



BRISMES

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9JQ

Email: office@brismes.org

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King of Bahrain, Sheikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa
Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa
Minister of Interior, Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa
Minister of Education, Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma

Via The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in London
Sent by Email: communication@bahrainembassy.co.uk

7 August 2024

Your Highness Sheikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa,

We write on behalf of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) to express our profound concern about the ongoing imprisonment of Bahraini academic Dr Abduljalil al-Singace and the violations of his academic freedom.

Founded in 1973, BRISMES is the largest national academic association in Europe focused on the study of the Middle East and North Africa. It is committed to supporting academic freedom and freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region, both in the UK and globally.

We previously wrote to you in [January 2023](#), and jointly with 18 human rights and freedom of expression organisations in [July 2023](#), to express our deep concern about Dr Al-Singace, and we profoundly regret that he is still imprisoned. As we noted in our first letter to you, his imprisonment for his role in peaceful protests calling for democratic reform is a violation of his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly that are guaranteed in Articles 23 and 27 of the Bahraini constitution.

Furthermore, it is our understanding that last month marked the third anniversary of his liquid-only hunger strike, which he began in response to prison authorities' confiscation of his manuscript on Bahraini dialects of Arabic on which he worked for more than four years, which is a clear violation of his academic freedom. Despite Article 23 of the Bahraini constitution guaranteeing freedom of scientific research, and Article 24 guaranteeing freedom of the press, printing and publishing, requests to return his manuscript to him or his family have repeatedly not been fulfilled.

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According to highly-respected [human rights organisations](#), and based on information provided to BRISMES, we understand that Dr Al-Singace continues to suffer from a number of complex health issues, but has not been receiving adequate healthcare or medical treatment. We are deeply concerned about his health and wellbeing.

We respectfully request your urgent intervention and urge you to release Dr. Al-Singace immediately and unconditionally. In the meantime, we request that you ensure he is held in conditions that meet international standards, receives his medication without delay, has access to adequate healthcare, including access to specialists in compliance with medical ethics, and that his arbitrarily confiscated research is immediately transferred to his family members.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Nicola Pratt
BRISMES President

Dr Lewis Turner
Chair of BRISMES Committee on Academic Freedom