

Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, with the support of the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, and the Bahrain Human Rights Observatory would like to thank the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention for its engagement on behalf of victims of arbitrary detention in Bahrain.

A recent study by ADHRB and BCHR found that the Working Group had submitted allegations regarding over 60 individuals in Bahrain since February 2011, including three cases alleged in the latest joint communications report. The volume and recency of such allegations shows that arbitrary detention is a systemic and modern practice in Bahrain.

In the joint communications report, the Working Group highlighted the case of an unnamed 15-year-old youth arrested in Bilad al-Qadeem. Government security forces allegedly arrested the youth, transported him to detention, and tortured him during his interrogation in order to secure a false confession later used to secure the youth's conviction. The court later refused to investigate the youth's allegations of torture.

In its communication to the government on behalf of the youth, the Working Group reminded the Government that the Convention against Torture obligates Bahraini courts to investigate all credible claims of torture, to prosecute perpetrators of torture, and to declare any evidence obtained by means of torture inadmissible.

Our investigation also uncovered widespread allegations that Bahrain regularly engages in arbitrary detention by securing convictions through coerced confession.

We join the Working Group in calling on the Government of Bahrain to honor its commitments under CAT and fully, impartially, and independently investigate all allegations of torture arising during Bahraini judicial review, and ask that the Working Group call on the Government to vacate all sentences resulting from the use of coerced confession.

Thank you.