

URGENT ACTION

BAHRAIN CONTINUES TO DETAIN PROTESTORS

The crackdown on activists continues in Bahrain, with the detention of a prominent Bahraini human rights activist and his two sons-in-law on April 9. They join over 400 activists currently held for their participation in and support for protests that began on 14 February.

'**Abdulhadi Alkhawaja**, a prominent Human Rights Defender and former director of the Middle East and North Africa department of Frontline, a Dublin-based international NGO that works with Human Rights Defenders, was arrested on 9 April in connection with the protests. He was taken from his daughter's house in Manama, Bahrain's capital, where he was staying at the time. Security forces raided the house at night and assaulted 'Abdulhadi Alkhawaja and one of his daughters. They took 'Abdulhadi Alkhawaja away together with his two sons-in-law, Wafi AlMajed and Hussain Ahmed Hussain and their whereabouts are now unknown, raising fear for their safety. 'Abdulhadi Alkhawaja was taken barefoot and not allowed to take his medication with him.

Over 400 people, almost all members of the majority Shi'a community, have been detained in the past month in connection with the popular protests that began on 14 February. In most cases, the detainees' whereabouts have not been disclosed by the Bahraini authorities though many are believed to be held by the Bahraini military. Only six, all leaders of the protest movement, have been allowed access to lawyers, including Hassan Mshaima'a, Ebrahim Sharif, 'Abdel-Waha Hussain and 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, all of whom are expected to be tried before a military court on charges of calling for the overthrow of the Sunni minority government and "collaboration" with a foreign power (Iran). Three detainees are reported to have died in custody in suspicious circumstances, heightening concern that detainees may be subject to torture or other ill-treatment.

On Monday the media reported that the Minister of Interior announced the release of 86 protesters arrested in relation with the protests after legal procedures have been taken against them. Amnesty International is concerned about the well being of all detainees and calls on the Bahraini authorities to reveal their whereabouts and grant them access to lawyers and families.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic or English:

- Call on the authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts and legal status of all the those detained in relation to the protests.
- Urge the authorities to grant all detainees immediate access to their lawyers and families and to any medical care they require.
- Call on the authorities to ensure prevent the torture or other ill-treatment of detainees and immediately establish independent investigations into the deaths in custody that have occurred, and to bring to justice anyone responsible for torture or other ill-treatment

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 MAY 2011 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 17664587
Salutation: Your Majesty

Prime Minister

Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
P.O. Box 1000, al-Manama, Bahrain
Fax: +973 17533033
Salutation: Your Highness

Minister of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah bin Ahmad Al Khalifa
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
P.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain
Fax: +973 17232661
Salutation: Your Excellency

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 second update of UA 79/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/015/2011/en>

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