



Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), with the support of AlSalam Foundation, would like bring to the Council's attention the repeated concerns raised by the Office of the High Commissioner since 2011 regarding human rights in Bahrain. The Bahrain government has thus far failed to adequately respond to these concerns over the intervening years.

In January 2013, High Commissioner Pillay voiced her "regret" that convictions against 13 leading opposition and human rights activists were upheld and reiterated concerns that "they may have been wrongly convicted for legitimate activities." These 13 activists from across Bahraini society, who were arrested and brutally tortured in 2011, remain in jail today. They include the leader of Wa'ad political society Ibrahim Sharif and cleric Sheikh Mohamed Habib al-Miqdad.

In August 2012, several UN Special Rapporteurs demanded an end to Bahrain's "campaign of persecution against human rights defenders" following the conviction of Nabeel Rajab for organizing and participating in protests. Nineteen months later, Mr. Rajab remains in jail, while other human rights defenders have been arrested and tortured, forced into exile, or subject to harassment.

In March 2012, High Commissioner Pillay raised further concerns over the “disproportionate use of force by Bahraini security forces, including the excessive use of teargas, the use of birdshot pellets and rubber bullets.” Over two years since these concerns were raised, Bahraini police have continued to use excessive force, resulting in multiple serious injuries and numerous fatalities, including the recent death last week of Jawad al-Hawi, a father of 5.

We are concerned that Bahrain has taken little notice of these and other concerns raised by the High Commissioner and other UN experts. While we welcome the presence of the temporary OHCHR technical mission currently in Bahrain, given the ongoing nature of human rights violations in the country, we feel that further cooperation is needed. Therefore, we call on Bahrain to demonstrate its serious intent to engage with the OHCHR by allowing a permanent mission to be established in the country with a full reporting and investigatory mandate.

Thank you.