



Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), with the support of Alsalam Foundation, would like bring to the Council's attention concerns about the Bahrain government's failure to engage with UN mechanisms. We would also like to raise concerns about its failure to support independent and credible human rights organizations and complaint mechanisms domestically.

Bahrain has failed to allow any of the UN Special Procedures access to the country since 2006. The repeated cancellations of visits by the Special Rapporteur on Torture demonstrates a clear lack of commitment toward addressing the serious and continuing problem of torture in Bahrain.

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), established in 2008, has failed to become a credible body for defending human rights. The NIHR continues to lack OHCHR accreditation due to its failure to achieve independence as defined by the Paris Principles. This lack of independence was illustrated last July when the NIHR praised a series of recommendations by the National Assembly whose repressive nature was met with great concern by the Office of the High Commissioner.

The Office of the Police Ombudsman was established following a recommendation in the 2011 Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry. However, the office has failed to demonstrate itself as a viable forum for complaint. The office has failed to investigate multiple violations by security forces, or challenge a judicial process which has supported an environment of impunity.

Most troubling are the reports we have received of reprisals against Bahrainis who have sought redress by reporting cases of human rights abuse to the NIHR and the Office of the Police Ombudsman. Cases such as these severely undermine the government's claims to be sincerely committed to accountability and reform.

Bahrain will undergo its mid-term UPR review this year. To date, a majority of the recommendations Bahrain accepted in 2012 have failed to see any substantive progress towards implementation, while many others have seen a notable decline. We call upon the Government of Bahrain to take seriously its commitments to the OHCHR, its Special Procedures and the wide ranging recommendations it has repeatedly pledged to implement but so far failed to do so.

Thank you.