

URGENT ACTION

HEALTH OF DETAINED PHOTOGRAPHER WORSENING

Photographer Hussain Hubail's case has been referred for trial on charges including using social media networks to incite hatred of the regime. He suffers from a heart condition and has been frequently losing consciousness.

Hussain Hubail was taken to the Public Prosecution Office on 31 October where he was told on arrival that his case had been referred to a court and he was returned to prison. Hussain Hubail along with **Mohammad Hassan Sudayf** are both charged with, among other things, using social media networks to incite hatred of the regime and calling on people to ignore the law. No date has yet been set for his trial. Hussain Hubail was taken to Salmanyia Medical Complex on the same day, after he fainted. Hussain Hubail is detained at Dry Dock prison, in the capital Manama, where he was transferred on 3 August.

Hussain Hubail has a heart condition and he fears he is not receiving adequate medical treatment. His health has deteriorated since his detention and he suffers from shortness of breath and frequently loses consciousness. He has been given medication by the prison clinic and was taken at least once before to hospital. However he told his family that his medication is being given to him randomly and he does not know what the medication is.

Both men were arrested on 31 July. Hussain Hubail was arrested at Bahrain International Airport as he was due to board a flight to Dubai. He told his family that during his interrogation at the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) he was threatened and beaten. Mohammad Hassan Sudayf was arrested at his parents' house in Sitra by plainclothes security officers, without a warrant. He told his family that he had been tortured while detained at the CID including with being given electric shocks and beatings. He was released on bail on 3 October.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Bahraini authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Hussain Hubail if he is being held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure that Hussain Hubail receives adequate medical care, including any specialist treatment needed for his heart condition;
- Calling on them to order an impartial and independent investigation into Mohammad Hassan Sudayf and Hussain Hubail's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, and bring anyone found responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 DECEMBER 2013 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 check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 206/13. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/051/2013/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The arrest of Hussain Hubail and Mohammad Hassan Sudaif took place on 31 July 2013 ahead of anti-government protests that were organized in many Shi'a villages in Bahrain on 14 August. Protesters were planning to march to Manama but security forces prevented them by using teargas and, in some instances, by erecting barbed wire around the villages. At least 18 people were arrested. The *Tamarrud* (Rebellion) movement, made up of youth groups, chose 14 August to organize anti-government protests to denounce government repression and call for genuine political reforms. Mainstream opposition associations were also planning a large anti-government rally, but it was cancelled due to the heavy security forces presence in Manama. Mohammad Hassan Sudaif told his family that he had been given electric shocks, that he had been beaten, forced to strip naked and had his clothes taken away while detained at the Criminal Investigation Directorate. His lawyer, 'Abdul-'Aziz Moussa, was arrested on 7 August 2013 after attending a session with him that day and later tweeting that he had seen signs of torture on his client and revealing the charges against both men, whom he named, and giving details of their interrogation. He was released on bail on 21 August, the day his trial began before Branch 4 of the Lower Criminal Court on a charge of "divulging details of investigations" and his next hearing has been set for 30 December.

Two-and-a-half years after the popular uprising in Bahrain, and beneath the fanfare of reform, prisoners of conscience, including some arrested during the protests, remain behind bars and the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly are still being suppressed. In recent months, not only have prisoners of conscience not been released, but more people have been jailed simply for daring to express their views, whether via Twitter or on peaceful marches. A number of women activists have been detained too. Bahraini courts have appeared more concerned with toeing the government line than offering effective remedy to Bahrainis and upholding the rule of law.

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), appointed by Royal Order on 29 June 2011, was charged with investigating and reporting on human rights violations committed in connection with the 2011 protests. At the launch of the BICI report in November 2011, the government publicly committed itself to implementing the recommendations set out in the report. The report recounted the government's response to the mass protests and documented wide-ranging human rights abuses. Among its key recommendations, the report called on the government to bring to account those responsible for human rights violations, including torture and excessive use of force, and carry out independent investigations into allegations of torture. However, many of the government's pledges remain unfulfilled. The establishment of BICI and its report was considered to be a groundbreaking initiative, but, almost two years on, the promise of meaningful reform has been betrayed by the government's unwillingness to implement key recommendations around accountability; this includes its failure to carry out independent, effective and transparent investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and excessive use of force, or to prosecute all those who gave the orders to commit human rights abuses. For further information see *Reform shelved, repression unleashed*, November 2012, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/062/2012/en>.

On 28 July 2013 Bahrain's parliament held an extraordinary session and then submitted 22 recommendations to the king. The recommendations toughen punishments laid out in the 2006 anti-terrorism law. A few days later the king issued several decrees curtailing the right to freedom of expression further, including banning all protests, sit-ins and public gatherings in Manama indefinitely and giving the security forces additional sweeping powers. On 9 September 2013 a joint statement by 47 countries at the UN Human Rights Council expressed serious concern about the ongoing human rights violations in Bahrain.

Names: Hussain Hubail, Mohammad Hassan Sudaif, 'Abdul-'Aziz Moussa
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 206/13 Index: MDE 11/054/2013 Issue Date: 5 November 2013