



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

ALI MUSHAIMA GOES ON HUNGER STRIKE IN LONDON TO 'STOP FATHER DYING IN PRISON'



Ali Mushaima, son of Hassan Mushaima, has been on hunger strike to save his father's life outside the Bahraini embassy in London.

The son of an imprisoned Bahraini activist has been on hunger strike for more than a week, in protest of his father being denied urgent medical care in a Bahrain jail.

Ali Mushaima, 35, is the son of Hassan Mushaima, a 70-year-old political leader who was arrested as part of a violent crackdown on civil society in the Gulf Arab country in 2011. He was [denied medical care](#) in Gulf Arab country after he refused to wear shackles to collect his medicine.



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Prisoner of conscience

Mushaima is serving life imprisonment simply for his involvement in the Bahraini [pro-democracy movement during the Arab Spring in 2011](#). As a leader of the political opposition, he has always fought to promote human rights in Bahrain.

He has been subjected to ill treatment in Jau Prison, including the continued denial of healthcare and restricted access to medication by the prison administration.

Denial of basic medical care

Bahraini authorities seem determined to inflict a slow and painful death upon Mushaima by depriving him of adequate medical attention solely on account of his status as a political prisoner.

As a survivor of lymphoma cancer, Mushaima requires screening every six months, yet his last check-up occurred in September 2016. He also suffers many chronic illnesses, including [diabetes](#), gout, and erratic blood pressure, which make him to require around ten different prescribed medications on a daily basis.

“They are killing my father slowly by denying him basic medical care,” said Mushaima.

Shackles as a humiliation

Unlike many other jurisdictions, inmates in Bahrain wear their own clothes, not uniforms, while in prison. However, according to Bahraini rules, when inmates leave the prison facility, whether to attend a trial or go to hospital or visitation, they are required to wear a uniform.

“Rather than giving him his medication inside his cell, the Bahrainis are making him walk to a counter for his medicine in this uniform,” Mushaima said.

As he refuses to attend the medical clinic in handcuffs, Hassan Mushaima has been deprived of his medication. His family has not even been able to visit him since February 2017, as prison authorities have refused to authorise family visitation.

“They are trying to use any excuse to humiliate him and break him down bit by bit,” added Mushaima.

UK complicit to the abuses

The Bahraini regime has an appalling human rights record, which it has been able to cover up on the world stage with the support of complicit governments like the UK.

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Despite Manama's ongoing crackdown on [human rights activists](#), opposition activists and politicians, Britain has strengthened its ties with Bahrain. Earlier this year, Britain opened a [permanent military base](#) inside the island country.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) – a department of the British government responsible for protecting and promoting British interests worldwide – has invested £5 million into its “[technical assistance programme](#)”, outwardly aiming to provide justice reform in Bahrain by training local institutions and officials. But in reality the UK funds have been used to train groups later involved in torture and executions.

Ali have raised his father's case many times by [asking Ministers at the FCO directly](#). So far, the FCO has done nothing to help.

Hunger strike as last resort

Having tried everything to raise his father's case – including an [online petition](#) – in order to end his suffering and to save his life, as a last resort measure, Ali embarked, since 1 August, on a [hunger strike](#) and camping outside of the Bahraini Embassy in London.

Relying upon [activists and friends](#) who have come out to [support him](#), the activist has slept [outside the Bahraini embassy](#) on a thin mattress and a sleeping bag. He had already lost five kilograms since going on hunger strike.

“This was not an easy decision to make. I left my wife and daughter to be out here. But if this is the only way to save my father, then so be it,” said Mushaima. “I will continue being on hunger strike until my father is given the rights that he deserves.”

ICSFT condemns in the strongest terms the Bahraini government for putting the life of the political prisoner and human rights defender Hassan Mushaima at risk by subjecting him to degrading and humiliating treatment.

Thus, we call on the government of Bahrain to immediately reinstate regular access to medical care and medication for Hassan Mushaima and ensure the rights and humane treatment of prisoners of conscience in Bahrain.

Further, we call on the authorities in Jau Prison to end the degrading practice of requiring shackles in order to receive medical care or familial visits.

We also call for the Bahraini government to release Mr. Mushaima and all other political individuals who have been convicted in violation of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

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Finally we urge the British government to end their arms sales to the Bahraini regime and put pressure on it to free Hassan and other political prisoners.

#FreeHassanMushaima