

URGENT ACTION

STUDENT PROTESTOR'S TRIAL RESUMES

The trial of student Ahmad Mshaima' has resumed in Bahrain although his torture allegation is not known to have been investigated. He told the judge on 10 April that he had been tortured in detention, and told his family his health was deteriorating.

Ahmad Hassan Ali Mshaima', who was arrested on 28 December 2013, has been charged with "illegal gathering with an intent to commit crimes and disturb public security" following protests to mark the second anniversary of the uprising on 14 February 2013. His trial started before the Lower Criminal Court in Manama on 13 March 2014. He denied all charges. His trial resumed on 10 April. Sources close to the defendant told Amnesty International that during the session Ahmad Mshaima' told the judge that he had been tortured while he was detained but the judge did not allow him to give any details, claiming the lawyer could do so in future sessions His lawyer asked that he be released on bail, but the request was rejected. The next session of the trial is scheduled for 16 April.

Ahmad Mshaima' has only been allowed to meet his lawyer during his questioning at the Public Prosecution Office and during his two court hearings. According to information received by Amnesty International, he continues to be denied full access to his lawyer to allow him to prepare adequately his defense. He is being held at the Dry Dock prison.

He had told his family when they visited him that he had been tortured when he was interrogated during the first hours he had been detained. This had included being beaten, kicked in the legs, forced to insult his father (one of the 13 prominent opposition activists and a prisoner of conscience) and his religion, and coerced into signing documents. He has complained to his family in recent prison visits about pain in his knees and problems walking. His family have submitted a formal complaint about his allegations of torture to the Special Investigations Unit, who have not yet responded.

Please write immediately in English or Arabic:

- Urging the authorities to release Ahmad Mshaima' immediately and unconditionally if he is held solely for exercising his rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Urging them to allow Ahmad Mshaima full access to his lawyer, order an immediate and independent investigation into his allegations of torture and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to provide him with any medical attention he may require, including access to specialized hospitals.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 MAY 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 first update of UA 5/14 Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/003/2014/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ahmad Mshaima' is the son of Hassan Mshaima' who is serving a life sentence in Jaw Prison on the outskirts of Manama, as one of 13 jailed opposition activists. Since March 2013, Hassan Mshaima' has been denied adequate medical care and family visits for refusing to wear the prison uniform. For further information please see UA 139/11, Index: MDE 11/025/2013, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/025/2013/en> and its follow-up.

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 its 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 account those responsible for human rights violations, including torture and excessive use of force, and carry out independent investigations into allegations of torture.

Over two years have passed since the BICI report, and the government has yet to fully implement the report's key recommendations. Prisoners of conscience, including some arrested during the protests, remain behind bars and the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly is still being curtailed. More people have been jailed for denouncing the ongoing human rights violations, whether via Twitter or on peaceful marches. Bahraini courts have appeared more concerned with toeing the government line than offering effective remedy to Bahrainis and upholding the rule of law.

The establishment of BICI and its report was considered a groundbreaking initiative, but the promise of meaningful reform has been let down 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 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 2013 expressed serious concern about the ongoing human rights violations in Bahrain.

Name: Ahmad Mshaima'

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 5/14 Index: MDE 11/013/2014 Issue Date: 10 April 2014