



Virginia L. Hood, MBBS, MPH, FACP
President
Professor of Medicine, University of Vermont
Nephrology Unit, Rehab Bldg 2312, FAHC
1 South Prospect Street
Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: 802-847-2534, Fax: 802-847-8736
Email: Virginia.Hood@vtmednet.org

April 6, 2012

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

Your Majesty,

The American College of Physicians is deeply concerned about the trial and sentencing of 20 medical professionals in Bahrain. We urge the government of Bahrain to ensure that proceedings against the medical personnel are held in full conformity with international standards for fair trial. This must include ensuring that confessions obtained under torture are not used as evidence against the defendants

Medical professionals must remain dedicated to their ethical and professional duty to provide care when needed in a non-discriminatory manner. Governments must not interfere with this duty and must respect the principle of medical neutrality, which is firmly rooted in professional medical ethics, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law.

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry found clear patterns of mistreatment and physical and psychological abuse against detainees by agencies of the government of Bahrain. (Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, Ch. 6 "Allegations of Human Rights Violations Against the Person", Sec. D.3. "Findings and Conclusions"). The mistreatment and torture of individuals while in detention violates norms of international law. See, *United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* as well as other pertinent international documents identified in Chapter 6 of the Commission Report.

We call for the investigation by an independent and impartial body of all allegations of torture and similar treatment in accordance with the Istanbul Principles.

We call on the government of Bahrain to hold accountable those at all levels of responsibility for torture and other violations of human rights.

We press the government of Bahrain to establish open and safe access to health care for all the people of Bahrain.

We urge the government of Bahrain to allow independent observers access to Bahrain to monitor the human rights situation in the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia L. Hood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Virginia L. Hood, MBBS, MPH, FACP
President

cc: The Honorable Thomas C. Krajeski
American Ambassador
Post Office Box 26431
Manama, Bahrain

Her Excellency Houda Nonoo
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain
3502 International Drive, NW
Washington, DC 20008