

## **Bahrain Revokes Citizenship of 31 Dissidents, Including ADHRB's Director**

In a stunning display of disdain for its human rights obligations, the Government of Bahrain [announced](#) today, in an “urgent” message, that it had revoked the citizenship of 31 Bahraini activists, including ADHRB Director Husain Abdulla. Husain’s full name, as listed in the announcement, is Hussain AbdulShaheed Hubail. Although Bahrain’s [Citizenship Act](#) stipulates that citizenship may be revoked by order of the king, no such order has yet been made public.

In its vaguely-worded statement, the government claimed that nationality is reevaluated when a citizen “causes damage to state security.” [According to](#) one political opposition leader, many of the individuals on the list who had been charged by a military court for harming state security last year were later acquitted of such charges, raising questions about the sincerity of the government’s reason for revoking citizenship. Some [believe](#) that the government’s action is politically motivated, as most of the 31 individuals have been harshly critical of the government’s repression of human rights in Bahrain since the outbreak of protests last year.

“The Government of Bahrain has been systematically targeting activists for years. The decision to revoke our citizenship now, just two weeks before the one-year anniversary of the [Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry report](#), appears to be yet another attempt by the government to silence dissent,” said ADHRB Director Husain Abdulla. “I expect such actions will have the opposite effect, causing more people to doubt the government’s commitment to human rights.”

Although the government’s action is viewed as being politically motivated, it could have far more serious implications for activists who do not possess dual citizenship. Those individuals will become stateless as a result of this decision, in violation of international human rights law, likely leading to [significant hardships](#) for them.

“Over the course of the past 21 months, the Government of Bahrain has violated the right to life; the rights to free speech, expression, association, and peaceful protest; the rights to freedom from arbitrary arrest, torture, and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment; the rights to a fair trial and to be innocent until proven guilty; and the rights to work and to an education,” explained Mr. Abdulla. “In that respect, the government’s decision to now revoke citizenship rights is just another attempt to silence its critics. Unfortunately, I don’t think we’ve seen the end of attacks on dissidents by the Government of Bahrain.”