



Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain

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ADHRB Marks the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances

WASHINGTON, DC – August 30, 2013 – On August 30, nations around the world take pause to [commemorate](#) the United Nations International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. [Defined](#) as the arrest, detention, or abduction of a person against their will by officials or organized groups affiliated with a government, followed by a refusal to disclose the fate or whereabouts of the person, enforced disappearance is often used as a means of political repression against human rights defenders. On this International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain stands in solidarity with the victims of enforced disappearances in Bahrain.

Following the brutal crackdown on peaceful protests in 2011, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), established by the Bahrain government to investigate the crackdown, [determined](#) "that the Government of Bahrain concealed or withheld from detainees and/or their families information about the detained persons' whereabouts for periods ranging from days to weeks." In addition to being a blatant violation of the [International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance](#), enforced disappearance is a direct violation of the [Rome Statute](#) of the International Criminal Court and numerous rights preserved by the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

"The ongoing use of enforced disappearances to intimidate human rights activists, bloggers, journalists, and ordinary Bahrainis is an abhorrent practice that must stop immediately," said ADHRB Director Husain Abdulla. "While Bahrain government officials insist they are implementing reform and no longer engage in practices that violate human rights, the recent enforced disappearances of [Redha al-Ghasra](#) and [Husseini al-Madhoon](#) clearly show that the Government of Bahrain has not stopped the practice of enforced disappearance against people in Bahrain. Given the Bahrain government's blatant disregard for even the most basic of human rights, we urge the United States and the international community to send a clear message that such human rights violations will not be tolerated, and in fact have serious consequences."

In a [statement](#) today released by the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances and the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, experts called for greater protection of the families and NGOs fighting for the victims of enforced disappearances. "Family of the disappeared and non-governmental organizations are sometimes the only voices in their countries calling for truth, justice and reparation for the victims and highlighting the plight of the disappeared," the statement said. "Given their fundamental role, many of them are vulnerable to intimidation and face obstacles in their fight to prevent and tackle enforced disappearances," the experts added. "We are calling on States to take or strengthen measures to protect relatives and civil society groups working on issues related to enforced disappearances and to prevent and punish any act of intimidation, persecution or reprisal."

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