



Via fax: 011 973 17664587

December 10, 2012

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
The Amiri Court,
Rifa'a Palace
P.O. Box 555
Al-Manama, Bahrain

Re: Hassan Maatoq, Nurse

Your Majesty,

As the national voice of nursing in Canada and a member of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) wishes to express its concern for the well-being of our nursing colleague, Mr. Hassan Maatoq, who remains in prison since his arrest on March 24th, 2011. Mr. Maatoq is facing a three-year prison sentence delivered by a military court. It is our understanding that he did not receive a fair trial.

We fear for Mr. Maatoq's safety, as reports from international human rights organizations and the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry have confirmed the use of mistreatment and torture to extract confessions with other imprisoned health-care workers. We understand these ill-sought confessions were later used in cases against them.

We urge Bahraini authorities to carry out an immediate and independent investigation into these allegations of torture and other ill treatment against detainees. We strongly condemn the abuse of all prisoners, regardless of their offence.

The Canadian Nurses Association joins with the International Council of Nurses in calling for the Kingdom of Bahrain to overturn the sentence of Mr. Maatoq and to protect health workers in their duty to care for all. Health professionals are needed for their services, whether in times of peace or conflict, to treat those who are suffering.

CNA is relieved that nine health professionals, including the president of the Bahrain Nursing Society, had their convictions overturned on June 14, 2012. We acknowledge the importance of this decision, and we thank you for facilitating the release of these prisoners.

As a member of the global health and nursing community, CNA will continue to monitor Mr. Maatoq's situation.

Thank you for your attention on this urgent matter. We look forward to receiving your timely response.

Yours truly,

Barbara Mildon, RN, PhD, CHE, CCHN(C)
President, Canadian Nurses Association

cc: Dr. Fatima bint Mohammed Al Balooshi, Minister of Social Development, Health and Human Rights
Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs
David Benton, Chief Executive Officer, International Council of Nurses