

19-March-2015

Bahrain: Human rights defenders Husain Abdulla and Abdulnabi Al-Ekri threatened at the Human Rights Council

,Husain AbdullaOn 15 March 2015 during a side event that was organised by Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), human rights defenders

Executive Director of ADHRB, and

Abdulnabi Al-Ekri

, President of Bahrain Transparency Society and member of the Bahrain Human Rights Observatory (BHRO), were reportedly threatened by MP Khalid Al-Shaer, Chairman of the Human Rights Committee in the Bahraini Parliament. This resulted in the need to bring UN security to prevent the MP from attending the event.

Al-Shaer reportedly threatened Al-Ekri that he will “be discussing things at the public prosecution” when returning to Bahrain. In addition to telling Abdulla that “I came to Geneva to see you,” he accused him of using ADHRB to “defame his homeland and spread lies.” He then added, “I know that you still have family residing in Bahrain and you can imagine what would have already happened to them [his family], if the government was truly bad.”

During the event, another member of Al-Shaer’s delegation took pictures of the Bahraini activists with her mobile phone. During previous Human Rights Council sessions, people accredited by the Government of Bahrain took pictures of human rights defenders as a means of intimidation. In addition, articles were written in the local Bahrain press <http://www.alwatannews.net/PrintedNewsViewer.aspx?ID=BAaNaDzsvsXPB> and <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=397594> defaming organisers. See

[733337Ta65u11Q933339933339](http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=397594)

Husain Abdulla informed the President of the Human Rights Council, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council and other bodies and mechanisms about this threatening incident.

The co-signed organisations believe that human rights defenders Husain Abdulla and Abdulnabi Al-Ekri have been targeted solely due to their co-operation with the UN system and in particular their role in documenting and reporting the continued human rights violations in Bahrain.

Attacks and intimidation against Bahraini human rights defenders for engaging with the UN human rights system have increased in recent years. Authorities continue to systematically target defenders who collaborate with the international mechanisms on politically-motivated charges using the judiciary, which lacks both independence and the most basic international standards. It is critical that the UN Human Rights Council addresses these threats and calls upon the Government of Bahrain to ensure the safety of human rights defenders returning to Bahrain after Geneva.

The co-signed organisations call on the government of Bahrain to:

1. ☐ ☐ ☐ Immediately stop the ongoing reprisals against human rights defenders who are engaging with the international mechanisms including the UN system;

2. ☐ ☐ ☐ Immediately stop the human rights violations as well as escalating attacks on human rights defenders;

3. Release all human rights defenders jailed in Bahrain, stop putting them on trial and lift the travel bans imposed on them;

4. ☐ ☐ ☐ Make the amendments and policy changes necessary to bring domestic legislation and procedures into conformity with Bahrain's international obligations and commitments to ensure and prevent violations of freedoms protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and

5. ☐ ☐ ☐ Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Bahrain are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals, and free of

all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Signed,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) ·

Amman Center for Human Rights Studies ·

Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI) ·

Arab Organization for Human Rights in Syria ·

Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF Network) ·

(BCHR) RightsBahrain Centre for Human ·

Bahrain Observatory for Human Rights (BOHR) ·

Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) ·

Bahrain Salam for Human Rights ·

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Information (CIHRS) ·

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation ·

Committee for the Defense of Democracy Freedoms and Human Rights in Syria ·

Damien McCormack – Irish Surgeon and activist ·

Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR) ·

Human rights Organization in Syria (MAF) ·

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders ·

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) ·

Iraqi Journalists Rights Defense Association (IJRDA) ·

Kurdish Organization to Defense Human Rights ·

Lawyer's Rights Watch Canada ·

Lualua Centre for Human Rights ·

Metro Centre to Defend Journalists in Iraqi Kurdistan ·

No Peace Without Justice ·

Rewangeh ·

Syrian Federation for Human Rights Organizations and Bodies ·

The Tunisian Intuitive for Freedom of Expression ·

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders ·