

Mr. President,

In cooperation with Americans for democracy and human rights in Bahrain, Kuwait Organization, and the Organization for Human Rights Watch, we would like to emphasize that many countries presented recommendations in Kuwait's UPR; many of which related to the right of expression, which is a right that has been subjected to intense restriction in Kuwait. There are more than 300 cases because of remarks on social media and in political speech. Also, harsh sentences were handed down to political activists, journalists, and human rights activists:

Musallam Al-Barrak, is one of the prominent opposition leaders, who was not provided with his right to fair trial and was denied one level of litigation after he was accused with "insulting the Amir" based on article 25 of State's security. He was sentenced to 2 years in prison because of a speech addressed to Kuwaiti Amir in a public yard. Harsher sentences between 3 to 5 years were handed down to those we recited his speech. More than 15 persons are awaiting rulings in similar cases.

Additionally, many individuals were arrested and accused with insulting neighboring countries and Kuwaiti Amir. They were kept in pre-trial detention for periods exceeding 1 month, like:

Abdulla al-Rassam

Ahmed Ashoor

Abdulrahman al-Ajami

We call for the implementation of the recommendations presented by France, Uruguay, Czech Republic, and Estonia regarding free expression by releasing political prisoners, dropping all charges against them, respecting international conventions and treaties ratified by Kuwait, amending laws that limit rights, and ensuring not prosecuting twitter users, political activists, journalists, and human rights activists.

It should be noted that when I was arrested in March, one of the officers told me that my arrest was a result of talking in the Human Rights Council. We face the same danger upon our return to Kuwait after this session.

Thank you Mr. President.