

URGENT ACTION

NABEEL RAJAB CHARGED, RISKS THREE YEARS' JAIL

Nabeel Rajab has been charged with “publicly insulting official institutions”. His detention has been extended and he will face trial on 19 October before the Lower Criminal Court. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Nabeel Rajab appeared before the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) on 9 October and was charged with “publicly insulting official institutions” under Article 216 of Bahrain’s Penal Code. The PPO ordered that he remain in custody and set 19 October as the first day of his trial. If convicted he will face up to three years in prison. He is still detained at al-Hooraa police station in the capital, Manama.

The charges were brought against Nabeel Rajab after the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence lodged complaints, over two tweets he had posted, one of them referring to security institutions in Bahrain as “ideological incubators”. The tweets were posted after the armed group calling itself the Islamic State released a video featuring Bahraini men, some of whom had left the Bahrain Ministry of Interior to join the armed group in Iraq and Syria.

Amnesty International has reviewed Nabeel Rajab’s statements on Twitter and considers him a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression.

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

- Calling on the Bahraini authorities to release Nabeel Rajab immediately and unconditionally and for the charges against him to be dropped, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to uphold the right to freedom of expression and repeal laws that criminalize the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly including Article 216 of the Penal Code.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 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
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 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 first update of UA 249/14. Further information:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/033/2014/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nabeel Rajab was summoned to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) Anti-corruption and Economic and Electronic Security Unit on 1 October for questioning about tweets from his Twitter account considered offensive to government institutions and was detained overnight. The following day, he was taken before the Public Prosecution for questioning who ordered him to be detained for a further seven days, pending further investigation.

The charges against Nabeel Rajab under Article 216 of Bahrain's Penal Code criminalizes offending "by any method of expression the National Assembly, or other constitutional institutions, the army, law courts, authorities or government agencies".

Name: Nabeel Rajab

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 249/14 Index: MDE 11/036/2014 Issue Date: 10 October 2014