



# CHAMBERS OF DEATH

A Report that monitors the  
violations of the National  
Security Agency (NSA) in Bahrain

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**GIHR**  
GULF INSTITUTE  
for Democracy and Human Rights

**Salam**  
For Democracy and Human Rights

**مركز البحرين لحقوق الإنسان**  
Bahraini Forum For Human Rights

designed by:



**Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights**

 gulfidhr  gulfinstitutione  Gulf Institute for Democracy & Human Rights - GIDHR  
E: info@gidhr.org | T: +61421237922.+61413984959.+61424610661 | [www.gidhr.org](http://www.gidhr.org)

**Bahrain Forum For Human Rights ( BFHR )**

 @MontadaBahrain  montadabahrain  @montadahr  montadaHumanRights  
E: montada.hr@gmail . com-info@bfhr.org | T: +41 76 644 00 50 | [www.bfhr.org](http://www.bfhr.org)

**SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights**

 @SALAM\_DHR  salam\_dhr  SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights  
E: info@salam-dhr.org | T: +44 7392 20 6877 | [www.salam-dhr.org](http://www.salam-dhr.org)





# CHAMBERS OF DEATH

A REPORT THAT MONITORS  
THE VIOLATIONS OF THE  
NATIONAL SECURITY  
AGENCY (NSA) IN BAHRAIN

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## **PREFACE**

In this report, we highlight the practices and human rights abuses committed by members of the National Security Agency (NSA hereafter) in Bahrain, which have recently increased. That is amid the absence of transparency, impunity, the broad powers vested in this Agency, torture, ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance and infringement on civil liberties.

The report is addressed to the international community, represented by the United Nations' human rights bodies, the allied states of Bahrain, especially the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as the independent international and local human rights organisations, civil society organisations and human rights activists. All of the before mentioned are urged to immediately exert influential efforts to put an end to these acts, and to hold accountable those involved in human rights violations.



## THE METHODOLOGY **AND SOURCES**



**The report has been prepared based on a historical study; the legal and human rights aspects of the history of security performance in Bahrain. In addition to the analysis and fact-finding of the documents, news and legal reports issued by various official institutions, as well as the international and local human rights organisations interested in monitoring and evaluating the human rights situation in Bahrain, including:**

- Reports published by United Nations organisations; interested in monitoring the human rights situation in Bahrain, especially the Committee against Torture (CAT).
- Reports published by international human rights organisations monitoring and documenting human rights violations in Bahrain, in particular, AMNESTY International and Human Rights Watch.
- Reports published by local human rights organisations monitoring the human rights situation in Bahrain.
- Official reports issued by various governmental institutions on the National Security Agency (NSA) in Bahrain.
- Websites interested in the situation and the latest developments in Bahrain.
- Texts of treaties and conventions on human rights.
- We attempted to interview victims and witnesses on the practices by the National Security Agency, some refused to speak to us for fear of retaliation, and some spoke to us, but also said they fear retribution and requested that we not use their names.
- Photographic documentation and video recordings.

## MAIN ACRONYMS

- **NSA** National Security Agency
- **CAT** The Committee against Torture.
- **CSOs** Civil Society Organisations
- **BDF** Bahrain Defence Force
- **MOI** Ministry of Interior
- **CIO** Central Informatics Organisation
- **SDC** Supreme Defence Council
- **BICI** Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry
- **NIHR** National Institution for Human Rights
- **SSF** Security Special Forces
- **ICCPR** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights



# PART **1**

## **EVOLUTION** OF SECURITY

## BACKGROUND

The Bahraini popular uprising demanding freedom, democracy and social justice dates back to the 1920s and 1930s, when Bahraini divers<sup>1</sup> rebelled against injustice, and called for the independence from the British coloniser. Citizens were, and still, demanding the establishment of a democratic state, in which equal citizenship is achieved through the participation of the civil society organisations (CSOs) in political, economic and social decision-making. The most prominent activists in that period were Abdel Wahab Al Zayani, Ahmad bin Lahej in the 1930s, and Abdul Rahman Al Baker, Abdul-Aziz Al Shamlan, Kamal Al Din in the 1950s. The popular movements to achieve legitimate demands continued in the 1960s, when an uprising broke out on March 5, 1965<sup>2</sup>, in which many of the victims were killed by the security Agency, including Abdullah Hussein Najm, Abdullah Saeed Al Ghanim, Faisal Al Qasab, Abdul Nabi Sarhan, Abdullah Sarhan, and Jassim Abdullah.

The March uprising was followed by the Labour Strikes in the early 1970s, after the declaration of the Independence Day of Bahrain on August 14, 1971. The strikes were held against injustice and the confiscation of rights, and demand the abolition of laws that bind people and devote injustices, especially the State Security Law<sup>3</sup>. The government then



pledged to move the state to a new phase of political life, based on democracy and respect for human rights. However, the dissolution of the National Assembly, in 1975, reversed the pledges set by the government, and confirmed its security choice, in particular through declaring the measures of the State Security Law.

Hundreds of people were imprisoned and killed on charges of violating the national law and the public order. As a result of the torture carried out by the security Agency, Mohammed Bou Nafour, Mohamed Ghuloom Bucheeri, Sa'aid Abdallah Al-Awainati, and others were killed.

In the 1980s, the protests escalated, and the government repressed them by its powerful security agency, through a wave of raids, arrests, assassinations, enforced disappearances, lethal torture, revocation of nationalities, attacks on religious rites, and defamation campaigns against dissidents. The security agency killed many of the citizens in prison, most notably: Jamil Al Ali, Karim Al Habashi, Sheikh Jamal Al Asfour, Hashim Al Ali, Reza Zainuddin and Sheikh Abbas Al Rusti. In the mid-1980s, the Islamic Enlightenment Society (Tawa'aiya) was shut down, and its cadres were arrested, along with dozens of citizens,

without any evidence. People were tried on confessions extracted under severe torture.

In the mid-1990s, the number of detainees held by the security Agency rose to more than 3,000 people. Then the security concern continued to be dominant, in which expressing opinion was considered a 'terrorist act', and because of torture and security practices, a large number of victims were killed, such as Said Al Shafi'i, Ali Al Sayed Amin, Noah Al Noah, etc.

In the late 1990s, the Government of Bahrain took significant steps to stop torture and other ill-treatment by security officials. The government made extensive political reforms after King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa succeeded his father as a governor in March 1999. The reforms included:

- Abolishing the State Security Law
- Abolishing the State Security Court
- Releasing more than 1300 prisoners of conscience
- Announcing that all those living in involuntary exile are free to return to the country unconditionally;
- Allowing the freedom of association.

In February 2001, the Bahrainis approved a referendum on the National Action Charter<sup>4</sup>. In 2002, Bahrain held the first National Assembly elections, after the suspension of the parliamentary action for more than a quarter of a century. However, since the end of 2007, and before the resumption of the current popular protests and human rights movements,



torture and ill-treatment have significantly resumed, particularly during interrogation with suspects.

By the beginning of the popular movement on February 14, 2011, many legal and human rights violations were committed by members of the security Agency. Amid the absence of censorship, the impunity, and the adoption of the security option to respond to peaceful and popular protests, many were killed, not to mention; Karim Fakhrawi, Zakaria A'ashiri, Jaber Al A'alawiyat. The prisons were also overcrowded with prisoners of conscience and victims of torture and ill-treatment; and the nationalities of hundreds were dropped, some of which were forcibly exiled. Various violations continued such as forced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and violation of the right to life. Sectarian Persecution and violating religious freedoms were increased.

## THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY **IN THE NATIONAL ACTION CHARTER**

National security is the efforts exerted by the state to protect its territories, its people and its interests from any external aggression, in addition to its ability to address all internal problems and work to solve them. National security is one of the fundamental pillars upon which States depend on to preserve their independence, security and development. In order to maintain an integrated security, it is necessary to promote human rights and equality among citizens in order to foster the values of national allegiance and fidelity.

With regard to the responsibility of national security, four institutions share responsibility for the maintenance of both internal and external national security, through the terms of reference granted to them in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, national laws and regulations, including:

- Bahrain Defence Force (BDF)
- Ministry of Interior (MOI)
- National Guard
- National Security Agency (NSA)

The National Action Charter<sup>5</sup> , adopted on February 14, 2001, set out the general framework for the national security of the Kingdom of Bahrain. A full part of the Charter was devoted to national security, defining it as 'the fortified fence and bulwark for the protection of the country and the maintenance of its lands and economic, social and political gains'. **The Charter also addressed the most important pillars of national security:**

**First:** Support and strengthen the Bahrain Defence Force to be able to perform its duties and obligations to the fullest.

**Second:** Provide the public security forces by the essentials equipment to ensure the performance of its duty of sustaining security and tranquillity throughout the country, and to maintain public order.

**Third:** Support and strengthen the National Guard to perform its role within the defence and security force; being a military assistance power to the Bahrain Defence Force and a security shield for the public security forces to protect the homeland.



## DECREES RELATED TO THE NATIONAL **SECURITY AGENCY (NSA)**

In advance of 2002, the National Security Agency (NSA) was known as the 'General Directorate of State Security Investigations' also known as 'Security and Intelligence'. Ian Henderson headed the British administration from 1966 to the date of his sacking in 1998. Henderson was succeeded by Khalid bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, the nephew of the former emir of Bahrain, Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa. The responsibilities and functions of the Agency have become interrelated with and even superior to the responsibilities of other bodies and ministries.

The National Security Agency was established by Royal Decree No. 14 of 2002 amending the Amiri Decree No. 29 of 1996<sup>6</sup>, in connection with the reorganisation of the Ministry of Interior. Pursuant to this decree, the National Security Agency has replaced the 'General Directorate of State Security', which was affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior. According to the law governing this body, it follows Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

**In accordance with its establishment decree, the NSA is required to work in the following main areas:**

- Preserves national security;
- Monitors and detects all activities that harm the national security of the Kingdom or its institutions and systems, or anything that threatens the security and the safety of the country;
- Develops necessary security plans to face all normal and exceptional circumstances in cooperation with the specialized government bodies.

The National Security Agency (NSA) has become a parallel directorate to other government bodies, instead of being part of them. Its powers overlap with the judiciary and the Ministry of the Interior. Its influence extends even to the Central Informatics Organisation (CIO) and the Ministry of Information. It derives its executive influence from its connection to, and its role as an executive arm of, the Supreme Defence Council (SDC), which is the highest authority in the country, **consisting of:**

- The King, the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister;
- The Minister of the Royal Court and ten other members of the Royal family who occupy leading political and security positions in the country.

The Royal Decree<sup>7</sup> states that “the NSA is a subordinate of the President of the Council of Ministries (the Prime Minister), and its president is appointed by a Royal Decree with a rank of a minister”. The National Security Agency is headed by a Director appointed by the King at the rank of Minister, a member of the Supreme Defence Council and the Minister of the Interior. This administrative measure is intended to extend the scope of powers and to protect security officials from accountability by local laws.

**Since its establishment in 2002, the National Security Agency has been playing a substantial role in:**

- Penetrating civil society institutions and monitoring activists
- Pursuing political opponents and human rights defenders, in Bahrain and abroad
- Exercising systematic Organised torture
- Fabricating or exaggerating terror events or plans to justify intensive security measures, and running media campaigns at home and abroad to discredit activists and opposition, and justifying arrest campaigns, unfair trials and harsh court rulings against violators of the political system
- Issuing travel and travel restrictions

In 2004, the Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa issued a decree regarding the organisational structure of



the NSA, consisting of a number of units and departments, **including:**

- Special operations department
- International affairs department
- Political security department
- Counter-terrorism department
- Central department for information and documentation
- Department of information technology
- Department of association and coordination
- Department of legal affairs

The NSA was granted the power to arrest citizens by royal decree in 2008<sup>8</sup>. Then this power was abolished on the basis of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry<sup>9</sup> (BICI), after the unrest in February, 2011, by Royal Decree. Instead of taking the necessary measures to stop these violations, in late 2008 the King amended Decree 14/2002 to grant the National Security Agency a parallel status to the public security forces and make the military courts<sup>10</sup> the only forum for prosecuting National Security Agency personnel. This made it impossible, for example, for citizens to file a civil or criminal complaint against the National Security Agency or any of its members. Amending the decree of 2002, granting the Authority serious powers, **the most important of which:**

- Makes the members of the National Security Agency equal to "officers, non-commissioned officers and

members of the General Security Forces.”

- Grants legal affairs in the agency “in the powers of the public security forces.”
- Grants “Officers, non-commissioned officers and members of the National Security Agency the status of judicial control for internal crimes within the jurisdiction of the National Security Agency.”

In 2011, after the launching of pro-democracy protests demanding for rights, in line with the serious human rights violations committed by the National Security Agency against defenceless citizens and peaceful protestors, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry was established. The BICI concluded that the agency had arbitrarily and unlawfully arrested many demonstrators and subjected many detainees to torture or ill treatment.

Accordingly, the Committee has made a recommendation to **“amend the decree establishing the NSA to ensure that the organisation is an intelligence gathering agency without law enforcement and arrest authorities. The NSA should also have an independent office of inspector general to carry out the same internal “ombudsman” functions mentioned above with respect to the MOI. Legislation should be adopted to provide that even during the application of a State of National Safety the arrest of persons should be in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure.”**

On November 31, 2011, Bahrain’s King Hamad bin Isa Al

Khalifa issued Royal Decree No. 115 of 2011<sup>11</sup> amending the decree of the establishment of the National Security Agency No. 14 of 2002, which withdrew the authority's powers regarding the law enforcement and made it an agency to collect information, monitor and detect all harmful activities related to espionage.<sup>12</sup> In 2012, Decree No. 28 was issued. The decree demanded the establishment of an independent office of the Inspector General of the National Security Agency 'Ombudsman', and further gives it more powers.<sup>13</sup>

In the beginning of 2017, Royal Decree<sup>14</sup> No. (1) Of 2017 amending certain provisions of Decree No. (14) Of 2002 establishing the National Security Agency, granting officers, non-commissioned officers and members of the National Security Agency the status of 'judicial control officers', and recommended that it be kept as an intelligence-gathering device.



**The following are the names of the National Security Agency chiefs in various names since independence until today**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Took Office</b>	<b>Left Office</b>
Ian Henderson	April 1966	February 1998
Khalid bin Mohammed Al Khalifa	February 1998	May 2002
Abdul Aziz bin Atiyatullah Al Khalifa	May 2002	September 2005
Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa	September 2005	March 2008
Khalifa bin Abdullah Al Khalifa	March 2008	March 2008
Adel bin Khalifa bin Hamad Al-Fadhel	March 2008	March 2008
Talal bin Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	March 2008	To date

The names of the  
security department  
in various names  
since independence  
until today

1966

1998



**Ian Henderson**



**Khalid bin  
Mohammed Al  
Khalifa**

1998

2002



**Abdul Aziz bin  
Atiyatullah Al  
Khalifa**

2002

2005

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2017



[illegible]

# Khalifa bin Abdullah Al Khalifa



# Adel bin Khalifa Al Khalifa



**Talal  
bin Mohammed  
bin Khalifa  
Al Khalifa**



## STRUCTURE AND HEADQUARTERS OF THE NSA

### **The Structure of the National Security Agency (NSA)**

The secrecy characterized by the work of the National Security Agency and its functions makes it very difficult to know more about the general organisational structure of the Agency. What is known only is that the director of the Agency must be from the Royal family; appointed by the king him, by a special royal decree. The officers and other members are chosen carefully and with complete secrecy, which is linked to the nature of the tasks entrusted to the staff of the Agency.

### **Headquarters**

With regard to the headquarters; back to the 1990s and during the era of 'the State Security Law', the security committee was headquartered in an old building inside the Al Qal'aa. The office block was a large ground building consisting of two small rooms, and a large room for officers and investigations, with a bathroom for use by security men, and is open directly to the confinements.

At the end of 2005, the building of the National Security Agency was restored and updated, which went along

with the Red Cross delegation visit to the prisons. The entire ground floor was completely demolished, and the interrogation rooms were transformed into new solitary cells. Officers' workplaces were also moved to the top floor, and equipped with advanced equipment. Besides, the top floor is a major centre for senior investigative officers from various units and of the Ministry of interior's departments.

According to the accounts of witnesses, the building of the National Security Agency is divided into several sections, each section commensurate with the security operation carried out by. It is also equipped with several underground floors, and there are secret caches, some of them are for arrest and detention, and some are for keeping secret documents and devices. The interrogation rooms are equipped with torture techniques.

In addition to the main building located next to the Ministry of Interior in Manama (Al Qal'aa Building) there is a branch of the National Security Agency located in Al Muharaq - the old market [souq]- as well as the permanent offices at Bahrain's air and land entrances; Bahrain International Airport and King Fahd Causeway. These offices include an alternate officer and a number of associate officers.

# PART 2

## **LAWS AND ETHICS** OF SECURITY WORK

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS **AND SECURITY WORK**

International conventions and treaties have been concerned with the protection of individuals against violations of their rights and freedoms; and have obliged Governments to sign them. These laws urged governments to take the necessary measures to inform and explain to law enforcement officials the provisions of the national legislation, in particular, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and other international human rights instruments; ratified by the Government of Bahrain. These covenants have urged Governments to act in all circumstances, even in exceptional circumstances such as a state of emergency, to be reflected in all national legislation, and to issue regular reports on their implementation on a regular basis.

### **THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS STATES**<sup>15</sup>

**Article 3:** Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person.

**Article 5:** No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel or inhuman treatment or punishment.

**Article 9:** No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.



**Article 10:** Everyone has the right, on an equal footing with others, to have his case heard by an independent and impartial tribunal in a fair and public manner to determine his rights and obligations and any criminal charge against him.

**Article 11:**

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

**Article 12:** No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his private life, family, home, correspondence or campaigns in his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

**THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND  
POLITICAL RIGHTS<sup>16</sup> , RATIFIED BY BAHRAIN ON  
20 SEPTEMBER 2006, STATES:**

**Article 7:** No one shall be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment.

**Article 9:**

Paragraph 2: Any person arrested shall be informed of the reasons for such arrest at the time of his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charge against him.

Paragraph 3: The detention of persons awaiting trial shall not be the general rule, but their release may be subject to safeguards to ensure their presence at any other stage of judicial proceedings and to ensure the execution of the sentence.

**Article 10:**

Paragraph 1: All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

Paragraph 2: The accused shall be separated from the convicted, except in exceptional circumstances, and shall be treated separately as being not convicted.

**Article 14:**

paragraph 1: All persons shall be equal before the courts and everyone has the right, in the determination of any criminal charge brought against him or his rights and obligations in any civil action, to have his case dealt

with fairly and publicly by a competent, Law.

Paragraph 2: Everyone accused of a crime shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty by law.

Paragraph 3: All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

**Moreover,**

**ARTICLE 7 OF THE UNITED NATIONS BASIC PRINCIPLES ON THE ROLE OF LAWYERS <sup>17</sup>,  
STIPULATES:**

Governments shall further ensure that all persons arrested or detained, with or without criminal charge, shall have prompt access to a lawyer, and in any case not later than forty-eight hours from the time of arrest or detention.

**ARTICLE 8 OF THE ARAB CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS<sup>18</sup> STATES:**

Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person and no one shall be arrested, held in custody or detained without a legal warrant and without being brought promptly before a judge.

**PRINCIPLE I OF THE BODY OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL PERSONS UNDER ANY FORM OF DETENTION OR IMPRISONMENT OF 1988<sup>19</sup> EMPHASISES:**

All persons under any form of detention or imprisonment shall be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

**THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT<sup>20</sup> STATES IN ARTICLE 2:**

«Each State Party shall take effective legislative, administrative or judicial measures or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory under its jurisdiction». Article 4 of the same Convention provides that «Each State Party shall ensure that all acts of torture are crimes under its criminal law and the same shall apply to any attempt by any person to commit torture and to carry out any other act constituting complicity and participation in torture.»

**THE UNITED NATIONS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, IN ARTICLE VI, STRESS ON THE PROTECTION OF THE HEALTH OF DETAINEES <sup>21</sup> STATING THAT:**

Law enforcement officials shall ensure the full protection of the health of persons in their custody and, in particular, shall take immediate action to secure medical attention whenever required.



Despite the fact that Bahrain is a party to a number of international conventions, the reservations it has made affect the essence of these conventions, and thus reduce their effectiveness of protecting human rights and public freedoms.

Regrettably, the ratification of these conventions was not accompanied by the amendment of national laws to comply with the provisions of the agreements, and it does not reflect the reality on the ground. The government is working hard to promote to the international community an idea that it is working to train and rehabilitate the security forces in order to improve its performance. However, after nearly five decades of independence, the government has not been able to achieve the minimum level of respect for human rights and to stop the abuses committed by the security services.

Since the Government of Bahrain is a State Member of the United Nations, it must respect its Charter, in addition to respecting and abiding by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Civil, Political, Social and Cultural Rights. Especially those related to the powers granted to the security Agency, and to punish human rights violators.

On January 5, 2017, the King of Bahrain issued Decree No. 1, which granted officers, non-commissioned officers and members of the National Security Agency the status of judicial officers. The decree ignored the human rights violations committed by this body and extrajudicial killings, and the series of torture practised against detainees due to their political grounds. As well as other forms of ill-

treatment, such as prohibiting treatment, extortion and threats, in a clear violation of context of the Bahraini Constitution, the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, which all prohibit the use of torture and other acts that violate human dignity.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE  
WORK OF THE POLICE, ISSUED BY THE UNITED  
NATIONS, ARE:**

- Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials
- Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Basic principles on the use of force and firearms by law enforcement officials
- The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Rules for the protection of juveniles deprived of their liberty
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women
- Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power

It is important to establish effective monitoring mechanisms for the National Security Agency, taking advantage of the

guidelines on national preventive mechanisms established by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which the Government of Bahrain has not yet ratified. The purpose of this Protocol <sup>22</sup> is to:

- Establish a system of regular visits by an international commission and an independent national mechanism for places where people are deprived of their liberty;
- Under this Protocol, States parties must establish one or more independent national preventive mechanisms to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment at the local level.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LAW **ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS**

Law enforcement officials are all those who exercise police powers, in particular, the power to arrest and detain persons. The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials<sup>23</sup> emphasises, in particular:

- Submission to control, accountability and accountability
- Effective maintenance of ethical standards among law enforcement officials
- Crime prevention and avoidance
- Compliance with law enforcement in a system that ensures the application of international human rights standards
- The public has the right to examine the actions taken by law enforcement officials
- Standards of human behaviour have practical value through education and training

## BAHRAIN'S COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

Human rights violations in Bahrain have been in the danger zone, amid the silence of the international community; the growing climate of impunity and lack of accountability, despite Bahrain's ratification of the following international treaties:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Protection of the Rights of the Child (CPRC)
- 

With regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the practices and abuses committed by the National Security Agency are incompatible with this Covenant, in particular:



- Detaining citizens on security cases; without a warrant
- Presenting photographs of the accused in the audio-visual media and issuing verdicts before the verdict
- The campaign of verbal abuse and contempt against citizens and human rights activists
- Dropping nationality
- Banning demonstrations

The report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry<sup>24</sup> regarding the widespread of torture and ill treatment in Bahrain; clearly reveals that the situation is inconsistent with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, following the enactment of the National Safety Legislation; promulgated by Decree No. 23 of 2011.

#### **THE BICI REPORT REFERS TO:**

- The National Security Agency (NSA) committed acts of torture that sometimes resulted in the loss of life; for instance the cases<sup>25</sup> of Abdel Karim Fakhrawi and Zakaria Al A'ashiri
- The use of excessive force that led to death, as in the case of Abd al-Ridha Bhmaid and Haj Isa Abdel-Hassan

The Bahraini Constitution<sup>26</sup> also guaranteed the prevention and punishment of torture, but its laws did not go beyond the stage of formal procedures, as the defendants were not punished in cases of torture and murder; against demonstrators. In some cases, those sentenced to torture were sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment, and then dropped to 3 years. Some were sentenced to 6 months of imprisonment, while others were acquitted. In this dire situation, the National Institution Human Rights (NIHR) only issues statements on world days and pays attention only to specific headlines that attract foreign media.

# PART 3

## THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

## PRACTICES OF THE NSA **IN THE DETENTION CENTRES**

Most of the opposition activists were arrested at midnight; by groups of security forces who raided their homes and took them to unknown destinations, where they were held incommunicado. Most of them claimed to be severely tortured during the first days of detention by security officers. They were not allowed access to their lawyers during the two-month investigation period by the National Security Agency, which confirmed to international human rights organisations that the standards for which they were tried lacked justice.

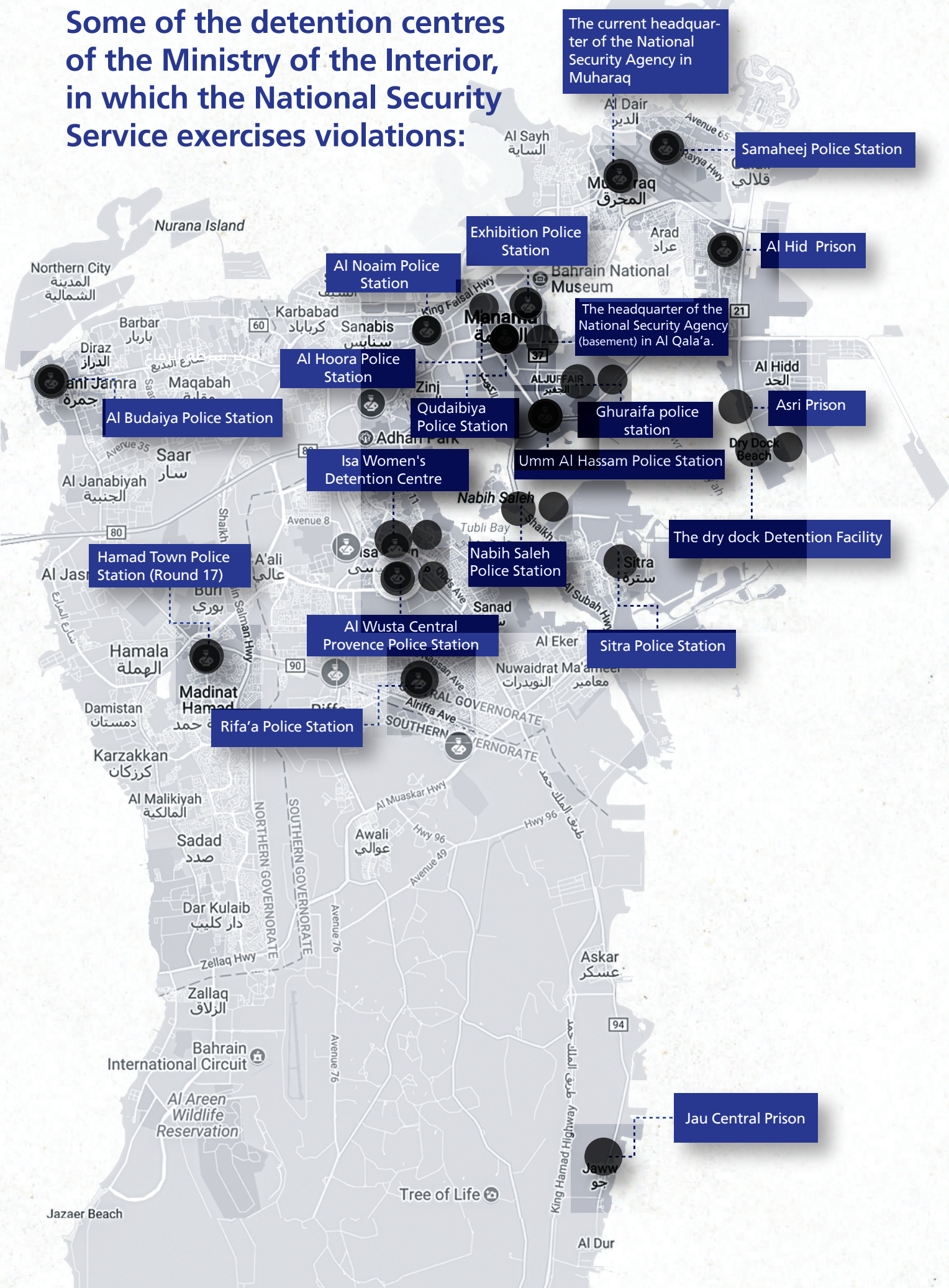
On 5 May 2017, a member of the 'Al Wefaq Shura Council' was arrested on charges of freedom of opinion and expression. He was subjected to interrogation, severe beatings and forced to stand over a long period.

