



UN Special Procedures release Joint Communications Report for HRC31

The Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council released the [13th iteration](#) of their joint communications report on Thursday, February 25, 2016, documenting allegations of human rights abuses from around the world. In the most recent edition of the report, the Special Procedures singled out Bahrain and Saudi Arabia as among the worst offenders of human rights throughout the globe, citing Bahraini violations in six different cases and Saudi Arabia in as many as ten. ADHRB has compiled summaries of each of these cases; you may find them below.

Bahrain

- 1) [Al-Wasat](#) – The Rapporteur on Expression complained that the Bahraini government had suspended the license of al-Wasat, Bahrain’s independent newspaper, due to dissemination of information affecting national unity and the Kingdom’s relationship with other countries. The Rapporteur was also concerned that Bahrain had intimidated al-Wasat’s staff over a period of several years, and that, though the suspension was lifted, its imposition would have a chilling effect on free speech in Bahrain.
- 2) [Shaikh Maytham al-Salman](#) – The Rapporteurs on Expression and Human Rights Defenders were concerned regarding the arbitrary arrest of human rights defender and inter-faith leader Shaikh Maytham al-Salman for allegedly “inciting hatred against the regime” and spreading false news. They additionally expressed concern regarding his alleged travel ban.
- 3) [Discrimination against Shia](#) – The Rapporteurs on culture, extreme poverty, and religion wrote of concerns that the Bahraini government had engaged in systemic discrimination against its Shia citizens through cultural, economic, educational, and social policies. The government allegedly targets Shia clerics for persecution and undermines the role of Shia in its official historical narrative. The government also allegedly discriminates against Shia in its citizenship, housing, and welfare policies, and has destroyed Shia mosques and sites of religious and cultural significance.
- 4) [Death Sentences of Mohamad Ramadan and Husain Moosa](#) – The Rapporteurs on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Summary Executions, and Torture wrote of concern that Bahraini citizens Mohamad Ramadan and Husain Moosa had been sentenced to death on the basis of confessions coerced by means of torture.
- 5) [Jau Prison](#) – The Rapporteurs on Health and Torture wrote concerning torture, poor conditions, and denial of access to health care in Jau Prison in relation to a violent crackdown on a prison protest on 10 March. Allegedly, the government has not undertaken an investigation against any security personnel involved in the assault.
- 6) [Ali Salman](#) – The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Rapporteurs on Expression, Assembly, Religion, and Human Rights Defenders expressed concern regarding the arbitrary detention of religious figure and political opposition leader Ali Salman.

Saudi Arabia

- 1) [Raef Badawi](#) – The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Rapporteurs on Expression, Religion, Human Rights Defenders and Torture wrote expressing concern regarding the imminent resumption of public flogging of human rights defender Raef Badawi for “insulting Islam and religious authorities.” Badawi is set to receive 1000 lashes in relation to his sentence from the Jeddah Criminal Court.



- 2) [Death Sentences against Drug Traffickers](#) – The Rapporteurs on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Summary Executions, Torture, and Trafficking expressed concern regarding the imminent execution of seven Pakistani nationals on charges of drug trafficking. According to the information received, Saudi public authorities fabricated the charges against the men and tortured them into confessing.
- 3) [Ali al-Nimr](#) – The Rapporteurs on Summary Executions and Torture wrote to express concern regarding the imminent execution of Ali al-Nimr, a relative of Shaikh Nimr who was a minor at the time of his arrest. The information received alleged that al-Nimr had been tortured, and that he could be executed by crucifixion at any time.
- 4) [Husain Abu al-Khair](#) – The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Rapporteurs on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Summary Executions, and Torture wrote concerning the alleged arbitrary death penalty imposed upon Jordanian national Husain Abu al Khair. Al Khair was allegedly tortured into confessing, and his sentence does not appear to meet the “most serious crimes” threshold.
- 5) [Destruction of Cultural and Religious Sites](#) - The Rapporteurs on Culture and Religion wrote concerning the alleged destruction of mosques and sites of religious, historical, and cultural importance in Saudi Arabia, especially sites important to Shia and Sufi religious and cultural identity. According to the information received, Saudi authorities have carried out this destruction over a period of years in an effort to prohibit or otherwise undermine religious practices not recognized by Saudi Arabia’s dominant interpretation of Islam.
- 6) [Dawood Hussain al-Marhoon](#) – The Rapporteurs on Assembly, Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Summary Executions, and Torture wrote concerning the alleged arbitrary death sentence against Saudi minor Dawood Hussain al-Marhoon for “sowing corruption and breaching security” in relation to his participation in protests. The information received indicated that al-Marhoon had been tortured into providing a coerced confession.
- 7) [Killings of Civilians in Yemen](#) – The Rapporteur on Summary Executions wrote concerning alleged indiscriminate airstrikes carried out by a Saudi-led military coalition leading to substantial civilian casualties in Yemen. Saudi-led coalition airstrikes have allegedly struck multiple residential compounds and wedding parties.
- 8) [Death Sentence against Ashraf Fayadh](#) – The Rapporteurs on Culture, Expression, Religion, Human Rights Defenders, Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Torture, and Summary Executions wrote concerning the imposition of the death sentence in an unfair trial against poet Ashraf Fayadh. Fayadh was apparently sentenced to death for apostasy without legal representation.
- 9) [Loujain al-Hathloul and Maysaa al-Amoudi](#) – The Working Groups on Arbitrary Detention and Discrimination against Women and the Rapporteurs on Expression and Human Rights Defenders wrote concerning the arrest of two Saudi female human rights defenders who drove cars in defiance of a ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia.
- 10) [Execution of Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr](#) – The Rapporteurs on Religion and Summary Executions wrote concerning the arbitrary imposition of the death penalty on Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, a Shia cleric and political opponent of the Saudi government. Sheikh Nimr has been executed since the time of this communication.