

## **Bahrain Upholds Convictions for Nine Medics, Continues to Ignore Human Rights Obligations**

Bahrain's Court of Cassation [upheld the convictions and sentences](#) of nine Bahraini medics today, ranging from one month to five years in prison. The medics, who were originally sentenced by a military court to five to 15 years in prison, were allegedly tortured into giving false confessions during their detention last year. They were released from custody during their appeal.

"Bahrain has wasted yet another opportunity to prove that it can comply with the rule of law. Instead, it has chosen to uphold political charges against nine health professionals for treating wounded protesters and for informing the foreign media of protesters' injuries," said Husain Abdulla, Director of Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB). "These people are being punished for simply doing their jobs and speaking out against the government's use of excessive force. The Government of Bahrain will stop at nothing to stifle dissent."

The nine medics were originally tried before the military court last year as part of a larger group of 20 health professionals. Of those 20, two medics, who had been sentenced by the military court *in absentia* to 15 years' imprisonment, remain at large. They did not appeal their sentences. Another nine health professionals were acquitted in June of this year, while the remaining nine had their sentences reduced. It is those remaining nine individuals whose appeal was rejected today. Three of the medics have been released after serving short sentences, while the remaining six have not completed their sentences and are subject to arrest and detention.

The court's decision comes two weeks after the Government of Bahrain [accepted](#) 145 of the 176 recommendations made by the UN Human Rights Council during Bahrain's [Universal Periodic Review](#), a process during which UN member states undergo review of their human rights records. Among the recommendations Bahrain accepted were those which required the release of prisoners of conscience, upholding the right to a fair trial, and holding officials accountable for human rights abuses committed during last year's protest.

"The Government of Bahrain has lost whatever credibility it might have had. To go from agreeing to implement the Human Rights Council's recommendations to completely ignoring them in the course of less than two weeks is a farce," said Abdulla. "Today's verdict—one in a long series of verdicts against pro-democracy advocates and human rights defenders—is proof that the international community can no longer wait for Bahrain to reform while people continue to suffer."