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Bahrain: FIDH Demands the Immediate Release of its deputy secretary general Nabeel Rajab

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- [english] - North Africa & Middle East - Bahrain -
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Description :

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) is gravely concerned about the arrest of its Deputy Secretary General and the continuing targeting of human rights defenders in Bahrain. On May 5th 2012, Nabeel Rajab, president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) and director of the Gulf Center for Human Rights, was arrested upon arrival at Manama airport from Lebanon and is currently detained in Al Hawra police station.

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The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) is gravely concerned about the arrest of its Deputy Secretary General and the continuing targeting of human rights defenders in Bahrain. On May 5th 2012, Nabeel Rajab, president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) and director of the Gulf Center for Human Rights, was arrested upon arrival at Manama airport from Lebanon and is currently detained in Al Hawra police station.

The police officers who arrested Rajab stated that the Public Prosecution has ordered his arrest, however neither Rajab nor his lawyers have been informed of the reasons for his arrest. According to BCHR, Rajab will appear before the Public Prosecution today in the late afternoon.

Furthermore, Rajab had returned to Bahrain on 5th of May in order to attend the first scheduled hearing against him in a case on 6th of May for charges relating to a protest he had participated in on the 31st of March 2012 in the capital Manama against the detention of human rights defender Abdulhadi Al Khawaja; the charges against him include "participating in illegal assembly and calling others to join". Rajab appeared before the court this morning and denied the charges against him.

FIDH calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Rajab and other human rights defenders, as this judicial harassment against them seems to be solely aimed at sanctioning their human rights activities.

FIDH recalls the authorities' obligation to comply with the international human rights instruments ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain and their pledge to effectively implement the recommendations of the BICI report, especially N°1722 with regard to "the use of force, arrest, treatment of persons in custody, detention and prosecution in connection with the freedom of expression, assembly and association".

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