

BAHRAIN

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

Hopeful Bahrainis aspire for change this year

As the year draws to a close, the people of Bahrain remain steadfast and adamant on achieving their goals. Despite five years of repression their Revolution has continued and is unlikely to subside before the people's demands are realised. However, the general outlook for the Arab and Muslim worlds is grim. The quagmire created by the tyrannical rulers will have long-lasting consequences. The Alliance Against Democracy has succeeded in causing fundamental change in the political and ideological landscape in the region. This is totally against the prevailing mood in following the self-immolation of the Tunisian young man, Mohammad Bu Azizi, on 16th December 2010. That single incident turned out to be the spark that ignited the Arab revolts in his country, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. It was probably the most significant development in the region, and had the potential of re-shaping the Middle East. This would have had enormous consequences to the dictatorial rule as well as their Western backers. The reactionary regimes led by Saudi Arabia were shaken to the core. The prospect of popular revolutions created fear and apprehension in the region and beyond. The counter-revolution forces, spearheaded by the Saudis took the decision to fight it to the end, using the most lethal dirty weapons in their disposal. The Bahraini Revolution was used as a guinea pig to test the various means of Saudi intervention. In mid-March 2011 the Saudis sent their armed forces to occupy Bahrain, crush the people's revolt and provide military support to the Alkhalifa dictatorship. As the public reaction from the Arab world was muted, the Saudis were able to build on their Bahraini adventure and push through their counter-revolution agenda.

The Arab world is now paying heavy price for its silence on that Saudi crime. Riyadh used that to prepare interventions in other countries. They supported armed groups in Iraq, then Syria. They intervened in Libya against the elected government and pushed their groups to wreak havoc in that country. Libya gradually became a failed state and is now a hotbed for ISIS and other armed terrorist groups. Then they helped to hatch the military coup in Egypt that brought down the

elected president, Mohammad Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Saudis, backed by the Israelis and the British went further. They attacked Yemen with extreme viciousness. Human Rights bodies have accused the Saudis of war crimes in their nine months of aggression. The insist on depriving the people of that country of their right to choose their representative government. At the same time they have continued their sectarian agenda to the limit. The whole Middle East is now embroiled in intractable sectarian strife with no end in sight as Saudi scholars continue to pour oil on the burning fire.

However there may have been a respite in pushing through the sectarian offensive. ISIS has expanded the territory under its control. They are being hit hard in Syria and Iraq and may have started changing tactics and moving their presence further from Iraq. The Saudis who have groomed them continue to provide political support to those groups, to the annoyance of the Western powers. The Saudis are aware of the limit of their power, but like to pursue their policies lest they are accused of inability to see through their political and military policies. Whether they will be able to adopt a modified ideology or remain insistent on those divisive policies remains to be seen. What is clear is that the counter revolution forces have failed to provide an alternative to a working democracy or improve on human rights. The two are linked and there is no prospects that human rights may be observed by dictatorships. The West must come clean on this issue and declare the impossibility of reforming these dictatorships. Tyrants will never respect human rights but, in the best case scenario, they will resort to deception to show that they are. Bahrain is a country ruled by hereditary dictatorship and its human rights situation has always been bleak. The past year has witnessed sharp escalation in human rights abuses. Apart from the UK government the world's human rights bodies have documented enormous amounts of abuses. These abuses are camouflaged with claims of reforms and publicity stunts. Public Relations companies have helped the regime to camouflage its abuses as the UK officials escalated their support of Alkhalifa.

The war that had been waged by the Saudis, the Alkhalifa and their backers on Arab people clamouring for better democratic situation has continued. They have managed to neutralise the Human Rights Council in its quest to investigate human rights situation in Saudi Arabia and its involvement in the war on Yemen. The West may have colluded with the Alkhalifa killers but it is now time that transparency is sought in pursuing the truth of the Saudi, Alkhalifa and British rule of the GCC. The UK's role in defending Alkhalifa torturers is becoming more visible, and there is widespread anger among the human rights activists that London would support those fascist policies. The new year is a period of reflection for Alkhalifa and AlSaudi backers to change track and deny these dictators the chance to continue their mischief especially in support of terrorist groups as they vie to expand their political influence. The Saudi moral and military defeat in Yemen has devastated them and those who had hoped to cash on their unwavering support of these rogue states. The Saudis are preparing to behead and crucifix more than fifty people on charges of anti-regime stands and the World must decide its position; to support the hereditary regimes or their democratic foes and adversaries. The recent attempt by Cameron's government to appease the Saudi and Egyptian dictators on the issue of the Muslim Brotherhood must be reviewed in light of the Saudi failure to widen the scope of political participation. The election of some women for the powerless local councils shows how people are ready to exercise their right to participate in the running of their countries. Saudis want more than these empty gestures, while Bahrainis will pursue the goals of their revolution and force the Alkhalifa out of power. They cannot let them continue occupying positions of power which enabled them to slaughter hundreds, imprison and torture thousands and carry out sectarian cleansing that amounts to genocide against the natives. The new year will thus witness more of the people's struggle to achieve basic rights as the regional balance of power turns against the dictatorial regimes especially those of AlSaudi and Alkhalifa.

UK asked to stop arms exports to Saudi, Alkhalifa crush free speech

As the year draws to a close the World finally begins to realise the true nature of the worst two Gulf dictatorships in Riyadh and Manama. The Saudis are angry that they are linked to the terrorist groups especially ISIS. They have now threatened twitter users who may link them to those killers. They are angry that senior European politicians like Germany's Vice-Chancellor and Swedish Foreign Ministers have spoken with anger the Saudi role in propping up extremism and terrorism. The Saudi police have detained a media activist and human rights defender Fadel Alsho'lah after appealing for solidarity with Sheikh Nimr AlNimr. A Saudi writer who has called for political reform is reported to have been sentenced to four years in prison. Zuhair Kutbi's lawyer and son said half the sentence was suspended, but that he was also banned from writing for 15 years and travelling abroad for five, and fined \$26,600 (£17,900). He was detained in July after saying Saudi Arabia should become a constitutional monarchy on TV. The 62-year-old is the latest in a string of human rights activists, reformists,

The British Government could be taken to court in order to halt arms exports from British companies to the Saudi Arabian regime, campaigners and lawyers have said. Law firm Leigh Day, which is representing Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT), is considering legal action against ministers to force the suspension of weapons exports to the Middle Eastern autocracy. The United Nations said Saudi Arabia is breaching international law in its on-going war in Yemen and lawyers contend that it is unlawful for Britain to continue weapons export to the country if they are being used for atrocities. Amnesty

International (AI) has also called for immediate halt of British arms export to Saudi Arabia. It said that it had evidence that Saudis had targeted hospitals and schools killing children. It said: "Our researchers have found a pattern of appalling disregard for civilian lives displayed by the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition which has declared the entire cities of Sa'da and nearby Marran as military targets. We also have evidence of the use of internationally-banned cluster bombs." AI demands that: The UK must end its transfers of arms to the Saudi Arabia-led Coalition carrying out illegal and indiscriminate airstrikes in Yemen. We must not supply weapons that could be used to commit human rights violations or war crimes, and There must also be an independent enquiry into the supply of arms to Saudi Arabia and all parties involved into Yemen conflict.

In the week 14 - 20th December 37 native Bahrainis were arrested including five children and one woman, 27 percent of them in illegal home raids. Yesterday, Sayed Nidal Sayed Hadi, from Malikiya was snatched from Marmarez café by plain-clothed members of Alkhalifa Death Squads. On 20th December at least four people from Karzakan were detained during home raids: Ali Jassim Ashoor, Hassan Hussain Arafat, Hassan Ibrahim Ashoor and Hassan Saleh AlQattan. From Malikiya town Mohammad Nooh was arrested in a dawn raid on his home. Hajji Fadhel Naseef was arrested at AlNa'aim Police station to which he had been summoned. Regime's forces also summoned Hussain, the son of Abdul Wahab Hussain, interrogated him for hours and banned him from travel. The mother of Ilias Al Mulla has appealed for his release as his cancer condition worsened. He has been suffering from Lympho-

ma cancer but is not receiving adequate treatment. When he spoke to his mother last week his voice was weak and he was barely able to speak. His chemotherapy sessions are not regular and are given to him without proper investigation.

