



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

ALI SALMAN'S TRIAL POSTPONED TO THE END OF SEPTEMBER



Sheikh Ali Salman, leading figure in the Bahraini opposition.

Initially [scheduled](#) for 5 September 2018, the trial date for the Public Prosecution's appeal of Sheikh Ali Salman's 'not guilty' verdict has been [postponed](#) to 26 September 2018.

Timeline of the trial

On Thursday, 21 June 2018, imprisoned opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman was expected to receive the final verdict in his trial relating to politically motivated charges of espionage. After a



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drawn-out trial marred by due process violations, Bahrain's High Criminal Court found Sheikh Salman [innocent](#) of politically motivated charges against him.

Nevertheless, having immediately [appealed](#) the verdict, the Public Prosecution Office continued to harass the political leader on these baseless charges, calling on the High Criminal Court to hand down the maximum sentence possible, which in this case would be the death penalty.

Sheikh Salman's trial is part of a wider initiative by the Bahraini government to silence political opposition ahead of the upcoming elections this autumn.

Arrest and continuous harassment

Sheikh Salman was originally arrested in December 2014 on charges of "inciting disobedience and hatred in the kingdom" for giving speeches as Secretary-General of the now dissolved Al-Wefaq opposition society, and he was ultimately sentenced to four years in prison.

Towards the end of his four-year sentence, in November 2017, Sheikh Salman was [charged](#) again, this time for "conspiring with Qatar" during the peaceful protest movement in 2011. The charges stem from an [open and documented](#) mediation attempt that was originally encouraged by the United States, with the Bahraini government's knowledge.

The case of Sheikh Ali Salman is just one of many that shows the Bahraini government's power to undermine and suppress the opposition, and the extent it will go to do so. It is deeply alarming that the government is not only prosecuting one of the kingdom's most prominent opposition leaders prior to elections, but also seeking his possible execution over baseless allegations.

With the elections approaching for Bahrain's lower house of parliament, Sheikh Salman's trial is a key example of the government's assault on independent political and civil society, even as it [moves to ban](#) nearly all opposition members from participating outright.



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It is unacceptable that the Bahraini government continues to target opposition leaders for expressing their political opinions.

The further imprisonment and possible death penalty against Sheikh Ali Salman should be of extreme concern to the international community, especially as Bahrain enters into its election season.

ICSFT condemns to the utmost degree the government's prosecution of Sheikh Ali Salman on arbitrary charges and call for the Bahraini government to immediately and unconditionally release him and drop all extant charges against him.

We further call on the international community, in particular key allies of Bahrain including the United States and United Kingdom, to push the Bahraini government for the release of Sheikh Ali Salman, as well as all other prisoners of conscience, and also to reinstate all arbitrarily dissolved political societies, and to end its oppressive and systematic human rights violations, including its all-out crackdown on civil and political society.