

BAHRAIN

Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" to promote human and constitutional rights

Third anniversary of Revolution will be decisive

Massive events have marked the three years of the Bahraini Revolution, and the political landscape has dramatically changed in favour of the people who aspire for change. In the past 36 months Bahrain has lived the bleakest period of its history with blood baths by the Alkhalifa hereditary dictatorship, massive demographic engineering by Bahrain's dictator and enormous sacrifices by the people. The decision has been taken by them to ensure that the next few years are not replication of the recent past. To achieve this, the regime must be deprived of the tools he had used to kill and maim with no respect to human life. As preparations for the third anniversary of the Revolution approaches, feelings are running high especially among the youth and plans are being drawn to determine the nature of the forthcoming events. The revolutionary youth have become so disenchanted by the dictatorship that any attempt to mediate or negotiate a middle path will be futile. The past twenty years have proven beyond doubt the impossibility of co-habitation between the two sides after the Alkhalifa clan committed heinous crimes against the people.

The events of the nineties had precipitated the conditions for eventual divorce but the promises by the dictator in 2001 dampened the implementation of divorce and raised the hopes of possible reconciliation. But what happened in the past three years has ended, forever, the relations between the two sides. No promises will be able to achieve a realistic rapprochement after the atrocious assault on the people's faith, humanity, dignity, rights and identity. When a regime demolishes mosques, kills men, women and children at will, uses chemical gases to annihilate the population, imports foreigners and naturalise them to replace the natives, destroys the cultural heritage of the natives including their places of worship, and revokes the nationality of the citizens at will, the foreign intervention and force can do little to bring back trust between the two sides or alter the realities on the ground. The thresholds between possible co-habitation and permanent divorce have been crossed and the people are now adamant that the regime must go. When po-

litical parties attempt to reach a political deal with the ruling clan that enables the regime to survive intact, the reaction has always been of extreme anger. There is now widespread determination to move out of the black phase in Bahrain's history and move forward without being dominated by the rule of the clan.

The 14th February Revolution has produced a new generation of activists who are more principled in their views than the older generation. The popular outpour of anger over the span of the past three years has fundamentally changed the perceptions of the Bahrainis who are now challenging the legitimacy of the Alkhalifa regime and calling for its downfall. When the "wiser" politicians attempt to present a political formula for the solution that does not include a clear disavowing of the regime, those politicians are often ridiculed and condemned. It has now become a taboo to be identified with the regime. The zeal of the youth and their harsh experiences in the streets of Bahrain at the hands of the riot police, security men, Death Squads or even the army has made it impossible to seek a reconciliation with the ruling family of any form. There has been a transformation in the public psyche against half solutions or short-term remedies. Unlike the other protests of the Arab Spring, the Bahraini Revolution has a long legacy of public revolts against the hereditary dictatorship extending back in history to more than nine decades. The future, they say, must not be a replication of the past, and no settlement would be acceptable if it allows the regime to keep the knife with which it had killed Bahrainis. While the revolutionary groups openly call for removal of the regime, the political societies have always avoided such call and called for a gradual change starting with what is available now. Although this represents the view of the few, nevertheless, it signals the beginning of the resolve of Bahrainis. The youthful movement and the elderly patience and cooperation have made Bahrain's Revolution unique among the other popular revolts.

The forthcoming events could well become decisive in the struggle for democracy and human rights. The regime is aware of the mounting international pressures to

implement the many recommendations by international bodies to end its repression and introduce political reforms. But it cannot do that. Any reforms will definitely lead to its eventual downfall. Its system is structured on repression and despotism. Any attempt to give the people their rights will empower them and push them for their share in running the country. This will reduce the ability of the ruling clan to continue its ruthless policies. For the Alkhalifa it is a struggle for survival of their political grip on the Bahrainis. For the people the struggle must continue to achieve their right to determine their destiny, elect their own government and control their natural resources. The Revolution has awakened the hearts and minds of the youth. The subsequent experiences have strengthened their zeal, determination and desire for change. This year's anniversary of the 14th February Revolution will expose to the world the reality of a people struggling to retain their identity, regain freedom and start building their country. Despite the enormous support from the Saudi occupation forces and Western security agencies, the events of the next few weeks will lead to more animosities between the two sides and test the resolve of the outside world in combating state terrorism, dictatorship and violations of human rights.

These are significant days in the political history not only of Bahrain but of the GCC countries. The Saudi aggression against Bahrain including their occupation that started on mid March 2011 has convinced other GCC regimes and people that the main threat to their freedom and liberty comes from Saudi Arabia. There are now clear signs that the fortunes of Al Saud and Alkhalifa clans are diminishing. Bahrain's Revolution appears to have become a quagmire for the Saudi ambitious expansionist plans. Victory of the people looks more certain than ever and the hour of reckoning is fast approaching. The third anniversary of the Bahraini Revolution will add more nails to the coffin of the Saudi occupation and Alkhalifa dictatorship. People's power will, once again, prove to be decisive in the battle for rights between the dispossessed and the dictators.

Preparations underway for 3rd anniversary as regime steps up repression

The meeting between the Alkhalifa crown prince and a delegation from Al Wefaq on Wednesday 15th January was seen by the revolutionary youth as a dirty ploy designed to confuse the situation and give false impression of a blood-thirsty dictatorial regime. While Salman Alkhalifa is himself discredited for his support of the violence perpetrated by his clan against Bahrainis, the two other Alkhalifa members present at the meeting has enraged the people for the atrocities they committed against the country and its native inhabitants. The Bahraini opposition is planning to bring them to international courts for demolishing mosques, torturing people to death, acts of rape of prisoners, extrajudicial killings and gassing demonstrators, elderly people and children to death. The aim of the meeting is seen as nothing more a desperate attempt to stall the preparations by Bahrainis to re-invigorate the Revolution on its third anniversary on 14th February. The dictator's son has repeated his failures time and again with those hollow meetings that have been discredited for being hollow gestures. The people's stand has remained defiant; that the Alkhalifa regime must go.

Among the atrocious acts committed by the regime is the continuous arrest, torture and unfair trials of Bahrainis. According to Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Ahmed Al-Arab's fate is still unknown since his abduction by Death Squads on 9th January. Children Jehad

AlSamea (10 years) and Abdulla AlBaharani (13 years) had their detention renewed until 27 January 2014. The Committee to Defend Athletes has reported a rise in targeting athletes. There are now 73 of them behind bars for protesting peacefully. The Committee to Defend Imprisoned Athletes stated that it had documented dozens of arrests among athletes, the total sentence of 42 athlete is approximately 634 years. Athlete Abdulla Al-Maghni was sentenced to 72 years in more than a case.

The BCHR has also documented three arrests since November in cases of vengeance against the arrested individuals' for the political and human rights activities of their. The security forces arrested Mahmood Aqeel Al-Sari on 6 November 2013, and Ahmed Hasan Mushaima on 28 December, while the airport security forces arrested Sheikh Yasser Al-Saleh on 26 December 2013.

There has been a deep feeling of disappointment at the decision by UK to send Prince Andrew to Bahrain. According to the British Embassy in Manama the trip was to help promote what its website calls "Great British Week". This included a performance by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and is designed to boost trade and "emphasise the friendship and strong bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and Bahrain." The Duke of York wanted to promote 200 years of British/Bahraini relations by forging stronger links with, and defence of the Alkhalifa heredi-

tary repressive dictatorship.

The British policy in Bahrain has been a source of unease among political activists who see UK's expertise in the security field being used to repress Bahraini people. Torture has been rampant and new cases of this horrific treatment like that of Ahmad Mushaima confirms this. The UK's image is being tarnished by this involvement which does not serve British interests.

Amnesty International has issued an Urgent Action on behalf of Bahraini photo-journalist Ahmad Fardan who was released on bail on 9 January, pending investigation on a new charge of "involvement in a Molotov cocktail attack on police in December". He has said that he was tortured.

Meanwhile, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) has commented on the controversy surrounding Formula 1 future. It said: Bernie Ecclestone has stepped down from the F1 board as he faces trial for bribery. Formula One and the FIA will be facing a media backlash because of the case and the last thing they need is Bahrain creeping up on them. This is a massive boost for the campaign. BIRD has already sent a letter to the Chairman of the FIA Jean Todt asking him for an immediate suspension of all FIA activities in Bahrain pending an investigation into a breach of their code of ethics.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
22nd January 2014

Crackdown against Bahrainis intensifies to pre-empt major protests ahead

As the third anniversary of the 14th February Revolution approaches the Alkhalifa and Al Saud forces regime have intensified their crackdown on Bahrainis in a desperate attempt to stall massive demonstrations to mark the occasion. Three young people from Duraz were kidnapped by members of the Death Squads operating under the control of the royal court. Fadhel Muslim, Ali Abdul Ameer and Sadiq Al Asfoor were detained one week ago and nothing has been heard of them since. They were hit by police using live ammunition in revenge for continuing the civil strife that has exposed Alkhalifa as the worst regime in the Middle East in terms of despotism and human rights violations. Also the fate of Formula 1 victim, Nafisa Al Usfoor, is causing concern to her family. She was due to have a family visit earlier this week but the visit was cancelled and the family was told that the young Bahraini had been transferred to hospital. Together with Rayhana Al Mousawi, Nafisa was subjected to horrific torture including sexual assaults after their arrest during F1 race last year.

