



## Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain

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### **ADHRB Concerned by Immense Tear Gas Purchasing Order Issued by Bahrain's Ministry of Interior**

WASHINGTON, DC – October 18, 2013 - On Wednesday, October 16, advocacy group [Bahrain Watch](#) [leaked](#) a [document](#) revealing the details of a purchase request made by the Bahrain Ministry of Interior for massive quantities of tear gas. Given the Government of Bahrain's history of abuse of these 'non-lethal weapons,' often resulting in the serious injury and death of peaceful protesters, Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) is deeply troubled by this development and calls for the immediate halt of all shipments of tear gas to the country.

Evidence of the Government of Bahrain's misuse of tear gas, including as a form of collective punishment, has been well documented by the [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), [Physicians for Human Rights](#), and the [Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry](#) (BICI) Report. While the Bahrain government claims it uses tear gas merely as a tool for crowd dispersal, its misuse has led to [health complications](#), [serious injury](#), and even [death](#). To date, the security forces in Bahrain have misused tear gas by [firing it directly](#) into private residences & religious places, most notably during after-dark reprisal raids on villages suspected of housing demonstrators. Additionally, Bahraini security forces have been known to shoot tear gas canisters [directly at protestors](#) during demonstrations, often at head level and at short range.

"Tear gas is labeled a 'non-lethal' weapon, yet its use has proved lethal for dozens of Bahrainis in the past few years," said ADHRB Executive Director Husain Abdulla. "In Bahrain, the authorities do not use tear gas to ensure the safety of the people; it is used as a weapon to terrorize, harm and kill."

The magnitude of tear gas requested through the Ministry of Interior's purchasing order suggests the Bahrain government's commitment to systematic misuse of the weapon goes far beyond the scope of calming public demonstrations. Due to Bahrain's abuse of tear gas, the United States [banned](#) the export of the weapon to the country in 2012, noting concern for "excessive use of force and tear gas by police." The leaked document shows a request for over 1.5 million canisters of tear gas for the roughly 1.2 million people living in Bahrain.

"As the Government of Bahrain continues to use tear gas to attack its people, foreign weapons firms continue to profit from its cruel misuse," Abdulla stated. "We call on the international community to voice its concern over the misuse of tear gas, and to demand that this excessive shipment of a weapon that continues to kill Bahrainis be halted immediately."

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