



Esteemed panelists,

Alsalam Foundation, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, would like to raise our concern over acts of official corruption that continue to undermine good governance practices. For example, the Government of Bahrain has failed to address multiple forms of corruption, including a compromised legal system, the acceptance of bribes, and the theft of public assets.

In Bahrain, both the judiciary and the public prosecution fall firmly under the control of the monarchy; the king himself shapes the staffing and development of the nation's courts. Authorities have used this system for political purposes. Since 2011, the government has used civilian and military courts to imprison thousands of prisoners of conscience like Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, Nabeel Rajab, Ghada Jamsheer, and Naji Fateel.

Bahraini state officials have also accepted millions in bribes. From 1989 to 2009, employees of Aluminum Bahrain, the state-controlled metal producer, accepted over \$110 million in bribes from an international corporation to facilitate the transfer of raw materials into Bahrain.

We are also concerned with the privatization of public lands, resulting in the destruction of traditional forms of employment. For years, the Bahraini government has privatized once-public beaches, selling swathes of land to developers of luxury construction projects. This new construction has blocked Bahrain's fishermen, a major component of the island's traditional labor force, from accessing fisheries and earning livable wages. These lands have been privatized through questionable means, as leading members of the royal family have reaped personal financial benefit for shifting coastal property from public to private control. Some royal family members have even funneled public funds toward private sporting events.

We implore the Council to mitigate corruption's negative impact on struggling populations. Esteemed panelists, how can the international community effectively prevent high-ranking government officials from manipulating public institutions for personal gain? And what steps would you recommend that states like Bahrain take to ensure transparency, accountability and restitution for the theft of public assets?

Thank you.