

May 23, 2014

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa  
Office of The King  
The Royal Court, Rifa'a Palace  
PO Box 555  
Manama  
Bahrain

Your Majesty,

We write as an informal group of organizations and individuals who are scholars, religious leaders, human rights advocates, and practitioners to express our concern about Abdulla Jaffar Abdulla, a 17-year-old American citizen currently detained in Bahrain, and ask that the charges against him be dismissed and that he be immediately released.

On 10 March 2014, Bahraini security forces arrested Abdulla and detained him arbitrarily. According to his family, Bahraini security officers repeatedly beat him during his arrest and incarceration to force a false confession of attending an illegal protest. Upon visiting him seven days after his arrest, Abdulla's family observed visible marks of abuse on his body which had been left untreated.

We are concerned that Abdulla Jaffar's treatment is but one example of the systemic use of violence against prisoners to elicit false confessions later used in court, in violation of international standards. His case is unfortunately not unique. On 7 October 2012, Bahraini security forces violently arrested another American citizen named [Tagi al-Maidan](#) and extracted a forced confession from him. This confession was eventually admitted into evidence at his criminal trial, resulting in a conviction that was widely denounced by the international community.

Such treatment stands in violation of Bahrain's international commitments and obligations, including the prohibition of evidence obtained by means of abuse, coercion, or torture into a court of law. [International law](#) also obligates the Kingdom to initiate a prompt and impartial investigation when there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture has been committed.

Abdulla Jaffar's trial has been postponed three times due to lack of witnesses, and by his trial date on 28 May 2014, he will have already spent more than 75 days in prison. With no evidence of any wrongdoing except for a confession which was obtained under duress, we call on the government to dismiss all charges against Abdulla Jaffar and arrange for his immediate release from detention.

We also call on your government to fulfill its obligations under international law and safeguard the protection of human rights and due process rights of all minors currently imprisoned in Bahrain. As such, we request your government to thoroughly investigate any allegations of torture and ill-

treatment used against Abdulla Jaffar and to ensure that he receives unfettered access to medical care for his injuries and ailments while in detention.

Thank you for consideration. We look forward to your prompt action on this matter.

Sincerely,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)

Child Rights International Network (CRIN)

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Human Rights Law Foundation

Institute for Gilgit Baltistan Studies

The Institute on Religion and Public Policy

Russian Ministries

Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church Of America

Secular Coalition for America

Individuals

Mr. C. Naseer Ahmad

Ms. Betsy Clarke

Mr. Brian Dooley

Dr. Harriett Nettles  
Founder, Voices of Understanding

Mr. Scott Bernard Peterson  
Chief Executive Officer, Global Youth Justice

CC: Ambassador Thomas C. Krajeski, US Embassy Manama; Ambassador Shaikh Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Bahrain Embassy, Washington DC