

URGENT ACTION

TORTURED TO 'CONFESS', ACTIVIST NOW STANDS TRIAL

Bahraini human rights activist Hussain Jawad stood trial on 17 March on the basis of confessions extracted from him under torture following his arrest. His trial was postponed to 7 April.

Human rights activist **Hussain Jawad** stood trial on 17 March before a Lower Criminal Court in Manama, the capital, on charges of "collecting and receiving money from home and abroad in order to support and finance subversive groups". He was tried together with two other individuals. On 12 March, the Public Prosecution said Hussain Jawad and another individual "confessed" to receiving money from a third individual living abroad and collecting money in Bahrain without authorization in order to support families of the prisoners convicted for sabotage activities. Hussein Jawad denied the charges and told the judge he was tortured when in custody of the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID). The case was then adjourned to 7 April.

Hussain Jawad previously "confessed" to a number of charges when he first appeared before the Public Prosecution on 21 February. Later, on 23 February, he told the Public Prosecution that he had been tortured at the CID and forced to "confess". He was questioned by the Special Investigation Unit (SIU), the body mandated to investigate and bring to court allegations of torture and other violations by the security forces, and told them he was tortured and threatened with further torture if he withdrew his confession. There is no information on the outcome of the SIU investigation into Hussain Jawad's torture allegations.

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

- Calling on the authorities to release Hussain Jawad immediately and unconditionally if he is being targeted for his human rights work;
- Calling on them not to use any confessions extracted under torture in any proceeding against him;
- Urging them to ensure that Hussain Jawad is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, and to promptly investigate his torture allegations, make the investigation results public and bring those responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 APRIL 2015 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

Ministry of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah Al Khalifa
P.O. Box 13, al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 1723 2661
Email via website:
www.interior.gov.bh/contact_en.aspx
Twitter: @moi_Bahrain

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs
Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
P. O. Box 450, al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 1753 1284
Email via website:
<http://www.moj.gov.bh/en/>
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 34/15. Further information:
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE11/1066/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hussain Jawad was arrested at around 1.30am on 16 February by masked police officers in plain clothes. They searched his house and then took him to the CID. They did not say why they were arresting him, but Amnesty International fears it may have been because of his human rights work.

Around 10 hours after his arrest, he phoned his wife and said that he was fine. She asked him whether the police had hurt him: he said "yes" and the line was cut off. Many of those taken to the CID in recent weeks and months have said they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated. His lawyer wrote to the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) asking to be told when Hussain Jawad was due for interrogation, so that he could be present with him. Amnesty International wrote to the PPO to ask why Hussain Jawad had been arrested and ensure that he is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, but received no reply.

In its response to a letter from Amnesty International, the Ombudsman of the Ministry of the Interior said that his office had questioned Hussain Jawad following a complaint from his wife but that he told them he was not beaten but only threatened he would be mistreated if he did not cooperate. Hussain Jawad told his wife he did inform the Ombudsman's office he was beaten but did not give the full details of his torture for fear of being sent back to the CID for further torture.

On 23 February, Hussain Jawad told the Public Prosecution that he had been tortured, including by being beaten, deprived of sleep, forced to stand for a prolonged period in a cold room, insulted, humiliated and threatened with rape and sexual assault.

Hussain Jawad, who is the Chairman of the European-Bahraini organization for Human Rights (EBOHR), had been arrested before in 2013 after giving a speech during a protest rally. He was charged with "criticizing government institutions", "insulting the flag and emblem of the country", "attempting to disrupt public security" and "illegal gathering".

Hussain Jawad was also arrested on 24 November 2013 while at the al-Wusta Police Station south of the capital, Manama, where he was filing a complaint against a Bahraini daily newspaper and an organization with close links to the authorities for defamation. They had published the photos and the names of 18 Bahraini human rights defenders and political activists and alleged that they were responsible for "human rights violations" and "terrorist attacks" in the country and called for them to be punished. Their actions came in apparent response to a campaign organized by the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) called "End Impunity in Bahrain", which ran from 1 to 23 November 2013. During the campaign, the BCHR published the names of people it deemed responsible for, or involved in, ongoing human rights violations in the country.

Name: Hussain Jawad
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 34/15 Index: MDE 11/1218/2015 Issue Date: 18 March 2015