

# URGENT ACTION

## OPPOSITION ACTIVIST ON HUNGER STRIKE

**Prisoner of conscience Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, one of the 13 jailed prominent Bahraini opposition activists, went on hunger strike on 25 August in protest at his arbitrary arrest and detention. His health might deteriorate rapidly.**

Prisoner of conscience **Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja**, a dual Bahraini-Danish national, started a hunger strike on 25 August. He had told his family the previous day when they visited him in prison that he go on a full hunger strike, and would refuse to be taken to either hospital or the prison clinic. His family fear that his health will deteriorate so rapidly that he will die.

The Public Prosecution visited Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja on 27 August. He demanded to be released. Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja also phoned his family. His voice was weak and he told them that he was losing weight rapidly, his blood sugar levels and his blood pressure had dropped, and that he had started drinking water with added salts and glucose to gain energy. He also said he was being checked by a doctor and a nurse every two hours and being videoed.

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention had found Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja's detention arbitrary in May 2012 and called for his immediate release.

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

- Calling on the Bahraini authorities to release Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja immediately and unconditionally;
- Calling on them to order an impartial investigation into Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 OCTOBER 2014 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 insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, 54, is a former protection co-ordinator with human rights NGO Frontline. He went on hunger strike for 110 days in 2012 in protest at his detention and life prison sentence.

At its 63rd session in April/May 2012, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD) considered Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja's detention to be arbitrary and in contravention of Articles 19, 20 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantee the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly and Articles 9(3), 14, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which guarantee the rights to freedom of association and assembly as well as the rights not to be arbitrarily detained and to have a fair trial before an independent and impartial court established by law. In view of these considerations the UNWGAD called on the government of Bahrain to release Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja immediately.

He and 12 other opposition activists were arrested between 17 March and 9 April 2011. Most were arrested in the middle of the night by groups of security officers who raided their houses and took them to an unknown location, where they were held incommunicado for weeks. Many of them alleged they were tortured during their first few days of detention when they were being interrogated by officers from the National Security Agency (NSA). None of them was allowed to see their lawyers during NSA interrogations just after they were arrested. Some saw their lawyers during questioning by the military prosecutor ahead of the trial, while others were only allowed to see them during the first court hearing in May 2011, which was the first time any of the activists had seen their families since they were arrested.

Bahrain's National Safety Court, a military court, announced its verdict on 22 June 2011, and sentenced them to between two years and life in prison on charges including "setting up terror groups to topple the royal regime and change the constitution". Seven of the 13 activists were sentenced to life imprisonment: Hassan Mshaima', 'Abdelwahab Hussain, 'Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad, Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad and Sa'eed Mirza al-Nuri. Four people, Mohammad Hassan Jawwad, Mohammad 'Ali Ridha Isma'il, Abdullah al-Mahroos and 'Abdul-Hadi 'Abdullah Hassan al-Mukhodher, were sentenced to 15 years in prison. Two people, Ebrahim Sharif and Salah 'Abdullah Hubail al-Khawaja, brother of 'Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, were given five-year prison terms. On 28 September 2011, in a session that lasted only a few minutes, the National Safety Court of Appeal, a military appeal court, upheld all the convictions and sentences imposed on the 13 opposition activists. On 30 April 2012, the Court of Cassation in Manama ordered them to appear before a civilian court to have their appeals heard. Their appeal before a civilian appeal court started on 22 May 2012. The High Criminal Court of Appeal upheld their sentences on 4 September 2012.

For more information on this case and others see the reports *Flawed Reforms: Bahrain fails to achieve Justice for protesters*, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/014/2012/en>, *Reform shelved, repression unleashed*, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/062/2012/en> and *"Freedom has a price": Two years after Bahrain's uprising*, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/005/2013/en>.

Name: 'Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja

Gender m/f: m

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