

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST ARRESTED FOR SPEECH

Bahraini human rights activist Hussain Jawad was arrested on 24 November at a police station south of the capital, Manama, while lodging a complaint. He has been accused of "inciting hatred against the regime" in a speech he gave on 12 or 13 November during a rally.

Hussain Jawad, aged 25, is the chairman of the European-Bahraini Organization for Human Rights (EBOHR). He was arrested on 24 November 2013 while at the al-Wusta Police Station south of the capital, Manama, where he was filing a complaint against a Bahraini daily newspaper and a government-organized non-governmental organization (GONGO) for defamation and incitement. He was told that he was being arrested on a charge of "inciting hatred against the regime" for a speech he had given in Manama on 12 or 13 November at a rally during the Shi'a festival of 'Ashura in which he called for the Bahraini people to demand their rights, peacefully and without fear, and he also harshly criticised the authorities. He was then transferred to al-Noaim Police Station from where he was able to contact his wife briefly before being taken for a medical check-up at the al-Qal'a Medical Centre and transferred to another police station in al-Houra. On 25 November Hussain Jawad appeared before the Public Prosecutor who ordered his detention for 15 days pending investigation and his transfer to Dry Dock Prison in Manama.

Amnesty International has reviewed a video of the speech and does not believe it contained any incitement to violence.

Hussain Jawad and other human rights activists have been subjected to a smear campaign by the daily Bahraini newspaper *Akhbar al-Khaleej* and three GONGOs. This follows the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR)'s "End Impunity in Bahrain" campaign naming perpetrators of human rights abuses in Bahrain.

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

- Expressing concern that Hussain Jawad may have been detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression in which case he should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- Urging the authorities to protect him from torture and other ill-treatment and to ensure that he is granted family visits and access to a lawyer of his own choosing;
- Urging them to respect and protect the right to freedom of expression and assembly and ensure that all human rights organizations and human rights defenders are able to carry out their work without hindrance.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JANUARY 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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hussain Jawad is the son of Mohammad Hassan Jawwad, who is serving a 15-year sentence in Jaw Prison as one of 13 jailed opposition activists.

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) ran its campaign “End Impunity in Bahrain” from 1 to 23 November 2013. During the campaign it published the names and accusations against people it deemed responsible for, or involved in, the ongoing human rights violations in the country, under the banner “Wanted for Justice in Bahrain”.

On the second anniversary of the report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), the government has not implemented the report’s key recommendations. Prisoners of conscience, including some arrested during the protests, remain behind bars and the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly continue to be suppressed and more people have been jailed simply for daring to express their views, whether via Twitter or on peaceful marches. Bahraini courts have appeared more concerned with toeing the government’s line than offering effective remedy to Bahrainis and upholding the rule of law.

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 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, and to prosecute all those who gave the orders to commit human rights abuses. For further information see the report *Reform shelved, repression unleashed* (Index: MDE 11/062/2012), November 2012, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/062/2012/en>.

Bahrain’s parliament held an extraordinary session on 28 July 2013 and then submitted 22 recommendations to the King, Shaikh Hamad Bin ‘Issa Al Khalifa. The recommendations toughen punishments laid out in the 2006 anti-terrorism law. A few days later the King issued several decrees further curtailing the right to freedom of expression, including banning all protests, sit-ins and public gatherings in Manama indefinitely and giving the security forces additional sweeping powers.

A joint statement signed by 47 countries at the UN Human Rights Council on 9 September 2013 expressed serious concern about the ongoing human rights violations in Bahrain.

Name: Hussain Mohammad Jawad

Gender m/f: m

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