

Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, together with the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, would like to call the Council's attention to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's enforced or involuntary disappearance of persons within its borders. Saudi Arabia has repeatedly violated the due process rights of disappeared detainees, arbitrarily depriving them of their liberty and refusing to disclose their whereabouts in contravention of international standards.

Saudi Arabia's continued practice of enforced disappearances directly disavows [several recommendations](#) put forward by the international community during its Second Cycle Universal Periodic Review, including recommendations covering the prevention of "arbitrary, secret and indefinite detention," and endorsing "the release of all detainees who are held without due cause." Saudi Arabia's opacity regarding the status of disappeared persons has drawn the attention of the Working Group, which recently recorded six outstanding cases at the end of an eighteen-month review.

On 15 April, Saudi officials disappeared attorney Waleed Abu al-Khair, moved him to an undisclosed location and [prevented him](#) from contacting legal counsel or

holding an extended conversation with his family. Abu al-Khair remained in prison until new charges were brought against him, on which he was convicted in July of this year.

Many of the disappeared do not resurface. Thousands of political detainees have resided in the labyrinth of Saudi secret prisons for years, some for over a decade. Kept from contacting family members and legal counsel, their locations are known only to Ministry of Interior officials. We also would like to call the Council's attention to the [ambiguous](#) wording of Saudi Arabia's new anti-terrorism law, which could provide the government with legal cover to increase this disappeared population.

We therefore call on Saudi Arabia to release all political prisoners; to sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and, in the interests of full transparency, to extend a visit to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary disappearances. We also request that the Working Group continue its efforts on behalf of the families of disappeared persons in Saudi Arabia.

Thank you.