



## A Timeline of Bahraini Rights Abuses since Membership in the Council

On **12 October 2018**, Bahrain gained a seat on the Human Rights Council (HRC). Bahrain ran unopposed, effectively guaranteeing it membership despite an atrocious record of systematic human rights violations, including consistent acts of reprisal against activists for engaging with the HRC itself. Bahrain [received](#) 165 out of 193 votes during the Council elections, falling towards the bottom of Asia-Pacific states elected this year. Membership in the Council has not hindered Bahrain from committing human rights abuses, but has rather enabled them to continue to commit these abuses, while promoting their Membership in the Council as evidence of a positive human rights record.

### NOVEMBER 2018



On **4 November 2018**, the Bahraini High Court of Appeal overturned the acquittal of political prisoner and former opposition leader **Sheikh Ali Salman** and [sentenced](#) him to **life in prison** on political charges of “espionage” for participating in discussions with Qatar during the 2011 Arab Spring events in Bahrain. On **28 January 2019**, Bahrain’s Court of Cassation [rejected](#) Ali Salman’s final appeal, therefore upholding his sentence of life in prison. He has now exhausted all domestic remedies.

On **13 November 2018**, former Member of Parliament **Ali Rashed al-Asheeri** was **arrested for tweeting that he would boycott the elections** - the government [deemed](#) these tweets to be “critical of the country’s upcoming parliamentary elections.” He was later convicted of violating elections through “the use of force, threat or interference, or by participation in rallies or demonstrations” and sentenced to one month of community service for this tweet.



On **24 November 2018**, Bahrain held **elections** for the 40 seats of the lower house of parliament. As expected, these [elections](#) occurred with severe [restrictions](#) placed on civil and political society by the Bahraini government. The **opposition was effectively banned** from fully participating in the elections. All of the major opposition societies remained forcibly dissolved and new legislation banned anyone who had belonged to one of these political groups from ever seeking elected office. Likewise, the legislation banned anyone who has served six months or more in prison from holding office. This affected a large portion of the population, given that around 4,000 political prisoners remain in jail.

On **27 November 2018**, football player and **refugee Hakeem AlAraibi** was [arrested](#) in Thailand on the basis of an INTERPOL Red Notice for a conviction issued in absentia, using evidence obtained through torture. He was held in Thailand pending a **request for his extradition**. After a hard-fought advocacy campaign spanning multiple continents, the Bahraini authorities later rescinded their extradition request. Hakeem was detained for a total of 76 days. In response to calls for his release, the Bahraini government has publicly denounced the international community’s “external interference” in his case, calling these concerns from outside actors “unacceptable.”



### December 2018

In **December 2018** several death row inmates in Bahrain reported **ill treatment, torture, raids** of their cells, and **abusive behavior from prison guards**, including threats that they would all be executed in a matter of days.

On **25 December 2018**, Bahrain’s Court of Appeals **upheld the death sentence** for **Moosa Abdulla Moosa Jaafar**, a former student who was harassed by the Bahraini police, tortured, and sentenced to death in an unfair trial.



On **31 December 2018**, the Court of Cassation [upheld](#) the **five-year sentence** for human rights defender **Nabeel Rajab**, for tweets highlighting torture in Bahraini prisons and criticizing the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen. This was despite the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issuing an Opinion in his case, that his detention is arbitrary, in **violation to his rights of free expression**, and discriminatory on the basis of his human rights activities. He has now exhausted all domestic remedies and will remain in prison until 2023. Following calls from the international community and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for Nabeel's release, the Ministry of Interior published a statement alleging that his conviction has "nothing to do with freedom of expression."

## January 2019

On **22 January 2019**, Bahrain's Court of Cassation [upheld](#) a ruling which **dissolved the opposition group National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad)** and confiscated its assets. The Government of Bahrain launched legal proceedings to dissolve Wa'ad, the country's leading secular, leftist opposition society, in March of 2017, citing unsubstantiated allegations of "incitement of acts of terrorism and promoting violent and forceful overthrow of the political regime."



On **28 January 2019**, the Bahraini High Court of Appeals **confirmed the death sentences** against **Ali Mohamed Ali Mohamed Hakeem AlArab** and **Ahmed Isa Ahmed Isa AlMalali**, who both alleged torture to produce confessions and other fair trial rights violations. The Court of Appeals also **upheld the conviction of 115 Bahraini individuals** in the mass trial of the Zulfiqar Brigades, despite a previous communication on this case by the Special Procedures offices, alleging **torture** to produce confessions. On **31 January 2019**, an Appeals Court confirmed the **death penalty** against **Husain Abdulla Khalil Ebrahim**, which had been issued in absentia.



On **31 January 2019**, Bahrain authorities **re-arrested** prominent Shia cleric **Sayed Majeed AlMeshaal**, days after his release from prison on 28 January. He was re-arrested for making a speech condemning the revocation of Sheikh Isa Qassim's citizenship in 2016 and calling for witnesses in Sheikh Qassim's hometown of Diraz to speak out about abuse and extrajudicial killings there in May 2017. He was charged with "inciting hatred towards the regime."

## February 2019

On **6 February 2019**, **Zakeya AlBarboori** was convicted to **five years in prison** and **denaturalized** on terrorist charges, despite raising with the Court that the confession used against her at trial was obtained through officers exerting "strong pressure" throughout six days of interrogation. On **19 February 2019**, the Bahraini Fourth High Criminal Court **denaturalized 25 Bahrainis** and **sentenced nine individuals to life imprisonment** across three cases. There are now **over 800 Bahraini individuals that have been denaturalized** since 2012.

The Court of Cassation's final verdict against Bahraini human rights defender, Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei's, mother-in-law, **Hajer Mansoor Hassan**, brother-in-law, **Sayed Nizar Alwadaei** and cousin, **Mahmood Marzooq Mansoor**, is scheduled to be held on **25 February 2019**. All three individuals are imprisoned in reprisal for Sayed Ahmed's activism.