

On International Human Rights Day, ADHRB Calls for Greater Human Rights Protections in Bahrain

Sixty-four years ago today, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR)—a document consisting of 30 articles which articulate internationally-accepted human rights principles. The UDHR represents a global commitment to protect and promote human rights, and its provisions have been incorporated into several subsequent human rights treaties. Each year, the adoption of the UDHR is commemorated on December 10, known as International Human Rights Day.

On this International Human Rights Day, ADHRB commemorates the efforts undertaken by the United States and other countries to strengthen and promote human rights around the world. Considerable progress has been made over the past several decades to advance protections for women and children, indigenous persons, and the disabled, among other groups. In addition, economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights, as well as the right to freedom from discrimination, have all received protection under international treaties since the UDHR was adopted.

However, the fight for fundamental freedoms is not over. Across the globe, millions of people remain disenfranchised, powerless, and repressed. In Bahrain, citizens are imprisoned for exercising their rights to free speech and assembly; protesters continue to be attacked with excessive use of force by police; and officials responsible for torturing detainees continue to get away with impunity. These violations are only some of the many abuses committed by the Government of Bahrain since the outbreak of peaceful protests in February 2011.

As a state party to multiple human rights treaties, Bahrain's human rights record falls far short of the country's binding treaty obligations. If Bahrain wishes to be taken seriously as a country committed to protecting human rights, it must take its international legal obligations seriously.

ADHRB calls upon the Government of Bahrain to demonstrate its commitment to human rights by: freeing all political prisoners; ending the prohibition on peaceful protests; eliminating an exception for state-sanctioned torture under domestic criminal law; investigating allegations of torture and abuse by police and security officials and holding perpetrators accountable; and prohibiting police and security forces from using excessive force against civilian populations.

A continued failure by the Government of Bahrain to abide by its human rights obligations only diminishes its credibility as a country committed to the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.