Arrest of Bahrainis has, meanwhile, continued unabated. Mohammad Ali Khamis from Bilad Al Qadim was arrested on Tuesday 14th January. Two youths from Bani Jamra were also arrested: Ahmad Al

Arab and Mansoor Al Jamri. The policy of revenge from anyone who speaks out about treatment inside the torture dungeons has continued. Abdul Jabbar Ahmad was arrested two weeks ago and subjected to severe torture. While his friends gathered in mosques to pray for him, Others called for investigating the torture he had endured. Al Wasat newspaper also dealt with his case. The Alkhalifa regime's reaction was to order his transfer to another cell and deny him medication for his ailments resulting from torture. Two other Bahrainis have been jailed for five years for taking part in anti-regime protest. Sayed Jaffar Sayed Salman and Abdulla Ahmad were subjected to horrific treatment before their sentence.

On 14th January Amnesty International urged its members to write to Alkhalifa dictators to demand the immediate release of Ahmad Mushaima, the son of the popular leader, Hassan Mushaima. He was arrested two weeks ago in revenge from his father and family, subjected to horrific torture and detained for no criminal reason. The Urgent Action said: "Ahmad Mushaima", who suffers from Blount's disease, a deformity of the lower legs, was taken to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) in the capital, Manama, where he was beaten, kicked in the legs, forced to

insult his father and his religion, and coerced into signing documents. He was accused of participating in demonstrations in Jid Hafis, just outside Manama," Amnesty also called for investigation of torture and bring those responsible to justice. Amnesty International also issued an Urgent Action calling for dropping the charges against Hussain Jawad since they are related solely to the legitimate exercise of his right to freedom of expression; It urged Alkhalifa officials to respect and protect the rights to freedom of expression and assembly and ensure that all human rights organizations and human rights defenders are able to carry out their work without hindrance .

Calls have also been made by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the OMCT for the release of Nabeel Rajab who has been behind bars for more than 18 months for opposing Alkhalifa hereditary dictatorship. Mr. Rajab's ongoing detention is arbitrary as it results from the exercise of his universally recognised human rights and as his right to a fair trial has not been guaranteed. The two organisations called upon the Bahraini authorities to immediately comply with the UN WGAD's decision and release Mr. Rajab immediately and unconditionally.

Bahrain Freedom Movement

SHIPMENT STOPPED

International Campaign Led By NGOs Succeeds in Pressuring Korean Regulator To Cancel Shipment

Advocacy group Bahrain Watch announced last month that the **#StopTheShipment** campaign it launched two months ago to prevent a massive shipment of tear gas to Bahrain, has achieved a major milestone. The Financial Times reported today that South Korea's Defence Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) denied two requests to export tear gas to Bahrain due to the "unstable politics in the country [Bahrain], people's death due to tear gas and complaints from human rights groups".

The campaign initially targeted all of Bahrain's tear gas suppliers, but zeroed in on South Korea after DAPA confirmed in October that it was considering a request to export tear gas to Bahrain from an unnamed Korean company, suspected to be DaeKwang Chemical Corporation. The shipment was believed to comprise in excess of 1.6 million rounds of tear gas based on a leaked tender document from a source close to Bahrain's Ministry of Interior. However, in today's Financial Times article DaeKwang's CEO said that as part of the deal, which was worth USD \$28

million, the Bahraini government was planning to buy 3 million tear gas canisters – around 4 canisters for each Bahraini citizen. DAPA's decision to cease exports means that this tear gas will not reach Bahrain.

South Korea joins other countries including the United States and United Kingdom, who have already stopped tear gas exports to Bahrain due to human rights concerns. Since 2011, at least 39 deaths in Bahrain have been linked to misuse of tear gas, according to data compiled by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR). The deaths include 14 year old Ali Jawad al-Shaikh who was shot in the back of his neck with a tear gas canister, and 15 year old Sayed Hashim Saeed, also shot in his neck with a tear gas canister at close range. No police officer or other government official in Bahrain has been held accountable for these or any other abuses due to the systematic misuse of tear gas, despite serious concerns raised by the United Nations Human Rights Council and the well-documented accounts that described the Bahraini government's use of tear gas as "unnecessary, indiscriminate and lethal".

Martyr Fadel executed

A young Bahraini youth has been martyred by live police bullets. Fadel Abbas Muslim, 19, had been shot on 8th January at Al Markh Town with two other youths. One of them, Sadiq Al Usfoor is still in serious condition. For two weeks the Alkhalifa clan refused to release any information about the victim who is believed to have died of his wounds on the day of the shooting. The images taken of his body in the mortuary after it was delivered on Sunday 26th January, clearly show the bullet



wounds to his head, shoulder and foot. The fatal bullet was fired from the back which indicates that it was an execution by the Death Squads which are controlled by the royal court.

Saudi terrorist role exposed, South Korea cancels controversial deal

The arrest and subsequent execution of a prominent Saudi terrorist in Lebanon has awoken the world to the murderous policies of the Saudi regime. Majed Al Majed, the head of Abdulla Azzam battalions, which is affiliated to Al Qa'ida, was arrested by Lebanese authorities on 26th December. It is widely believed that he worked for the Saudi intelligence networks. His group had claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Iranian Embassy in Beirut last month that claimed the lives of at least 23 people. But before the Americans or the Iranians could question him, he was swiftly liquidated after Saudi Arabia paid \$US billions to the Lebanese government. This is one of the most outrageous episodes of espionage, terrorism and corruption attributed to the Saudi regime. Al Majed would have become the "smoking gun" that would have implicated the Saudis in the terrorist campaign which is being waged in the name of Al Qa'ida. It is clear that the world is now paying the price of its silence on the Saudi invasion and occupation of Bahrain in mid-March 2011.

In a major setback to the Alkhalifa dictators, South Korea decided to stop the shipment of tear gas canisters to Bahrain[1]. South Korea's Defence Acquisition Program Administration, which oversees the country's military trade, told two companies that sought approval to export to Bahrain in October and November to suspend shipments. Lee Jung

-geun, a spokesman for the defence agency, said the decision had been made because of the "unstable politics in the country [Bahrain], people's death due to tear gas and complaints from human rights groups". Bahrain's interior ministry in June solicited bids for 1.6m tear gas projectiles, 90,000 tear gas grenades and 145,000 stun grenades, according to a tender document leaked to Bahrain Watch, an advocacy group. The order would have been of a similar magnitude to the 2m tear gas projectiles that activists estimate were fired by the security forces since pro-democracy protests swept the strategic island in February 2011. "This is also a clear message to any other countries considering supplying tear gas to Bahrain that profiting from repression is unacceptable," Bahrain Watch[2] said in a statement.

Despite the international rebuke of the Alkhalifa regime, it continued human rights abuses at an alarming rate. In the first week of the New Year 40[3] Bahrainis were arbitrarily detained without arrest warrants, according to the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights. On Monday 6th January Mohammad Jawad Me'raj[4] and his brother, Ali[5], were arrested during a raid on their home. The same day Abbas Ali[6], from Maqaba Town, was arrested and taken to the torture dungeons. He had just been released last month. The regime decided to detain the well-known athlete, Ahmad Hamza[7], for sixty days, at the Dry Dock torture centre, pending investigation. He is a member of Bahrain's National Volleyball team. On

2nd of January, Mohammad Kadhem Al Halwachi[8], was detained as he landed at the airport, and taken to an unknown location. Sayed Ali Sayed Hadi[9] was also detained at the airport.

Among the detainees in recent days are: Abdul Nabi Hassan Mahdi[10] who was detained at a checkpoint near his town, Sadad. From Hamad town Hussain Al Mesbah[11] and his brother, Amin were arrested yesterday. From Jannusan, Fadel Ali Abdul Aziz[12] was taken by members of Death Squads to the torture chambers. From Duraz Town, 12 [13] youths were arrested on Monday including: Aamer Baddao, Ahmed Mohammad Habib, Jalal Al Anfooz, Ali Al Matrook, Mohsin Al Marzooq and Hassan Alao. Images of their homes show extensive damage inflicted by Alkhalifa agents during the raids. They did not only arrest the youths but wreaked havoc on their homes. Under international pressure[14] The Juvenile Prosecution ordered on 26 December that 13-year-old cousins Sayed Tameem Majed Ahmad Majed and Sayed Hashim Alwai Ahmad Majed should be released on bail. Both are still facing charges of "illegal gathering" and "throwing Molotov cocktails at a police patrol". But he replaced them with two other children; Jihad, 10 and Abdulla, 13 who had to remain at the torture centre until 6th January.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
8th January 2014

URGENT ACTION

Doubts about torture investigation

Bahraini photojournalist Ahmad Fardan was released on bail on 9 January pending investigation on a new charge of "involvement in a Molotov cocktail attack on police in December". He has said that he was tortured.

