



13 August 2018

Hon. Jeremy Hunt
PO Box 6255
Milton Keynes
MK10 1XX
United Kingdom

Dear Hon. Jeremy Hunt,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) is gravely concerned by this weekend's attack on peaceful protester Ali Mushaima by the Bahraini Embassy in London. We urge you to immediately condemn the Embassy's unacceptable actions against Mushaima and to call on the Bahraini government to hold the perpetrator(s) accountable to prevent further reprisals.

As you are aware (see our communication dated 2 August 2018, which received a reply from the Arabian Peninsula Joint Unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [FCO]), Ali Mushaima has launched a hunger strike outside the Bahraini Embassy in London to protest against the government's mistreatment of his father, Hassan Mushaima, who is a prisoner of conscience in Bahrain. In the early hours of the morning of 12 August 2018, an unidentified individual believed to be an Embassy official threw a large amount of unknown liquid from the ambassador's balcony onto Mushaima, who was sleeping below. The liquid, which penetrated Mushaima's umbrella, was foamy and Mushaima initially feared that it was acid or boiling water. British police arrived at the scene and attempted to contact Embassy officials, but they did not reply. The perpetrator and the liquid both remain unidentified, and it is as yet unclear if the attack will have any adverse effects on Mushaima's health. Mushaima is [concerned for his safety](#) and is worried that the Embassy or other government officials will intensify measures to silence him or end his hunger strike.

The Bahraini Embassy in London has previously harassed Mushaima and other peaceful protesters, and this latest incident constitutes a clear reprisal against his ongoing hunger strike. In January 2017, after Bahraini authorities executed three torture survivors following an unfair trial in the kingdom, demonstrators gathered outside the Embassy in London to condemn what a United Nations (UN) [expert described](#) as "extrajudicial killings." One of the three prisoners executed by the Bahraini government was Sami Mushaima, a cousin of Ali Mushaima, and the latter was present at the London protests. On 20 January 2017, officials [threw boiling hot water](#) from the Embassy balcony, dousing some of the protesters. British police investigated the incident as a "common assault" and Stewart McDonald, the SNP Member of Parliament for Glasgow South raised the issue with the FCO.

That same month, an unidentified Bahraini Embassy official specifically threatened Ali Mushaima with arbitrary detention and violence, saying that he would eventually be subjected to the same abuses as his father, who was tortured and unjustly imprisoned in Bahrain.

These attacks are part of a [consistent pattern](#) of Bahraini government harassment and intimidation against protesters, activists, and human rights groups both within the kingdom and around world. Since violently suppressing the pro-democracy movement in 2011, Bahraini authorities have virtually closed civil society space at home and worked to silence international criticism through threats of abuse, blanket travel restrictions, punitive denaturalization, and fabricated criminal charges. Retaliatory measures commonly escalate to outright violence and torture. In 2015, for example, activists attending

the UN Human Rights Council were threatened with reprisal by the Bahraini delegation; [authorities then repeatedly](#) detained and tortured woman human rights defender Ebtisam al-Saegh for her work at the Council in 2017. Likewise, after he participated in the Council that same year, the government [jailed and abused](#) three family members of Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, the London-based director of advocacy for the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), making good on threats to retaliate against him for his continued international human rights activism.

In 2017, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Andrew Gilmour [documented](#) this pattern in the office's eighth report on reprisals, finding that the Bahraini government is engaging in an "ongoing trend of major harassment and intimidation against human rights defenders." He cited Bahrain as one of the most "egregious" perpetrators of such abuses in the world.

As a result, we are extremely concerned by this weekend's events and the risk of further escalation. In 1984, a similar pattern of reprisals spiraled into outright violence in London's streets, when a Libyan Embassy official [opened fire](#) on protesters outside, wounding ten and killing a British police officer. Bahraini authorities regularly use excessive and lethal force against peaceful protesters domestically, and we are deeply worried that any future action against Ali Mushaima or other demonstrators in London could turn violent, or potentially deadly.

We therefore call on your office to clearly and unequivocally condemn the Embassy's actions against Ali Mushaima to the Government of Bahrain. We additionally urge you to insist the government to identify and hold the perpetrator(s) accountable to ensure such attacks do not continue.

Thank you for your attention on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Husain Abdulla', written over a horizontal line.

Husain Abdulla
Executive Director
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain