

# URGENT ACTION

## AHMAD MSHAIMA' LOSES APPEAL

**Ahmad Mshaima has lost an appeal against his one-year prison sentence for “insulting the King of Bahrain”. He is a prisoner of conscience.**

**Ahmad Mshaima'** is serving a one-year sentence for “publicly insulting the King of Bahrain”. The Court of Appeal upheld this sentence on 15 February. He was not present in court to hear the verdict, but his lawyer and family were present. He is serving his sentence in Jaw prison, south-eastern Bahrain.

He was sentenced to one year in prison for “publicly insulting the King of Bahrain” on 9 December, by a Lower Criminal Court, under article 214 of the Bahraini Penal code, which criminalizes insulting the ruler of the country. He had been charged after reading a poem on 1 November during a religious festival commemorating Ashura in al-Muharraq island, north-east of the capital, Manama, which cited growing injustice in Bahrain and described the ruler as an unjust ruler who breaks promises and sheds blood.

His lawyers complained that they had not been able to attend his interrogation and Ahmad Mshaima' could not attend his first court hearing.

He is also being tried in another case brought against him in December 2013 because he had taken part in a public gathering on 14 February 2013. He was charged with “illegal gathering with an intent to commit crimes and disturb public security”. His trial on this other charge will resume in March.

### **Please write immediately in English or Arabic:**

- Urge the authorities to quash the sentence imposed on Ahmad Mshaima' and release him immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, jailed solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to drop any pending charges against him, if he has been charged solely for exercising his right to freedom of assembly;
- Urging them to uphold the right to freedom of expression and repeal laws that criminalize the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly including Article 214 of the Penal Code.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 31 MARCH 2015 TO:**

#### King

Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa  
Office of His Majesty the King  
P.O. Box 555  
Rifa'a Palace, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1766 4587 (keep trying)  
**Salutation: Your Majesty**

#### Minister of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah Al Khalifa  
Ministry of Interior  
P.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1723 2661  
Twitter: @moi\_Bahrain  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Abdullah Al Khalifa  
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
P. O. Box 450, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1753 1284  
Email: minister@justice.gov.bh  
Twitter: @Khaled\_Bin\_Ali

### **Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fourth update of UA 5/14. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/050/2014/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmad Mshaima's father, Hassan Mshaima', is serving a life sentence in the same prison, Jaw Prison, as one of 13 jailed opposition activists. In 2013, Hassan Mshaima' was denied adequate medical care and family visits for refusing to wear the prison uniform. See UA 139/11, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/025/2013/en> and follow-up.

Ahmad Mshaima' was arrested on 28 December 2013 and charged with "illegal gathering with an intent to commit crimes and disturb public security" following protests on 14 February that year to mark the second anniversary of the start of the uprising. His trial on this charge started before the Lower Criminal Court in Manama on 13 March 2014. He denied the charge. He was released on bail on 25 June while his trial was ongoing and rearrested on 13 November in relation to the new charges brought against him.

He had told his family when they visited him after his December 2013 arrest that he had been tortured when he was interrogated during the first hours he had been detained. This had included being beaten, kicked in the legs, forced to insult his father and his religion, and coerced into signing documents.

Name: Ahmad Mshaima'

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 5/14 Index: MDE 11/010/2015 Issue Date: 17 February 2015