

BAHRAIN

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

Change in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia will eradicate terrorism

The situation in Bahrain is worsening as the Western powers and regional players lend unequivocal support to the Alkhalifa regime. The past month has seen an escalation in the activities of the courts, sentencing tens of citizens to lengthy jail terms and revoking citizenship of many native Bahrainis. So far 210 native Bahrainis have had their nationality revoked. It is an indication to the inferiority complex suffered by the dictator and his clique for being foreign occupiers. The aim is to eradicate the natives and replace them with foreigners so that the feeling of belonging to the land, its history, culture and people gradually disappears or fades away. In addition reports of serious human rights abuses have been rampant. Last month several families reported horror stories from their children who told them tales of maltreatment. Many have said they were blindfolded, placed in dark rooms and set upon by the torturers without mercy. Scars were visible on their bodies while their spirits were said to be sky-high. There is now more determination than ever that the Alkhalifa tribal rule be removed and that no political settlement that would legitimise their rule would be acceptable to the people.

Among the most significant hindrances are the Western policy towards those dictatorial regimes. Of particular concern is the continued support by US and UK to an antiquated illegitimate regime that has failed to uphold the rule of law, respect human rights or undertake political reforms. The hundreds of recommendations presented by the regime-funded BICI four years ago, the Human Rights Council, the European Parliament and human rights bodies have largely been ignored. Its backers in London and Washington have abetted in covering its daily crimes by creating bodies that carry the name of human rights, ombudsmen offices and other modern terminologies, while in practice their function is to camouflage the regime's continued atrocities against native Bahrainis. None of the families who ventured to contact those GONGOS received any serious address or help from them. The torture practices have now been developed. Special houses and farms have been allocated for torture. Native Bahraini detainees would be taken away

from their homes to those houses for periods of between one and three weeks before they are transferred to the prosecution offices or official prisons. In those crucial days they would be subjected to more extensive torture that had been practiced before until they sign the confessions prepared by the security services. Upon those confessions extracted under torture, Alkhalifa "courts" would pass sentences ordered by the royal court.

The most recent human rights report issued last month by Human Rights Watch describes in some detail how the regime's abuses have intensified. It relies on testimonies who have recently been subjected to horrific treatment. It is a damning report that both London and Washington have been at pains to ignore citing "more pressing issues" like the ISIS crisis and the bombings in Paris. Both capitals are well aware of several facts; First that both the Alkhalifa and Saudis are immersed to their necks in human rights abuses. They torture, maim, kill and issue sentences of execution and long term imprisonment against anyone criticising their antiquated repressive regimes. Second is the fact that internal tension in those countries has given impetus to radicalisation especially in the Arabian Peninsula. This tendency has led to the current terrorist phenomenon that has claimed thousands of lives of innocent people both in Arab capitals and in Paris. Third; The support by those regimes to ISIS and other terrorist groups is not secret. There are videos containing all forms of material, ideological and political support that has enabled those groups to engage in most horrific practices. Fourth, the West is well aware of the need for immediate halt to those atrocious terrorist acts and that necessitates stronger political decision to challenge supporters of terrorism like Saudis, Alkhalifa, Qatar and Turkey. Without serious intervention to address those facts terrorism will continue to spread.

Bahrainis have been the most civilised and patient people in the Arab World. They have endured five years of hell since they declared their revolution against the hereditary dictatorship. They paid high price for their peaceful protests that have continued unabated until now. They also suffered the onslaught by the Alkhalifa and

their Western backers who have lost the most basic of moral stands. When senior figures of those countries mislead the public with their claims that the Alkhalifa regime was "on the right track" and when they hail "the courageous reforms" by those regimes, they are punching the truth, humanity and decency in the heart. Some of them have sunk so low that they do not deserve respect from decent people. The Human Rights report is a serious slap in the face of "the leaders of the Free World". It presents facts, figures and undisputable arguments that dismantles any claim by those opportunistic politicians. More needs to be done by the politicians of those countries, especially parliamentarians to challenge the claims by the politicians head on. They are armed by facts, testimonies, statistics and documented evidence. The people of Bahrain have said their final word and will not be deterred from pursuing their noble goal: The hereditary dictatorship must go. This is necessary for the good of people, the world and humanity.

Today's world is run by powers and political authorities that have abandoned their commitment to creating a safer world run by democratic regimes that respect and protect human rights. The suffering of the people worldwide is symptomatic of this lack of attachment to reasonable degrees of morality, good governance and pluralism. Using firepower, be it against terrorists or peaceful protesters will not lead to a safer world. In this political and moral quagmire voices must be raised to awaken those living in their ivory palaces and force them to shoulder the responsibility of change to the better. While confronting terrorism, politically and militarily, there is a need to enforce changes in the countries that have created the environment for extremism, terrorism and exclusionism. Starting with promoting and supporting change in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain will contribute immensely to the throttling of their destructive ideologies which are based on tribal traditions and are alien to modern world. People's lives are precious, Muslims and non-Muslim alike. Enemies of life must not be allowed to wreak havoc in the world. Their supporters in Riyadh, Manama, Doha and Ankara must not be allowed to do so.

Saudis to execute 55 citizens, Alkhalifa revoke citizenship of more natives

Saudi media have reported that more than 50 citizens would be executed soon, having been condemned on various charges. They possibly include Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr, his nephew, Ali AlNimr and five other Shia Muslims who had protested peacefully against AlSaud tribal rule. There is now urgent need for pressure on the Saudis to spare the lives of those condemned to death for calling on the regime to reform. Washington and London are urged to make a noble stand to stop these executions and force Saudis to behave decently with citizens or pack and go. Meanwhile a Saudi court has sentenced a citizen to jail term and lashing on a strange charge. Mukhlif Al Shummari, 60, has been sentenced to two years jail and 200 lashes for "socialising with the Shia and sympathising with them in their tragedies". He is known for communicating and co-habiting with the Shia Muslims of the Eastern Province. He has shrugged off the sentence and vowed to continue his relations with all sectors of the Saudi society. The New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) has issued an extensive report on Bahrain titled "The Blood of People Who Don't Cooperate" detailing the systematic torture inflicted on native Bahrainis by the ruling Alkhalifa tribe. It said that security forces are torturing detainees during interrogation as regulatory bodies set up after the 2011 uprising "lack independence" and officials are not held accountable. In its 84-page report, HRW said it interviewed 10 detainees "who said they endured coercive interrogations" by authorities. It cited four other inmates of Jaw prison "who said authorities had tortured them in March 2015", four years since reforms that were announced after the initial revolt was crushed. Reported

physical assaults include "being subjected to electric shocks; suspension in painful positions, including by their wrists while handcuffed; forced standing; extreme cold; and sexual abuse," HRW said. In the wake of the Human Rights Report Lord Avebury, the Vice-Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group tabled a question "To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the recommendations by Human Rights Watch in its report on the treatment of detainees in Bahrain, The Blood of People Who Don't Cooperate, that the UK should suspend funding, support and training for security service reform until Bahrain enacts listed reforms and issues a standing invitation to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture." On 23rd November Alkhalifa court issued sentences totalling 429 years against 36 native Bahrainis and revoked the citizenship of 13 of them. Three were sentenced to 15 years jail, ten others to 10 years each. In another case, sixteen native citizens were given 15 years and three sentenced to ten years. Thirteen of these had their nationality revoked also. In a third case the same court sentenced one person to five years and three others were given three years each. On 19th November Alkhalifa court sentenced six Bahrainis from Jihafs Town to 15 years jail sentence for taking part in anti-regime protests. On 23rd November Photojournalist Sayed Ahmed Al-Mousawi and his brother, Sayed Mohammed have been sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for doing their job. Reporters Without Borders issued a statement condemning the sentence: "The threats and intimidation campaigns against professional journalists and citizen journalists have just one aim – to use 'terrorism' as a pretext for suppressing all criticism of an au-

thoritarian regime," said Alexandra El Khazen, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Middle East desk. It added: "It is outrageous that a journalist has been treated like a terrorist. Arbitrary arrests of peaceful dissidents, systematic torture and impunity have turned Bahrain into a dangerous country for those who speak out. We condemn Mousawi's arbitrary detention and call on the authorities to overturn his conviction."

Arbitrary detention has continued. On 22nd November Hussain Abdulla AlShehabi and Mohammad Al Fatlawi, from Duraz, were arrested and taken to be tortured at secret houses. On 21st November Sheikh Fadhel Ibrahim was detained. On 23rd November, a blind native Bahraini was arrested at Bahrain airport on his way to attend religious rituals in Iraq. Ali Sa'ad, 30, has been repeatedly detained despite his blindness caused by suspicious explosion in a car he was sharing with a friend.

On Friday 20th November human rights activists launched a campaign in defence of the children who are languishing at Alkhalifa jails. AlWahdwi Human Rights Monitor said that more than 340 children (under 18) are behind bars. Around 100 of them are under 15. Many of them are denied basic medical treatment. It urged UNICEF to intervene to get these children released to stop their torture and let them attend school.

On 19 November 2015, 80 Members of the European Parliament addressed an open letter to Bahrain's King, His Majesty Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa, on the ongoing travel ban against Bahraini Human Rights Defender Nabeel Rajab, and asked for the charges against him to be dropped.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
25th November 2015

AI asks UK to stop arming Saudis as Alkhalifa sentence natives to death

Amnesty International has warned that recent comments from UK's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond about investigating whether weapons supplied by the UK to Saudi Arabia have been used to commit war crimes and other breaches of international humanitarian law in the conflict in Yemen are "grossly misleading". Speaking on the BBC Newsnight programme on 10th November, Mr Hammond said that there need to be "proper investigations" into whether weapons supplied to Saudi Arabia have been misused in Yemen, adding that "we need to work with the Saudis to establish that international humanitarian law has been complied with." Amnesty International UK Director Kate Allen said: "Philip Hammond's remarks about 'investigations' over Saudi war crimes in Yemen are grossly inadequate. "We need an independent investigation into whether UK arms supplied to Saudi Arabia have been used to commit appalling attacks on civilians in Yemen. Amnesty is specifically calling on the UK to: **Suspend** all transfers to members of the Saudi Arabia-led

coalition which are carrying out attacks in Yemen, of general purpose bombs, including but not only those bombs which Amnesty has found evidence of use in a manner which violates or facilitates the violation of international humanitarian law in the conflict: in particular bombs from the MK (Mark) 80 series, specifically MK 82, MK 83, MK 84 and **Suspend** the transfer to members of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition which are carrying out airstrikes in Yemen of fighter jets, combat helicopters and associated parts and components.

The confirmation this week by Bahrain's tribal rule of the death sentences on two innocent native Bahrainis has shocked the human rights world and presented new urge to remove Alkhalifa killers from power. Mohammad Ramadhan and Hussain Ali Moosa had appealed against their earlier death sentence and produced damning evidence of torture, but the Alkhalifa kangaroo court of Cassation ignored the torture claim and confirmed the death sentence. At least seven native Bahrainis are on death row awaiting final approval by the dictator,

Hamad. On Sunday 15th November Mohammad bin Ali Alkhalifa, a senior figure of the ruling tribe, imposed life sentence on 12 native Bahrainis and ordered the revocation of their nationality. This brings the total of native Bahrainis whose nationality had been revoked by the Alkhalifa occupiers to around 200.