The trials of 71 native Bahrainis were adjourned and several others were given jail sentences. The trial of Majid Milad, a senior AlWefaq former MP was adjourned until 31st January. Ahmad Al Arab, a juvenile, has been given jail terms totalling 90 years. On Monday 21st December five Bahrainis were given life sentences for joining anti-regime protests. On 16th December Alkhalifa kangaroo court sentenced the Kuwaiti MP, Dr Abdul Hamid Dashti to two years jail for donating money to the families of the native Bahraini prisoners. The same court sentenced Hussain Jawad Parweez to two years jail. Amnesty International issued a statement calling for quashing the sentence.

Last month, the Government of Brazil blocked an independent investigation of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) into the ethicality of a Brazilian company's tear gas exports to Bahrain. The decision, made by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came after Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) requested that Brazil's National Contact Point of the OECD investigate the business relationship between Bahrain and Condor Non-Lethal Technologies. ADHRB calls on the Brazilian government to allow the OECD investigation to continue, and to hold its companies accountable for violations of business ethics and human rights.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
23rd December 2015

Saudis camouflage defeat in Yemen, as Alkhalifa target Day of Martyrs

People in the Arabian Peninsula are bracing themselves for more oppression and revenge following the defeat of the Saudi-led aggression on Yemen that lasted over eight months. The aggressors were humiliated into accepting to negotiate in Geneva with the Yemenis who succeeded in defending their country and inflicting heavy losses on the aggressors. To camouflage their defeat the Saudis rushed into announcing the forming of "Islamic Military Alliance" to fight terrorism. Given their performance in Yemen few believe that the Saudis can lead such a mission, especially that they are accused of grooming, financing and harbouring most vicious terrorist groups.

On the eve of Bahrain's Martyrs Day the situation is as tense as ever. Scores of native Bahrainis have been detained as the regime's judiciary passed harsh sentences against peaceful protesters. In the week 7-13th December at least 23 people were detained from their homes, workplace, the causeway or the street. Fourteen native Bahrainis received a total of 57 years jail

sentences while 41 others had their trials adjourned. Yesterday Alkhalifa dictator sank to lowest level of humanity when he ordered the arrest of a mother of six after her appeal against an earlier six months sentence was rejected by his enslaved judges. One of her brothers, Ahmad was martyred in a protest. Her son, Jamil Abdul Ghani, has been languishing behind bars for some time. On Monday 14th December two young native Bahrainis from Bilad Al Qadeem were detained by plain-clothed members of Death Squads. Concern have deepened for the welfare of Sayed Sadiq Sayed Ni'ma, 27, since his arrest by Saudi authorities on 26th November. His family has been seeking more information about him from the Saudi authorities but without success. His nationality had been revoked and was living in Saudi Arabia before he received his sentence. Yesterday Fadhel Abdul Emam was arrested in a dawn raid on his home in Abu Saiba Town. Abdulzahraa Abbas Shamtoot was also arrested in a dawn raid on his home in Musalla Town. Hadi Mohammed Jawad from Daih

was arrested on 14th December after attending a police station. Abbas Abdulla Salman was arrested on 13th December by members of plain-clothed Death Squads in a home raid. Within 24 hours of talking to a foreign satellite TV station, a Bahraini artist has been arrested. Yasser Nasser, from Aali Town was stopped at the Bahrain-Saudi causeway on his way to Mecca. He is known for his brave stands and support of the popular political movement. The night before he had spoken by telephone to AlNaba TV about the situation saying the arrest of Sheikh Ali Salman and others only causes more tension in the country and forces the people to activism. Under the title: 2015 prison census: 199 journalists jailed worldwide, the Committee to Protect Journalists highlighted the cases of five Bahraini writers and journalists: Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace, Ahmad Humaidan, Hussain Hubail, Ali Me'raj and Sayed Ahmad AlMousawi. It gave a brief of the ordeal of each of them. The trials of three prominent political figures have been adjourned until January. *Continued on P 4*

Germany condemns Saudis as Bahrainis commemorate Martyrs Day

On 6th December, Germany's vice-chancellor Sigmar Gabriel asked Saudi Arabia to stop supporting religious radicals amid growing concern among some legislators in Berlin about the funding of militant mosques by the world's biggest oil exporter. The unusual criticism of the Gulf state follows a report by Germany's foreign intelligence agency, which suggested that Saudi foreign policy was becoming more "impulsive". Sigmar Gabriel said that the Saudi regime is funding extremist mosques and communities that pose a danger to public security. "We have to make clear to the Saudis that the time of looking away is over," Mr Gabriel told Bild am Sonntag newspaper in an interview. He added: "Wahhabi mosques all over the world are financed by Saudi Arabia. Many Islamists who are a threat to public safety come from these communities in Germany." The charge that Saudi Arabia has funded mosques with links to Islamist terrorism in the West is not new. But it is highly unusual for a Western leader to speak out so directly against the West's key Arab ally. It shows a gradual shift against the Saudis. Toby Mathiesen, author of "Sectarian Gulf" says in an article published yesterday by the New York Times that "The West's alliance with Saudi Arabia fuels Islamism". But in another article published in The Financial Times today Kenneth Ruth says "The Rise of ISIS, decline of oil, may finally be leading to tougher response to Saudi repression".

Meanwhile Alkhalifa regime has intensified its repression ahead of the Martyrs Day commemoration on 17th December. Dawn raids on homes, torture and outrageous trials and sentences have exposed a weak tribal regime that cannot tolerate dissent. Native Bahrainis will mark the occasion with protests and calls for ending the culture of impunity that has facilitated torture. Yesterday, Saudi police detained a native Bahraini at the causeway. Sayed Sadiq Sayed Hussain Al-Mosawi, from Bani Jamra, was snatched and taken to secret torture houses. Also the veteran activist, Hajji Majid, was detained for participating in the peaceful anti-regime protests. Being in his seventies, he has become an inspiration to the youth and those seeking justice and democracy in the country. On 7th December regime's Death Squads raided the family home of Hussain Mohammad Antar and arrested him. The day before the Hussaini orator, Mohammad Saeed (Abu Muntadhar) was arrested at the causeway on his return from a religious trip to Iraq. On 2nd December Ali Abdul Jalil was arrested from his home and taken to the CID headquarters where torture is routinely administered on detainees. Mohammad Redha Taqi, from Barbar Town, was arrested from the

market and taken to one of the secret torture chambers. Ibrahim Al Adhem was arrested in a raid on his home at JedAli Town. The attack was led by plain-clothed members of Alkhalifa Death Squads. From Al-Eker Death Squads also detained Abdulla Abdul Aziz.

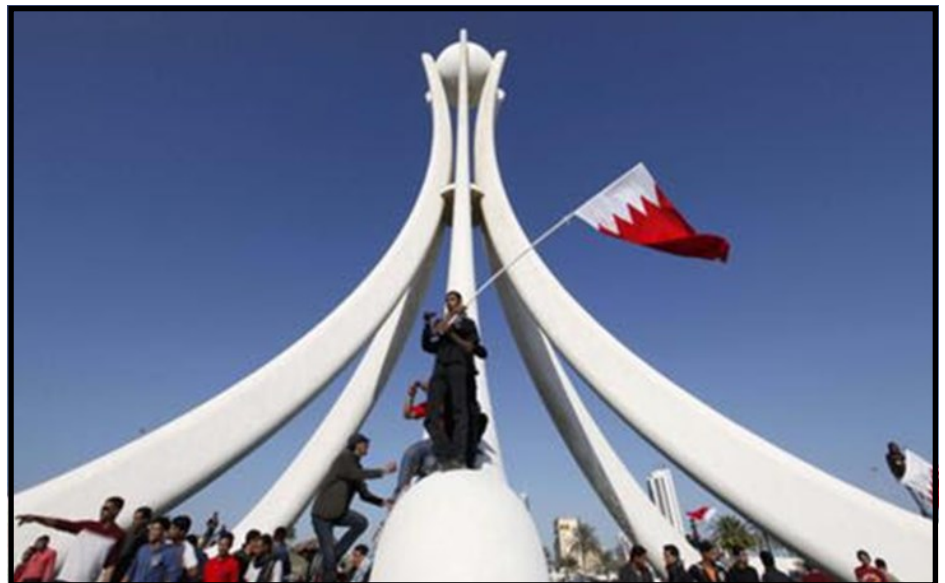
For the sixth time, Alkhalifa court has renewed the custody of the leading Al-Wefaq official, Sheikh Hassan Isa for no reason except revenge and hate. On 3rd December three Bahrainis from Sitra Town were given harsh sentences for taking part in anti-regime protests. Qassim Abdul Nabi Umran Khudair and Yousuf Ahmad Umran Khudhair were sentenced to three years jail. Yesterday the trial of woman activist, Jalila AlSayed Amin was postponed until 31st December. She has been languishing behind bars since 10th February without a fair trial.

