

URGENT ACTION

AHMED AL-ARAB SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON

Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab has been sentenced to life imprisonment. After an unfair trial he was convicted of attempted murder and possession of explosives. He is still on trial in separate cases, and could face a total of 64 years' imprisonment.

Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab, aged 22, was sentenced to life imprisonment on 18 September. He is now facing 10 separate charges, including illegal gathering, arson, and rioting. He is in Jaw prison, around 30km south of the capital, Manama. His family told Amnesty International that these charges are based on "confessions" which Ahmed al-Arab said were obtained from him under torture during interrogation at the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID), police testimonies, "confessions" obtained under torture from other detainees and "private sources".

Ahmed al-Arab was not brought to court in a new trial which opened on 22 September as the bus had not come to pick him up from prison. The judge prevented his lawyer from representing him during his absence. According to Ahmed al-Arab's family, he was not brought to court several times in previous trials and therefore was denied the right to be represented by a lawyer. He was not given adequate notice to attend his court sessions or adequate time for his lawyer to prepare a defence, with court summonses being issued on the day of the trial hearing or with two days' notice, which does not meet international standards of fair trial.

According to his family, during the court sessions Ahmed al-Arab's lawyer told the judge that his "confessions" had been obtained under torture and asked the court to order an investigation into this, but the judge dismissed this request. Ahmed al-Arab told his family that on 2 March he had been visited by members of the Public Prosecution Office, who told him that they were visiting him because an Amnesty International Urgent Action had been issued on his behalf. There has been no further investigation into his allegations of torture and other ill-treatment.

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

- Urging the Bahraini authorities to overturn Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab's convictions and sentences where evidence obtained under torture was used to convict him;
- Calling on them to order an independent investigation into Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to order a retrial in proceedings that meet international standards of fair trial.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 NOVEMBER 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 (keep trying)
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
Email: minister@justice.gov.bh
Twitter: @Khaled_Bin_Ali

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 second update of UA 21/14. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/009/2014/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab was arrested on 14 February 2012 during demonstrations to mark the first anniversary of the anti-government protests in Bahrain. He was kept in a police vehicle for several hours and repeatedly beaten. He was then taken to the CID, where he was beaten unconscious. He was interrogated about his relationship with the "14 February Movement", a loose anti-government movement made up mostly of young activists who took part in the February 2011 protests, and was beaten again when he denied any connection with it. His family knew nothing about this, despite asking the Public Prosecution Office, the CID and the police, until two days later, when he phoned his family to tell them he was in the prison hospital. His father received a phone call the next day, asking him to come and collect him.

He was arrested again on 9 January 2014 during a police raid on the family home of one his friends in Hamad Town, central Bahrain, where he was hiding. During his arrest, he and his friend were beaten and other people from the house were searched and threatened. He saw his family for the first time on 10 February, a month after he was arrested. During subsequent visits he told his family about how he was tortured. He said he was taken to CID for interrogation, during which time he was blindfolded and beaten. The officer interrogating him wanted him to confess that he had weapons, which he did to stop the beating and told them that the weapons were at his family home, but no weapons were found. He said that his torture continued for five or six days. During their first visit, the family saw that he had scars on his face and black marks around his wrists and that one of his front teeth was broken.

According to his family, during several family visits to Jaw prison, Ahmed al-Arab was brought late to meet them, and though they asked for this time they had missed to be added, the prison officers said this would not be possible. When they came to the prison on 12 May, his family were not allowed to see him at all.

Name: Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 21/14 Index: MDE 11/032/2014 Issue Date: 29 September 2014