

SCHOLARS AT RISK

N E T W O R K

His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa
Prime Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P.O. Box 547
Government Road
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Via email to: info@mofa.gov.bh

Via fax to: +973 1-753-6343

December 20, 2011

Re: Dr. Masaud Jahromi

Your Excellency:

I write on behalf of the Scholars at Risk Network with regard to Professor Masaud Jahromi, Chairman of Telecommunication Engineering Department at Ahlia University, Manama, Bahrain. We wrote to you earlier on August 16, 2011 and on November 1, 2011. We wish to express again our grave concern for Professor Jahromi, who is to face trial on December 22, 2011, and to respectfully urge you to intervene to ensure that the hearing is addressed in a manner consistent with internationally recognized standards of due process and fair trial, in accordance with Bahrain's obligations under international law.

Scholars at Risk (SAR) is an international network of over 270 universities and colleges in 33 countries dedicated to promoting academic freedom and its constituent freedoms of thought, opinion, expression, association and travel. In cases like that of Professor Jahromi, involving alleged infringement of these freedoms, Scholars at Risk intervenes hoping to clarify and resolve matters favorably.

Professor Masaud Jahromi holds a PhD in Telecommunication Networking from University of Kent at Canterbury in the United Kingdom, and he is the former Chairman of the Telecommunication Engineering Department at Ahlia University. Professor Jahromi was arrested and taken from his home at 2:30 am on April 14, 2011 and was imprisoned for five months. According to reports, on the night of his arrest, the police broke into his house in the middle of the night, threatened and harassed members of his family, confiscated the family's laptops, and beat Professor Jahromi before taking him away to an undisclosed location. According to information Scholars at Risk received, while in prison, Professor Jahromi was denied access to his family, much-needed medical care (as he suffers from hepatitis C) and legal counsel for extended periods of time. He was suspended from his position at the university. Initially held without charge, four months' after his arrest he was charged with "participation in an unauthorized rally". Reports suggest the charges relate to his peaceful exercise of his right to free expression and assembly. Professor Jahromi was released on bail on September 12, 2011, pending trial. He remains suspended from the university.

We would of course welcome any additional or contrary information you might share which will help us to understand the situation more fully. Absent this, the facts as described appear to constitute violations of internationally recognized human rights and standards of due process, fair trial and detention, as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain has acceded. Taking into account reported arrests of scholars in Bahrain following the pro-democracy protests in February and March, Professor Jahromi's detention

suggests a wider attempt to intimidate intellectuals in Bahrain—a suggestion Scholars at Risk finds particularly distressing and unfortunate given the recent manifestations of public discontent in the region, which appear to warrant more rather than fewer exchanges and discussions among states, intellectuals and the public.

Especially in light of the recent report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, which included in Chapter VII, Section C findings of inappropriate restrictions on freedom of expression at university campuses, we respectfully urge you to intervene in Professor Jahromi's case. We urge you to ensure that the hearing is addressed in a manner consistent not only with the Commission's findings but with internationally recognized standards of due process and fair trial, in accordance with Bahrain's obligations under international law.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Robert Quinn
Executive Director

CC:

His Majesty Shaikh Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa
King of Bahrain
Office of His Majesty the King
P. O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace, Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: + 973 1-766-8884

His Excellency Dr. Majid Bin Ali Al Nuaimi
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education Building
Al Istiklal Street
P.O. Box 43
Isa City
Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 1-768-7866
Email: moe.relations@bahrain.gov.bh

Professor M. Cherif Bassiouni
Commission Chair
Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI)
Email: outreach@bici.org.bh

His Excellency Mr. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh
Chairman of Shura Council

c/o Bahrain Shura Council
P.O. Box 2991
Manama - Kingdom of Bahrain
Email: info@shura.bh
Fax: +973 17 714583

Professor Abdullah Y. Al-Hawaj
President, Ahlia University
P.O. Box 10878
1st Floor
Gosi Complex
Exhibitions Road
Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain
Email: aalhawaj@ahliauniversity.edu.bh
Fax: +973 17 290083

Her Excellency Ms. Houda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo
Ambassador of Bahrain to the United States
Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain
3502 International Drive NW
Washington, DC 20008 USA
Fax: +1 202-362-2192

The Honorable Hillary R. Clinton
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520 USA

His Excellency J. Adam Ereli
Ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of Bahrain
Embassy of the United States of America
Bldg 979, Road 3119, Block 331, Zinj
Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 1-727-0547

The Honorable Navanethem Pillay
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland