

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST FACES JAIL FOR ‘DEFAMATION ON TWITTER’
Bahraini women’s rights activist Ghada Jamsheer was arrested on 15 September on 10 charges of “defamation via her Twitter account”. Her detention order has been extended several times and her next hearing, which relates to one of the charges, is scheduled for 24 November. She is a prisoner of conscience.

Ghada Jamsheer, a women’s rights activist, is being held in ‘Issa Town Detention Centre for Women, south of the capital, Manama. In all, 10 separate defamation cases have been brought against her; all relate to postings on her Twitter account about alleged corruption at King Hamad University Hospital, on al-Muharraq island, north-east of Manama. Her next hearing is scheduled to take place on 24 November.

Ghada Jamsheer was originally summoned on 9 September to appear the next day at the Criminal Investigations Directorate’s department for combatting cybercrime for interrogation in relation to her postings on her Twitter account. On 15 September the Public Prosecution charged her with “defamation on Twitter” and ordered her detention. Since then her detention order has been renewed several times and is currently extended until her next court hearing. On 22 October Branch 3 of the Lower Criminal Court set bail of 50 Bahraini dinars (approximately US\$125) in one of the cases. On 29 October the court issued its verdict in two cases, sentencing her to a fine of 100 Bahraini dinars in one case.

Her lawyer is still awaiting the court to give him access to the case files, without which he will not be able to adequately represent his client. He has also requested that all 10 cases be joined into one case, as per Article 66 of Bahrain’s Penal Code, which states: “Where several offences are committed for one purpose only and where they are so closely related, they shall be regarded as a single offence which shall be subject to the harshest penalty”.

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

- Urging the authorities to release Ghada Jamsheer immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to repeal all legislation that criminalizes the rights to freedom of expression and respect and protect the rights to freedom of expression.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 DECEMBER 2014 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

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
 Twitter: @Khaled_Bin_Ali
Salutation: Your Excellency

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.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ghada Jamsheer is the president of the Women's Petition Committee (WPC), a network of Bahraini women human rights activists campaigning for the codification of Bahrain's family laws and the reform of Shari'a family courts.

Ghada Jamsheer has been the subject of harassment, including a campaign of judicial harassment. In 2005, she faced three separate criminal charges for allegedly criticizing a number of family court judges. These charges were dropped on 19 June 2005.

Name: Ghada Jamsheer

Gender m/f: f

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