

URGENT ACTION

AHMED AL-ARAB NOW NEEDS MEDICAL ATTENTION

Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab now requires urgent medical attention for injuries he says he sustained during torture at the National Security Agency.

Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab saw his family for the first time on 10 February, a month after he was arrested, and again on 18 February. During the visits Ahmed al-Arab told his family that he was still suffering the effects of shoulder injuries, especially on his right side, which he said he had sustained as a result of severe beatings at the National Security Agency headquarters in the capital, Manama, and being hung from his wrists while they were twisted behind his back and handcuffed. He also told his family he had numbness in his hands and a tooth which was broken during the beating was bleeding every day. He said he had not received any medical attention for any of his injuries. He told his family that he had been severely beaten, on his genitals and elsewhere, at the National Security Agency and a detention facility in Riffa. He also said he had had his face covered with a cloth and water poured over it to make him feel as if he was drowning; he was threatened with having his nails pulled out and being raped. He was also made to sign papers while blindfolded but did not know what they were. During their first visit, the family saw that Ahmed al-Arab had scars on his face, black marks around his wrists and a broken tooth.

Ahmed al-Arab told his family that he was sleeping outside in the courtyard of the prison because of overcrowding in the prison cells, and inside in the prison corridors when it rained. He said that he had a constant headache and sore throat from staying out in the cold. He has not been brought to any of his court hearings and has not been able to meet his lawyer despite repeated requests at each court hearing that he be brought to the hearing. During one session, the court also denied his lawyer's requests for information regarding the cases against Ahmed al-Arab on the grounds that the suspect was absent from court.

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

- Urging the authorities to provide Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab with any medical attention he may require, as a matter of urgency;
- Calling on them to ensure Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, immediately investigate allegations that he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated and bring those responsible to justice;
- Calling on them to provide Ahmed Mohammad Saleh al-Arab with access to his lawyer and bring him to his court hearings in line with international fair trial standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 APRIL 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

Is 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 first update of UA 21/14. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/008/2014/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 uprising in Bahrain. He was kept in a police vehicle for several hours and repeatedly beaten. Afterwards, he was taken to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID), where he was beaten until he passed out. He was interrogated about his relationship with the "14 February Movement" and was beaten again when he denied any connection with the movement.

His family had no news of him for two days despite requests to the Public Prosecution Office, the CID and the police. Late on the second day of his arrest, he phoned his family to tell them that he was in the prison hospital. On 17 February 2012, his father received a phone call to come to pick him up.

Following the uprising in Bahrain in February 2011, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), appointed by Royal Order on 29 June 2011, was charged with investigating and reporting on human rights violations committed in connection with the 2011 protests. At the launch of the BICI report in November 2011, the government publicly committed itself to implementing BICI's recommendations. The report recounted the government's response to the mass protests and documented wide-ranging human rights abuses. Among its key recommendations, the report called on the government to bring to justice those responsible for human rights violations, including torture and excessive use of force, and carry out independent investigations into allegations of torture.

The establishment of BICI and its report was considered to be a groundbreaking initiative, but the promise of meaningful reform has been betrayed by the government's unwillingness to implement key recommendations around accountability; this includes its failure to carry out independent, effective and transparent investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and excessive use of force, and to prosecute all those who gave the orders to commit human rights abuses. For further information see the November 2012 report *Reform shelved, repression unleashed*, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/062/2012/en>.

Bahrain's parliament held an extraordinary session on 28 July 2013, after which it submitted 22 recommendations to the King, Shaikh Hamad Bin 'Issa Al Khalifa. The recommendations toughen punishments laid out in the 2006 anti-terrorism law. A few days later the King issued several decrees further curtailing the right to freedom of expression, including banning all protests, sit-ins and public gatherings in Manama indefinitely and giving the security forces additional sweeping powers.

A joint statement signed by 47 countries at the UN Human Rights Council on 9 September expressed serious concern about the ongoing human rights violations in Bahrain.

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

Further information on UA: 21/14 Index: MDE 11/009/2014 Issue Date: 20 February 2014