Commission

Headquarters: Via Sant'Ambrogio 12, I-20816 Ceriano Laghetto MB (Italy) - Fiscal Code: 97310380155

Tel +39 02 6427882 - Fax +39 178 2206601

[www.oipa.org](http://www.oipa.org)



To the kind Attention of  
His Highness Sheikh  
Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
President of the United Arab  
Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi  
[press@mediaoffice.abudhabi](mailto:press@mediaoffice.abudhabi)

Milan, 05 October 2023

Your Highness,

## **Mass dumping of cats in the desert, Al Falah area**

OIPA - *International Organization for Animal Protection*, a non-governmental organization based in Italy - is committed to defending animal rights and protecting animals from any form of cruelty and abuse. OIPA is also an accredited member of the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and listed in the Register of Transparency of the European Commission.

We took this step of writing to your Highness in order to express our deep concern about the recent horrific case of animal cruelty discovered in the Al Falah area of Abu Dhabi. A few days ago, we were informed that rescuers found over 150 cats and a few dogs who had been dumped, alive, in the desert, some still locked inside their carriers. This site is less than a kilometer from the internationally renowned Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital. As you might already know, some of the animals were luckily still alive and could be rescued, while approximately 60, at the time of writing, plus two dogs, were found deceased and in different stages of decomposition.

These animals had been left to die in scorching temperatures, without food, water or shelter enduring prolonged, unimaginable and unacceptable suffering. To make things worse and incomprehensible, almost all the animals were microchipped and had been recently neutered, in fact some of them had surgical stitches clearly visible. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

We are pleased to learn that after news of the discovery went viral, Abu Dhabi's Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), in collaboration with the relevant authorities, condemned the episode and took immediate action by starting an investigation. We hope and trust that Your Highness will, in your role as President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, make sure that all the necessary measures will be taken to find the guilty and punish the perpetrators of these cruel acts.

We have learnt unfortunately that this is not an isolated episode, and several other dumping sites have been reported as being active, some for at least a couple of years, in different areas of Abu Dhabi as well as the rest of the UAE. We have learnt that this dumping activity is taking place across Emirates, reportedly from Dubai across into Abu Dhabi.

We hope your Highness will oversee a radical overhaul of the animal welfare system within the UAE, and make the country an international beacon of animal welfare, setting a shining example of humane stray animal management.

Whilst we know that Trap Neuter and Return (TNR) programs exist in the country, they are managed within the municipality pest control division and as such this process is incompatible with animal welfare and open to abuse – both of animals and of the process.

We are told repeatedly that the two laws relating to animal welfare are not promulgated within the legal system, meaning they are not available to the judiciary or law enforcement when dealing with offences detailed in these acts.

Atrocities of the kind seen at Al Falah do not reflect what we believe to be the compassionate nature of the UAE and instead tarnish its image within the international community that increasingly considers animal welfare and protection a pillar of civil society.

We are confident that your Highness, who has always shown himself to be a compassionate leader and one who cares deeply about the less fortunate, will take this issue to heart.

We remain at your disposal to provide additional information.

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts.

Sincerely,

*Massimo Pradella*  
President  
OIPA ONLUS  
[presidency@oipa.org](mailto:presidency@oipa.org)

*Valentina Bagnato*  
Head of Foreign Office/International Advisor  
OIPA ONLUS  
[international@oipa.org](mailto:international@oipa.org)

*Massimo Pradella*



*Valentina Bagnato*