Ahmad Fardan was released on bail from Dry Dock prison in the capital, Manama, at about 9pm on 9 January. Earlier that day he had been taken to the offices of the prison authorities to meet a member of the Special Investigative Unit (SIU), a unit within the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO) set up to investigate allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, killings and other violations by the security forces, who asked about his alleged torture and other ill-treatment since his arrest and told him that he was visiting because of this UA being issued on 7 January. Ahmad Fardan gave details of his torture to the investigator.

Ahmad Fardan gave an interview to the Bahraini newspaper *al-Wasat* on 11 January about the alleged torture and other ill-treatment he said he had been subjected to while he was being transferred to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) in Manama in the vehicle of the security forces and on arrival at the CID.

On 26 December, the day of his arrest, he was taken before the

Public Prosecution and interrogated on the charge of "participating in a public gathering" in connection with a 16 December demonstration in Abu Saiba' village, west of Manama, which he had intended to cover as a photographer. During interrogation, he was kept blindfolded, with his hands cuffed behind his back. The Ministry of the Interior published a statement in English on 14 January denying that Ahmad Fardan had been tortured or sustained broken ribs, adding that he had been arrested in connection with his "involvement in a Molotov cocktail attack on police earlier in the month". This is the first time Ahmad Fardan was told of this charge.

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

* Calling on the authorities to drop the charges against Ahmad Fardan since they are related solely to his peaceful work as a photojournalist;

- Urging them to order a thorough, independent and impartial investigation into allegations that Ahmad Fardan was tortured or otherwise ill-treated when in the custody of the security forces;
- Urging them to uphold the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, in line with Bahrain's international human rights obligations.



Ruling with force outside the rule of law

This picture show summarises the sad truth in Bahrain today. On the right are the killers, torturers and human rights abusers. On the left are the heads of the religious meeting halls. Those on the right who represent the occupiers summoned the Bahrainis, threatened and abused them for allowing the revolutionaries to express their opinion on the Arab'een (Fortieth Day after Imam Hussain's martyrdom). In those protests pictures of Bahrain's dictator (the self-styled king) were thrown on the ground while protesters and passers by stepped on them. The dictator was so furious that he himself

summoned them and exploded in outrage and swearing. The regime ordered its slaves to do the same with the picture of a senior religious leader. The divorce between Bahrainis and Alkhalifa will not an honourable one.



Bernie Ecclestone Steps Down as F1 Director

Bernie Ecclestone has stepped down from the F1 board as he faces trial for bribery. Formula One and the FIA will be facing a media backlash because of the case and the last thing they need is Bahrain creeping up on them. This is a massive boost for the campaign. BIRD has already sent a letter to the Chairman of the FIA Jean Todt asking him for an immediate suspension of all FIA activities in Bahrain pending an investigation into a breach of their code of ethics. We are currently waiting for his response and will keep you updated on any developments. The campaign this year can be very successful with everyone's input.

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Prince Andrew's visit to Bahrain

When Prince Andrew decided to visit Bahrain, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) issued the following statement:

The visit of Prince Andrew came at a time when human rights abuses in the country are on the increase. We believe that the visit has been strategically set to coincide with the upcoming Formula One race to depict a 'business as usual' environment in the country. Prince Andrew, who is also patron of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, will join a cultural event organised by the British Council in Bahrain where the Orchestra is set to perform.

Nicolas McGeehan (HRW) on the visit:

"Prince Andrew will arrive in a country whose rulers appear to believe that it is possible to arrest and torture their way to stability and security. And the Foreign Office appears to believe much the same – at least when it comes to Bahrain, whose people suffer the daily consequences of increasingly repressive laws aimed at quashing their calls for political reform and accountability for serious human rights violations."

We hope that members of the working group can put pressure on the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on performing in Bahrain whilst human rights abuses continue. BIRD will be sending a letter to the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestra in regards to the performance. It is unlikely that this will result in anything significant such as a stop to the performance, however, it can be used to shed more light on the human rights abuses in the country.

