

EXTERNAL

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Fear of torture / Medical concern

2 February 1996

**BAHRAIN** Shaikh 'Abd al-'Amir Mansur al-Jamri  
Shaikh Hassan Sultan  
Shaikh 'Ali Ashour  
Shaikh 'Ali bin Ahmad al-Jeddhafsi  
Shaikh Hussein al-Deihi  
Hassan Meshema'a  
Sayyed Ibrahim Adnan al-Alawi  
Abdul Wahab Hussein  
and many others

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The eight prominent Muslim Shi'a leaders and religious figures named above, arrested on 22 January 1996, are among hundreds reported to have been arrested and held in incommunicado detention following recent protests in Bahrain. Amnesty International fears that all those so detained are at risk of torture.

Security forces launched mass arrests in January 1996 after they clashed with protestors demonstrating against the security forces' closure of a number of mosques where prominent Shi'a clerics had been calling on the government to restore democratic rights. The renewed demonstrations had begun in October 1995 in protest against the continued detention of about 500 people in connection with earlier unrest, between December 1994 and April 1995, in which protestors demanded the restoration of democratic rights.

The government has put the number of people detained since the recent unrest at 186 and said it will try the eight leaders named above for instigating violence and sabotage. Opposition sources and lawyers say about 2,000 people are currently detained, most of them with no access to families or lawyers.

Shaikh al-Jamri is a prominent Shi'a Muslim and religious scholar from the village of Bani Jamra, and a member of the former National Assembly which was dissolved in 1975. Shaikh al-Jamri, Hassan Meshema'a and Abdul Wahab Hussein embarked on a hunger-strike and were reportedly moved to the Military Hospital at the end of January 1996. Their present medical situation and whereabouts are not known. The eight leaders were detained in the 1994-1995 unrest, and held without charge or trial until their release in September 1995.

Reports that some detainees held during the 1994-1995 unrest were tortured to extract information has heightened Amnesty International's fears for those currently detained.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Arabic or your own language:**

- urging the prompt release of all those arrested since January 1996 and of detainees held since earlier unrest, unless they are to be charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- seeking information about the identities and current whereabouts of all the detainees and the reasons for their arrest and details of any charges and trial proceedings against them;
- seeking assurances that all the detainees are being humanely treated and urging that they be granted immediate access to lawyers, relatives and independent doctors in accordance with international standards.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Highness  
Shaikh 'Issa Bin Salman Al Khalifa  
Office of His Highness the Amir  
P.O. Box 555  
The Amiri Court, Rifa'a Palace, Bahrain  
**Telexes:** 8666 Qasar BN; 8500 Qasar BN  
**Telegrams:** His Highness the Amir, al-Manama, Bahrain  
**Faxes:** +973 668884  
**Salutation:** Your Highness

His Excellency  
Shaikh Muhammad Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa  
Minister of Interior  
P.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain  
**Telexes:** 9572 PSMKT BN or 8333 ALAMAN BN  
**Telegrams:** Minister of Interior, al-Manama, Bahrain  
**Faxes:** +973 276765 or 290526  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

His Excellency  
Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman al Khalifa  
Prime Minister  
P.O. Box 1000, al-Manama, Bahrain  
**Telexes:** 9336 PROM BN or 7889 PMPO BN  
**Faxes:** +973 533033  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Bahrain accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 March 1996.