**SOME OF THE DETENTION CENTRES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, IN WHICH THE NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE EXERCISES VIOLATIONS:**

- 1.** The current headquarter of the National Security Agency in Muharaq
- 2.** The headquarter of the National Security Agency (basement) in Al Qala'a.
- 3.** Jau Central Prison.
- 4.** The dry dock Detention Facility (a short-term detention unit).
- 5.** Al Hid Prison.
- 6.** Al Noaim Police Station.
- 7.** Qudaibiya Police Station.
- 8.** Rifa'a Police Station.
- 9.** Al Wusta Central Provence Police Station.
- 10.** Asri Prison.
- 11.** Al Budaiya Police Station.
- 12.** Exhibition Police Station.
- 13.** Hamad Town Police Station (Round 17).
- 14.** Al Hoorah Police Station.
- 15.** Isa Women's Detention Centre.
- 16.** Nabih Saleh Police Station.
- 17.** Samaheej Police Station.
- 18.** Sitra Police Station.
- 19.** Umm Al Hassam Police Station.
- 20.** Ghuraifa police station.



# Some of the detention centres of the Ministry of the Interior, in which the National Security Service exercises violations:



The member of SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights Ebtisam Alsaegh told Amnesty International that she was tortured for seven hours on 26 May 2017, at the National Security Agency building in Muharaq. Ebtisam Alsaegh confirmed that officials of the National Security Agency (NSA) subjected her to severe psychological and physical torture, including sexual assault, in retaliation for her work. The sources indicated that Alsaegh went out of the investigation and was taken to the hospital immediately. Alsaegh has been targeted through a campaign by media organisations backed by the government, and her car was burnt last months. On the morning of 4 July 2017, masked armed security men raided her house without presenting an arrest warrant<sup>27</sup>. She was transferred to the General Department of Criminal Investigation, and then detained in the Isa Town prison for women.

On the 23rd of May 2017, Adel Al Marzooq, head of the Monitoring Committee of the Unitary National Democratic Assemblage, was interrogated by the NSA about his activism that highlight human rights violations in Bahrain. He reported that he was severely beaten in the head area by a solid material, stripping him of clothes, pouring cold water several times on him, threatening him with rape, forcing him to repeat the slogans **"I am a traitor to the homeland"**, and forcing him to resign from his legal activism.

The National Security Agency (NSA) has also summoned large numbers of human rights activists in the recent weeks and subjected them to intimidation, reprisals, torture or

other ill-treatment in order to force them to suspend their activities. The head of the Monitoring Committee at the Bahrain Human Rights Society, Abdul Jalil Yousef, was interrogated for four hours, during which he was subjected to abuse, threats and ill-treatment, and forced to resign from the human rights activism.

On 4 July 2017, the security forces raided and searched a house belonging to human rights activist Mohammed Khalil Al Shakhouri, in Karzakan, and transferred him to an unknown destination. Al Shakhouri was one of the jurists summoned in the security compound in Muharaq of the National Security Agency in May. After his release, he reported that he had been severely beaten, subjected to exhaustion, electric shock and sexual assault to force him to resign from the human rights activism.

A few days before the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, on 22 June 2017, the National Security Agency (NSA) interrogated Mohammed Hassan Sultan<sup>28</sup>, the son of the son of the member of Al-Wefaq Block Sheikh Hassan Sultan, one of the opposition leaders. During interrogation, Officer Muhammad Hazeem tortured him, and he was also stripped of his clothes; forced to stand for a long time; threatened with sexual assault and was informed that he is banned from traveling by decision of the National Security Agency.

On 1 August 2017, the National Security Agency summoned the activist in social media, Yousef Al Jamri, and interrogated him for 16 hours in three separate sessions, while he was blindfolded. Al Jamri reported on Twitter after being



released that the investigation was on terrorism-related cases, despite that his personal account presents a variety of bias news. He also said that his phone was confiscated, his religious beliefs were insulted, threatened to be raped and to deprive his family of the right to education and housing. The activist confirmed that he was subjected to physical and psychological torture during the interrogation sessions. He was summoned again for investigation and threatened to arrest him from the house if he did not attend. However, he did not comply with the calls he received on his wife's phone pending the extradition of a formal call from the security authorities. He did not go to the investigation again until the time of writing the report.

The National Security Agency has launched a large-scale campaign to recruit activists to work for the security services. Bahraini human rights organisations have documented numerous human rights abuses by members of the National Security Agency (NSA) at the security compound in Muharraq city, specifically on the third floor, room number one, **including:**

- Interrogation and investigation of the human rights defenders, in violation of the law, for long hours while standing and blindfolded for this entire period
- Lawyers were not allowed to follow the proceedings of the investigation, contrary to Article 20 of the Constitution
- Severe beatings

- Disrespect the detainees' religion
- Blasphemy, insult and humiliation
- Psychological torture, especially the threat of assault on honour
- Verbal harassment, sexual assault and erosion
- Electric shock
- Threats and intimidation of targeting members of their families if they do not leave their activism with local and international human rights organisations
- Force them to publicly announce their resignation from their human rights activism





5 May 2017

**Nizar Al-Qarea'a**

A member of the 'Al Wefaq Shura Council' was arrested

**charges** of freedom of opinion and expression



He was subjected to interrogation



forced to stand over a long period



severe beatings





# 26 May 2017

The human rights defender  
**Ebtisam Alsaegh**

told Amnesty International that she was tortured for seven hours on 26 May 2017, at the National Security Agency building in Muharaq.



sexual assault



subjected to severe psychological and physical torture

Alsaegh has been attacked by media organisations backed by the government



The sources indicated that Alsaegh went out of the investigation and was taken to the hospital immediately



her car was burnt last months



On the morning of 4 July 2017, masked armed security men raided her house without presenting an arrest warrant . She was transferred to the General Department of Criminal Investigation, and then detained in the Isa Town prison for women.



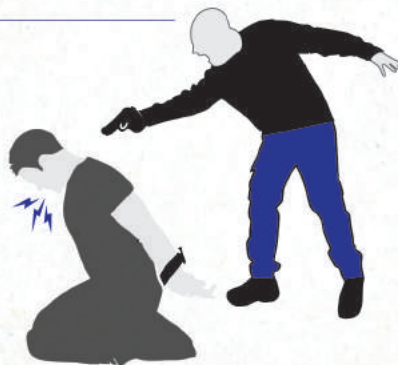
23 May 2017

**Adel Al Marzooq,**

head of the Monitoring Committee  
of the Unitary National Democratic  
Assemblage, was interrogated by the  
NSA



stripping him of clothes



forcing him to repeat the slogans  
**"I am a traitor to the homeland"**

severely beaten in  
the head area by a  
solid material



pouring cold  
water several  
times on him

Forcing him to resign from his legal activism.







The head of the Monitoring  
Committee at the Bahrain  
Human Rights Society,  
**Abdul Jalil Yousef**

was interrogated for four hours



during which he was  
subjected to abuse,  
threats and ill-treatment,  
and forced to resign  
from the human rights  
activism.



# 4 July 2017

The human rights activist

**Mohammed Khalil  
Al Shakhouri**



The security forces raided and searched a house belonging, and transferred him to an unknown destination



stripping  
him of  
clothes



he had been  
severely beaten

sexual assault



electric shock





## 22 June 2017

The National Security Agency (NSA) interrogated **Mohammed Hassan Sultan**, the son of the member of Al-Wefaq Block Sheikh Hassan Sultan

During interrogation, Officer Muhammad Hazeem tortured him



stripped of his clothes



forced to stand for a long time



he was informed that he is banned from traveling by decision of the National Security Agency



threatened with sexual assault



# 1 August 2017

The National Security Agency  
summoned the activist in social media,

## **Yousef Al Jamri**



interrogated him for 16 hours in three separate sessions, while  
he was blindfolded



his phone was  
confiscated, his  
religious beliefs  
were insulted



The investigation was on  
terrorism-related cases,  
despite that his personal  
account presents a variety  
of bias news

he was subjected to physical and psychological  
torture during the interrogation sessions



**threatened**



to deprive his family of  
the right to housing



to be raped



to deprive his family of  
the right to education

**He was summoned again for investigation and threatened to arrest  
him from the house if he did not attend**





# The National Security Agency (NSA)

Force them on standing for long hours



Interrogation of the human rights defenders, for long hours while standing and blindfolded for this entire period



Severe beatings



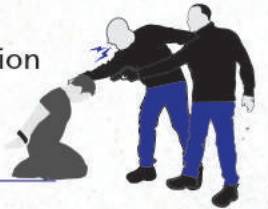
Lawyers were not allowed to follow the proceedings of the investigation, contrary to Article 20 of the Constitution



Disrespect the detainees' religion



Blasphemy, insult and humiliation



Electric shock



Psychological torture, especially the threat of assault on honour



Threats and intimidation of targeting members of their families if they do not leave their activism with local and international human rights organisations



Verbal harassment, sexual assault and erosion



Force them to publicly announce their resignation from their human rights activism





# PART 4

## THE NSA

SECURITY  
DOCTRINE

## SECURITY **BUDGET**

The final accounts<sup>29</sup> of the budget show that the military and security spending of the Kingdom of Bahrain is in a marked increase; despite the decline in oil prices. The expenditure of the National Security Agency increased from about BD 18 million in 2011, the launch of the public unrest, to BD 35 million in 2015.

The security approach of the National Security Agency (NSA) is to organise a comprehensive information structure on political opponents and human rights activists. This helps to use the latest modern spy devices, which the United Kingdom sells to the Government of Bahrain, to penetrate the activists' devices, accounts and personal information, which requires a big budget to buy the latest technological inventions in the field of espionage and information gathering.

In addition, the Statistics and Information Service; directly linked to the National Security Agency (NSA), provides all the techniques and facilities needed by the NSA. The Communications Division also provides essential security services to the NSA; as it is a spy division, equipped with the latest eavesdroppers and tracking information and data, and includes all personal belongings, communications traffic and internal and external relations. There is no doubt that the independence of the system from the ministries of state, provides it with wide powers to move freely, without fear of legal accountability or to disclose the nature of his work and functions.



## SECURITY COOPERATION **WITH BRITAIN**

The UK assists the National Security Agency (NSA) by technical assistance in intelligence, although it is involved in the torture and killing of activists and journalists in Bahrain. The UK<sup>30</sup>, in addition, is involved in providing the security authorities with modern techniques of espionage, which Bahrain exploits against activists and human rights activists. Activists say that during their interrogation in the National Security Agency (NSA), they are asked about their private phone's conversations and calls, which reflect the degree of espionage and the lack of respect for the privacy of individuals guaranteed by international treaties and conventions.

Henderson came to Bahrain accompanied by four officers, demanding to control the security matters. When he was asked to specialise in a specific type of crime, he almost gave up his job, and he set conditions in the contract, which Britain quickly approved. The most notably was the formation of a special section for Investigation and Prisons Service, with absolute terms of reference, and the recruitment of four English officers to head these positions. The main task of the security intelligence service to Henderson was to penetrate and defeat popular movements demanding democracy. Henderson saw human rights advocates,

supporters of the Constitution and elected parliament as **'radicals, extremists, and terrorists'**. Many were arrested without a fair trial or clear charges, and often were brutally beaten and tortured.

Bahrainis tell terrifying stories about the repressive Agencies and the strategy of repression against the peaceful opponents demanding democracy and the due rights. They affirm that Britain held the security joints, and has the upper control on the intelligence work in Bahrain; even before Henderson's advent, during his colonial rule and after the independence, until the arrival of John Yates subsequently after the unrest of February 2011, as Britain follows a special security strategy regarding the Bahraini issue.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### OF THE BICI REGARDING THE NSA

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry has confirmed, **“The National Security Agency follows a systematic practice of physical and psychological ill-treatment which in many cases has amounted to torture in relation to a large number of detainees held in their custody.”** The Commission said that this assumption was concluded on the basis of forensic investigations and examinations conducted by the Committee. It also founded that the death of one of the detainees Karim Fakhrawi was caused by torture in the National Security Agency.

#### THE COMMITTEE ALSO RECOMMENDS:

- Reducing the powers of the National Security Agency, and limit it to collecting intelligence after it was within its powers: arrest and investigation reference. The report said, **“Amend the decree establishing the National Security Agency to keep it in charge of gathering intelligence without law enforcement or arrest.”**

- Accountability to officials, officers and members, accused of torture; on their involvement in grave violations of human rights, including killing demonstrators, torturing to death, raiding, stealing, damaging raided houses and other documented violations; during the period of National Security.

The Government of Bahrain claims to abide by the recommendations of the Bassiouni Commission<sup>31</sup> (BICI), including the National Security Agency, where the King of Bahrain hurried to issue Decree Law No. 115 of 2011 amending certain provisions of Decree No. 14 of 2002 establishing the National Security Agency.

**“Article (4): The National Security Agency shall collect information and monitor and detect all harmful activities related to espionage, terrorism and terrorism in order to preserve the national security of the Kingdom and its institutions and systems. Article 5 (1), Paragraph 4: The National Security Agency shall refer cases that require arrest or detention to the Ministry to take legal action.”**

Although this Decree-Law was in line with the recommendation of the BICI, in terms of form and content, however, the National Security Agency still exercises all of its previous roles. The decree to reduce the authority of the NSA is not practical, and has failed to halt the violations, in addition officials, officers or member; belonging to this Agency have not been held accountable for torture

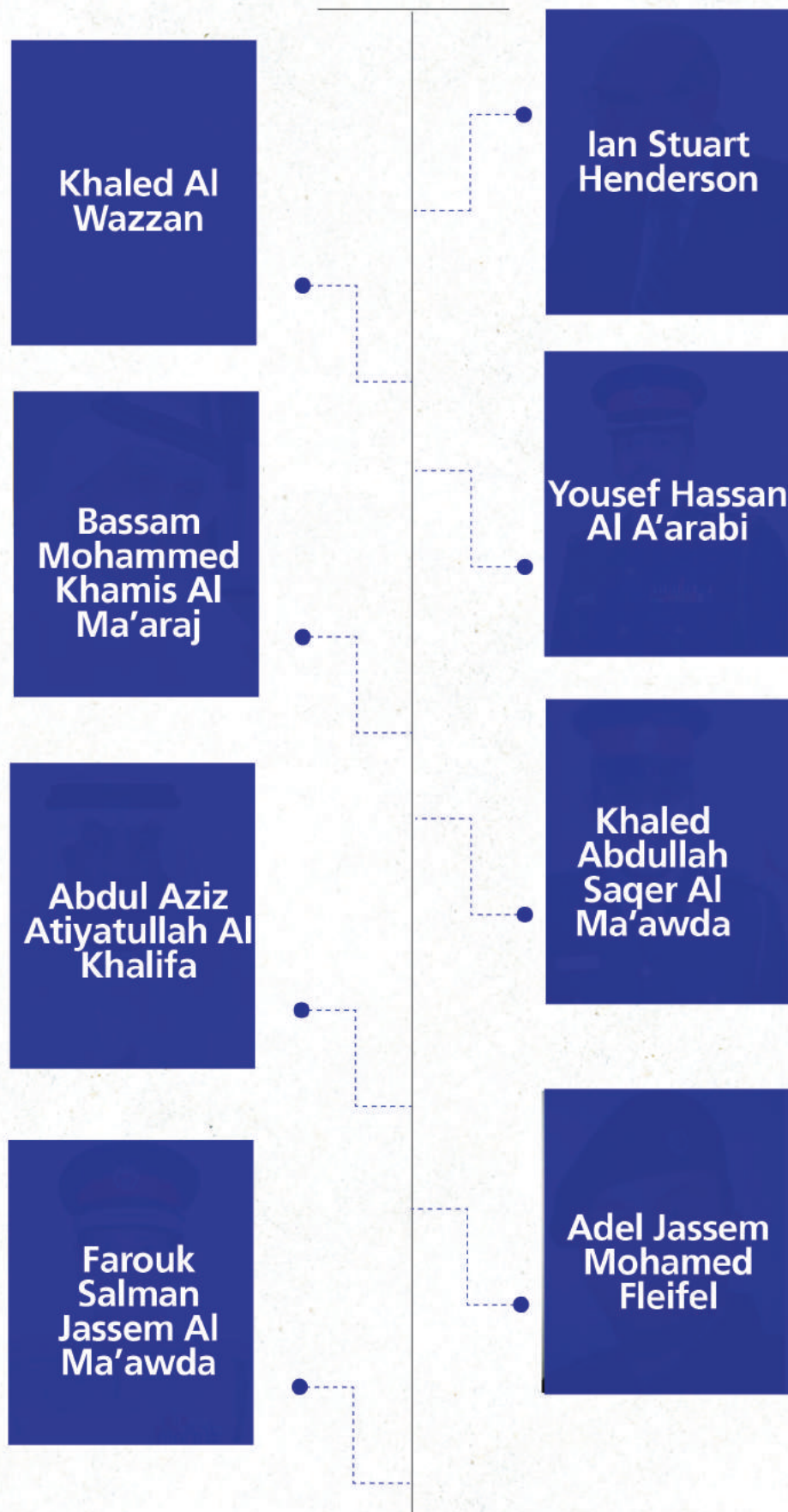
allegations and violations that affected hundreds of victims, particularly in 2011. At the top of those responsible for violations, the former head of the NSA; Khalifa Bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, who was promoted, instead of being held accountable for the crimes of torture and murder during the National Security period.

# PART 5

## **OFFICIALS INVOLVED** IN TORTURE AND VICTIMS



# Officials Involved in Torture



**Khalifa bin  
Ahmed Al  
Khalifa**

**Isa A'awad  
Talal Majali**

**Khalifa  
Abdullah  
Mohammed  
Al Khalifa**

**Yousef Ali  
Yousef Al  
Mana'ai**

**Khalifa Ali  
Rashid Al  
Khalifa**

**Fahd Abdul-  
lah Al Fadala**

**Isa Sultan Al  
Sulaiti**

**Hassan  
Ibrahim Al  
Bu A'ainain**

**Talal bin Mo-  
hammed Al  
Khalifa**

## OFFICIALS INVOLVED **IN TORTURE**

It should be noted that the government of Bahrain is promoting a policy of impunity and seeking to find a legal way out. Bahrain's King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa issued a law (Royal Decree 56 of 2002) granting the National Security Agency personnel immunity from prosecution on the human rights violations committed before 2001.

### **IAN STUART HENDERSON**

The former Director-General of the State Security Investigation Department in Bahrain and the adviser to the Minister of Interior, Ian Stewart Henderson<sup>32</sup>, who was responsible for torturing Bahraini dissidents during the 1980s and 1990s, since joining the State Security Agency on 23 April 1966, until it was announced that he was disqualified from office on 3 July 2000. Opponents who would have been oppressed by Henderson; have conveyed most of the information known about him. In addition, human rights activists reveal that Henderson has strengthened the culture of extrajudicial killings in the security services, as dozens of his victims have been killed. Henderson was brought to suppress dissidents in Bahrain



after his success in suppressing the Kenyan rebels in the 1950s. The security Agency in Bahrain, which was led by Henderson, led harsh repressive practices and gross violations of human rights.

The British officer Ian Henderson is the first man in the private security Agency for 30 years of Bahrain's history. Henderson reshuffled the State Security Investigation Department, which was founded in 1957, and headed the Secret Intelligence Service to monitor politicians until 2000.

Henderson's harshness in dealing with opponents is well known; he supervised with his executive arm Officer Adel Fleifel on the security file during the uprising of the 1990s. Henderson conducted a series of dialogues in prison with opposition leaders during the 1990s uprising, which was demanding the return of parliamentary life. What is known about Henderson's personality is his ability to recruit opponents and to conceal those who intend to cooperate with him during their time in prison. He also does not initiate torture personally, but rather relies on agents acting on his behalf. While preferring to appear in the character of the negotiator, who seeks solutions while continuing to tighten the security grip.

Henderson received several awards and honours from representatives of the Authority in Bahrain. On 20 January 1982, the former ruler Isa bin Salman awarded him the First Class Military Service medal. In 1983, Henderson was awarded the 'First Order of Bahrain', also the current King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa in 2000, 'Sheikh Isa Medal of First Class'.

On 22 February 1998, the Government of Bahrain announced Henderson's retirement; before it signed on 6 March 1998, the Convention against Torture (CAT), in Geneva. On 7 January 2000, the British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw stated that the Organised Crime Section of the 'The Metropolitan' had opened an investigation into the involvement of Henderson in widespread human rights violations.

Although Henderson<sup>33</sup> was retired in 1998, the Government of Bahrain kept him an adviser to the interior minister. The British Ian Henderson, the engineer of torture in Bahrain, died but his bloody image. He lived and died, protected by the privileges of the security state, which he established. Henderson died on 13 April 2013, in Bahrain, at the age of 86 years, without being officially paid by Britain or Bahrain.

### **KHALED AL WAZZAN**

One of the most prominent perpetrators of torture in Bahrain and close to the director general of the notorious State Security, British officer Ian Henderson, a member of the commission overseeing the investigation of the events of the 1990s, and supervisor of torture at the Khamis Centre. Al Wazzan carried out all forms of torture against prisoners of conscience, such as beatings with wooden boards and clubs, rubbing, hanging from the hands or feet at the door or in the famous 'Al Falaqa' manner, and psychological torture through verbal abuse and insults to extract confessions; in the political issues related to the popular movement at that time.



Al Wazzan was involved in the raids on houses in the early hours of dawn to arrest the wanted men. He was involved in the acts of housebreakers, intimidating people and damaging the furniture.

Witnesses confirmed that he had sexually assaulted 17-year-old Saied Al Askafi, who had been arrested from his home in the village of Sanabis. Al Askafi returned dead on 8 July 1995, within a week of his arrest and torture until he died at Al Khamis detention centre. One of Al Wazzan victims, who witnessed the incident recounts that Al Wazzan was beating Al Askafi with a heavy wooden stick throughout his body, mercilessly despite being young. He died while Khaled Al Wazzan was torturing him, who oversees his case and dozens of other cases.

He was also mentioned as being involved in the torture case of the victim Noah Khalil Noah, who was 22-years-old, and who suffered the same fate on 21 July 1998; in less than seven days of his detention in the same centre.

Reports confirm that he personally committed torture, whether in Khamis centre, in the Criminal Investigations Unit, or in Al Qal'aa (Command Centre of the State Security Agency). The testimonies indicate that Al Wazzan used to severely torture activists and detainees of the villages of Muharaq Island; to force them to confess about themselves and about others. He directed attacks and raids on houses in the dawn, with the help of his right-hand assistant Captain Isa Sultan Al Sulaiti.

### **YUSEF HASSAN YUSEF AL A'ARABI**

One of the investigating officers was responsible for the investigations and the acquittal of the confessions after the detainee was subjected to various means of torture by the torturers; in full view of him. Testimonies of some victims indicate the role of Al A'arabi in forcing them to confess being in dire situation, when they were brought in at dawn, or returning them to the torture confinements located near his criminal investigations office in Aladliya.

### **BASSAM MOHAMMED KHAMIS AL MA'ARAJ**

He was member of the investigation team of torturers Fahed Al Fadala and Isa Al Majali, who were involved in torture and ill-treatment of detainees. He used to receive the detainee after being tortured. Then, he also used to threaten the detainee to hand him to another torturer for other doses of torture. He also used to assault the honour of the detainee's wife or mother or sister, in order to let him confess. Along with Fahed Al Fadala and other officers, he witnessed an assault on an activist when he was stripped of his clothes, and a wooden stick was introduced in the sensitive point, while the detainee was handcuffed.

### **KHALED ABDULLAH SAQER AL MA'AWDA**

With the tortured Khaled Al Wazzan, Khaled Al Ma'awda is the main accomplices of the executioner Adel Fleifel. He was one of the members of the Committee of Security

Torture, which was formed in the events of the 1990s. He accompanied both Adel Fleifel and Khalid Al Wazzan in all their raids in the dawn to arrest citizens and torture them to exert confession. He has been known to extinguish cigarette butts in the detainees' bodies, and he used to compete with Al Wazzan to inflict the greatest harm on the victims; delighted in doing so.

#### **ABDUL AZIZ ATIYATULLAH AL KHALIFA**

He was the head of what was known as the 'Security Committee', which was composed of a number of internal officers responsible for the investigation of the detainees during the events of the 1990s. He used to torture victims to force them to confess, especially in times of dawn. Abdul Aziz Atiyatullah was the first president of National Security Agency (NSA), with the rank of Minister, after its formation of the on 8 May 2002. After the increase of popular claims to sue him, and to turn away from accountability, his position was changed in 2005, from the president of the National Security Agency to an adviser to the Prime Minister for Security Affairs; with the rank of minister also.

#### **ADEL JASSEM MOHAMED FLEIFEL**

He is considered one of the most frequently mentioned in the testimonies of the victims of Bahrain from 1980 to 1997, where he does not only lead the raids on homes at dawn, and interrogated the detainees, but also contributed

to beating them and insulting their beliefs and supervising their torture directly.

He was Henderson's right-hand man, known for torturing the victims. He used to psychologically torture the detainees; either by threatening them with assault on the honour of their women, or watching and smiling in their face while a member of his torture crew sexually assaulted the detainees. In addition to torturing through electric shocks, pulling of nails and using a hot metal rod during interrogation.

After being sent to retirement in 2002, and due to local pressure and protests, Fleifel fled to Australia.

#### **FAROUK SALMAN JASSEM AL MA'AWDA**

Farouk Al Ma'awda was director of the General Directorate of Investigation and Criminal Evidence (The Bureau of Investigations in Aladliya). It is the main torture centre after the absence of the security role of Al Qal'aa, known as the National Security Agency, where the worst practices of human rights violations of detainees are practised, particularly physical and psychological torture of detainees.

The authorities have honoured Farouk Al Ma'awda with many rewards; in recognition of his efforts in the various positions, he has held.



### **KHALIFA ALI RASHID AL KHALIFA**

He is the former head of the National Security Agency from 26 September 2005, until 3 July 3 2008. He arrested many political activists and human rights defenders, which has contributed to the internal tension and has been reflected in the human rights and media reports on Bahrain.

Testimonies of the victims arrested during Khalifa's administration of the State Security Agency indicate that they were subjected to torture and ill-treatment, which was the subject of the attention of local and international organisations that have been calling for the formation of commissions investigating the torture cases and holding those responsible accountable.

### **KHALIFA BIN AHMED AL KHALIFA**

In August 2016, Talal bin Mohammed Al Khalifa was appointed head of the National Security Agency. Human rights activists say he has been involved in numerous human rights abuses committed in the confinement of the NSA. He is accused of torturing dissidents by using various means, notably electric shock, to extract confessions.

### **FAHD ABDULLAH AL FADALA**

His name emerged distinctively in the practice of torture directly to the detainees and the exchange of roles with other officers, including the naturalised Jordanian Isa

Majali and the other Bahraini Bassam Al Ma'araj to obtain confessions the way he wants. He was known to accompany the detainees when he took them to the Public Prosecutor's Office. He used to torture and beat those who refused to sign ready confessions there or to say what is contrary to what is mentioned in the interrogation confessions.

Testimonies indicate threatening detainees with his weapon, and stating that no one can access them or know their fate through fabricating integrated events. It also confirms that he and Al Majali sexually harassed some detainees by introducing a wooden stick in the sensitive point in order to force them to confess.

#### **ISA A'AWAD TALALL MAJALI**

A Jordanian citizen of Bahraini nationality at the end of his fourth decade. He works in the Directorate of Criminal Investigation at the rank of lieutenant. He is expected to be promoted to a higher rank in recognition of his efforts to extract confessions from detainees and activists. He was known as the first to receive the detainees in an attempt to extort confessions and break their will.

Al Majali is known for his use of slanderous language and contemptuous speech with the detainees, insulting the honour of their mothers, sisters and wives, in addition to ridicule and mockery of their religious beliefs, and has witnessed the torture of many activists and human rights defenders.

### **ISA SULTAN AL SULAITI**

His role has emerged in helping his supervisor Al Wazzan, and to lead night raids on the activists' homes. He also played a role in interrogating the detainees on Muharaq villages, specifically the youth of Arad, Dair and Samaheej, and using various means of torture and intimidation to force them to confess.

### **KHALIFA ABDULLAH MOHAMMED AL KHALIFA**

He was the head of the National Security Agency and responsible for the arrests of political activists and human rights defenders after he took over from Khalifa Ali Rashid Al Khalifa.

It is known that he led the process of televised confessions presented on Bahrain state TV, in December 2008, by young people who were subjected to electric shocks and severe torture of what is known as the detainees of 'The Scheme of the Hujayra'. These confessions were used to arrest popular figures and leaders in January 2009, triggering popular protests in the villages and cities of Bahrain until they were released in April of the same year, after the charges were suspended.

### **HASSAN IBRAHIM AL BU A'AINAIN**

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued Decree No. (4) Of 2017 on 12 January 2017, to appoint Brigadier General

Hassan Ibrahim Ali Al Bu A'ainain as an agent for the National Security Agency.

The Irish judge Green O'Neill has rejected the request to bring Bahraini public prosecutor Al Bu A'ainain on the grounds of complaints of torture and torture assistance, the Belfast Telegraph reported.

Al Bu A'ainain was responsible for overseeing Al Qal'aa prison in Bahrain, run by the Bahraini National Security Agency, where detainees were subjected to electric shocks, sleep deprivation and beatings on the soles of the feet.

Swiss prosecutors have launched an investigation into the Al Bu A'ainain after a number of victims have been charged with torture and ill-treatment.

#### **YUSEF ALI YUSEF AL MANA'AI**

Is a member of the National Security Agency under the supervision of Capt. Bader Ibrahim Habib Al Ghaith, the captain who is accused of torturing the symbols in the case of the 21 who is responsible for the injuries to human rights activist Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja<sup>34</sup>.

One of the most important accused of torture, and he was leading a battalion of riot police and wearing Special Forces uniforms.



### **TALAL BIN MOHAMMED AL KHALIFA**

Is the second son of former interior minister Mohammed Al Khalifa and younger brother of Bahrain's ambassador to Britain Fawaz Al Khalifa. Talal Mohammed Al Khalifa assumed his duties following the Royal Decree No. 66 of 2016, appointing him as Head of the National Security Agency after undergoing the same training courses that all the executioners entered before him at the Sandhurst Military College in Britain and graduated in 1992.



## **VICTIMS OF THE PRACTICES OF THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES**



### **Mohamed Ghuloom Bucheeri (1976)**

Bucheeri was active in demanding the causes of his people in freedom, democracy and a decent life. At the end of November 1976, after the killing of the victim Abdullah Al Madani, the intelligence services arrested him, brutally torture him, and was then transferred to the hospital to die on 2 December 1976, after 10 days of continuous torture. Then the intelligence service summoned his father to come and see his corpse, and then secretly buried him in the cemetery of Manama, without knowing the whereabouts of his grave.

### **Saied Al Awaynati (1976)**

Saied Al Awaynati -25 years old- was arrested during the State Security Law and received various forms of torture under Henderson's supervision until he died on December 12, 1976, after twenty-four hours of his arrest. Al Awaynati was a poet and activist in the cultural press.







### **Jamil Ali Mohsen Al Ali (1980)**

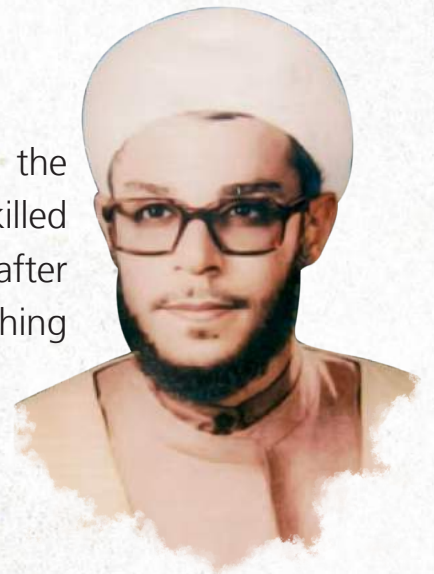
On 26 April 1980, Jamil Al Ali was arrested while participating in a march that was suppressed by the security authorities.<sup>36</sup> After 13 days of detention, he died on 5 May 1980. He was subjected to the worst methods of torture that appeared on his body, such as:

- His body was burnt with an electric kettle
- Some organs of his body were broken
- Some places of his body was drilled with an electric drill
- Torture by electric shock

The authorities prevented the family of Jamil Al Ali from receiving his body. The masses went to Salmaniya Hospital and took his body by force. Many of his photographs were taken as hard documents condemning the killers.

### **Sheikh Jamal Al Asfour (1981)**

He was active in the 'London group', later known as the Bahrain Islamic Freedom Movement. Al Asfour was killed under severe torture, after being arrested, immediately after issuing a statement in 1981, and was accused of establishing a movement called the 'Martyrs' Movement.'<sup>37</sup>







### **Dr Hashim Al Alawi (1986)**

On 18 September 2009, the security services launched a campaign of mass arrests against dozens of activists, in response to their demand to restore the Constitution and parliamentary work and the abolition of repressive laws restricting freedoms, especially the State Security Law.

Dr Al Alawi was subjected to brutal torture leading to his death, along with a group of activists.

### **Hussein Qambar (1995)**

On 5 January 1995, the security authorities summoned the family of the victim, Hussein Qambar, who was killed under severe torture. An intelligence official offered to hand over the body of their son, provided that the family bury him immediately under the guard of the security forces. In an atmosphere of absolute secrecy, surrounded by riot police, the victim was buried in Al Hoorah cemetery in Manama, in the presence of very few members of his family.





### **Saeed Al Eskafi (1995)**



Al Eskafi, who was not yet 17 years old, was imprisoned for participating in some of the demanding demonstrations. During his six-day incarceration, he was subjected to physical and mental torture. Doctors who saw the effects of torture on his body described it as a crime against humanity whose perpetrators deserved to appear before the International Court of Justice.

On July 8, 1995, Al Eskafi's father received a phone call from the security authorities to come to the hospital on the pretext of his son's illness. On that day, the security services leaked news that he would be released, but his family discovered that he had been killed in prison.

