

PRESS RELEASE - THE OBSERVATORY

BAHRAIN: Human rights defender Nabeel Rajab is finally free!

Paris-Geneva, June 9, 2020 - *Today, human rights defender Nabeel Rajab was finally released from Jaw prison on a non-custodial sentence, after spending nearly four years in arbitrary detention in relation to tweets and media interviews criticising Bahrain's human rights record.*

“We are so relieved about Nabeel's release, which is the result of the relentless fight of the human rights movement as a whole”, said Alice Mogwe, FIDH President. *“We recall, however, that he should have never been detained in the first place”,* she added.

Mr. **Nabeel Rajab** is the co-founder and President of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), as well as founding Director of the Gulf Center for Human Rights (GCHR). He was also reelected as FIDH Deputy Secretary General in March 2020. He had been arbitrarily detained since June 13, 2016 in relation to two different criminal cases after he denounced the use of torture in Jaw prison and the killing of civilians by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

On June 9, 2020, he was released on a non-custodial sentence, a new system allowing Bahraini courts to convert jail terms into alternative sentences.

“The release of Nabeel Rajab must not overshadow the persisting detention of other human rights defenders in Bahrain, such as Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja and Naji Fateel”, said Gerald Staberock, OMCT Secretary General. *“We call upon the Bahraini authorities to release them all”,* he concluded.

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