

URGENT ACTION

BAHRAINI ACTIVIST NABEEL RAJAB REARRESTED

Bahraini human rights defender Nabeel Rajab was arrested on 2 April and is facing new charges. The hearing of his appeal against his six-month sentence has been adjourned until 4 May. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Nabeel Rajab was arrested at his home in the village of Bani Jamra at around 4pm on 2 April and taken to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID). He was questioned, with his lawyer present, about comments said to have been posted on Twitter or retweeted by him on the war in Yemen and incidents in Jaw prison after a prison strike on 10 March. He was charged under Articles 216 and 133 of Bahrain's Penal Code. If convicted, he could face up to 10 years in prison.

Shortly after his arrest, the Ministry of Interior said in a statement that he had been arrested for posting a "message that could incite people and disrupt peace" and "defaming a statutory body". The following day, the Public Prosecution ordered him to be detained for seven days, for further investigation. He is detained at 'Issa Town detention centre, in a single cell.

The security forces went into Nabeel Rajab's home on 5 April and removed his computers and other electronic devices, as well as cameras belonging to other members of his family.

Nabeel Rajab is appealing against a six-month prison sentence he was given for "publicly insulting official institutions" after comments he made on Twitter that the Ministries of Defence and Interior considered offensive. His appeal hearing was due on 5 April but was adjourned to 4 May.

Please write immediately in English Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the Bahraini authorities to release Nabeel Rajab immediately and unconditionally, as he is being detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to quash his six-month sentence, as he received it solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- 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.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 MAY 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

Salutation: Your Majesty

Ministry of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah Al Khalifa

P.O. Box 13, al-Manama

Bahrain

Fax: +973 1723 2661

Email via website:

www.interior.gov.bh/contact_en.aspx

Twitter: @moi_Bahrain

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs

Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa

Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs

P. O. Box 450, al-Manama

Bahrain

Fax: +973 1753 1284

Email via website:

<http://www.moj.gov.bh/en/>

Twitter: @Khaled_Bin_Al

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 249/14. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE11/0007/2015/en/>

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nabeel Rajab is the President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights. He was summoned to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) on 1 October 2014 for questioning about two tweets he had posted on 28 September that the Ministries of Defence and Interior considered offensive, under Article 216 of the Bahraini Penal Code. He appeared before a Public Prosecutor on 9 October, who ordered that he remain in detention and set the first day of his trial for 19 October. The Public Prosecution Office charged Nabeel Rajab with “publicly insulting official institutions” on 9 October. He was released on bail on 2 November but a travel ban was imposed on him.

Amnesty International has reviewed Nabeel Rajab’s tweets in which he commented on security institutions in Bahrain after a video was released by the armed group calling itself the Islamic State featuring Bahraini men, some of whom had left the Bahrain Ministry of Interior to join the armed group in Iraq and Syria.

Nabeel Rajab was sentenced to six months in prison on 20 January 2015. His appeal started before the Court of Appeal on 11 February.

Nabeel Rajab had previously served a two-year prison sentence in Jaw Prison on charges of participating in an “illegal gathering”, “disturbing public order” and “calling for and taking part in demonstrations” in Manama “without prior notification”. He was released in May 2014.

Name: Nabeel Rajab

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 249/14 Index: MDE 11/1406/2015 Issue Date: 10 April 2015