



Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), with the support of Alsalam Foundation, would like call to the Council's attention continued breaches of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action by the Kingdom of Bahrain. While Bahraini breaches to the Declaration are not limited the areas enumerated in our statement, we would like take this time to highlight specific violations of women's rights in Bahrain, pursuant to Part II, Section B, paragraphs 38 and 39 of the Vienna Declaration.

According to the Declaration: "States are urged to withdraw reservations to [the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)] that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention." We note with great concern that Bahrain currently maintains reservations to Articles 2, 9, 15, 16 and 26 of the Convention. Bahrain's reservation to Article 2 in particular serves to undermine the effective implementation of the Convention and its policy recommendations in the country. While Bahrain has announced plans to "rewrite" its reservations to CEDAW, we urge the Government of Bahrain to completely and immediately withdraw all reservations to the Convention, as called for in the Vienna Declaration.

In conjunction with Bahrain's further reservations to CEDAW and the Vienna Declaration which stresses the importance of "the elimination of gender bias in the administration of Justice," we call on Bahrain to end the legal inequality of women under Bahraini law, particularly regarding issues of Nationality and Family Law.

To comply with CEDAW and the Vienna Declaration, Bahrain must pass national legislation which equally protects all women from crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault and marital rape.

Bahrain further demonstrates gender bias in its administration of justice through the country's current nationality laws which restrict Bahraini women from passing their citizenship to children with non-Bahraini fathers. This fundamental discrimination results in children born stateless, without access to state institutions, services and protections. We urge Bahrain to immediately pass and implement the long-delayed draft law on nationality.

In conclusion, we would like to call on the OHCHR and HRC Member States to continue to urge Bahrain to come into full compliance with the guidelines and recommendations of CEDAW and the Vienna Declaration.

Thank you.