



Mr. Vice President,

The Alsalam Foundation, in coordination with Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, would like to discuss areas of deficiency in States' engagement with the UN Special Procedures. By example, we would like to highlight the Saudi government's actions as regards recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women after the mandate's visit to the country in 2008.

In the report, the Special Rapporteur noted significant issues regarding violence against women in the country. The Rapporteur expressed concern regarding domestic violence and rape, noting that migrant domestic servants often find themselves particularly vulnerable to abuse. The Rapporteur recommended that Saudi Arabia adopt comprehensive reform on violence against women, including adopting laws with clear guidelines for implementation and sanctions against perpetrators, defining rape and domestic violence in the penal code, and eliminating the *kafala* system.

On 2 September 2013, six years after the Rapporteur's visit, Saudi Arabia passed a draft law criminalizing domestic violence and other forms of abuse. However, human rights organizations and defenders on the ground have monitored little to no change in how the government prosecutes violence against women. Additionally, the Saudi government still maintains the *kafala* system in its full force, effectively continuing the system that victimizes domestic workers in the country.

We ask that Saudi Arabia take positive measures to implement the 2013 law and punish perpetrators of violence against women. We additionally ask Saudi Arabia to revisit the report from the Special Rapporteur and implement all of the recommendations of the mandate, including the abolishment of the *kafala* system. We finally ask that Saudi Arabia, as a voting member of the Human Rights Council, set an example and extend invitations to all Special Procedures that have requested country visits.

Thank you.