

30 Days for Freedom

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#FreethePress

WAN-IFRA www.worldpressfreedomday.org

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We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of Ahmed Humaidan, Hussein Hubail, Abdul-Jalil al-Singace and Sayed Ahmed Al-Mousawi, and all journalists imprisoned in Bahrain for simply doing their job.

On March 26, 2014 freelance photographer Ahmed Humaidan, who had already been in jail since December 2012, was sentenced to 10 years in prison. The government accused him of attacking a police station on the island of Sitra in 2012, however Humaidan was there simply to document the attack as part of his on-going coverage of anti-government protests.

Photographer Hussein Hubail is accused of being a "terrorist" and a "militant" and, if convicted, faces up to fifteen years in prison. During the first three days of his detention, he was forbidden from sitting down and was reportedly punched and kicked during interrogations.

Human rights activist and blogger Abdul-Jalil al-Singace was sentenced to life imprisonment. His blog covers issues such as human rights violations, sectarian discrimination and repression of Bahrain's political opposition.

International award-winning photographer Sayed Ahmed Al-Mousawi was arrested on February 10, 2014 and is currently being held in Dry Dock prison. The charges against him are still unknown. Ahmed said that he was tortured for six days, his mistreatment including being hung from a door, electrocution, and being prevented from sitting down for four days.

Your Excellency, we are appalled that journalists and those chronicling Bahrain's popular protest movement should face charges of 'militancy' and 'terrorism'. We are deeply concerned that such heavy sentences, along with allegations of torture and mistreatment at the hands of the authorities persist, and that the suppression of free speech is allowed to continue in Bahrain.

We therefore urge you to respect a free and independent press and to stop criminalising journalists. We call on you to free Ahmed Humaidan, Hussein Hubail, Abdul-Jalil al-Singace and Sayed Ahmed Al-Mousawi, and all journalists imprisoned in Bahrain.

Sincerely,

#FreethePress
The 30 Days for Freedom campaign

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, the '30 Days for Freedom' campaign aims to highlight the plight of imprisoned journalists worldwide in the 30 days leading up to 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

www.wan-ifra.org / www.worldpressfreedomday.org

