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Brussels, 8 November 2012

Re: Condemnation of the arrest of the BTA Vice President, Jalila al-Salman

Your Majesty,

Education International (EI), the Global Union Federation representing 30 million teachers and education workers worldwide, strongly condemns the arrest of Jalila al-Salman, Vice President of the Bahrain Teacher Association (BTA), on 7 November 2012.

The acting Chair of the Bahrain Teacher Association (in lieu of the BTA President, Mahdi Abu Dheeb, detained since April 2011), Mrs Jalila al-Salman, was transferred to the Women Prison of Isa Town after being summoned without explanation to the Investigation Department in Manama. Her lawyer and family were not allowed to accompany or contact her. Neither could she go home before being transferred to the prison.

Jalila al-Salman and Mahdi Abu Dheeb were condemned in September 2011 by a military court after being forced to sign "confessions" while in detention. The guilty verdict was upheld by the Manama Appeal Court on 21 October. The lawyers of the BTA leaders filed an objection to the Supreme Court regarding this verdict.

On behalf of its 30 million members worldwide EI calls on the Bahraini authorities to:

- Release immediately and unconditionally Mahdi Abu Dheeb and Jalila al-Salman as their judicial case is unsubstantiated;
- Set up a full, impartial and independent investigation into their reported ill-treatments and bring those responsible to justice;
- Relegalise the BTA as a registered teacher union;
- Respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of teachers, students and union activists in accordance with international standards;
- Set the conditions for a respectful and all-inclusive dialogue that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Bahrainis, to promote social justice to bring about a peaceful transition to democracy.

In the meantime, the international community, and particularly EI's members and partner trade unions, will continue to monitor the situation in Bahrain closely.

Yours sincerely,

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary



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