### **Abdul Karim Fakhrawi (2011)**

On 12 April 2011, the citizen Abdul Karim Fakhrawi went to the police station to report that the security forces had raided his house, and damaged his contents. However, he disappeared for a week, then, the security authorities called the family to come to pick up his body, claiming that he had died as a result of kidney failure.<sup>38</sup> In the morgue, the most severe torture scars were obvious on his body. Eyewitnesses reported that members of the National Security Agency subjected him to beatings and abuse for a week, until he died in custody.







### **Zakaria Al Asheeri (2011)**

On April 2, 2011, the Bahraini National Security Agency detained the Bahraini journalist Zakaria Al Asheeri for his relationship with the Committee to Protect Journalists, which documented the abuses against journalists in Bahrain. Nine days after his arrest, Al Asheeri died as a result of torture and beatings, which had obvious effects on his body.

### **Jaber Al Alawiyat (2011)**

Al Alawiyat died two days after his release from prison on 6 December 2011. The security authorities imposed a blackout on his case. Witnesses report multiple fractures in his body, and the effects of shoes and bruises on his stomach, which was very swollen due to internal bleeding.

The security authorities forced Al Alawiyat family to remain silent about the cause of his death and claimed that he died under the influence of drugs.





## **Hassan Jassem Al Hayeki (2016)**

On July 31, 2016, Al Hoorā police station reported the death of Al Hayeki to his family in a telephone call, at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, and had not provided any specific cause of death. The Bahraini Ministry of Interior was quick to acquit the security forces through a statement claiming, "The death is normal and the detainee was suffering from a health problem."

While his family confirmed that, he was subjected to violent torture during his interrogation at the General Directorate of Investigation and Criminal Investigation, and in Building No. 15 in Jau Central Prison, used for interrogation and torture.

The family confirmed that he had no health problems prior to his arrest and that he died of injuries sustained during torture, being hanged for 5 days and severely beaten during interrogation; focusing on the head and sensitive areas of his body to force him to confess some of the charges.

The family reported that their son was transferred more than three times to the Public Prosecutor's Office to sign the confessions. However, for the first time, he was not able to speak because of his health situation. The second time he did not accept to sign the confessions, which subjected him to further torture, especially after demanding the presence of a lawyer.



# PART 6

## SECURITY

AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
VIOLATIONS



The task of the National Security Agency is to arrest wanted persons and place them in the detention centres. In addition to raiding houses, often at dawn, without regard to the sanctities or customs and values, and to insulting the religious beliefs of citizens.

- The National Security Agency has committed a number of human rights violations against detainees amounting to torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, as defined by the United Nations Convention against Torture, including:
- Hitting feet with rubber hoses and/or batons;
- Slapping and kicking the detainees and beating them with tools;
- Forcing detainees to stand for long periods;
- Threatening detainees to death;
- Using devices for electrocution;
- Holding detainees in painful positions;
- Severely beating detainees;
- Threatening detainees of rape.

**MOREOVER, ACCORDING TO MEDICAL REPORTS, VICTIMS WERE INJURED, INCLUDING:**

- Scars, which are consistent with being a result of physical abuse
- Bruising caused by beatings
- Scars around the wrists; caused by the placement of narrow instruments around the wrists (not the normal use of restraints)
- Shoulder joint dysfunction leads to reduced movement
- Disturbances in the collarbone
- Burns

It is also the responsibility of members of the National Security Agency to prosecute some of the wanted persons and pursue them through the recruitment of some informants on the ground to collect information or tracking phone segments to determine their whereabouts and detain them. The members of the National Security Agency may kidnap, even sexually harass, some persons, including children, to blackmail and threaten them if they refuse to cooperate with the NSA.

Some of the provisions of Decree No. 14 of 2002, in the beginning of 2017<sup>39</sup>, have been amended to give the National Security Agency the power of judicial powers in violation of the recommendations of the Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### TO THE KING OF BAHRAIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA

- Implement the recommendations of Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, including keeping the National Security Agency in charge of gathering intelligence without law enforcement or arrest.
- Hold the senior officials, who are involved in the cases of torture and ill-treatment, accountable

### TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN

- Accountability of employees of the National Security Agency; involved in committing violations and the practice of torture and referring them to fair trials
- Amend Decree-Law No. 56 of 2002 to comply with the principles of human rights;
- Abide by Article 8 of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which prohibits the torture or ill-treatment of any person.

## TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Pressure the Government of Bahrain to put an end to human rights violations committed by the National Security Agency;
- Form an international committee to investigate the violations committed against citizens and human rights defenders;
- Request the Government of Bahrain to allow the opening of a permanent Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to review Bahrain's implementation of its commitments to the recommendations made in Geneva;
- Request the Government of Bahrain to extend an open invitation to the UN Special Rapporteurs to visit Bahrain and allow them unconditional access to all places of detention.



## CONCLUSION

The extensive powers granted to the National Security Agency have given it a legal cover that allows its members to go unpunished, despite all the abuses and mistreatments they commit. Since its establishment, the National Security Agency has been involved in numerous human rights violations against the detainees in its grip, in some cases resulting in serious injuries and in other cases death.

Accordingly, the human rights organisations involved in the preparation of this report refuse to fortify the policy of impunity that encourages those involved in human rights violations, in particular members of the National Security Agency, to persist in their practices. It also calls for providing the appropriate environment to bring all those responsible to justice.

## ANNEX

### NO. 1

#### **DECREE NO. 2012/67**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR GENERAL IN THE NSA**

We, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain,

After reviewing the constitution,

And decree No. (14) of 2002 regarding the establishment of the National Security Agency (NSA) and its amendments,

And decree No. (28) of 2012 regarding the establishment of an independent office for the Inspector General and Professional Standards Office in the NSA

And the Royal Decree No. (23) of 2010, related to Judicial appointments

After the nomination by the Head of the NSA,

After the revision of the Premier,

#### **enacted the following:**

#### **Article No. (1)**

The Judge Mohamed Rashid Abdulla Rumaihi is hereby appointed as Inspector General in the NSA in the rank of Under-Secretary for the period of five years, which is renewable.

## **Article No. (2)**

The Premier will have to execute the Royal Decree which will be applicable from the date of its issuance and will be published in the official Gazette.

King of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

Deputy Premier

Mohamed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa

**Issued in Riffa Palace**

**24 Shawal 1433 AH**

**11 September 2012**

## ANNEX NO. 2

### **DECREE NO. (1) FOR THE YEAR 2017 AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF DECREE NO. 14 FOR THE YEAR 2002**

The establishment of the National Security Agency  
We are Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

After reviewing the Constitution,

The Penal Code promulgated by Legislative Decree No. 15 of 1976 and its amendments,

And the Code of Criminal Procedure promulgated by Legislative Decree No. 46 of 2002 and its amendments, Law No. (58) for the year 2006 regarding the protection of society from acts of terrorism and its amendments,

Decree No. (14) for the year 2002 establishing a National Security Agency and its amendments,

Based on the proposal of the Prime Minister,  
and after the Council of Ministers' agreement,

### **We have decided the following:**



## **Article 1**

Article (5) (1), the fourth paragraph of Decree No. (14) of 2002 regarding the establishment of a National Security Agency shall be replaced by the following text:

«Without prejudice to the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure promulgated by Legislative Decree No. (46) for the year 2002 and the provisions of Law No. (58) for the year 2006 on the protection of society against terrorist acts, officers, non-commissioned officers and members of the National Security Service shall have judicial control over terrorist crimes. Except for these crimes, the agency refers cases that require arrest or detention to the Ministry of the Interior to take the necessary legal procedures.

## **Article 2**

The Prime Minister and the Ministers, each within his own jurisdiction, shall implement the provisions of this Decree and shall come into effect as of the day following the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

King of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

Prime Minister

Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa

**Issued at Riffa Palace:**

**Date: 4 Rabia'a Al-Akhir 1438 AH**

**Corresponding to: 2 January 2017**

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"I was insulted and stripped of my clothes. I was also subjected to sexual and verbal assault by the interrogator of the National Security Agency (NSA), and threatened to target my family. They obliged me to insult the religious and national characters and describe them, in addition to those extrajudicial killed, as terrorists. Moreover, I was obliged to sing the royal anthem, and harshly beaten and kicked all over my body and head when I replied that I don't memorise it. The beating was worsened when I replied legal answers related to my publicised peaceful human rights defending work. They told me "there is no organisation in the whole world can protect you or the activists; you will all be targeted".

**Ebtisam Alsaegh**

**Detained human rights defender and victim of torture**

**Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights**

 gulfidhr  gulfinstitute  Gulf Institute for Democracy & Human Rights - GIDHR  
E: info@gidhr.org | T: +61421237922.+61413984959.+61424610661 | [www.gidhr.org](http://www.gidhr.org)

**Bahrain Forum For Human Rights ( BFHR )**

 @MontadaBahrain  montadabahrain  @montadahr  montadaHumanRights  
E: montada.hr@gmail . com-info@bfhr.org | T:+41 76 644 00 50 | [www.bfhr.org](http://www.bfhr.org)

**SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights**

 @SALAM\_DHR  salam\_dhr  SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights  
E: info@salam-dhr.org | T: +44 7392 20 6877 | [www.salam-dhr.org](http://www.salam-dhr.org)