

# **Bahrain: Arbitrary Detention and the Deterioration of Prison Conditions**

A statement on (cases of arbitrary detention and the deterioration of prison conditions in Bahrain)

An introduction for the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in its 31<sup>st</sup> session in 2017

July 2016

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## Introduction

1. This statement was prepared for the Universal Periodic Review of the human rights situation in Bahrain, which is to be held in 2017. In this statement, the Bahrain Forum for Human Rights assesses the implementation of the recommendations made in the previous Periodic Review, and the causes of concern that have developed on the ground, in topics related to arbitrary arrests, torture, and ill-treatment, during the period between the end of May 2012 until early March 2016.
2. Regarding the implementation of the previous Periodic Review recommendations, this statement indicates that the Bahraini authorities did not implement the recommendations that urge them to drop the charges against the persons convicted of exercising the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, and to release them immediately. In addition, the Bahraini authorities did implement the recommendations that urge them to repeal or amend the national legislations, which restrict the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.
3. Regarding the causes of concern that have developed on the ground, this statement reveals that the Bahraini authorities continue to arbitrarily arrest political activists, human rights defenders, persons active in the media field, and others who are affiliated with the opposition for exercising freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.
4. This statement also reveals, in the same regard, the Bahraini authorities' failure to ensure fair trials for individuals.

## First, the implementation of the previous Periodic Review recommendations

5. 6 of the 176 recommendations sent to Bahrain in the second UPR in May 2012 called on the Bahraini authorities to drop charges against the persons convicted of exercising the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, and to release them immediately.<sup>(1)</sup>
6. According to what we saw, the Bahraini authorities did not respond, as requested, to those recommendations. It appears that the authorities are not serious about the release of any prisoners convicted solely for exercising their right to peaceful

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<sup>1</sup> Review the following recommendations: (115/91, 115/100, 115/101, 115/122, 115/126, 115/159). See the report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of session 13 in 2012. (July 6, 2012). Document no. (A/HRC/21/6). Retrieval date March 14, 2016, from the website of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/21/6](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/21/6)

assembly and freedom of expression, or dropping the charges against them accordingly.

7. This is clearly demonstrated, for example, in the case of the political activists who have been detained over their demand for a regime change (the case of the 21 symbols). While the authorities insisted on not releasing those activists and repudiated that the charges of freedom of expression are related to their conviction, they issued a pardon for one of them, the former president of the National Democratic Action Society, Ibrahim Sharif, after he spent more than 4 years in prison, while he was sentenced to 5 years. After about 3 years of his release, the authorities rearrested him on charges of "incitement to change the state system, and public incitement of hatred and contempt against the regime", during a speech he made in a public forum on July 11, 2015, and on February 24, 2016, so a criminal court sentenced him to one year in prison.
8. The problem with the Bahraini authorities, in this regard, is their denial of the existence of prisoners convicted on charges of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. This is highlighted by their response to the recommendations addressed to them, when they said that the courts have not issued "in the context of the events of February and March 2011 any verdict related to practicing freedom of expression by individuals. People who are still serving sentences were convicted for committing criminal offenses."
9. That means that the Bahraini authorities basically do not see a space for implementing those recommendations. On that basis, they classified those recommendations within the recommendations that have their full support.
10. As for the recommendations that urge the authorities to repeal or amend the national legislations that restrict the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression<sup>2</sup>, which form the legal pretexts to carry out arbitrary arrests, the authorities added one article (69 bis) that states, "the restrictions on the right to expression in this Act [Penal Code] or in any other law, are interpreted in the framework necessary for a democratic society according to the principles of the National Action Charter and the Constitution, and it is considered an excuse exempt from punishment to exercise the right to freedom of expression in this context "<sup>3</sup>.
11. With this only positive amendment that we encourage, the authorities amended the articles of some laws related to freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly to become more restrictive than they previously were.

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<sup>2</sup> Review the following recommendations: (115/24 ·115/25 ·115/26 ·115/27 ·115/30 ·115/148 ·115/149 ·115/151 ·115/152 ·115/153 ·115/154 ·115/157 ·115/160). See [previous reference](#).

