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We, the undersigned organisations, call on the authorities in Bahrain to immediately and unconditionally release Hajer Mansoor Hasan, Sayed Nazar Alwadaei and Mahmood Marzooq Mansoor, to ensure their convictions and sentences are quashed, and to drop all additional fabricated charges Mr Nazar Alwadaei is facing. On 25 February 2019, the Court of Cassation in Bahrain will issue its verdict in the appeal against the three-year prison sentence handed to all three individuals. If the sentence is upheld, they will have exhausted all legal remedies available to them.

Ms Mansoor, Mr Nazar Alwadaei and Mr Mansoor are family members of Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, who has been tortured, judicially harassed, stripped of his citizenship and threatened by the Bahraini authorities due to his human rights work in the United Kingdom. The prosecution of his relatives is the latest attempt to intimidate him and silence his advocacy efforts. Last month, the UN Working Group of Arbitrary Detention described the imprisonment of Ms Mansoor, Mr Nazar Alwadaei and Mr Mansoor as “arbitrary” and in reprisal to Mr Alwadaei’s activities and called for their immediate release.

Mr Alwadaei’s family members were arrested in March 2017, while he was attending the 34th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. They were subjected to physical and psychological abuse and prosecuted on dubious charges of planting fake explosive devices to create terror among the population. The prosecution failed to present any physical evidence linking the three to the alleged crime, relying instead on “confidential sources” and confessions which the defendants claim were extracted under duress.

On 30 October 2017, Ms Mansoor, Mr Nazar Alwadaei and Mr Mansoor were convicted by a Bahraini court following a long trial marred by due process violations, including allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, coerced confessions and denial of legal representation. On 20 December 2017, an appeals court upheld the sentence. Mr Nazar Alwadaei was issued an additional seven years’ imprisonment in two separate cases on 29 November 2017 and 26 March 2018 based on similar charges. He is now serving 11 years in total.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the prison conditions in Isa Town Prison, where Ms Mansoor is held, are not in line with international standards. We are aware that she is not receiving adequate medical attention for a lump in her breast, which may be cancerous. We also understand that she has not been allowed to see her family since September 2018, due to the imposition of a physical barrier in the visitation room.

We urge the Bahraini authorities to release Ms Mansoor, Mr Nazar Alwadaei and Mr Mansoor immediately and unconditionally, to ensure their convictions and sentences are quashed and to drop all additional fabricated charges against Mr Nazar Alwadaei. An impartial, effective and independent investigation into their credible allegations of torture and other ill-treatment must be conducted and the results made public to ensure that all those involved can be held accountable following fair judicial proceedings.

The treatment of Sayed Alwadaei's family is indicative of Bahrain's pattern of abuse, harassment and intimidation against human rights defenders, as highlighted by the UN Secretary-General in September 2018. We call on the authorities in Bahrain to end such actions and ensure a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders and that the right to freedom of expression is fully respected.

Signed,

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
Amnesty International
Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)
Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD)
English PEN
European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ECDHR)
Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
Human Rights First (HRF)
Human Rights Watch (HRW)
PEN International
Women's March Global