

**Middle  
East  
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26 September 2019

Sheikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa  
Office of His Majesty the King  
P.O. Box 555  
Rifa'a Palace, al-Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1766 4587

Your Majesty,

We write to you on behalf of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) to express our profound concern at the continuing maltreatment and deteriorating health of Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace, a Bahraini citizen sentenced to life imprisonment by your government for taking part in peaceful political protest in 2011. We have written four letters to you since 2013, most recently in March 2017, about the conditions of Dr. Al-Singace's imprisonment and his lack of access to medical care, among other issues. Our latest letter is prompted by new reports of a serious further deterioration in Dr. Al-Singace's health, exacerbated by the long-term mistreatment he is alleged to have faced in prison.

MESA was founded in 1966 to support scholarship and teaching on the Middle East and North Africa. The preeminent organization in the field, the Association publishes the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and has over 2500 members worldwide. MESA is committed to ensuring academic freedom and freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region in North America and elsewhere.

Dr. Al-Singace was a Professor of Engineering at the University of Bahrain between 1995 and his arrest in March 2011. During his tenure at UoB, Dr. Al-Singace published regularly in academic journals, served on multiple university committees, and was a board member of the Bahrain Academic Society as well as a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineering. Dr. Al-Singace was arrested on 17 March 2011 after he participated in peaceful demonstrations in support of political reform in Bahrain and was subsequently tried before a military court and sentenced to life in prison on a charge of attempting to overthrow the government. We reiterate our view, expressed in our previous letters to you, that Dr. Al-Singace is a prisoner of conscience targeted simply because the views he holds do not accord with your government's position.

Local reports collected by the Gulf Centre for Human Rights have indicated that Dr. Al-Singace suffers from mounting ill health that includes prolonged chest pain and numbness in his fingers, in addition to spinal problems caused by his maltreatment and torture and sickle cell disease worsened by the type and quality of food provided to him in prison. The Gulf Centre for Human Rights has noted also that prison authorities at Jaw Prison have deprived Dr. Al-Singace of medical treatment and visits to the canteen to purchase hygiene supplies since February 2017, in part because Dr. Al-Singace has refused to wear a prison uniform or be

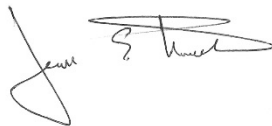
shackled when he leaves his cell. From February 2017 until April 2019, Dr. Al-Singace additionally was denied family visits for the same refusal to wear a prison uniform, and his books were confiscated. We understand that while Dr. Al-Singace's family visits have resumed, the prison authorities still refuse to take him unshackled to receive medical treatment outside the prison.

Your Majesty, these latest reports about Dr. Al-Singace's condition are entirely consistent with the reports that prompted our previous letters to you. In our 2017 letter we noted that Dr. Al-Singace's eardrums had ruptured, reportedly as a result of beatings he suffered in prison, and in our 2015 letter that he had gone on a hunger strike to protest the conditions of his incarceration. Our initial 2013 letter informed you that Dr. Al-Singace suffered from significant physical impairment and partial paralysis and notified you of reports that he had been forced to stand upright for long periods of time without the use of his cane or wheelchair. As each of our letters called on you to ensure that Dr. Al-Singace is provided with the medical care and treatment he requires, we are dismayed that your government has failed to do so even as his condition has worsened. Moreover, as more than 600 prisoners of conscience have joined a hunger strike begun in August by fifteen detainees in isolation, we wish to draw your attention as a matter of urgency to the problems of systematic maltreatment of prisoners in Bahraini jails.

We reiterate our call on your government to provide Dr. Al-Singace the medical care he requires and ensure that he is no longer subjected to degrading, humiliating, and inhumane treatment. In addition, we urge you to review the prison sentences of all those who have been jailed merely because they voiced a dissenting opinion and ensure that Bahrain upholds international standards of freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly. At a time when your government is seeking, once again, to persuade the international community that it has "moved on" from the upheaval of 2011, we regard the ongoing incarceration and reported mistreatment of Dr. Al-Singace and others, such as Nabeel Rajab, as a continuation of the near-total crackdown on human rights defenders and advocates of civil society and political reform in Bahrain.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Judith E. Tucker  
MESA President  
Professor, Georgetown University



Re: Deteriorating health of imprisoned professor Abduljalil Al-Singace  
26 September 2019  
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurie Brand', is positioned above the typed name.

Laurie Brand  
Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom  
Professor, University of Southern California

cc:

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