Meanwhile detention of Bahrainis has continued. This morning Hajj Zakariya Sabah, from Qurayyah Town, was arrested at the Bahrain-Saudi causeway. Also Sayed Abdullah Shamsan, from Karranah Town was detained with help from foreign mercenaries. Yesterday Ahmad AlAsfoor, a young activist from Sitra was arrested in a raid on Sheikh Mo'mon's Mosque. On 11th November Sadiq Hamza was detained at Abu Khamis Mosque in Barhama Town and taken to Al-Ma'aridh torture centre. Majid Al Qattan, from Nabih Saleh was arrested at the Bahrain-Saudi causeway. Two young sons from the family of Haji Mahdi Haidar, of AlQurayya, were arrested on 11th November to bring the total number

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Saudi-backed Alkhalifa regime pursues “quiet” genocide against

On 5th November five native Bahraini youth were given life sentences for taking part in anti-regime protests. The Alkhalifa dictators also revoked their Bahraini nationality. The victims are: Ahmad Sayed Hussain Sharaf, Ali Abdul Hussain Ali Ahmad, FAdhel Abbas Ali, Sadeq Khalifa Al Hayki and Jassim Ahmad Abdulla. They were falsely accused of links to Iran, as human rights activists confirmed that severe torture forced them to sign false confessions. Three years ago, the regime started to use nationality revocation to punish its opponents. Thirty one native Bahrainis were punished in this way. Last year 72 more had their nationality revoked. On 9th November two more native Bahrainis were sentenced to ten years imprisonment and revocation of nationality. Jaffar Jassim Majed Habeeb, 21 and Ibrahim Mohammad AlFarhood, 32, were punished for their anti-regime protests. They were falsely accused of receiving military training in Iraq which is a total lie.

Eight Bahraini human rights organisations have condemned the revocation of nationality decisions carried out by the Bahraini authorities. These NGOs are: Bahrain Human Rights Observatory, SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights, Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights, The European-Bahraini Organisation for Human Rights, Bahrain Human Rights Society, and Justice Human Rights Organization

Meanwhile the detention of Ibrahim Karimi has been extended for one more month for tweets he had made against the Saudi mismanagement of pilgrimage. At least 2000 worshippers were killed in Mecca two months ago. Sheikh Hassan Essa, a leading figure from AlWefaq Society, had his detention extended for 30 more days for the fifth time. Yesterday young native Bahraini, Sadeq Jaffar AlKarrani was detained by the regime's torturers. He had been on the run for some time fearing for his personal safety. His father is was murdered by the Alkhalifa regime on the day they attacked the Pearl Jaafari Institute where he was teaching. In the early hours of Thursday 5th November Jaffar Radhi Nasser was arrested in a raid on his home at the town of Nuwaidrat. From Hamala Town Ahmad Essa Ahmad Yahya, 23, was also detained in a house raid. On 5th November regime's forces stormed a school bus near Abu Saiba town and detained at least ten students returning from school. They were taken to Maqaba police station where they were interrogated and threatened with torture. They were subsequently released.

Human rights activists are hailing news that Swiss authorities have opened a case

against Bahrain's Attorney General Ali Bin Fadhul Al-Buainain, after torture allegations were filed against him. The complaint was filed in September by a Bahrain-born British national supported by Swiss NGO TRIAL and other groups. It came on the eve of a visit to Switzerland by Al-Buainain, "This is a very significant case," says TRIAL legal adviser Benedict De Moerloose. "Bahrain's practice of torturing human rights activists and political opponents placed under investigation from the Attorney General's office has been systematic. However, high ranking individuals have not been prosecuted yet. The opening of an investigation against Bahrain's Attorney General is a first step in the fight against impunity for Bahrain." On 15th September TRIAL, in collaboration with the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), British NGO Redress and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), had filed a complaint with Swiss prosecutors against Al-Buainain on behalf of alleged torture victim Jaafar Al-Hasabi. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has confirmed that Sheikh Ali Salman, the Secretary General of AlWefaq

Society had been arbitrarily detained and that he must be released. All the political leaders who have been in jail for the past five years were also detained arbitrarily. The State Department's spokesperson, John Kirby, said in a daily press briefing on 7th November that charges against Sheikh Ali Salman that were brought on the basis of freedom of peaceful expression should be dropped. Sheikh Salman, Secretary General of Al Wefaq National Islamic Society, was sentenced to four years in prison last June for expressing his political opinion. "We also strongly urge the Government of Bahrain to abide by its commitment to the protection of freedom of expression", he stated. Kirby also expressed deep concern by the conviction and sentencing of Sheikh Ali Salman. "As we have consistently said, opposition parties that peacefully voice criticism of the government play a vital role in inclusive, pluralistic states and societies. We believe that no one anywhere should be prosecuted or imprisoned for engaging in peaceful expression or assembly", he added.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
11th November 2015)

HRW: Torture still happening in Bahrain jails

Detainees were subjected to electric shocks; suspension in painful positions; extreme cold; and sexual abuse

Scores of Bahraini government opponents have been detained, with many facing trial

Bahraini security forces are torturing detainees during interrogation as regulatory bodies set up after the 2011 uprising "lack independence" and officials are not held accountable, Human Rights Watch said on Monday 23rd November in its 84 page report.

Bahrain, a key ally of the West, has been rocked by an uprising since February 2011 with demands ranging from a constitutional monarchy to overthrowing the ruling Al-Khalifa dynasty altogether.

Scores of opponents have been detained, with many facing trial, while others convicted of involvement in violence have been handed heavy sentences, including revoking citizenship and life in prison.

In its 84-page report, HRW said it interviewed 10 detainees "who said they endured coercive interrogations" by authorities.

The New York-based group cited four other inmates of Jaw prison "who said authorities had tortured them in March 2015", four years since reforms that were announced after the initial revolt was crushed.

Reported physical assaults include "being subjected to electric shocks;

suspension in painful positions, including by their wrists while handcuffed; forced standing; extreme cold; and sexual abuse," HRW said.

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), set up by King Hamad to probe allegations of government wrongdoing, wrote in a November 2011 report that police had used "excessive force" and tortured detainees in that year's crackdown on opponents. More than four years later, the situation remains unchanged despite the government establishing three bodies to end torture in interrogation and detention facilities, according to HRW.

"Bahrain can't claim any progress on torture while its anti-torture institutions lack independence and transparency and until it takes some serious steps to address the complete lack of accountability for the abuse of detainees," said HRW's deputy MENA director Joe Stork.

Bahrain is home to the US Fifth Fleet and work began in the kingdom on 31 October to construct Britain's first permanent military base in the Middle East since 1971.

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EP urges Bahrain's King to lift Nabeel Rajab's travel ban, drop charges

20/11/2015

On 19 November 2015, Member of the European Parliament Mr. Pier Antonio Panzeri, together with 80 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), issued a letter to Bahrain's King Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, calling on the Bahraini government to immediately lift the travel ban and drop all charges against human rights defender Nabeel Rajab. The undersigned 20 international NGOs welcome the letter and echo the call to lift Mr. Rajab's travel ban and end the judicial harassment against him.

Mr. Rajab, a prominent human rights defender, is currently subject to a travel ban and faces up to 10 years in prison for exercising his right to freedom of expression in Bahrain. Mr. Rajab is President of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), Founding Director of the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR), Deputy Secretary General of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and a member of the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch's Middle East Division.

Mr. Rajab previously served a two-year sentence in 2012 for three cases related to his participation in peaceful gatherings in favour of fundamental freedoms and democracy. On 1 October 2014, he was arrested and detained for one month over a tweet he wrote while in Europe, and was sentenced to six months in prison on 20 January 2015 for "publicly insulting official institutions." He was released early after a pardon was issued by the King on 13 July 2015, following heavy criticism by the international community, and an Urgency Resolution issued by the European Parliament on his case on 9 July 2015. On the day of his release, the Public Prosecution imposed a new travel ban on Mr. Rajab in relation to another criminal case, for which he had been previously arrested on 2 April 2015. He was charged with "insulting a statutory body" and "disseminating false rumours in time of war," for which he could face up to 10 years in prison, following a series of tweets and opinion pieces he wrote in March 2015 regarding the treatment to which Jaw prisoners were subjected and Bahrain's involvement in the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

In their letter, the MEPs highlight that the Bahraini government's treatment of Mr. Rajab was in breach of international human rights law, as his detention violated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Further, the MEPs recall the European Parliament's Urgency Resolution of 9 July 2015 which calls for all charges against Mr. Rajab to be dropped, referring to his release as "only a 'half measure'" as he "remains subject to a travel ban" which

"greatly limits his freedoms and is a clear obstacle" to his human rights activities.

Furthermore the MEPs call for the implementation of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI)'s 2011 report, the UN Human Rights Council's 2012 Universal Periodic Review on Bahrain, and the European Union's repeated calls about the human rights situation in Bahrain, via the March 2012, January 2013, September 2013 and February 2014 Urgency Resolutions on the Human Rights situation on Bahrain. The signatory members of the European Parliament particularly condemn the "criminalisation of dissent and free speech" in Bahrain, and the ill-treatment and im-

prisonment of hundreds of human rights defenders, civil and political activists, including minors.

The signatory NGOs support the MEPs' call to the government of Bahrain to respect its human rights obligations. Accordingly, we call on the Bahraini government to drop all charges against Nabeel Rajab and lift his travel ban, and fully implement the BICI recommendations and abide by its obligations under international human rights law. The European Union should concretely take action to prevent human rights abuses and stop the prosecution of peaceful human rights defenders by the Bahraini authorities.

Torture still happening in Bahrain jails, *Continued from P3*

"The claims of Bahrain and its allies that authorities have ended torture in detention are simply not credible."

"All the available evidence supports the conclusion that these new institutions have not effectively tackled what the BICI report described as a 'culture of impunity' among security forces," said Stork.

These institutions, controlled by the interior ministry and public prosecutor, provide "little" information on "complaints, investigations, and prosecutions", the watchdog said.

The tiny but strategic kingdom's authorities should ensure that these bodies are neutral and form a civilian com-



mittee of independent experts to guarantee this, said HRW.

It urged Bahrain to "issue an immediate and open invitation to the UN special rapporteur on torture to conduct a country visit and allow unfettered access to detainees and all places of detention".

- See more at: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/torture-still-happening-bahrain-jails-hrw>

AI asks UK to stop arming Saudis, *Continued from Page 2*

of family members detained to 14; three sons and 11 grandsons. None of his children or grandchildren has remained outside prison. The trial of Zainab AlKhawaja for attempting to visit her imprisoned father was yesterday adjourned to 2nd February 2016. She refused to attend the show trial after the judiciary had become mouthpiece to announce the political decisions of the dictator. Three youths from Samaheej town have been given hefty prison sentences. Hussain AbdAli was sentenced to three years; Hassan Awn and Mohammad AlHaddad to five years. Ali Hani AlEskafi, from AlNa'aim District has been sentenced to three years and \$2000.

Three photo journalists have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms for doing their job. Mustafa Rabi'e and Ahmad Zain AlDin were given ten years and Hussam Suroor three years. The three have confirmed on record at the trial that they had been tortured. A young native Bahraini woman has been given jail term because she did not bow to a

foreign policeman's instructions while visiting her nephew. Sawsan Ma'yoouf has been sentenced to six months in prison. Her baby will accompany her in the torture cells. The nephew, Hassan Essa Ma'yoof, has been given additional 20 years jail to his 42 years jail sentence. This will make his sentence of 62 years one of the longest in the world for a political activist.

Carshalton and Wallington's MP, Tom Brake has called for Britain to act in Bahrain, as Amnesty International slams the British government for 'overlooking human rights for commercial benefit'. The EDM proposed by Mr Brake calls for the government to pressure Bahrain to release its prisoners of conscience, including opposing political leaders. While the proposed bill has just 17 signatures so far, Mr Brake argues the government has a moral obligation to act in Bahrain.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
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