

To the president of the Supreme Political Council, Mr. Saleh Ali al-Sammad

Respectful greetings!

Subject: A complaint from the Bahá'í community of Yemen.

Dear Sir!

We are the Bahá'ís of Yemen. We were born and raised on this blessed land. Our Bahá'í teachings have taught us that one's country is in the heart, that a true Bahá'í is he who loves mankind and serves his community and that he has to strive to establish unity and peace and sow the seed of brotherhood amongst the people.

Consequently, we live our lives trying to take advantage of every moment to offer a worthy service to our society and our beloved country; and based on this, we sponsored a youth gathering for 3–10 August 2016 through the Nida' Foundation to build on the educational, moral and service-oriented spirit in the youth in order to strengthen in them the sense of good citizenship, which is founded on the spirit of voluntary service, love for humanity, and refining the creative gems concealed in the minds of young people for the service of their communities.

The youth were concluding the camp that was held at the Jud Organization in full harmony and peace and discussing their voluntary service projects when they were raided by masked armed men in military attire in a manner similar to that of raiding a critical terrorist cell that was planning a coup. They arrested 60 youth (male, female, and children between the ages of 10 and 15, with half of them not Bahá'ís) without the least regard for the sanctity of the women and children. They were transported to the National Security Prison, and most of them remain there to date, including three mothers of young children. The detainees have not only committed no crime, nay rather they have hearts that are brimming with so much love for their country and fellow countrymen and are so sorrowful deep inside for what the country is going through from war to destruction, that they came up with the idea of this educational, service-oriented camp, have dedicated their time and left their occupations and families to engage in teaching those youth lessons of service and [community] building. In return, they faced this tragic outcome.

Therefore, we are imploring you and are hopeful that they will be released so that they can return to their families, who are counting the minutes until their arrival.

We are, moreover, in agony owing to the detention of another member of our community, the wronged detainee, Hámid Kamál Muhammad Bin Haydará, who was arrested on 3 December 2013 at his workplace at the natural gas company in Belhaf, and who had disappeared from our eyes for a period of nine months until he was transported to National Security [Prison], where we were apprised of the corporal punishment and electric torture he had received [at National Security Prison] for no reason other than his being a Bahá'í.

Since then, his family has endured a number of difficulties, ordeals, threats, the severance of Hamid's salary, and the confiscation of their property in Mukalla, Hadramaut by Ansar al-Shari'a once his wife and three daughters left for San'a' to follow up with Hámid's case to try to help him regain his freedom. How it weighed on them to have their sole breadwinner languishing in jail without trial! It has now been three years that he has spent in prison away from his family, and his trial continues to be postponed without a legitimate reason when we know that the defendant is innocent until proven guilty. So how can Hamid remain in prison for three years without a verdict?

In conclusion, we stretch our arms beseeching your backing and support for this prisoner's release and so that the hand of tyranny is stayed from him, and his wife and children are not deprived of his presence in their lives.

We beseech God, the Almighty, to bestow upon you his blessings and bounties and assist you in establishing a free Yemen rid of all kinds of prejudice so that its people may thrive in what God has destined for them, "a good country and a Forgiving Lord".

Respectfully and with much appreciation,

The Bahá'í community of Yemen.