

4 August 2021

To the King of Bahrain and the Bahraini Crown Prince

Copy:

- Manchester University President & Vice-Chancellor, Dame Nancy Rothwell
- Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham
- FCDO (UK Foreign Office)
- US Department of State
- European External Action Service

Your Majesties King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa,

We are writing to express our deep concern for the well-being of Bahraini political prisoner and University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) alumni Dr Abduljalil AlSingace, who at the time of writing has been on hunger strike since 8 July 2021 in protest against persistent mistreatment at the hands of Jau Prison authorities and to demand that a book he wrote in prison, which was confiscated by prison guards, be immediately returned to his family.

Dr AlSingace is a respected Bahraini academic, blogger and human rights defender. He has a PhD in Impact Mechanics from the UMIST, now the University of Manchester, is a former lecturer in the Mechanical Engineering department at the University of Bahrain, and a 2007 Draper Hills Fellow at Stanford University's Center on Democracy Development and the Rule of Law. Dr AlSingace has a disability and suffers a range of chronic health conditions, including post-polio syndrome, and requires the use of crutches or a wheelchair.

In 2011, Dr AlSingace was sentenced to life imprisonment over his leading role in Bahrain's pro-democracy uprising during the Arab Spring. According to the [Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry](#), Dr AlSingace was subjected to brutal torture following his arrest, including being repeatedly beaten, "sexually molested", "forced to lick the shoes" of prison guards and threatened with the rape of his wife and daughter, amongst other violations.

Since his imprisonment, the international community has made consistent calls for his immediate and unconditional release, including [Human Rights Watch](#), [Amnesty International](#), the [Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy](#) and [American](#), [British](#) and [European](#) legislators. Like many political prisoners in Bahrain, Dr AlSingace has faced sustained medical negligence by prison authorities throughout his 10-year imprisonment, causing his health to deteriorate severely.

Dr AlSingace's decision to launch a [hunger strike](#) on 8 July 2021 was a response to degrading treatment he was [subjected](#) to by Officer Mohammed Yousif Fakhro and to demand the return of his book, upon which he has dedicated at least four years of work. We understand the book to be a study of linguistic diversity among Bahraini Arabic dialects, without any political content, yet the book has not been returned despite repeated promises by prison authorities.

We are thus deeply disturbed to hear that by 29 July 2021 Dr AlSingace had lost 10kg and been transferred to an external hospital for monitoring. Recent outbreaks of COVID-19 [reported](#) at Jau Prison further exacerbate the threat to Dr AlSingace's health.

Dr AlSingace has spent the last decade in prison simply for peacefully standing up for democracy and human rights, which are essential academic values. The confiscation of Dr AlSingace's book is a cruel and unjust punishment and Dr AlSingace should not have to place his life on the line to secure his basic rights and the return of his intellectual property.

Signatories

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