



Uaa - Country: Bahrain

Bahrain: End the violations against teachers, unionists and students (24 October 2011)

The Bahraini authorities continue their punitive and vindictive campaign of repression against the pro-democracy movement. The Ministry of Education has further carried out an attack on the Bahrain Teachers Association (BTA) with the condemnation of the President of the teachers union, Mahdi Abu Dheeb, and Vice-President, Jalila Al-Salman. EI believes that they are prisoners of conscience condemned solely for exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly as leaders of the BTA.

[Help us end the violations against teachers, unionists and students! Click here to send an online message to Bahraini authorities now!](#)

Already 251 messages sent



Bahraini Teachers' Association President, Mahdi Abu Dheeb



On 25 September, the National Safety Court of First Instance – a Bahraini military court – sentenced Al-Salman and Mahdi Abu Dheeb, to three and ten years' imprisonment, for their involvement in peaceful protests in the capital, Manama, last March.

They were among several BTA board members arrested after calling for a teachers' strike during the civil uprisings for democracy. While their colleagues were released, both trade union leaders have been prosecuted on dubious charges of 'leaving work on purpose, encouraging others to do so, and taking part in illegal gatherings'.

King Al Khalifa's regime has also dissolved the BTA and has repressed teachers using harassment and intimidation that includes the suspension of salaries, mass dismissals, arbitrary arrests, detentions and, in some instances, allegations of torture. Many teachers had indeed responded to the call for strike action made in March to raise concern about the physical security of academics, education workers and students in education institutions. The government response has been violent repression and persecution.

Background Information

Over the past few months, the Bahraini regime has committed many violations against students and educators as a form of retribution to their participation and support of the pro-democracy movement. Since the declaration of a state of emergency in March, the authorities have conducted pre-dawn raids on the homes of many students and teachers, detaining some for months with no trial and depriving their families of any knowledge of their whereabouts.

Many teachers are currently awaiting trial while dozens have been sacked only to be replaced by unqualified volunteers. This is resulting in the deterioration of the quality of education in Bahrain as the volunteers are high school graduates with no background in teaching whatsoever. The educational environment in schools is of high risk for both students and teachers who have been attacked by riot police and are constantly being attacked by the pro-government administration.

Since the launch of the EI Urgent Action Appeal, 18 member organisations have written protest letters to the authorities (CITA-Cambodia, NEAD-Cambodia, CAUT-Canada, CSQ-Canada, CPC-Chile, DLF-Denmark, HKPTU-Hong Kong, NUTP-Malaysia, MUT-Malta, AOB-Netherlands, DAÜ-SEN-North Cyprus, KTOEOS-North Cyprus, UEN-Norway, SADTU-South Africa, FE.CC.OO-Spain, Lärarförbundet-Sweden, NTA-Taiwan and NUT-UK) and over 200 online messages have been sent.

TAKE ACTION NOW to urge the Bahraini authorities to release the teacher union leaders, to reinstate sacked teachers and academics, and to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of teachers and students and their unions.

What you can do

1. Send appeals, in English, Arabic or your own language, urging the Bahraini authorities to:

- Release immediately and unconditionally Jalila al-Salman and Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Deeb; protect them from torture or other ill-treatment; immediately set up a full, impartial and independent investigation into the reported ill-treatment of Jalila al-Salman and bring those responsible to justice;
- Reinstate the teachers dismissed and the students expelled, together with their salaries and scholarships;
- Respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of teachers, students and union activists in accordance with international standards;
- Engage in respectful dialogue to bring about a peaceful transition to democracy and a fair resolution of the current impasse and legitimate claims of the Bahraini people.

Send appeals to:

Documents and Links

[Bahrain: Council of Global Unions letter to Crown Prince of Bahrain \(2011\)](#)
[Bahrain: Amnesty International Appeal \(2011\)](#)
[Bahrain: Model letter to Bahraini authorities \(2011\)](#)
[Bahrain: Release detained teacher union leaders \(2011\)](#)

Contact Us

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Latest Updates

Bahrain: BTA court case postponed for fourth time to 30 May

EI has learned that the Supreme Criminal Appeals Court has adjourned the case of Mahdi Issa Abu Dheeb and Jalila Al-Salman, from the Bahraini Teachers Association (BTA), to 30 May, and refused to release Mahdi on bail once more. Both were arrested after a crackdown by authorities following pro-democracy demonstrations.

[Read more](#)

More on this country

[Bahrain: BTA court case postponed for fourth time to 30 May \(04 May 2012\)](#)
[EI pleads with Bahraini government officials to respect human and trade union rights \(26 April 2012\)](#)
[Bahrain: Decision on Mahdi Abu Dheeb's release deferred \(30 March 2012\)](#)
[Bahrain: Academic freedom under threat \(27 March 2012\)](#)
[Bahrain: Teacher leaders still detained \(21 March 2012\)](#)

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Copies to:

- - Diplomatic representatives of Bahrain accredited to your country.
- - EI (headoffice@ei-ie.org or fax +32 2 224 0606).

2. Encourage your individual union members to send online messages to the authorities through the EI website: www.ei-ie.org/uas/issues_actions.

3. Express your solidarity with the Bahraini Teacher Association, through EI.

4. Give visibility to the situation of teachers in Bahrain and the online appeal in your magazine, on your website, during meetings and via other appropriate means.

EI will of course keep you updated on all development. For additional information or to discuss possible action, contact the [***El Human and Trade Union Rights Coordinator***](#).

EI is grateful for your solidarity in support of our Bahraini colleagues.