



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon. Dominic Raab MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

17 March 2021

Dear Dominic Raab MP,

Further to my letter dated 15 February 2021, and ahead of the 10th anniversary of the arrest of political leaders and activists in Bahrain for their participation in pro-democracy protests, we, the undersigned, are writing to draw your attention once again to the ongoing suppression of democracy and political opposition in Bahrain.

This letter marks the tenth anniversary of 17 March 2011, when seven prominent Bahraini opposition leaders and activists were sentenced to life imprisonment¹: **Hassan Mushaima**², **Abdelwahab Hussain**, **Abdulahadi Al-Khawaja**³, **Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace**⁴, **Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad**⁵, **Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad**, **Saeed Mirza al-Nuri** and **Sheikh Ali Salman**⁶; on charges of communicating with foreign countries and inciting murder and destruction of properties⁷. Human rights organisations have challenged this, and assert that they were arrested for their criticism of the Al-Khalifa regime and involvement in the pro-democracy protests⁸ that took place a month earlier, in February.

A decade later, Bahrain continues to suppress any and all political dissent⁹. Nonetheless, the UK has continued to support¹⁰ the Bahraini regime, despite it being listed as one of the UK's human rights priority countries¹¹.

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/jailed-opposition-leader-critical-condition>

² <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/bahrain-london-embassy-hunger-strike-highlights- plight-four-frail-prisoners>

³ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-17793857>

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<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/09/bahrain-denial-of-medical-care-for-seriously-ill-imprisoned-activist-latest-act-of-cruelty>

⁵ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2010/08/bahrain-intensifica-repression-clerigos-activistas/>

⁶ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/11/bahrain-opposition-leader-sheikh-ali-salman-unlawfully-convicted/>

⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bahrain-protests-idUSTRE72E26N20110317>

⁸ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE11/015/2011/en/>

⁹

<https://apnews.com/article/bahrain-dubai-saudi-arabia-united-arab-emirates-persian-gulf-tensions-89f7d61bc6ec332de35675eb31265d29>

¹⁰ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2018-0197/>

¹¹

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-priority-countries-autumn-2020-ministerial-statement/human-rights-priority-countries-ministerial-statement-january-to-june-2020>

It is time to disengage from blind support of those who abuse civil society for the mere expression of opinion, and “*help Bahrain to return to a stable and reformist state with a good human rights record*”, per the UK Government’s mission statement¹² on Bahrain.

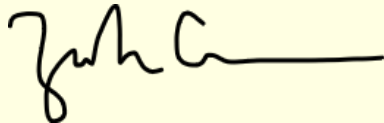
Of particular concern is the imposition of an atmosphere of silence as well as the regime’s lack of accountability, since torturers and abusers have remained free from prosecution. The cases of **Hassan Mushaima, Abdul Jalil al-Singace, Abdul Wahhab Hussain, Salah Abdullah al-Khawaja, Dr Ali al-Ekri, Hassan Hadad, Ibrahim Sharif**, among others, stand out as testimonies of criminal behaviour by a regime that the UK celebrates an “extraordinary relationship”¹³ with.

Therefore, we ask the government to condemn the suppression of self-determination in Bahrain by:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Bahraini political prisoners Abdelwahab Hussain, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad, Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad and Saeed Mirza al-Nuri, Sheikh Ali Salman, and the leader of the opposition Hassan Mushaima
- Reconsidering its relationship with Bahrain, as a country of concern, until the demands of the Bahraini people are adequately met

We hope that you treat this request with the urgency it deserves.

Yours sincerely,



Zarah Sultana

Member of Parliament for Coventry South

Diane Abbott MP

Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

Tahir Ali MP

Dan Carden MP

Alistair Carmichael MP

Jeremy Corbyn MP

Ed Davey MP - Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Dr Stephen Farry MP - Deputy Leader of Alliance

Marion Fellows MP

Andrew Gwynne MP

Kenny MacAskill MP

Virendra Sharma MP

Tommy Sheppard MP

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/world/bahrain/news#:~:text=Our%20mission,and%20enhancing%20our%20bilateral%20relationship>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/launch-of-200th-anniversary-of-bahrain-uk-relations>