<sup>3</sup> Law no. 51 of 2012 regarding amending some provisions of the Penal Code issued by Decree-Law no. 15 in 1976. October 11, 2012. Retrieval date October 20, 2015 from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/AdvancedSearchDetails.aspx?id=2111#.ViZrW34rKU>

12. For example, the Bahraini authorities did not respond to the recommendation (115/157), which states: "Abolish legal provisions unduly restricting peaceful demonstrations, remove restrictions on freedom of expression contained in Law 32 of 2006" on the organization of gatherings. Instead, they introduced articles that prohibit "organizing demonstrations, marches, rallies, or protests in the city of Manama," or those "that are held or pass by hospitals, airports, malls, or security-related places", based on the new amendments of the law introduced in 2013<sup>4</sup>.
13. In another example, the Bahraini authorities did not respond to the recommendation (115/27), which states: "Amend any article of its Penal Code that can be used to prosecute individuals for the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly or association". Instead, the authorities introduced tougher penalties for people convicted on charges of "insulting the King, the flag, or the national emblem," so their prison sentence increased to 7 years after it was maximum 3 years.

## **Second, the causes of concern on the ground**

14. Since 2012 until 2015, the Bahraini authorities made 7919 arrests relevant to the popular protests that erupted in February 2011, according to local human rights reports. Based on the testimonies of the victims or their families or what we learned from documents, it appears that most of the reported arrests fall into at least one of two categories, according to the classification of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. Deprivation of liberty is arbitrary if it resulted from the exercise of freedom of expression and assembly (Category II), and if the international norms relating to the right to a fair trial were not respected (category III).
15. The Bahraini authorities have arrested opposition leaders, human rights defenders, activists, and journalists. They did not spare anyone who criticizes them in public speeches and even in social media. They accuse them of charges such as "promoting forceful regime change," "inciting hatred against the regime," "inciting disobedience of the law," "insulting the King, the flag, or the national emblem," "insulting a foreign country or an international organization", and "insulting a governmental authority," until the law became a baton used to silence opponents.

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<sup>4</sup> Decree-Law no. 22 of 2013 to replace Article 11 of Decree-Law no. 18 of 1973 regarding public assemblies, marches, and gatherings. August 15, 2013. Retrieval date December 15, 2015, from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=30498#.VnaaxRV96Un>

16. According to the information received, the Bahraini authorities dangerously violated the minimum guarantees of the people's right to a fair trial. The Judiciary convicted many victims of criminal charges based on confessions, which the victims confirmed that they were extracted under torture and duress. The victims' claims were not seriously inspected, and lawyers were not allowed to plead, not given an adequate opportunity to defend, or the court ignored their requests, which could have changed the course of the trial, etc.
17. Moreover, the authorities did not comply with the legal procedures that ensure the arrest is conducted and continued according to the standards of a fair trial. It appeared that the security services did not comply with presenting the public prosecutor's permission to arrest the victim and notifying the victim or his/her representative at the time of the arrest, did not inform the victim of the reasons for his/her arrest and of the party that is arresting him/her, did not reveal where the victim is being taken to, and did not allow the victim to communicate, as soon as possible, with his/her family and his/her lawyer in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to enable the victim to clarify his/her legal situation and health condition to his/her family and receive adequate legal advice in the first stages of the investigation.
18. It is noteworthy that the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention mentioned in several opinions that Bahrain has violated "international norms relating to the right to a fair trial"<sup>5</sup>. It expressed its concern over using confessions as evidence for prosecution and conviction is common in the current investigation system in Bahrain<sup>6</sup>. It said that their findings regarding torture, arbitrary detention – including the detention over peacefully practicing the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association – and the lack of a fair trial "demonstrate that these are systematic problems in the administration of criminal justice in Bahrain"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> The opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in its 70<sup>th</sup> session in 2014, (November 20, 2014). Document number (A/HRC/WGAD/2014/27). Retrieval date: November 18, 2015, from the website of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/WGAD/2014/27](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/WGAD/2014/27)

<sup>6</sup> The opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in its 70<sup>th</sup> session in 2014, (November 19, 2014). Document number (A/HRC/WGAD/2014/22). Retrieval date: November 18, 2015, from the website of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/WGAD/2014/22](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/WGAD/2014/22)

<sup>7</sup> UN Body Declares Sheikh Ali Salman Arbitrarily Detained. (17 September 2015). Retrieved 19 November 2015, from the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) Website: <http://birdbh.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Opinion-2015-23-Bahrain-Salman.pdf>

## **The Cases of Arbitrary Detention between 2012 and 2015:**

19. During 2012, for example, activist Maasouma Al-Sayed was arrested, on April 3, following her strike in front of the U.S. Embassy in solidarity with the hunger strike of the human rights activist, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja. In addition, Nabeel Rajab, a human rights activist, was arrested and detained for two years over charges related to tweets on (Twitter) and “organizing illegal assemblies”. Zainab Al-Khawaja, a human rights activist, was also arrested more than once because of her participation in peaceful marches.
20. During 2013, Hisham Al-Sabbagh, a leader in the Islamic Action Society (Amal), was arrested, on April 25, and charged with “founding an illegal group, which aim is to call for disabling the provisions of the Constitution and the law”, and he was sentenced to 15 years in prison because of his political activity. On July 31, 2013 the blogger and translator Mohammad Sadeef and the photographer Hussain Hubail were charged with managing electronic accounts that call for the overthrow of the regime, inciting hatred, and inciting disobedience of the laws, due to their anti-regime activities on social media outlets. On September 17, 2013, Khalil Al-Marzooq, the political assistant of Al-Wefaq Secretary-General, was arrested and faced charges that include the incitement and promotion of committing terrorist crimes over a speech, in which he criticized the regime.
21. During 2014, Sheikh Ali Salman, Al-Wefaq Secretary-General, was arrested, on December 28, charged with “promoting forceful regime change, threatening to use unlawful means, and insulting a government authority”, over speeches he made between 2012 and 2014, and sentenced to 4 years in prison. On October 24, 2014, Osama Al-Tamimi, the MP whose membership was revoked, was arrested and faced a charge of “insulting the security men” during his candidacy for the 2014 elections. On August 29, 2014, the human rights activist, Mariam Al-Khawaja, was arrested and charged with “assaulting an officer and a police woman” while arresting her over the previous charge of “insulting the King”. On July 24, 2014, the photographer Ammar Abdul Rasool was arrested and charged with “assembling and acquiring Molotov cocktails” due to his activity in covering the public demonstrations.
22. During 2015, Sayed Jamil Kadhém, the former MP and senior leader in Al-Wefaq Society, was sentenced to 6 months in prison and fined BD500 after being charged with “breaching and confusing the freedom of elections by publishing false statements in order to affect the results of the elections”, over a tweet he posted in his Twitter personal account, in which he criticized the political money in the parliamentary elections. On May 27, 2015, a criminal court sentenced MP Khalid Abdul Aal to a one year in prison on charges of insulting the Interior Ministry by posting tweets on his Twitter account, in which he criticized the Ministry regarding torture and other practices, although he had parliamentary immunity then. On June 7, 2015, Majeed Milad, the former Head of the Capital Municipal Council and a prominent leader in Al-Wefaq Society, was arrested and charged with “inciting hatred against the regime and disobedience of the law”,

following his participation in a talk show that discusses political issues. During the months of January and February 2015, the bloggers Ali Hassan Al-Maqabi and Jalila Sayed Ameen were arrested after being charged with “insulting the King, and inciting to enhance some issues that are considered crimes” over managing a Twitter account that publishes news and political opinions related to the opposition political movement.

## **The legislations that criminalize the freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly**

23. The Bahraini authorities utilized a number of laws to silence political activists, human rights defenders, and influential people in the media field, in addition to others who are affiliated with the opposition. Among the most important laws are the Penal Code<sup>8</sup>, the Terrorism Act<sup>9</sup>, the Citizenship Act<sup>10</sup>, and the Public Gatherings Law<sup>11</sup>, therefore expressing an opinion on social media outlets or in public forums by criticizing the authorities or their agencies became “inciting hatred against the regime”, demanding a democratic regime became “promoting forceful regime change and disabling the Constitution”, and calling for peaceful demonstrations became “inciting disobedience of the laws”. Some cases reveal that the authorities exploited some articles of these laws to accuse the activists of charges of a criminal or terrorist nature that do not relate to the activists’ activities, as when the name of the activist is embroiled in a case, in which the authorities claim a terrorist bombing occurred or a member of the security forces was killed.
24. For example, the authorities excluded criticizing public figures from the public debates through (Article 214), which criminalizes “insulting the King, the flag, or the national emblem”, (Article 215), which criminalizes “insulting a foreign country or international organization”, and (Article 216), which criminalizes “insulting a governmental authority”.
25. In the Terrorist Act, the authorities excluded from the public debate the opinions that express an opposition to the current Bahraini regime, as for example, they

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<sup>8</sup> The Bahraini Citizenship Act of 1963, (September 16, 1963). Retrieval date October 29, 2015, from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=2197#>

<sup>9</sup> Law no. (58) of 2016 regarding protecting the society from terrorist acts, (August 16, 2006). Retrieval date October 20, 2015, from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=2125#.ViZhnX4rKUK>

<sup>10</sup> Decree-Law no. 15 of 1976 to issue Bahrain’s Penal Code, (April 8, 1976). Retrieval date October 20, 2015, from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=4069#.ViZhnX4rKUK>

<sup>11</sup> Decree-Law no. 18 of 1973 on public meetings, processions, and gatherings (September 13, 1973). Retrieval date December 15, from the website of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission:

<http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=3969#.VOvNNvNF-4k>



- considered calling for a democratic regime a call for disabling the Constitution and laws.
26. In the Citizenship Act, the vague texts granted Bahrain's Minister of Interior a broad discretionary authority that allows him to request stripping people of their citizenship upon being charged with "harming the interests of the kingdom" or "acting in contrary to the duty of loyalty", as stated in (Article 10), which allowed the employment of that authority against the opponents.
  27. According to the Public Gatherings Law, the Chief of Public Security, or his substitute, has the authority to change the time and the place of the gathering, modify the route of the march or demonstration, and disperse assemblies "over any reason that disturbs the public order". The authorities used the excuse of "disturbing public order" in a loose way without standards or determinants. The law became exaggeratedly restrictive in this matter to the degree of prohibiting "organizing demonstrations, marches, assemblies, or strikes in the city of Manama", or "that are held near hospitals, airports, shopping centers, or the security-related sites" according to the new amendments of the law that were introduced in 2013<sup>12</sup>.

## **The Deterioration of Prison Conditions:**

28. The deterioration of prison conditions represents the second phase of the arbitrary detention. The prisoners are held in correctional institutions that do not meet the Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, provide a fertile environment for torture and abuse to extract confessions; and represent an instrument for revenge from the supporters of the opposition.
29. According to the information received, the deterioration of prison conditions include all four official prisons in Bahrain, but it is strongly concentrated in the Dry Dock Detention Center and Jaw Prison, in comparison with the Female Detention Center and Juveniles Detention Center.
30. The most important aspects of the deterioration of prison conditions:
  - 30.1. **Neglecting the hygiene and the maintenance of the facilities:** many prisoners complain about the spread of insects and mosquitoes in the halls and rooms of the prison. The complaint of the political activist Khalil Al-Halwachi for the Ombudsman regarding this issue is a noticeable example. Al-Halwachi confirmed that the detainees sleep with the insects, especially cockroaches, and even during mealtimes, they are surprised by the number of insects they find there. It is noteworthy that the annual report of Bahrain's Prisoners and Detainees

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<sup>12</sup> Decree-Law no (22) of 2013 replacing (Article 11) of the Decree-Law no (18) of 1973 regarding public meetings, marches and assemblies, (August 15, 2013). Retrieval date December 15, 2015, from the website of Bahrain's Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission: <http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/LegislationSearchDetails.aspx?id=30498#.V5roXet97IX>

Rights Commission of 2014 pointed out to the absence of specific procedures regarding changing the mattresses and pillows, and that there is a difficulty in delivering and receiving clothes from the parents, in addition to the lack of lockers for every prisoner in order to keep his personal belongings<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, the Ombudsman's annual report in 2013 pointed out to the obvious lack of maintenance and poor hygiene<sup>14</sup>, which appeared through a video published by activists on media outlets that reflects the hygiene deterioration<sup>15</sup>.

- 30.2. **Violating Privacy:** although there are private rooms for the lawyers to meet their clients in, the presence of a security member deprives the meeting of privacy. The defendants also suffer from violating their privacy during the visits of their parents, since a security member accompanies the family most of the times.
- 30.3. **The absence of procedures for prisoners' access to education:** although the administrations of the prison allow the detainees, in some cases, to pursue their studies, they have not established any policies or procedures that enable the detainees to get opportunities to pursue their education. Many prisoners complain about the delay of the prison administration and the lack of education opportunities for all prisoners, in addition to the procedures that may take a long time.
- 30.4. **Overcrowding:** according to the report of the Ombudsman on its visit to the Central Prison of Jaw in September 2013, the capacity of the prison accommodates to 1200 members, while the prisoners, during the visit, were 1600 prisoners<sup>16</sup>. It is noteworthy that activists on the social media outlets published a leaked video showing the prisoners' protests against the overcrowding they suffer from<sup>17</sup>.
- 30.5. **Poor health care:** despite the large numbers of detainees, especially in the Central Prison of Jaw and The Dry Dock Detention Center, usually there is only one doctor available in every shift in each prison, and this doctor is not always available. According to the available testimonies, as a result of the pressure on the doctor, he does not perform a medical examination in all cases, but only prescribe painkillers. The doctor postpones transferring the detainees to hospitals and outside clinics, while some detainees are prevented from being transferred because the

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<sup>13</sup> The annual report of the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission (2014-2015). (August 2, 2015). Retrieval date July 25, 2016, from the website of the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission: <http://www.pdrc.bh/reports/>

<sup>14</sup> The annual report of the Ombudsman (2013-2014), (May 2014). Retrieval date July 25, 2016, from the website of the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission: <http://www.pdrc.bh/reports/>

<sup>15</sup> Bahrain's Central Prison of Jaw (January 31, 2015). Retrieval date July 25, 2016, from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsMeMuNxPPI>

<sup>16</sup> The annual report of the Ombudsman (2013-2014). Previous reference.

<sup>17</sup> Following the arrest of a policeman accused of "smuggling mobile phones"... A leaked video from "Jaw Prison". (February 27, 2015). Retrieval date July 25, 2016 from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbUfPEzHjI&feature=youtu.be>

prison administration does not take them to their medical appointments set by the external health center after being transferred by the prison doctor. In addition, the convicts who would like to get treatment in a private health center – on their own expenses – are not transferred. Although the prison administration has the authority to release the prisoners whom their presence in jail threatens their lives, but this authority is often not used.

31. The deterioration of prison conditions caused many complaints, and led to several protests, which demanded from the prisons administrations to apply the Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The most prominent protests were the unrests of the Dry Dock Detention Center in 2013 and the protests of the Central Prison in 2015:

- 31.1 **The unrests of the Dry Dock Detention Center:** in August 2013, police forces assaulted a group of defendants who expressed their anger due to ill-treatment. The defendants refused to go out for visits, demanding to improve their conditions inside the detention center. Another group went out to the visits with bruises on their faces.
- 31.2 Human rights activists confirmed that the police forces used tear gas, stun grenades, and batons to punish the defendants, which resulted in the injury of 40 defendants.
- 31.3 In August 2014, a year after the incident, the prisoners in the Dry Dock Detention Center announced a hunger strike due to the ill-treatment they are exposed to and because of the glass barrier, which is placed during visits and prevent them from shaking their families' hands, and especially for not being convicted yet.
- 31.4 In February 2016, the prisoners began another hunger strike, renewing the same previous demands. The defendants said that they are assaulted and subjected to solitary confinement and imitation of animals' sounds. The prisoners also complained about the presence of the glass barrier during visits.
- 31.5 **The unrests of the Central Prison of Jaw:** the prison had witnessed several unrests since the eruption of the public protests on February 14, 2011. The most prominent one was known as "March 10 events", in which more than 1100 convicts were subjected to torture and ill-treatment. The protests of the prisoners were repressed by shotguns, tear gas, and stun grenades, which resulted in the injury of tens of prisoners. Security forces entered the prison, assaulted all the convicts, and took them outside in the open air, before placing them in tents. They were deprived of praying, and restrooms. They were also insulted by obliging them to imitate animals' sounds, in addition to cursing them, their parents, the country's symbols, and their religion.
- 31.6 According to the available information and testimonies, the causes of those unrests were the restriction of the detainees, ill-treatment,

depriving them of treatment, restricting them and their parents during visits, and overcrowding.

- 31.7 A criminal court had sentenced 57 defendants to 11 years in prison over the Jaw Prison unrests, and obliged them to pay together around BD 508,000 for the damages. Bahrain's Public Prosecution said that it listened to 126 witnesses that include keeping-order specialists and workers in the administration, and started investigations with the prisoners accused of participating in those unrests. During the investigations, some prisoners claimed that they were abused, and there were some similar complaints from the Ombudsman, which were referred to the Special Investigations Unit<sup>18</sup>. However, Bahrain's Public Prosecution neglected investigating the excessive use of force and torture by security members to control the unrests.
- 31.8 The way Bahrain's Ministry of Interior and Bahrain's Public Prosecution dealt with this incident was the same as they dealt with previous unrests in the Dry Dock Detention Centre in 2013. Both of them neglected the prisoners' subjection to torture and abuse<sup>19 20</sup>. However, the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) said that "some of the prisoners' bodies showed traces of abuse"<sup>21</sup> during its visit to the prison. Nevertheless, on September 25, 2014, 19 defendants were sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined together BD 600 for damages, while the court did not consider the allegations of torture<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> 15 years for 57 defendants in Jaw prison rioting (January 25, 2016). Retrieval date January 26, 2016, from the website of Bahrain News Agency: <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/707816?date=2016-01-25>

<sup>19</sup> Inspector-General/Statement – The relevant security forces intervened to deal with riots in custody (August 16, 2013). Retrieval date January 25, 2016, from the website of Bahrain News Agency: <http://bna.bh/portal/en/news/575451?date=2013-08-17>

<sup>20</sup> Public Prosecution starts Investigation on the Rioting and Vandalism Incident on the Officer and Members of the Police at the Detention Center (August 17, 2013). Retrieval date January 25, 2016, from the website of Bahrain News Agency: <http://bna.bh/portal/en/news/575461?date=2013-08-17>

<sup>21</sup> The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) visits the custody center (August 17, 2013). Retrieval date January 25, 2016, from the website of the National Institution for Human Rights: [http://www.nihr.org.bh/mediacenter/s64/hidnews1/17\\_Aug\\_2013.aspx](http://www.nihr.org.bh/mediacenter/s64/hidnews1/17_Aug_2013.aspx)

<sup>22</sup> 3 more years were added to the sentence of 19 defendants after being accused of riots in Dry Dock Detention Center (September 25, 2014). Retrieval date January 26, 2016, from the website of Al-Wasat News Paper: <http://www.alwasatnews.com/news/923487.html>

## **The Recommendations:**

32. The Bahraini authorities should admit that there are prisoners who were convicted only for exercising freedom of expression or peaceful assembly and release them immediately.
33. The Bahraini authorities should respond to the visit request of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and adopt its opinions issued since 2012 regarding releasing some of the victims or compensate them.
34. The Bahraini authorities should abolish the articles of the Penal Code and Gatherings Law that criminalize freedom of expression and restrict the right to peaceful assembly; or amend them to be consistent with the international laws.
35. The Bahraini authorities should abolish or amend the articles stated in the Terrorist Act and Citizenship Act that are employed to punish the opponents.
36. All the prison guards and security forces should be trained to deal with the detainees and the protests inside the prison.
37. The officials, the security members, and any security forces responsible for torturing and abusing the prisoners, especially during the events which witnessed strong protests, should be held accountable.
38. Clean and new buildings should be established for the prisoners' safety and health. A cleaning and maintenance company should be hired to do what is necessary.
39. The prisoners should be able to meet their parents or lawyers in private.
40. A clear mechanism should be established to ensure facilitating providing all levels of education – including higher education – for all prisoners.
41. The clinics of the centers should be enhanced to ensure that the detainee receives an appropriate treatment. The detainees should be allowed to get treatment in outside medical clinics if the suitable treatment is not available in the center's clinic or in the official hospitals in Bahrain.