

Brussels, 10 JAN. 2018
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Ms Ana Gomes MEP
European Parliament
60 rue Wiertz
1047 Brussels

Dear Ana,

I would hereby like to thank you for your letter dated 28 November regarding the trial and detention conditions of the human rights defender Nabeel Rajab and on the deteriorating human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

I fully share your concerns and believe that the respect for human rights and individual freedoms is crucial in attaining peaceful, stable, and thriving societies. This message has been repeatedly delivered to the Bahraini authorities, both at the political and technical levels, via public statements as well as through diplomatic contacts by the European External Action Service and the EU Delegation accredited to Bahrain.

Furthermore, during the last EU-Bahrain informal working group on human rights held in April, the case of Nabeel Rajab was explicitly raised and discussed. The EU expressed its strong views regarding the prolonged detention of Mr Rajab and other individuals.

The EU has reiterated to the Bahraini authorities that security concerns, while legitimate, can never justify human rights violations. Political participation and freedom of expression are central components of stability. In addition, the EU remains supportive of reconciliation and reform processes in the Kingdom. The upcoming 2018 elections should represent an opportunity for the country to show its commitment to pluralism and dialogue, while providing an occasion to put aside sectarian differences.

The EU will continue to follow the case of Nabeel Rajab and of other political prisoners, as well as overall developments in the Kingdom of Bahrain. We will continue to emphasize that the full respect of human rights will be to the benefit of Bahrain's stability and peace. In this regard, we will equally pursue our regular interactions with the Bahraini authorities in preparation for the Third Informal Working Group on human rights, which is to take place next year in Manama.

Yours sincerely,

Federica Mogherini

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