

BAHRAIN

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

Shameful Western support of Saudi aggression on Yemen, Bahrain

The situation in Bahrain has deteriorated further since the beginning of the year. At least seven natives were slaughtered by the Alkhalifa killers and hundreds detained and tortured. The regime is under intense pressure to go as the Bahraini Revolution, which is the only remaining political strife among the Arab Spring movements, that has survived the onslaught by the counter-revolution forces. In mid-January came the execution of three young Bahrainis for their activism in the pro-democracy movement. There was an outcry especially in the human rights world. There was a unanimous verdict that it was extra-judicial killing which is a crime against humanity. Then came the execution of three others on 9th February. They were in hiding after their stunning escape from the notorious Jaw Prison last year. They were pursued and liquidated by foreign mercenaries with intelligence from friendly sources in London and Washington. It was a crime that shocked the nation to the core. The three could not have committed serious crimes as the regime alleged. They spent most of their lives behind bars as Alkhalifa terror squads roamed the streets and terrorised the natives. Then on 20th February a young Bahraini was killed by Alkhalifa Death Squads. Abdulla Al Ajooz, 21, is said to have been thrown from the rooftop of a house and was not treated on the spot. He was left to meet a slow death to make him a lesson to anyone who wants to challenge this most cruel dictatorship. This escalation in the killing of martyrs point to one thing; the regime has reached a point of total despair. Despite his earlier claim that the situation had been under control, the enlisting of the Turkish help in recent weeks confirmed the suspicion that the regime would not survive this revolution. It is too weak to stand up to the challenges of either the continued Revolution or any attempt on reform. It is non-reformable regime and must go.

There is, however, the question of propping the regime by foreign governments. The case of Bahrain has presented one of the most compelling evidenced at the moral decadence of the West. As the debate reaches deadlock over the rise of the far-right and the American presidency under Donald Trump, authors and ideologues have started to speak of "post-West" politi-

cal system. There is now realisation that modern statehood that had developed after the Second World War is finally giving in to the hidden evil nature of colonialism, imperialism and capitalism. The economic crash of 2008 signalled the beginning of the end of that political system and the downfall of the free market economy. The failure of the banks to underpin Western economies has created what present rulers in Washington, London and Paris with what they would call "new realities" which forced them to backtrack on their long-held principles and values of democracy, human rights, transparency and the rule of law. All have been guillotined as those rulers sought quick cash from most notorious dictatorships to prop up the capital system. That came at a time of rising concerns and worries about the widespread extremism and terrorism. It also came few years after the "war on terror" had been launched by American-led alliance to uproot those phenomenon. It had been widely accepted that Gulf regimes led by Saudi Arabia had been responsible in great part for the rise of those ugly phenomenon. Extremism, sectarianism and terrorism had been groomed by those tribal regimes who had been in possession of massive amounts of petrodollars. Instead of standing up to the challenges and security threats posed by those tribal dictatorships the Western alliance chose to defend them against the rising tide of pro-democracy activism. Billions of petrodollars were channelled to the Western economies in return for propping up the security of the tribal regimes. When the Arab Spring emerged the West was shocked at the beginning but within weeks it was tempted again to barter money for principles and values. Within few years the Saudis and Alkhalifa whose regimes were targeted by pro-democracy activists, along those of Egypt, Tunis, Yemen and Syria, had made a comeback and started to impose hegemonic policies not only within their borders but on regional level. From being a pariah state the Western support turned Saudi Arabia into an interventionist power with expansionist aims and devious policies. In March 2011 Saudi troops were sent to Bahrain to quash the Revo-

lution against the Alkhalifa tribal dictatorship. They went on the rampage; killing protesters, spreading social discord, sectarianism and social division and destroying mosques and religious places. US and UK did not raise an eyebrow at this disastrous adventure that has caused misery, mayhem and mayhem to thousands of people in troubled Bahrain.

The Western support continued. The Saudis went on to create more mayhem and destroy the peace of the region. They pushed the terrorist agenda further. Iraq and Syria had to pay heaviest price for their criminal behaviour. Somalia and Libya were also targeted by Saudi-backed terrorist groups. Then came the most devastating episode with the war on Yemen. The Saudis led the illegal attack on Yemen in March 2015. For two years, the country has suffered untold destruction, misery, human devastation and disasters. More than 20,000 civilians have lost their lives. The country's cultural and architectural heritage has been ruined. Yemen's civilisation has been carefully targeted for total obliteration. Both US and UK admit their direct involvement in this illegal aggression, supplying the Saudis with guided missiles and bombs, intelligence and experts at the Command and Control centres. Despite the cries and pleas from anti-war, anti-arms activists, arms are still flowing to Riyadh to be used against helpless Yemenis. It is one of those episodes of history that will remain to indict the perpetrators of this most criminal savagery. The West has blood on its hands for supporting the Saudis in their illegal war on those peaceful people of Yemen, the poorest of the Arab countries. It is another evidence of the extent of moral decadence of the West. The irony is that two years of non-stop bombing of the defenceless Yemenis have not yet touched the human chords of the citizens of those countries. Only few have objected to this savagery that observes no limits. The Bahrainis have stood up bravely to resist the Saudi aggression. The Yemenis have taught the aggressors unforgettable lessons and are adamant on defeating the Saudi aggressors. Victory will be theirs. Defeat will haunt the enemies of mankind and the adversaries of humanity. Nobility dictates that the oppressed be defended.

Bahraini martyr thrown from roof, new Saudi war crimes in Yemen

On Monday 20th February the Alkhalifa regime committed another crime that shocked the nation. 21-years old Abdullah Hussain Al Ajooz, of Nuwaidrate Town, was executed by masked members of regime's Death Squads. He was thrown from the top of a two-storey floor which caused fatal injuries to the head and neck. This is the seventh martyr since the beginning of this year. Those who saw the body at the mortuary, including the prominent liberal activist, Ibrahim Sharif, confirmed that the native citizen had been thrown from the roof by regime's forces. His injuries are not consistent with a fall or jump. The people reacted in extreme anger as they took part in the funeral procession yesterday. They chanted anti-regime slogans including: Hamad must be executed. The country is passing through its bleakest moments in its history. In the week 13-19th February at least 30 native Bahrainis were arrested including six children and one woman. A total of 112 natives were given extensive prison sentences in show trials. There were at least 194 protests in 55 towns and villages.

For the 9th time the internationally renowned human rights activist, Nabeel Rajab, had his trial postponed. He is being tried for tweets against the Saudi-Alkhalifa aggression on Yemen.

On 20th February 14-year old Ali Na'eem Marhoom from Sanabis Town was detained in a brutal raid on his house. Jassim and Hassan Mohammed AlQattan from Nabih Saleh island were snatched by Death Squads who raided their home. The family of Abbas Aoun, 16, is extremely worried about their son who disappeared last week without a trace or phone call.

Another human right defender was arrested and transferred to the notorious Jaw Prison. Nader Abdul Emam was detained for his pro-democracy stands. He had been detained several times and served six-month sentence two years ago.

On 16th February The European Parliament issued a strong resolution condemning Bahrain and Kuwait for carrying out executions. The Alkhalifa regime had the lion share of the resolution. The resolution; 1- Condemned the recent execution of three Bahraini natives, 2- called for commuting the death sentence hanging on the heads of two other natives: Mohammad Ramadan and Hussain Musa, 3- Called on the Alkhalifa regime to invite the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Extra Judicial Killing, 4- Condemned the big arms deals that European countries are signing with countries like Bahrain which have bleak human rights records, 5- called for more efforts to get Nabeel Rajab released from incarceration, 6- called for wider efforts to secure the release of most Bahraini prisoners whose only crimes are linked to peaceful expression of opinion. 7- called on Alkhalifa regime to stop using excessive force against demonstrators and release Abdul Hadi AlKhwaja and Khalil AlHalwachi. Finally it called for allowing people the right to peaceful protest and assembly on the 6th anniversary of the Revolution, and stopping arbitrary detention & torture. On 16th February the top United Nations humanitarian official in Yemen said he was extremely saddened and appalled by the airstrikes that killed six women and a girl gathering for a funeral in a private residence in the Arhab District of Sana'a Governorate the day before. "The manner

in which the parties to the conflict are waging this war is taking an unacceptable toll on the civilian population in Yemen and as illustrated by this most recent tragedy, women and children are paying with their lives," said UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick in a statement. Calls are mounting for UK to stop arming the Saudis. The High Court case brought by CAAT (Campaign Against Arms Trade) against the government is awaiting final decision from the court in March.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson professed in his Senate confirmation testimony that "our values are our interests when it comes to human rights." Yet one of his State Department's first acts may be to abandon that stance with the tiny but strategic Persian Gulf state of Bahrain. Concerns in Congress and the human rights community are high that the Trump team is planning to approve a multibillion-dollar sale of Lockheed Martin F-16 fighter planes to Bahrain without any conditions, reversing an Obama administration decision to demand the government take small reform steps in exchange for the jets. If approved by State, the sale would reward a tribal monarchy that has been cracking down on its majority-Shiite population and flouting U.S. requests for restraint. Corker objected to the fact that the Obama administration attached human rights conditions to a congressional notification about the F-16 sales sent to Capitol Hill in September. Congress is given a chance to object to an arms sale before it goes through, but typically there are no conditions attached by that stage in the process.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
22nd February 201)

HC to decide UK's arming of Saudis, as Alkhalifa revenge from AlWefaq

Yesterday, The High Court in central London began to examine the legality of UK arms exports to Saudi Arabia. The case was brought to court by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT). The UK government has been repeatedly asked to stop supporting the Saudi-led aggression on Yemen which was launched in March 2015 and has killed more than 20,000 people. There is a good possibility that the court could rule against the government, in which case the Saudis will lose the moral and political support it has enjoyed for two years. It could herald the beginning of the end of the Saudi expansionist policy in the region and could expose its leaders to war crimes tribunals. It will also signal a military and moral defeat of the Saudis.

Anger is growing among the British public after it emerged that Ministers had refused to stop bomb sales to Saudi Arabia despite being told to do so by own export control chief. Sajid Javid, the then business secretary was told a year ago about concerns that weapons could be used to kill civilians in Yemen, according to ministerial correspondence that emerged on the first

day yesterday of a judicial review into UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Edward Bell, head of the Export Controls Organisation, wrote in an email about the decision: "To be honest, and I was very direct and honest with the secretary of state, my gut tells me we should suspend [weapons exports to the country]." The question had also been raised with the prime minister, Bell wrote.

In the week 30th January to 5th February the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights documented at least 21 arbitrary arrests including one child. At least 36 citizens were sentenced by Alkhalifa courts to long term jail sentences. There were at least 52 protests calling for regime change, thirteen of which were attacked by Alkhalifa mercenaries and Death Squads. On 3rd February three children from Saar Town were detained from their home and abused. Kadhim, Amir & Loay were playing on their Playstation when their home was raided by masked men using extreme force. On Monday 6th February, Alkhalifa top court rejected an appeal by the country's main opposition group Al Wefaq against its dissolution over its anti-regime stands. The

court of cassation "denied the appeal against the dissolution of Al Wefaq and the seizure of its assets," the source said.

Fadhel Sayed Abbas Hasan Radhi has been detained without charge since his arrest on 29 September 2016. He has had no access to a lawyer and only limited access to his family. His family have not heard from him since 10 December 2016 nor have they received any information about his whereabouts or well-being. Amnesty International (AI) has expressed concern that he is a victim of enforced disappearance and at risk of torture and other ill treatment. AI has asked people to write: Urging the Bahraini authorities to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of Fadhel Sayed Abbas Hasan Radhi, and to release him unless he is promptly charged with a recognizable criminal offence, in accordance with international law and standards; Calling on them to provide him with prompt and regular access to his family, lawyer and any medical attention he may require and ensure that, pending his release, he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment. *Continued on Page 4*

CAAT may achieve Saudi arms embargo; Alkhalifa commit more atrocities

On Thursday 9th February, the regime committed one of the most horrific crimes, killing three native Bahrainis and injuring others. The three martyrs are: Redha AlGhasra, MustafaYousuf and Mahmood Yousuf. They had escaped from prison one month ago with seven others who remain at large. Massive search had been in operation since then. Houses were raided, road closed, ports closely monitored and sea patrols intensified. The group had been subjected to most horrific treatment and sentenced to phenomenal jail periods. Redha Al Ghasra, for example, had total sentences of 160 years for his activism in street protests. He is known for his ability to escape from Jaw prison in daring ways. The regime claimed that ten people, including the three martyrs, were trying to flee Bahrain in a small dingy, a claim that was ridiculed by experts. The official version of events does not stand to scrutiny and the more viable explanation is that the group may have been attacked and killed before being taken to the sea. The sixth anniversary of the 14th February Revolution was marked on Tuesday in style. Protests were held in almost all parts of the country despite the regime's brutal suppression. Roads were closed as the people re-asserted themselves and claimed their public space that had been occupied by foreign Alkhalifa and their mercenaries. The scenes of the Pearl Square were re-enacted as slogans were raised confirming steadfastness and zeal unseen in any other country that had

witnessed the Arab Spring. The regime was also non-compromising in its cruelty, viciousness and collective punishment. Scores had been rounded up in the days leading up to the anniversary. This is despite warnings from international human rights bodies to refrain from using force to stop the right to open protest. On 14th February Amnesty International issued a statement asking Bahrain's regime not to use force to deny people the right to protest.

A campaign of mass arrests was launched by Alkhalifa dictators to pre-empt the preparations for the 6th anniversary of the Revolution. In the week 6-12th February at least 48 native Bahrainis were detained, including 5 women and 3 children. There were at least 138 protests, 32 of which were attacked by Alkhalifa mercenaries using chemical and tear gases and shotguns. A religious procession in Duraz Town on Saturday 11th February was attacked as regime intensified its war on religious activities of the natives. Many of the participants received shotgun wounds to their bodies. Five women were detained last week: Amira AlQash'ami, Hamida AlKhour, Muna Habib, Tahira Mohammad Al Ghanmi and Faten Hussain.

On Sunday 12th February Sayed Hashim AlMosawi, from Bilad AlQadeem was snatched by masked members of Alkhalifa Death Squads. He was crossing the causeway when he disappeared with no trace. On 13th February under-aged Ali Hussain Meftah, from Tubli Town, was snatched by ISIS-style Death Squads. From Aali

Town, Sayed Hashim AlGhuraifi was detained and taken to the torture centre at Roundabout 17 of Hamad town. Ahmad AlShegel was arrested at a check point and is being held by the notorious CID department. From Sitra two brothers were detained; Mohammad and Ali Radhi Farhan when their home was raided on 13th February. From Dair Town many people were arrested on 13th February. Haji Abdul Hadi was arrested as he walked on the road, Mahmood Ismael Al Sabe', 24 was also detained as he walked along one of the alleyways of the town. Yousuf Hassan AlWalad, 22, was snatched when his home was raided on Saturday 11th February. Mohammad AlNahham, a teacher was also arrested on 11th February. From Aali Town, Ali Ahmad Mahdi was arrested and taken to the torture secret houses. Ali Hassan Hammad, 29 and his brother Mohammad, 25 were arrested in a home raid on their home at dawn. In the early hours of Thursday 9th February a religious scholar and his family were arrested at the town of Barbar. Sheikh Mohammad Saleh AlQash'ami, his son Abul Fadhl and his daughter were arrested and taken to unknown destination. On 9th February several people from Sitra Town were arrested: Mohammad Jassim and his brother, Zakariya, Hussain Abdul Jabbar, Ammar Ahmad Hubail and Jaber Khalil AlKattab. Ali Mohamad Hakim AlArab, from Bani Jamra was arrested on 9th February.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
15th February 2017

UN aid official 'appalled' by airstrikes that kill Yemeni women and children

16 February 2017 – The top United Nations humanitarian official in Yemen today said he was extremely saddened and appalled by the airstrikes that killed six women and a girl gathering for a funeral in a private residence in the Arhab District of Sana'a Governorate yesterday. "The manner in which the parties to the conflict are waging this war is taking an unacceptable toll on the civilian population in Yemen and as illustrated by this most recent tragedy, women and children are paying with their lives," said UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick in a statement.

The statement, issued by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said that health authorities confirm six women and a girl killed, as well as at least 15 other women injured, some gravely. Unfortunately, the number of dead could rise as the critically injured struggle to survive. "I am alarmed to see this tragic loss of life further escalate the fighting, with reports of a retaliatory ballistic missile strike into Saudi Arabia's Asir region," he said. This incident comes at a time of severe

hardship and suffering in Yemen where imposed import restrictions are causing food scarcity and price hikes resulting in worsening food insecurity and malnutrition across the country.

The economic decline caused by the conflict is leading to the collapse of basic service provision. Sana'a airport remains closed to commercial flights, limiting options for those who need this service to access life-saving medical care and restricting movements in and out of the country. "The people of Yemen have suffered long enough. Peace is the only solution to help end the suffering in Yemen," he said, calling on all the parties to return to the negotiation table.

In a separate statement on the incident, UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, stressed that every day, across Yemen, civilians are killed by indiscriminate attacks by all parties to the conflict on residential areas in complete disregard of the rules of international humanitarian law.

"Attacks on civilians are unjustifiable, regardless of the circumstances. Women and children in particular have been subjected to unspeakable suffering in this brutal conflict. This should stop immediately," he said, calling an all parties to adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law and respect the sanctity of civilian life.

Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed went on to note that the ongoing military clashes on the Red Sea coast are aggravating an already catastrophic humanitarian situation, with tens of thousands of civilians caught in the war zone without access to humanitarian assistance and unable to flee to safety.

"The military activities in the region threaten to disrupt the import of commercial and humanitarian supplies which could have a terrible impact on the food security for large parts of the population," he said, urging all parties to ensure the unhindered movement of commercial and humanitarian supplies, without which millions of Yemenis are at risk of death and famine.



Bahrain conference; The London Declaration

On 11th February 2017 a one day conference on Bahrain was held by the Gulf Cultural Club to mark the 6th anniversary of the 14th February Revolution. It was attended by political and human rights activists, academics, supporters and journalists. There were four main sessions. The first was for keynote speakers at which international personalities expressed their support to Bahraini people. The second was dedicated to discussing the political situation. The third was for human rights conditions and was addressed by international HR activists. The final session was dedicated to young pro-democracy activists including Dr Alaa Shehabi, Dr Marc Owen Jones, Maryam AlKhwaja, Tara O'Grady, Joe Dwyer (from Sinn Feinn) and an activist from Brussels. Before the end the Final Declaration was read out to the audience.

Final declaration of Bahrain's conference

London 11th February 2017

The London conference titled: Overdue change in the Middle East, the case of Bahrain was held on Saturday 11th February to mark the sixth anniversary of the 14th February Revolution of 2011. It was attended by friends of Bahraini people and addressed by political and human rights activists over three sessions. The first was for keynote speakers who hailed the mass movement for its consistency, clarity of purpose, peaceful nature and dedication to the cause of change. The second session was titled "Thrive for Democratic Change in Bahrain" and was addressed by political activists, researchers and academics. They highlighted the need for political change in Bahrain that addresses the grievances of the people, grants them the right to self-determination, paves the way for drafting a new constitution and leads to a political system based on the principle of "One man one vote". Reconciliation is a key condition for this. The third panel was held under the title: Consecration of Human Rights in Bahrain. Participants dealt with various aspects of the appalling human rights situation that saw the country sink into the abyss, with rampant torture, arbitrary detention, forced disappearances, executions, revocation of citizenship and banishment of natives.

After careful and extensive deliberations, the conference has adopted the following recommendations;

1- The peaceful nature of the Bahraini revolution deserves respect and commendation. The massive protests that have not ceased over the past six years is a trade mark for this public dissention and civil disobedience.
2- The people of Bahrain must be sup-

ported in their struggle to achieve their legitimate rights of self-determination, a new constitution and a swift democratic transformation to replace the outdated form of hereditary dictatorship.

3- The extent of human rights violations, as documented by local and international human rights bodies has rendered Bahrain as one of worst offenders of those rights. The international community, led by the Human Rights Council must act to stop the flagrant attacks on and disrespect of human rights. Freedoms of Speech, Assembly and Association must be respected. There is also a need to end the culture of impunity. The head of state must repeal Decree Law 56/2002 that facilitates this impunity. In the absence of this willingness to repeal this draconian decree, the HRC must act to ensure that Bahrain stops sheltering torturers.

4- Of particular significance is the need to stop escalating the situation by carrying out death sentences against people who were forced under torture to sign false confessions. Human life is valuable; the regime must stop these killings.

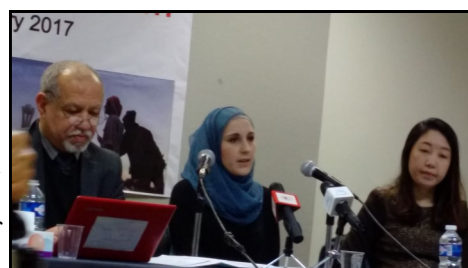
5- The prominent figures, commonly known as the Bahrain 13, Sheikh Ali Salman, Nabeel Rajab and other prisoners of conscience must be released immediately and conditionally.

6- The participants urge the UK Government to stop propping up Bahrain's ruling family; withdraw the Prison Inspection Team, stop its technical assistance that enable the regime to spy on

opponents, track their movements and use private information to blackmail or charge them. After five years, UK's "assistance" has not resulted in improvement of Bahrain's human rights records. This assistance is seen as a key element in emboldening the regime in refusing to adapt to civilised norms of behaviour.

7- The people of Bahrain must be given the right to participate in a referendum to determine their future; the shape of their government, their constitution and their political system.

8- Finally, a key to empowering the people is for all foreign powers, troops and security personnel to leave the country. Bahrain is seen as a country under occupation since the Saudi and Emirati forces invaded its lands. Also Pakistani and Jordanian regiments must be removed from the country.



HC to decide UK's arming of Saudis

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The Foreign Office has been accused of trying to cover up its funding of a programme to train the Alkhalifa police in crowd control techniques, including the use of water cannons and dogs. Officials have consistently denied that the £1bn conflict, stability and security fund has been used for any public order programmes with Bahrain's security forces. On 5th February the Sunday Times said that the fund was used to pay for Bahrain's chief of police, Tariq al-Hassan, and other senior officers to travel to Belfast to learn how police in Northern Ireland deal with public protests. It also emerged that "journalist" Justin Hunter who was killed in a car accident in early December was working privately to help train Bahraini police and government officials, according to "Belfast Live" on 5th February. Human rights group Reprieve has criticised the PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland)

for "sharing its expertise on gathering intelligence ahead of parades" with around half a dozen Bahraini police officers during the visit to Belfast in August 2015.

English PEN has joined 20 other NGOs and rights campaigners to send an open letter to Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, urging him to call for the release of jailed human rights defender Nabeel Rajab. The letter, signed by Amnesty International, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), PEN International, Index on Censorship and others states: "The UK's significant historical, economic, security and political ties with Bahrain incur a responsibility to acknowledge and criticise negative human rights developments within the country. The UK's voice is strongly heard in Bahrain, and we urge you to act publicly and promptly in support of Nabeel Rajab's human rights work and call for his release."

Bahrain Freedom Movement

8th February 2017