

URGENT ACTION

BAHRAINI PRISONER STILL ON FASTING PROTEST

Bahraini-Danish human rights defender and prisoner of conscience **Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja** reinstated his fasting protest on September 21, 2023, after prison authorities reneged on their promises including to transport him and other prisoners to appointments without handcuffs and in regular vehicles. His health remains critical due to his cardiac condition which has led to three emergency visits to hospital. He began his fast on August 9 to protest his continued denial of access to medical care and in solidarity with hundreds of prisoners in Jaw Prison.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Seventh Urgent Action 100.22**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

**Crown Prince and Prime Minister
Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa**
Court of the Crown Prince
P.O Box 29091, Riffa – Bahrain
Email (via contact form):
<http://www.crownprince.bh/en/contact>
Twitter: [@bahrainCPnews](#) [@BahrainPMO](#)

**Embassy of Bahrain in the United States
Ambassador Shaikh Abdulla Bin Rashid Al Khalifa**
3502 International Dr NW, Washington, DC 20008
Phone: (202) 342-1111
Email: ambsecretary@bahrainembassy.org
Twitter: [@bahdiplomatic](#)
Salutation: His Excellency

Your Highness,

Bahraini-Danish human rights defender **Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja**, 62, has been arbitrarily imprisoned since 2011 for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression during the 2011 popular uprising in Bahrain. He began a fasting protest on August 9, 2023, joining hundreds of prisoners in their mass hunger strike, but his fasting has exacerbated his cardiac condition.

On September 20, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja signed a document suspending his fasting protest after two prison officers promised Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja that all the prisoners held in the building housing him and the other opposition leaders, would no longer be transported to their appointments handcuffed and on board an armored bus and that he will soon have an appointment with a cardiologist and other specialists. The next day, one of his co-prisoners was due for a hospital appointment. When he arrived at the prison transport gate, the guards said that they knew nothing about the promises made to the prisoners. As a result, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja resumed his protest for the third time because prison authorities reneged on their promises.

We call upon your Highness to ensure that Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja is immediately and unconditionally released. In the meantime,, we urge you to ensure that the promises made to him and other prisoners of timely access to adequate health care and in regular transportation are met, and that he is protected from further torture and other ill-treatment.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prominent human rights defender and prisoner of conscience Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, aged 62, is serving a life sentence in Jaw prison for his role in leading peaceful protests during the 2011 popular uprising in Bahrain. He was convicted and sentenced following a grossly unfair military trial in 2011 and later at a retrial in 2012 by a civilian court on charges including “setting up terror groups to topple the royal regime and change the constitution”. Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja began a fasting protest on August 9, 2023, after the latest denial of adequate medical care by the prison authorities.

Although he experienced cardiac arrhythmia on February 28, 2023, it was not until June 1 that he had an appointment at the prison clinic with a cardiologist. The cardiologist did not have access to his medical file nor the necessary equipment to conduct a proper examination and stated that Al-Khawaja needed an X-ray and specialized medical monitoring in the hospital for several days, which the prison authorities refused to grant. On August 11, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja experienced strong cardiac arrhythmia and was taken to the prison clinic from where he was transferred to the Bahrain Defense Force hospital emergency service before being admitted to the intensive care unit. He was soon transferred back to his prison cell where he immediately resumed his protest.

On September 11, the prisoners halted their month-long mass hunger strike in response to promises by the prison administration to improve conditions, but on September 13, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja resumed his own fast when the prison canceled his scheduled hospital appointment with an ophthalmologist. He was rushed to hospital again on September 14, after he felt tightness in the chest and pain in his arm. There, he was seen by a cardiologist, but no tests were done. Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja immediately suspended his fasting for five days, to give the prison authorities the time to arrange an appointment with a cardiologist and for actual tests to be run. On September 19, he resumed his fasting after prison authorities failed to make a hospital appointment with a cardiologist.

Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja has also agreed to be handcuffed and transported on board an armored bus and against medical advice from prison doctors. During travel in the armored bus, prisoners at times kept wait in the vehicle for hours. International human rights mechanisms have said that the use of restraints on prisoners who do not pose a risk can constitute torture and other ill-treatment. Rule 47 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that restraints should only be used to prevent escape or to prevent prisoners from injuring themselves or others.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English / Arabic

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: November 9, 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja (he/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/7119/2023/en/>