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## Yemeni Migrant Caught with Child Abuse Videos Spared Jail and Deportation

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A 26-year-old Yemeni migrant, Osamah Al-Haddad, was found in possession of child abuse material upon arrival at Heathrow Airport in January 2024. Despite the severity of the offense, he received a suspended sentence and was not deported, drawing criticism over leniency in cases involving non-citizens committing serious crimes.

Al-Haddad was stopped by UK Border Force officers after flying in from Cairo, where authorities found disturbing videos on his mobile phone. He admitted to possessing the indecent images, which were classified under the most serious category of child abuse content. However, instead of serving time behind bars or facing deportation, he was given a 30-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months. He was also handed a 10-year

Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO), restricting his internet use and contact with children.

The judge's ruling was influenced by concerns that returning Al-Haddad to Yemen could put him at risk of being forced into military conflict due to the country's ongoing civil war. This humanitarian consideration appears to have outweighed the severity of the offense in the eyes of the court.

Outside court, Al-Haddad was seen giving a thumbs up to cameras—a gesture that has only fueled public anger. The decision to suspend his sentence, rather than impose immediate custody or deportation, has raised serious questions about the consistency and toughness of the UK's approach to dealing with foreign nationals convicted of sexual offences.

This incident has also cast renewed attention on border policy and public safety. Critics argue that the justice system must send a stronger message in cases involving child exploitation, regardless of the offender's country of origin. The fact that Al-Haddad will remain in the UK, despite his criminal record, may increase public pressure on lawmakers to review sentencing guidelines and immigration enforcement.

The timing of the case is notable, occurring shortly after government discussions aimed at barring foreign sex offenders from seeking asylum in the UK. Under current proposals, only those sentenced to more than a year in prison would be excluded, meaning Al-Haddad's suspended term would not have triggered such a ban.

While legal protections must be upheld, many believe the public interest and safeguarding of children should remain paramount. As this case shows, there is growing demand for a more consistent and firm approach when serious offences intersect with immigration law.