

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



8 July 2024 MDE 11/8277/2024

BAHRAIN: JOINT LETTER ON DR. ABDULJALIL AL-SINGACE AS HE EXCEEDS THREE YEARS ON HUNGER STRIKE

King of Bahrain, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa,
Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa,

Your Majesties,

We write to you urgently on 8 July 2024, which marks three years since award-winning academic, blogger, and human rights defender Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace went on a liquid-only hunger strike in response to prison authorities' confiscation of his manuscript on Bahraini dialects of Arabic that he spent four years researching and writing.

Dr. Al-Singace, aged 62, is serving a life sentence and has spent over 13 years [arbitrarily detained](#) solely for exercising his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

On 3 April 2024, 28 rights groups [wrote](#) to you to mark 1,000 days since he began his hunger strike. For the past three years, Dr. Al-Singace has been sustaining himself only on multivitamin liquid supplements, tea with milk and sugar, water, and salts. We reiterate our calls for you to immediately release Dr. Al-Singace, who is wrongfully detained, and ensure that he receives the healthcare he urgently needs.

We regret that Dr. Al-Singace, along with other high-profile political leaders and activists, were not included in the recent royal pardons issued on the occasion of Eid by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa on [8 April](#) and 15 June 2024, respectively. According to [research](#) conducted by the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), the 8 April pardon resulted in the [release](#) of over 650 political prisoners, [accounting](#) for an estimated 41% of the total royal pardon. In contrast, the 15 June pardon [included](#) only eight political prisoners, representing an estimated only 1.5% of the total royal pardon, and most were serving short or alternative sentences. BIRD estimates that 546 political prisoners remain imprisoned in Bahrain, the majority of whom are held in Jau Prison.

Additionally, BIRD found that opposition leaders have been largely excluded from alternative sentencing measures and open prisons, which are cornerstones of Bahrain's prison reform plans.

We are concerned by recent updates received from Dr. Al-Singace through his family, wherein earlier this June, authorities twice failed to refill his medical prescriptions in a timely and appropriate manner. On both occasions, Dr. Al-Singace gave authorities three days to resolve the issue and then he escalated his hunger strike, consuming nothing but water. Shortly after his escalation, authorities provided him with his proper medications. All detainees must receive adequate healthcare, which is required under international law.

According to his doctors, Dr. Al-Singace has a low white blood cell count due to his hunger strike, and suffers from complex health issues including tremors, prostate issues, and shoulder pain. He also requires prescription glasses.

Dr. Al-Singace continues to be held in prolonged solitary confinement within his room in Kanoo Medical Centre, where he has been prohibited from going outside, having exposure to direct sunlight, and receiving the physiotherapy he requires for his disability. Additionally, authorities refuse to provide him with adequate crutches or provide replacements for the worn rubber tips for his crutches as well as other necessary items, such as medical slippers to prevent him from falling in the bathroom and a hot water bottle to relieve pain.

We respectfully request your urgent intervention and urge you to release Dr. Al-Singace immediately and unconditionally. In the meantime, we request that you ensure he is held in conditions that meet international standards, receives his medication without delay, has access to adequate healthcare, including access to specialists in compliance with medical ethics, and that his arbitrarily confiscated research is immediately transferred to his family members.

Sincerely,

1. Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD)
2. ALQST for Human Rights
3. Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
4. Amnesty International
5. Article 19
6. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
7. Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
8. DAWN
9. European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ECDHR)
10. FairSquare
11. Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
12. Human Rights First
13. Human Rights Sentinel
14. Human Rights Watch
15. IFEX
16. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
17. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
18. Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
19. No Peace Without Justice
20. PEN America
21. The Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)
22. The Rafto Foundation for Human Rights
23. Rights Realization Centre
24. Salam for Democracy and Human Rights

25. Scholars at Risk
26. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders