UA 128/12 8 May 2012 **URGENT ACTION** MDE 11/029/2012

# **PROMINENT ACTIVIST ARRESTED IN BAHRAIN**

# BAHRAIN

**Nabeel Rajab (m)**

Prominent human rights activist Nabeel Rajab was arrested on 5 May at Bahrain International Airport in relation to tweets he posted. He has been charged with “insulting a national institution” and is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Nabeel Rajab, the director of the Bahrain Human Rights Centre, was arrested in the evening of 5 May after he landed at Bahrain International Airport, in Manama, the capital. He had flown from Lebanon where he had been attending a human rights workshop. He was taken to al-Houra police station and the following day he appeared before a representative from the Public Prosecution.

On 26 April Nabeel Rajab had received a summons for questioning at the Public Prosecutor’s Office in connection with a complaint made against him by the Ministry of Interior. He did not go because he was about to travel abroad. Nabeel Rajab was charged with “insulting a national institution” (the Ministry of Interior) in his tweets. He told the prosecutor that all tweets published in his account are his own, but he refused to answer other questions. The prosecutor issued a seven-day detention order pending an investigation. He is being held in al-Houra police station and he has received visits by his family and his lawyer.

On 6 May, Nabeel Rajab was also taken to a lower criminal court in another case in which he is charged with calling on people to join him in illegal marches against the government. The trial was adjourned until 22 May.

Nabeel Rajab has previously been subjected to ill-treatment. On 6 February 2012 he was on a protest when riot police hit him several times in the face, head and back with truncheons. He was briefly hospitalized for treatment.

**Please write immediately in English, Arabic or your own language:**

\* Expressing concern that Nabeel Rajab has been detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression and urging his immediate and unconditional release;

\* Urging the Bahraini authorities to protect him from torture or other ill-treatment.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JUNE 2012 TO: (Time difference = GMT + 3 hrs / BST + 2 hrs)**

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| KingShaikh Hamad bin ‘Issa Al Khalifa Office of His Majesty the KingP.O. Box 555Rifa’a Palace, al-Manama, Bahrain**Fax:** 00973 1766 4587**Salutation:** Your Majesty | Minister of InteriorShaikh Rashid bin ‘Abdullah Al Khalifa Ministry of InteriorP.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain**Fax:** 00973 1723 2661**Twitter:** @moi\_Bahrain**Salutation:** Your Excellency | Public ProsecutorMr ‘Ali al-Bu’aineinPublic Prosecution OfficeP.O. Box 450, al-Manama, Bahrain**Fax:** 00973 1753 0884**Salutation:** Dear Mr ‘Ali al-Bu’ainein |

**PLEASE SEND COPIES OF YOUR APPEAL TO**

Sheikh Khalifa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa
Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, 30 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8QB

**Fax:** 020 7201 9183 **E-mail:** information@bahrainembassy.co.uk **Website:** <http://www.bahrainembassy.co.uk>

**PLEASE CHECK WITH THE INDIVIDUALS AT RISK PROGRAMME AT AIUK BEFORE SENDING APPEALS AFTER 19 JUNE 2012**

Individuals at Risk Programme, Amnesty International UK, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA, 0207 033 1572, iar@amnesty.org.uk.