

Press release 26.09.2013

ABOUT NABEEL RAJAB (49)

Name: Nabeel Rajab
Date of birth: 1 September 1964
Nationality: Bahraini
Twitter: @NABEELRAJAB

Position: Human rights activist and the president of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR).

Activism: Member of the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch's Middle East Division, member of the Advisory Board of the Bahrain Rehabilitation and Anti-Violence Organization (BRAVO), former Deputy Secretary General for the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and former chairman of Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility (CARAM) Asia.

Current situation: He was imprisoned for having criticised the Prime Minister on Twitter in July 2012. Then he was sentenced to three years imprisonment in August 2012, later reduced to two years, for having "encouraged illegal gatherings." He is still in prison.

Awards:
2012 Freedom of Expression Award, annual prize awarded by Index on Censorship

2011 Ion Ratiu Democracy Award, annual prize awarded by Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

2011 Silbury Prize, prize awarded by the Silbury Fund

QUOTE FROM NABEEL RAJAB:

«We want them [the West] to respect the words they say, and those they've committed themselves with: To respect the international convention for human rights. To respect the international standards. To have *one* policy towards each and every revolution. To have *one* policy towards all dictators. Not only those dictators you have a problem with, but even those you have a good relation with.» (HARDtalk BBC: 'King of Bahrain 'not keeping promises', 30.03.2012)

ABOUT ABDUL-HADI AL-KHAWAJA (52)

Name:	Abdul-Hadi al-Khawaja
Date of birth:	5 April 1961
Nationality:	Bahraini and Danish
Position:	Human rights activist, and the co-founder and former president of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) in 2002.
Activism:	Includes serving as - Middle East and North Africa Protection Coordinator (2008-2011) for Front Line Defenders - the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. He is also a member of the International Advisory Network of the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre and a member of the Advisory Board of the Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies. He started a "freedom or death" hunger strike on 8 February 2012 protesting about his wrongful detention and his treatment in prison. It ended on 28 May 2012, 110 days later, when he was forcibly fed by the Bahraini authorities.
Current situation:	Currently he is serving a life sentence in prison accused of various, unlawful acts, including "organising and leading a terrorist organisation", "attempting to overthrow the Government by force and in liaison with a terrorist organisation working for a foreign country" and "collecting money for a terrorist group." He was convicted on June 22 nd 2011.
Awards:	
2012	Politikens Frihedspris 2012, Denmark
2012	Freedom Award, Freedom House, USA

QUOTE FROM ABDUL-HADI AL-KHAWAJA:

«If I die, in the next 24 hrs, I ask the people to continue on path of peaceful resistance, I don't want anybody to be hurt in my name.» (On the 72nd day of his hunger strike he asked for a lawyer to assist him in writing his will. <http://www.bahrainhrd.org/abdulhadi.html>, 20.04.2012)



ABOUT MARYAM AL-KHAWAJA (26)

- Name: Maryam al-Khawaja
Date of birth: 26 June 1987
Nationality: Bahraini and Danish
Twitter: @MARYAMALKHAWAJA
- Mobile: +45 817 57 959 (Denmark)
+44 771 678 5791 (UK)
- E-mail: maryam.alkhawaja@gchr.org
maryam.alkhawaja@bahrainrights.org
- Position: Human rights activist, and the acting-president of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR).
- Education: 2005 – 2009: Bachelor of Arts – Major: English Literature.
Minor: American Studies, University of Bahrain.
- Courses, workshops and seminars:
- 2010 “Islam and Democracy in the Middle East”, Brown University (Fulbright Scholarship), USA
- 2010 “Leadership in Organizations”, Brown University (Fulbright Scholarship), USA
- 2009 “Teaching Methodology”, Scranton University (Fulbright Scholarship), USA
- Activism: Is also the head of the International Office and the co-director at the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR). She has been active in participating in non-violent protests and volunteering for human rights organizations since she was a young teenager. She calls what is happening in Bahrain “the inconvenient revolution” and points out through her Twitter account and numerous press reports that human rights also apply to the Gulf and to everyone, including women, minorities and migrant workers.
- Current situation: She has been in exile since March 2011. Since January 2012 she has lived in Denmark knowing that most of her colleagues in Bahrain have already been arrested. In August 2013 she attempted to return to Bahrain but was denied boarding at the Copenhagen airport as a *persona non grata* in Bahrain, both as a Danish and Bahraini citizen.

Awards:
2012 Stieg Larsson Prize, Stockholm
2011 UNESCO Chair Award
2012 Freedom Award, Freedom House, USA

QUOTE FROM MARYAM ABDUL-HADI AL-KHAWAJA:

«And for us who are human rights defenders and human rights organisations, for us of course our call is not for political change, our call is for a government that respects human rights, whether it is in the forms of a constitutional monarchy or not – but we do call for accountability.» (CNN interview, 28.12.2012)

ABOUT ZAINAB AL-KHAWAJA (30)

Name: Zainab al-Khawaja
Nationality: Bahraini and Danish
Twitter: @ANGRYARABIYA

Position: Human rights activist

Activism: Has been active since the Bahraini uprising in 2011, both on Twitter and in the streets of Bahrain. In April 2011 she started a 10-days hunger strike protesting about the detention of her father Abdul-Hadi, her husband Wafi Al-Majed, and her brother-in-law Mohammed al-Maskati.

Current situation: She is serving a consecutive multiple short prison sentences that have accumulated to around 12 months for multiple charges including “entering the Pearl Roundabout area”.

Awards:
2012 Freedom Award, Freedom House, USA

QUOTE FROM ZAINAB ABDUL-HADI AL-KHAWAJA:

«When ur in chains, living with no dignity or rights, bowing to criminal dictators, the first step is to forget ur fear & realize that its ur right.. to be angry. Bahrain.» (Text on her Twitter profile)

