

# URGENT ACTION

## BAHRAIN AUTHORITIES ARREST YET ANOTHER CHILD

**In a month that has seen an increasing number of children detained in Bahrain, 14-year-old Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubbar has been arrested and the Public Prosecution has extended his detention pending investigation. The boy has reportedly been charged with burning tyres and is currently held in a juvenile detention centre.**

Fourteen-year-old **Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubbar** was first arrested by the police on 17 September 2013 when he, his family and others were celebrating the birthday of a Shi'a Imam in a Hussainiya (Shi'a mosque) in the village of al-Sahla, west of Manama, the capital. He was taken to the al-Khamis police station at around 7pm. He was questioned for nearly three hours in connection with rioting and burning of tyres near al-Sahla village that same day. A police officer reportedly asked him to become an informant and gave him his telephone number.

The boy's father went to the police station at around 10pm on the same day and managed to convince the police to release his son. He had to sign a document pledging that he would take his son back to the same police station the next morning. On 18 September the police took Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubbar to the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) where he was interrogated by a prosecutor, without the presence of a lawyer, for several hours. The Prosecutor charged him with burning tyres and ordered his detention for seven days pending investigation.

Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubbar was then taken by the police to the al-Khamis police station where he had medical check-ups before being transferred to a juvenile detention centre, controlled by the Ministry of the Interior, in 'Issa Town, in central Bahrain. On 25 September he was brought again before the Public Prosecution, which ordered his detention for another seven days pending investigation. His parents were able to visit him in detention on 23 September and his father told Amnesty International that they are very concerned, especially as their son has now missed two weeks of his first year of secondary school education.

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

- Urging the Bahraini authorities to immediately release Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubar;
- Urging the Bahraini authorities, should there be any reasonable grounds for bringing formal charges against Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammed, to ensure that he is treated in accordance with the international standards of juvenile justice and that under these standards children may only be imprisoned as a measure of last resort;
- Expressing concern that his detention is interfering with his schooling

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 NOVEMBER 2013 TO:**

#### King

Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa  
Office of His Majesty the King  
P.O. Box 555  
Rifa'a Palace, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1766 4587 (keep trying)  
**Salutation: Your Majesty**

#### Minister of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah Al Khalifa  
Ministry of Interior  
P.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1723 2661  
Twitter: @moi\_Bahrain  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Abdullah Al Khalifa  
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
P. O. Box 450, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1753 1284  
Email: minister@justice.gov.bh  
Twitter: @Khaled\_Bin\_Ali

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the last two years scores of Bahraini children were detained in connection with ongoing anti-government protests. They were suspected of participating in “illegal gatherings”, rioting, burning tyres or throwing Molotov cocktails on police patrols. Some have been released but dozens are currently being tried or being held without trial pending investigation. In a number of cases children have reportedly been tortured or otherwise ill-treated to force them to sign “confessions”. In other cases, they were formally charged with criminal offences under the Penal Code and the 2006 anti-terrorism law, tried as adults, convicted and sentenced to prison terms.

Provisions in Bahraini legislation with regards to children, including those affecting children in conflict with the law, flout international standards of juvenile justice. Bahrain’s Penal Code (Article 32) establishes a minimum age of criminal responsibility of 15, but in reality the legal minimum age of criminal responsibility is seven years, which is extremely low compared to internationally accepted standards. According to the 1976 Juvenile Law a child is someone not exceeding 15 years of age, whereas the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Bahrain in 1992, defines a child as anyone below the age of 18. On 6 August 2013 the King, Shaikh Hamad Bin ‘Issa Al Khalifa, issued two emergency decrees including one amending the 1976 juvenile law which now stipulates that if anyone under 16 years of age takes part in a demonstration, public gathering or sit-in, his or her parents will be warned in writing by the Ministry of Interior. If six months after the warning the juvenile is found in a new demonstration his or her father could face jail, a fine or both.

Principles of juvenile justice, which would apply to anyone under the age of 18 who comes into contact with the criminal justice system, include: detention or imprisonment only as a measure of last resort – under regular review and for the shortest appropriate time and a commitment to the use of alternatives to detention whenever possible; prohibition of solitary confinement; separation of children in detention facilities from adult detainees; and attention to the particular needs of children in custody and an emphasis on reformation and social rehabilitation of child prisoners.

Two and a half years after the popular uprising in Bahrain, and beneath the fanfare of reform, prisoners of conscience, including some arrested during the protests, remain behind bars and the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly continue to be suppressed. In recent months, not only have prisoners of conscience not been released, but more people have been jailed simply for daring to express their views, whether via Twitter or on peaceful marches. Bahraini courts have appeared more concerned with toeing the government’s line than offering effective remedy to Bahrainis and upholding the rule of law.

On 12 September the European Parliament passed a resolution calling for the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Bahrain. Amongst other recommendations, the resolution urges the Bahraini authorities to respect the rights of juveniles, to refrain from detaining them in adult facilities, and to treat juveniles in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Bahrain is a party. Also in mid-September a joint statement signed by 47 countries at the UN Human Rights Council expressed concerns about the ongoing human rights violations in Bahrain.

Name: Sayed Hassan Sayed Mohammad Shubbar  
Gender m/f: m

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