

# BAHRAIN

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

## **Time for khalifi hereditary dictatorship to leave the scene**

Dictators never acknowledge their crimes, nor would they concede defeat at the hands of their foes. Instead they will persevere in their quest to subjugate their citizens using the most brutal methods of repression and suppression. Their mindset is infested with feelings of superiority, arrogance and criminality and rarely they will refrain from wrong-doing. They will only acknowledge the logic of force and will be belittled by the outside power who use them to further their regional objectives. The Bahraini regime falls within this category. It will exhibit its ruthless power when dealing with the unarmed peaceful citizens, but will cower when challenged by outside powers. On their part, the natives who have been engaged in generational struggle to liberate their homeland from the khalifi occupiers have always been steadfast, resilient and patient, conceding human and material sacrifices as a price for freedom, liberty and dignity.

For the past eleven years thousands of natives have been languishing behind bars as the tribal dictators wreaked havoc in the country and crushed values of decency and humanity. In addition to the arbitrary detentions they adopted torture as a means of suppression. Yet they have failed to silence the people who have been adamant on achieving fundamental political change. Yet the prisoners themselves, supported and encouraged by the human rights activists inside the country and outside it, have shown outstanding courage as they acted to foil the regime's plots and exploitation. They have blunted the instruments of torture and defeated the regime's GANGOs which were created to supplant the cries of the victims. These political detainees have sent the regime's ploy named "alternative sentencing" to the dustbin of history. The khalifi dictators were given direct orders by their Western supporters to end the political crisis that has embarrassed them as the Bahraini activists and their supporters gained the political initiative and corened them at almost every level. Instead of swallowing their pride and releasing the native hostages they presented their "alternative sentencing" initiative hoping to silence the opposition forever. Political prisoners would be released in return for giving pledges to remain silence and abandon their political struggle. The freedom fighters flatly rejected this and insisted on

achieving political change that will prevent the re-occurrence of the gross violations of human rights.

They regime thought it was clever when it camouflaged its defeat in victory shrouding. But, to its dismay, its "cleverness" was exposed and it was denied the opportunity to continue its deception after it had been politically and morally been defeated. Now, under orders from its British defenders, it is presenting its defeat in another form. It has mobilised its mouthpieces and slaves to propagate the idea of what it calls "open prisons". The freedom fighters would be allowed to spend sometime with their families but return to stay at the torture cells at night. This is to ensure that they are politically dormant and gradually abandon the struggle. For example the leaders of the people would be stripped of their freedom and leadership role under this regime, thus depriving the political movement of leadership, steadfastness and human values. The Bahraini hostages will, once again, reject the new khalifi ploy and will announce to the world that they will never abandon the struggle and the efforts to establish a new political order based on the will of the people. They will tell the khalifis and their supporters that their "cleverness" and deception have been exposed and they have only one viable avenue: handing power to the people to govern themselves in the way the see appropriate. The political goals take precedence over any other consideration, and the regime's ploys only affirm the notion that the khalifis are not fit to rule.

The "open prisons" ploy is a stillbirth by the unholy political alliance that seeks to enslave the people, continue its criminal acts against the country and its inhabitants and persists on denying the people their natural rights. The khalifis, once again, are playing with fire in their quest to crush the political strife to end their hegemonic dictatorship. The political prisoners have been held for a long time as hostages in the hands of those criminals. They did not hide their real objective: your release is linked to the abandonment of your natural legal and moral rights. Among these is the right of expression. Bahrainis have learnt lessons from their two sources; their history under the khalifi occupation and their religious attachment to noble people such as Imam Hussain, the grandson of Mo-

hammad. He refused to remain silence in the face of oppression and insisted on challenging the Umayyad tribal dynasty. For decades they rose above their pains and insisted on retrieving the right to live free from the tribal hegemony. They have no intention to stop that noble struggle that started in 1922. The political leadership which has been behind bars for eleven years have declared their position loud and clear: We have sacrificed in order to achieve freedom and liberty, we won't accept half solutions.

Who can influence the situation in Bahrain? First are the people who are determined to continue their struggle until victory. Their sacrifices have been immense and will not accept compromises that lend the dictators more time to spread corruption. The second is the international community with its several layers of political-making processes. The UN is urged to play a constructive role in leading the way for Bahrainis to achieve freedom and end the khalifi hereditary dictatorship. The UN experts on human rights are also urged to put pressure on the regime to allow them to visit the country and see for themselves the agenoice of the people. The forth are the British Government which has, hitherto, supported the dictators without any reservation. They are helping the khalifis to sail through the political and moral turbulence with the intention of hiding their crimes and helping them to get away with murder. It is time that London came clean and declared its dissociation from the torture regime instead of helping it to hid its crimes and whitewash its bleak record on human rights and political corruption.

After decades of struggle the native Bahrainis have come to the conclusion that there are no common grounds for cohabitation with the khalifa tribal regime, that its insistence on deception, false pretentions and hollow gestures have destroyed any chance of reconciliation and that the struggle will continue until a lasting solution based on people's will is achieved. The release of political prisoners must happen sooner or later because the khalifis have been defeated in this matter. The longer they hold the leaders hostages the more serious their crimes will become. If they want to cut, they must cut clean and leave the arena soon.

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## New detentions, trials of Bahraini and Saudi pro-democracy activists

The International Day in Support of Torture Victims (26th June) was marked by Bahrainis inside and outside the country. Protesters raised slogans of support for torture victims, published articles and expressed views on social media. Mothers and relatives of torture victims issued brief clips describing the torture inflicted on their loved ones by the khalifi dictators. Outside the country there were online seminars, protests outside Bahrain embassies and plenty of comments in the virtual world.

A native Bahraini mother has spoken of the extreme forms of torture inflicted on her three sons. Abdul Zahra Mushaima was released in 2014 when his condition worsened. In a video clip to mark the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture his mother said: When they arrested him he was in excellent health as a young man with no health complaints at all. He had been repeatedly hit on the head during torture sessions. He suffered five strokes before his release. His brain is permanently damaged, and he lost his memory. He is now a cripple. My other son, Sami Mushaima was executed (15th January 2017). The third is still behind bars with a bullet in his body and damaged ears due to torture.

On 26th June Reprieve, which campaigns against capital punishment tweeted about the two native Bahrainis on death row. First it said: On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture we demand justice for those tortured, forced to sign "confessions" and sentenced to death in Bahrain. Bahrain's broken criminal justice system is sustained by taxpayer-funded support from the UK. It then said: Husain Moosa was arrested on 21 February 2014. His interrogators beat him with sticks and

threatened him until he signed a "confession" for a crime he didn't commit. This "confession" was used to sentence him and Mohammed to death. Husain remains on death row to this day. It added: Mohammed Ramadhan is a father to 3 young children. After attending peaceful democracy protests, he was arrested on 18 February 2014. He was tortured into "confessing" to being at the protests, then sentenced to death for a crime he didn't commit. He remains at risk of execution.

In an audio message political prisoner, Ali Al Banna accused the regime of denying him medical treatment that led to deterioration of his health. In the message which was smuggled out of the torture chambers he complained of several illnesses in the heart, eyes and neck for which he has been demanding treatment. He said the swelling in the neck had started four months ago but received no treatment for it.

This week khalifi court issued prison sentences against four native citizens for opposing the hereditary dictatorship. Haidar Ali Nasser, Mohammad Al Aswad, Abdul Amir Abdul Karim and Sayed Hussain Ma'tooq were given three years in a brief trial that fell short of international standards of fair trials. Another khalifi court has upheld an earlier prison sentence against three under-aged children from the town of Samaheej: Hassan Mubarak: 3 years, Jassim Mohmmad, 10 years and Salman Ali Salman, 15 years. The Bahraini regime has arrested native Bahraini Hassan Ahmad from Bilad Al Qadeem town.

Political prisoner, Ahmad Sheikh Ali Rahmah has started a hunger strike in protest at the ill-treatment he suffered recently. He had refused to be held in the same cells as criminal offenders. It has become a practice by the torturers to humiliate activists.

Several young men have been detained by the Saudi regime. They include: Sheikh Abdul Majid Al Ahmad from Ihsaa Province, Moosa Al Khunaizi and Hussain Rajab from Qatif. The detentions include also a woman: Sarah Al Ali from Ihsaa Province.

Amnesty International has launched a campaign to save the life of a Saudi national condemned to death after an unfair trial. It said: Abdullah Al-Hwaiti, Arrested at 14, tortured, now faces execution! Call on @KingSalman not to ratify the verdict, have his conviction overturned, and retry him under international fair trial standards: Recently unsealed court documents revealed that a Saudi operative who was studying in Mississippi was allegedly using secret social media profiles to harass dissidents of the regime. Ibrahim Alhussayen was eventually arrested for lying to FBI agents about his use of pseudonymous social media accounts, the criminal complaint and affidavit say. Alhussayen, a 42-year-old Saudi citizen who has lived in the U.S. since 2013, had been obtaining his PhD at a Mississippi university when he allegedly sent threatening messages and comments to "harass dissidents and critics of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," the filing says. One message in 2020 read, "Soon, I will know where you are and get you, b\*\*\*h." An Instagram comment in 2020 left on the page of a woman who had criticized some Saudi policies said, "I hope you will have the same fate/end up as Nada al-Qahtani"—a Saudi Arabian woman shot to death by her brother. The feds say Alhussayen lied to them in interviews and claimed he only operated accounts under his name.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
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## UK Gov continue defending Bahrain's dictators, Saudis agonised under MBS

The UK government failed to raise the most pressing Bahraini human rights cases with the kingdom's authorities during high-level meetings earlier this year despite implying it had done so, a freedom of information request has revealed. Among the cases of imprisoned human rights defenders that Lord Ahmad, the minister responsible for human rights, neglected to press during a 13-14 February visit to Bahrain was that of Abduljalil Singace, an academic who is serving a life sentence over his participation in the 2011 uprising. An independent commission, established by the king of Bahrain, found that he has been tortured while imprisoned. He has been on hunger strike demanding the return the manuscript of his culture book for almost a year.

Political prisoner Akbar Ali Ali who was sentenced to 60 years had been only 15 when he was snatched by the khalifis who tortured him mercilessly. He is now unable to grasp what had happened to him. He

was electrocuted twice; the first by the torturers and the second by the psychologists who are trying to offset the effects of torture.

Sayed Reda Ali Mahfood, a political prisoner at bloc 15 has not been heard of for over two weeks. The inmates are forced to stay 23 hours a day in their cells and prevented from buying their needs. Once they managed to buy them, they are confiscated the following day. Another victim of this policy is sayed Adnan sayed Majed, held at bloc 7. He has not contacted his family for the past 12 days. Sayed Hassan Salman Fadel was only 15 when he was incarcerated by the khalifis and handed seven and half years and almost \$20,000 fines. Three years ago he was transferred to the isolation prison to lose whatever had remained of his childhood. He has undertaken seven hunger strikes to demand an end for his isolation but the khalifis refused to grant him his wish.

In the early hours of Sunday 19th June

scores of regime's militia dressed in ISIS-style outfits targeted the house of a native Bahraini woman and snatched her to the torture chambers. The people of her town, Sitra, were woken up by the noise of the khalifi attackers who took away Mrs Fadeela Abdul Rasool, her husband Sayed Radhi Al Alawi and his brother brother, Sayed Jaffar. They are accused of sheltering their son, Sayed Mohammad al Alawi who was being treated at the psychiatrist hospital for severe depression and other mental health issues. He left the hospital and went to the family's home. One hour later the regime's torturers arrived and took him back to their torture cells. He is serving an 18-year prison sentence for opposing the khalifi hereditary dictatorship.

The family of political prisoner Hussain Al Sa'di, who has acute Sickle cell disease and heart malfunction has complained of medical negligence by khalifis including their agents at their pseudo-ombudsman

## Khalifis lambasted for TB failure, Saudis criticised for death verdict

On 9th June Amnesty International issued a Press Release criticizing the khalifi regime's officials of "inadequate response" to TB cases. "Bahrain's inadequate response to address cases of tuberculosis in prison shows a disturbing lack of concern for prisoners' health and puts their right to health at grave risk. The prison authorities have stood by for too long in the face of the risk of further infections," said Amna Guellali, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa. "The Bahraini authorities must immediately provide people in prison who are sick with all necessary medical care. They should put in place measures to prevent the spread of the illness, including access to voluntary testing for tuberculosis for people with symptoms. Authorities should further investigate any allegations of delayed access to health care and hold those responsible to account." The numbers of Covid-19 cases among the political prisoners at Bloc 17 of the Dry Dock prison has increased to 17. Despite their pleas, regime officials have refused to address the complaints of infected inmates despite their harrowing symptoms. Families of political prisoners have expressed their deep-founded worries about the health situation of their loved ones in the khalifi jails. The sister of Abdul Jabbar Ahmad Ali who is held at Bloc12 of Jau prison said: After discovering the TB cases in the prison I express my worry and fear for his life and demand his immediate and unconditional release. The sister of political prisoner Hussain Ali Al Sa'di expressed similar worries and fears and calls for his release. The sisters of Mohammad Al Daqqaq (held at Bloc 14 of Jau), the sister of the four jailed brothers Jaber, Taher, Ibrahim and Ali at Blocs 10 and 13 of Jau said the same. So did the mother of Ahmad Al Ujaimi and the wives of of Ali Hassan Hammad and Ahmed Ali

Mohammad.

On 14th June Prisoners of Conscience at Bloc 7 (formerly Bloc 15) stopped making calls to their families or going outside to the courtyard. They are protesting lack of medical treatment and cutting the time of the outside exercise to 45 minutes a day. Hassan Bati is a Bahraini political prisoner with TB who says he fears he will die soon. Inmates say when they pleaded for his care this week, an officer said 'Let him die of TB', walked away and laughed.

The khalifi regime summoned several people to appear at various torture centres. Munir Mushaima, brother of executed innocent Bahraini youth, Sami Mushaima, was asked to appear at the Budaya station. Abdul Majid Abdulla (Hajji Sumood) and Ali Muhanna were summoned to the same station and interrogated about their participation in a peaceful protest on 28th April at Abu Saiba town.

The health of Dr Abdul Jalil al-Singace is worsening after almost a year on hunger strike. His sugar levels are fluctuating downward and is experiencing bouts of shivering. He is denied the necessary medical treatment on orders from the royal court. To force him to end his action he has been banned from the sugar he uses in tea and the bi-weekly blood tests have been interrupted. He also has high blood pressure and low protein levels. He has not been given the results of MRI scan of his shoulders taken last October. Although doctors had asked for X-rays of the head in January this has not been done. International support for Dr Al Singace has continued. A message on twitter said: Amnesty International's Secretary General, Agnes Callamard stands in solidarity with Abduljalil Al Singace who has been on hunger strike for 337 days, demanding the return of his confiscated research. Bahrain must release him immediately and unconditionally!!! #FreeAlsingace.

Saudi Arabia's Court of Appeal has decided to uphold a death sentence for child defendant Abdullah al-Howaiti. The Saudi justice system continues to rely on the torture-induced 'confession' of a 14-year-old boy to convict him for a crime he could not have committed. This not only defies United Nations experts' plea that his death sentence be reversed, it demonstrates once again that Saudi Arabia's claim to have abolished the death penalty for child defendants is nothing more than a disingenuous PR stunt. Sentencing a child to death is an act of unbearable cruelty. Abdullah has spent his teenage years fearing he will be executed and each court ruling subjects him to more severe emotional trauma. He must be released immediately.

Yesterday, 13 human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch said in a joint letter that US President Joe Biden's expected visit to Saudi Arabia to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman risks encouraging new abuses and further entrenching impunity. The Biden administration should secure clear and concrete commitments on human rights with Saudi authorities prior to the visit, including on the government's relentless crackdown on freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and speech. Before any visit, Biden should meet with Saudi human rights defenders outside the country, secure the release of detained dissidents, and the removal of arbitrary travel bans on human rights activists and others, including US citizens. "President Biden should recognize that any meeting with a foreign official provides them instant credibility on a global stage, whether intended or not," said Lama Fakih, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "Meeting MBS without human rights commitments would vindicate Saudi leaders who believe there are no consequences for egregious rights violations."

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offices. Political prisoner, Jassim Mohammad Kuwayid has been denied medical treatment for his numerous cysts in his feet and thighs. His condition has recently worsened but has not received treatment. He is left to die slowly. The sister of Ali BuHamid, a political prisoner at Bloc 7 of Jau prison is also denied medical care. The inmates of that bloc are also denied the freedom to exercise their religious rituals.

The khalifi dictators have summoned scores of native Bahrainis to Al Nu'aim police station for interrogation about their active participation in a protest two months ago in support of Palestinian cause and calling for the liberation of Al Quds from the Israeli occupation. Peaceful protests and expression of opinion are not tolerated by the hereditary dictatorship.

One month ahead of President Joe Biden's trip to Saudi Arabia, the District of Columbia is renaming the street in front of the Saudi embassy Jamal

Khashoggi Way, trolling Riyadh for its role in the killing of the dissident Saudi activist and journalist in 2018. With members of the D.C. Council in attendance, a Jamal Khashoggi Way sign was unveiled directly in front of the embassy's main entrance. "We intend to remind the people who are hiding behind these doors ... that we hold them responsible and we will hold them accountable for the murder of our friend," said Sarah Leah Whitson, executive director of DAWN, the pro-Arab world democracy organization founded by Khashoggi prior to his death. Whitson also criticized what she called the "shameless capitulation" of the Biden administration for seeking improved relations with the Saudi government and scheduling an official presidential visit to the kingdom.

Yesterday, Saudi activists marked five years

of Mohammad Bin Salman's rise to power with feelings of disgust, disappointment and frustration. Since his father, Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud succeeded to the throne in January 2015, his son Mohammed bin Salman has gained ever-greater powers and influence. In 2015, he was appointed Defence Minister, Deputy Crown Prince and Chair of the kingdom's vast sovereign wealth fund, the Public Investment Fund (PIF), before being made Crown Prince on 21 June 2017 and becoming de facto ruler of the country. In those five years, repression has intensified; women incarcerated, religious scholars detained and tortured and hundreds beheaded and crucified. This year over 100 innocent people were slaughtered by the regime headed by MBS. President's Biden forthcoming meeting with MBS next month has been widely criticised.

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## PENWrites: Dr Abduljalil Al-Singace

Dr Abduljalil Al-Singace is an award-winning academic, activist, and blogger from Bahrain. He has spent the last decade in prison, where he is serving a life-sentence for his role in the 2011 pro-democracy protests.

In July 2021, Dr Al-Singace launched a hunger strike to protest his ill-treatment in prison, in particular the confiscation of a manuscript he had been working on for years. Amid mounting concerns for his health and well-being, PEN is continuing to call for his immediate and unconditional release.

### Background

In 2010, leading Bahraini academic and blogger Dr Abduljalil Al-Singace visited the UK to attend a seminar at the House of Lords. During the seminar, he described the deteriorating human rights situation in his native Bahrain, speaking at length about the ‘triad of suppression’:

[There are] three pillars ensuring that activists and NGOs who work on exposing violations are seized and [condemned] somehow, ensuring that they are suppressed. The first is the use of force, torture and ill-treatment. [The] second is the use of the law. And [the] third is the judicial apparatus and procedures.

On returning home to Bahrain with his family, Dr Al-Singace was arrested at

Bahrain International Airport. He was held incommunicado and in solitary confinement for six months, during which he was reportedly subjected to torture and ill-treatment, including verbal and physical assault.

Dr Al-Singace was freed in February 2011 following widespread calls by anti-government protestors for political reform and the release of political prisoners. However, just a month later, he was among 13 opposition activists to be arrested for their roles in the pro-democracy protest movement. In June 2011, he was sentenced to life in prison.



In the decade since, the international community, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and leading human rights organisations, have continually raised his case and called for his immediate and unconditional release.

Dr Al-Singace relies on a wheelchair for mobility. He also suffers from post-polio syndrome, heart, eye, and sinus problems. Despite this, prison authorities have frequently denied him the specialist medical treatment he requires, citing his refusal to wear a prison uniform as the reason he cannot attend appointments outside the prison compound. At times, Dr Al-Singace has also been denied access to books, television, radio, and even pen and paper. Dr Al-Singace has launched several hunger strikes during his time in detention, in order to protest prison conditions and ill-treatment, most recently on 8 July 2021. PEN is gravely concerned for his health and well-being and continues to call for his immediate release.

Prior to his detention, Dr Al-Singace was a lecturer in the Mechanical Engineering department at the University of Bahrain. He holds a PhD in Impact Mechanics from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, now the University of Manchester, and authored his own blog.

**Send a message of support and solidarity to Dr Abduljalil Al-Singace**

## Liz Truss unable to name any occasion she challenged a Gulf state on HR

*'You can't remember one?' foreign secretary asked – despite pledge to 'hold those who violate human rights to account'*

Rob Merrick, Deputy Political Editor, The Independent 28th June

Liz Truss has failed to name a single occasion when she has challenged a Gulf state on human rights abuses – despite promising to hold its leaders “to account”.

Challenged by MPs – as the UK seeks a controversial trade deal with a six-nation bloc including Saudi Arabia and Bahrain – the foreign secretary was unable to back up a claim that she raises concerns.

Ms Truss told the foreign affairs committee she would have to provide details later of the “precise timing” of when Gulf leaders have been challenged about human rights violations.

“You can't remember a single human rights issue you have raised with a Gulf States leader?” asked Chris Bryant, a Labour member of the committee, suggesting the government believes it is “fine to do business” provided a country has not invaded another.

But Ms Truss defended opening talks with the Gulf Cooper-

ation Council (GCC), arguing the need for “alternative energy sources” to counter Russia must be the priority.

“We are not dealing in a perfect world. We are dealing in a world where we need to make difficult decisions,” she told the committee.

Mr Bryant pointed out that Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Crown Prince, was held responsible for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and that the country recently executed 81 people in a single day.

But Ms Truss described Saudi Arabia as “an important partner of the UK”, adding: “I think it is right that we build that closer trading relationship with Gulf states.”

She added: “Is every country that we work with exactly in line with United Kingdom policy on everything? No, they are not. But they are important allies of the United Kingdom.”



Ms Truss also confirmed the primary aim of UK overseas aid spending has shifted from alleviating poverty to “geo-politics” and challenging the rising threat of China. Her new strategy is focused on “promoting freedom and democracy around the world” to “challenge the Chinese Belt and Road initiative”, the foreign secretary said.

Ms Truss also rubbished French claims that the UK is interested in joining a loose new “European political community” grouping, being pursued by Emmanuel Macron.

The French president claimed Boris Johnson was enthusiastic in their weekend meeting, but she told the committee “That’s not true. We have not agreed to that.”

The UK is instead striking bilateral agreements with EU countries and views the G7 as the key economic alliance for Britain after Brexit, she said.

Ms Truss said the government is still considering seizing the assets of sanctioned Russian oligarchs – an idea first put forward in February – with the proceeds going towards victims of the Ukraine invasion.