



Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain

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ADHRB Cautiously Optimistic after Government of Bahrain Invites Opposition to Resume Talks

January 22, 2013 – Washington, DC – Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) responded with cautious optimism to an [announcement](#) by the Government of Bahrain today that the King of Bahrain has invited opposition parties to resume stalled talks on political reforms. According to Bahrain’s Information Affairs Authority, the directive authorizes the justice ministry to invite representatives from Bahrain’s political societies, as well as “independent members of the political community,” to resume a national dialogue.

“We certainly hope that this latest call for talks by the Government of Bahrain will result in a credible process that leads to meaningful reforms,” said Husain Abdulla, Director of ADHRB. “We remain skeptical, however, as the government has called for dialogue before, but has done very little to align its actions with its rhetoric.”

Although Information Minister Samira Rajab has indicated that the Government of Bahrain “would like all parties to know that we are ready to sit at the table of dialogue,” Ms. Rajab also indicated some skepticism that such talks would be successful, suggesting that some groups may refuse “the invitation to sit at the table of dialogue.” An earlier attempt at negotiations in July 2011 fizzled after Bahrain’s main opposition party, Al Wefaq, [withdrew](#) from negotiations because the opposition was given only limited representation during the talks.

“I am cautiously optimistic that the king’s call for dialogue will lead to substantive and long-lasting reforms in Bahrain,” said Abdulla. “However, the government must also show that it is serious about these talks, and that it has the willpower to initiate much-needed reforms. We will have to wait to find out whether things will be different this time.”

ADHRB has previously called for meaningful negotiations between the Government of Bahrain and the opposition. ADHRB calls upon the United States Government to support legitimate efforts by the Government of Bahrain and the opposition to end the ongoing violence in Bahrain and implement much-needed reforms.