



## FREEDOM NOW

February 16, 2012

His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa  
Riffa Palace  
Amiri Court  
FOB 555  
Manama, Bahrai

Dear Your Majesty:

I write to you as the Executive Director of Freedom Now, a legal advocacy organization that represents prisoners of conscience worldwide. Freedom Now represents Abdulhadi Alkhawaja, a citizen of the Kingdom of Bahrain imprisoned there since April of last year. We are extremely concerned about Mr. Alkhawaja's health and urge you to immediately release him on humanitarian grounds.

On June 22, 2011, Mr. Alkhawaja was convicted by the National Safety Court of financing and participating in terrorism to overthrow the government, as well as spying for a foreign country. Your government sentenced him to life in prison. Mr. Alkhawaja's trial and imprisonment have been condemned by international human rights organizations and governments alike and your own Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) calls into question the legality of his trial and treatment in detention. Freedom Now submitted a legal petition on behalf of Mr. Alkhawaja to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention under Resolutions of the Human Rights Council seeking a determination that Mr. Alkhawaja's continued detention is a violation of international law.

As you may know, Mr. Alkhawaja joined 14 other prominent Bahrainis imprisoned following the February 2011 protests in an eight day hunger strike from January 29 to February 5 to protest their imprisonment. During the hunger strike, Mr. Alkhawaja was hospitalized due to a dangerous drop in his sugar level and blood pressure. On February 8, Mr. Alkhawaja launched an open hunger strike to compel his release. Since that time, Mr. Alkhawaja's health has deteriorated rapidly and it is believed that his condition at this stage is life threatening.

Mr. Alkhawaja's frail health has been exacerbated by injuries he sustained from beatings by security agents, as well as other forms of inhumane treatment he has been subjected to while in detention. According to the BICI report, the BICI forensic team examined Mr. Alkhawaja and reported that he "has lost 12 kilograms during his time in detention" and suffers, "several physical ailments including the following: lower spine pain when sitting; right elbow pain; right lateral ankle pain; left facial pain; numbness and gum pain; and he cannot open his mouth normally."

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*Our mission is to free prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts.*

In order to ensure that Mr. Alkhawaja's condition does not worsen and that he receives proper medical care for the injuries he has so far sustained in detention, we ask the Government of Bahrain to immediately release Mr. Alkhawaja on compassionate humanitarian grounds.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maran Turner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Maran Turner  
Executive Director  
FREEDOM NOW

CC:  
Assistant Secretary of State Michael Posner  
Ambassador Houda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo