

**Note:** This letter is based on a statement Ali Hajji provided to the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) on 3 November. As of 12 November, Ali Hajji was placed in **solitary confinement** and has been since then left **incommunicado**. This followed the release of a voice recording on [Twitter](#) in which he exposed his torture and lack of access to medical care, as well as the inclusion of his case in a [letter](#) signed by 20 MPs and sent to your office on 8 November. Due to the urgency of the matter, please be aware we will make this letter public.

14 November 2018

Dear Ministers,

My name is Ali Hajji and I am a Bahraini political prisoner. I was sentenced to ten years in prison after a grossly-unfair trial including brutal torture to extract my confession. I am writing to ask for your help: I need surgery for my jaw because of the torture I suffered. The authorities of Jau prison are denying me access to this medical treatment that I urgently need.

No one in Bahrain is helping me, even though I have complained to the authorities and oversight bodies on several occasions. I hope that the longstanding relations between the UK and Bahrain will inspire you to act on my behalf.

### **My Ordeal**

Plain-clothed officials from Bahrain's National Security Agency arrested me without a warrant in May 2013 and took me to the Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID) for interrogation. Officers [Isa Al-Majali](#) and Issa al-Jowder conducted my interrogation. I was questioned about my links with peaceful demonstrations in Manama, beaten, and coerced into signing prepared confessions without being allowed to read them.

My efforts to inform the Public Prosecution about my ordeal were in vain, and I was soon taken back to the CID and subjected to further, harsher torture. A group of men beat my face and intimate parts using their shoes. The beatings caused severe injuries to my eyes and mouth, as well as breaking my nose. The pain was so intense that I collapsed before eventually giving them what they wanted: a forced confession of my involvement in a terrorist act targeting the Prime Minister's convoy.

However, the authorities wanted me to confess to further crimes, none of which I had committed, so the torture went on. I was beaten with a piece of wood, kicked and injured in my lower back with a sharp object. I was forced to stand for hours and deprived of sleep. The officials stripped me of my clothes and urinated on me, while threatening to shoot my leg. They threatened to rape my wife, kill my son and subject my parents to severe interrogations involving electrocution.

### **Fair Trial Violations**

From the time of my arrest to my conviction, my right to a fair trial was violated on multiple occasions. I was subjected to enforced disappearance for ten days, during which I could not

communicate with my family or lawyer. The Public Prosecutor threatened to take me back to the CID if I did not confess to carrying out a terrorist act against the American Service Center.

To make matters worse, I was defamed on national television. When in June 2013, before the trial even started, the Bahraini authorities broadcasted my photos with claims of my involvement in terrorist acts, I knew I would be convicted. In November 2013, I was sentenced. My trial was overseen by Judge Ali Al-Dhahrani, who is well-known for accepting confessions extracted through torture even in death penalty cases. The court ignored my complaint to the Special Investigation Unit (No. 22/2013) and decided to sentence me anyway.

### **Urgent Medical Treatment Needed**

The multiple letters I have sent to local authorities over the years were vain. In October 2016, I wrote to the Ministry of Interior, but they never implemented what they promised me. I also sent several letters to the Attorney-General in both 2013 and 2014 to complain about those individuals who had abused me and requested urgent surgery following the torture I endured.

I had two surgeries in my nose and I needed to complete the treatment to heal. I also needed to undergo treatment for the hearing loss I suffered in my left ear during the interrogation.

I now need urgent surgery to my lower jaw and intimate parts due to a damage to the blood vessels I suffered as a result of the torture. This was also revealed in the medical reports included in the complaint to the Special Investigation Unit.

### **Prison Conditions**

The conditions in Jau Prison severely damage both my physical and mental wellbeing. I have not seen my family in 20 months in protest for the visitation system in place. Last summer I ended my hunger strike after 26 days as I had received promises from prison official, Turki al-Jowder, that my suffering would end. These promises never materialised.

### **Requests**

I am now requesting that you use your leverage to pressure the relevant authorities in Bahrain on my behalf, so that I have access to the urgent medical treatment and basic visitation rights I am entitled to.

Yours Sincerely,  
Ali Hajji