

I am writing this to express my grave concern for Nabeel Rajab, whom, on 21 February, the High Criminal Court convicted and sentenced to five years in prison in relation to comments posted and retweeted about the killing of civilians in the Yemen conflict, and allegations of torture in Jaw prison. He is a prominent human rights defender and the President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights.

So I urge you to release Nabeel Rajab immediately and unconditionally, to quash his convictions and sentences, as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

I also urge you, pending his release, to ensure that Nabeel Rajab is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment; has regular access to his family, lawyers of his choice, and adequate healthcare.

Last but not the least, I urge you to uphold the right to freedom of expression and repeal laws that criminalize the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly, including Article 216 of the Penal Code.

Thank you for your prompt attention to the above.

Sincerely yours,