On 7th December an Urgent Action update was issued by Amnesty International on behalf of Zainab al-Khawaja whose one-year sentence for speaking out in defence of another prisoner while she was in prison in June 2013, and her four-month sentence for ripping up photos of the King

of Bahrain in May 2012 have been upheld on appeal. She has been sentenced to a total of three years and one month and is at risk of immediate re-arrest. Ali Isa Al Tajir, brother of the prominent human rights brother, Mohammad, has been charged with terrorism offences after one month of horrific torture. The Gulf Centre for Human Rights issued a statement in defence of Mr AlTajir and called on the authorities in Bahrain to: 1. Immediately and unconditionally release Ali Isa Al-Tajir and drop all charges against him; 2. Immediately grant him access to a doctor, lawyer and to his family; 3. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigations into the torture of Ali Isa Al-Tajir with a view to bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards; and 4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Bahrain are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals, and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
9th December 2015

Let's Rebuild the Pearl Roundabout!



The Pearl Roundabout was the center of the 2011 peaceful protests in Bahrain calling for democracy and human rights. On the morning of March 18, 2011 the Government of Bahrain demolished the Pearl Roundabout in an attempt to destroy Bahrain's Tahrir Square and quash the hopes of the Bahraini opposition.

In February 2016, on the fifth anniversary of the uprising, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) will recreate the Pearl Roundabout in Washington, D.C. to highlight the ongoing struggle for re-

spect for human rights and democratic reform in Bahrain. The roundabout will celebrate and create awareness of Bahrainis ongoing calls for democracy. But we need your help!

Join ADHRB to help us re-construct this symbol of peace, human rights, and democracy by donating to our [crowdfunding campaign](#). Every donation, no matter how small, will help us bring this symbol back and stand in solidarity with the people of Bahrain. Please give \$5, \$10, \$20, \$100 or whatever you can to help rebuild the roundabout.

Brazilian Government Blocks Bahraini Tear Gas Probe

17 December 2015 – Washington, DC – Last month, the Government of Brazil blocked an independent investigation of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) into the ethicality of a Brazilian company's tear gas exports to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The decision, made by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came after Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) requested that Brazil's National Contact Point of the OECD investigate the business relationship between Bahrain and Condor Non-Lethal Technologies. ADHRB calls on the Brazilian government to allow the OECD investigation to continue, and to hold its companies accountable for violations of business ethics and human rights.

Tear gas manufactured by Condor first appeared in Bahrain as early as 2011, when the government used tear gas and other riot control weapons in the suppression of the peaceful protest movement that swept the island nation that year. In 2012, the Brazilian government announced that it would investigate Bahrain's alleged misuse of Condor's product, later denying that Brazilian tear gas had been sold to Bahrain. In 2015, however, Condor tear gas re-appeared in Bahrain, as Bahraini security forces utilized the Condor product to suppress peaceful demonstrations. In January of that year, Bahraini security forces blanketed the entire village of Bilad al-Qadeem in tear gas in retaliation against peaceful protests staged in the area. As a result of their reckless use of tear gas, Bahraini citizen Abdulaziz al-Saeed asphyxiated in his home and died. Tear gas canisters manufactured by Condor were found outside of his home.

In September, ADHRB submitted a complaint to the Brazilian National Contact Point of the OECD, asking it to investigate Condor for potential human rights violations under OECD guidelines. The Contact Point decided that ADHRB's complaint merited further examination, and requested that the Brazilian Foreign Ministry release information related to Brazil's tear gas exports for verification. However, the Ministry refused to release the information, thereby blocking the OECD investigation and shielding Condor from accountability.

"The presence of Condor's product outside of the home of Abdulaziz al-Saeed renders the company an accessory to his murder," said Husain Abdulla, Executive Director of ADHRB. "The Brazilian government should investigate Condor's involvement; instead, they're shielding it from account."

International pressure has in the past had a significant effect on Bahrain's ability to obtain access to tear gas. In 2014,

ADHRB participated in a "Stop the Shipments" campaign after discovering that a South Korean tear gas manufacturer planned to ship 1.7 million tear gas canisters to Bahrain. As a result of the campaign, the South Korean government indefinitely suspended shipments to Bahrain in the face of mounting evidence of systemic abuses, which it found to have resulted in civilian deaths. Earlier this year, the European Parliament also called for an end to European tear gas exports to the country, citing Bahrain's failure to hold abusers accountable as justification for the ban.

"Brazil should be following the examples set by governments like South Korea and the European Union, but instead appar-

ently condones the use of Brazilian products to murder innocent people," said Abdulla. "As Bahrain continues to abuse tear gas to harm and kill its people, it falls on countries like Brazil to deny Bahrain access to their weapons."



Solidarity with Nigerian victims

There have been several protests in support of the Nigerian Shia Muslims suppressed violently by the army. Sheikh Ibrahim Zakzai, the leader of the Islamic Movement was taken hostage with his wife when the Nigerian army stormed his house and a congregation hall. Zakzaki has been focal supporter of the Bahraini people and his arrest is affront to human decency. Six of his children were slaughtered by the army that had failed to stop the atrocities of Boko Haram.

Saudis camouflage defeat in Yemen, *Continued from P 2*

On Monday 14th December the Appeal Court refused to release Sheikh Ali Salman who was jailed for calling for political reforms and adjourned the hearing until 14th January 2016. On 9th December the Alkhalifa court played a dirty game by claiming that Fadhel Abbas had not arrived at the court while he was kept in the police van that had brought him from his torture cell. The judge sat with him in a private room and adjourned the hearing until 10th January. On 15th December the same court adjourned the case of Ibrahim Sharif until 10th January.

On 15th December Human Rights Watch called on the Alkhalifa regime to stop its harassment of Nabeel Rajab and allow him to travel. It said that "An arbitrary travel ban is preventing a prominent rights activist from leaving Bahrain. The ban against Nabeel Rajab is based on charges that violate his right to free expression. Prosecutors should immediately drop the charges and lift the travel ban."

On Dec. 11, Standard & Poor's (S&P) Ratings Services affirmed its long- and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings on the Bahrain at 'BBB-/A-3'.

It said: "Our fiscal projections show Bahrain's general government deficit widening to 10 per cent of GDP in 2015 compared with a surplus that averaged 1 per cent of GDP over 2007-2013. The government's debt burden has doubled since 2009, reaching some 43 per cent of GDP at the end of 2014. We estimate that the government will be in a net debt position of almost 20 per cent of GDP by the end of 2015, from nine per cent of GDP in 2014, S&P ended its report saying: "The outlook remains negative, reflecting uncertainties in our fiscal forecast, particularly around the implementation of a sustainable fiscal consolidation path."

We could lower the ratings within the next 12 months if the government's fiscal performance is materially worse than we expect. We could also lower the ratings if economic growth is substantially lower than our current projections or if significant data inconsistencies in Bahrain's external accounts are not addressed in 2016."

Bahrain Freedom Movement
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