



Esteemed Rapporteurs,

Alsalam Foundation, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy and the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, would like to call your attention to the ongoing use of foreign mercenaries in state security forces.

For example, the Government of Bahrain hires exclusively Sunni foreign nationals with mercenary-like characteristics to attack Bahraini protesters and suppress all forms of dissent in Bahrain. Many of these foreign nationals have been recruited from Pakistan, Jordan, Yemen and Syria; the government rewards them for their service with generous salaries, benefits, and paid housing. These foreign nationals are used to staff Bahrain's infrastructure at the expense of the country's native Baharna residents, who make up less than 3% of Bahrain's security forces.

We express concern that the systematic use of foreign nationals in Bahrain's security forces contributes to continuing human rights violations in Bahrain. Video and photographic evidence demonstrates foreign officers arbitrarily arresting and harassing civilians and protesters, as well as using excessive and disproportionate force in suppressing anti-government protests, often causing significant injuries and fatalities. Arrested protesters often report widespread abuse by foreign officers, including not only verbal but also physical abuse amounting to torture. The physical abuse inflicted by foreign officers employed by Bahrain's security apparatus has resulted in several deaths.

We therefore ask you to comment on the legitimacy of states' use of foreign mercenaries in security forces, as in Bahrain. Additionally, what actions can states take to remedy the issues created by the use of foreign mercenaries, as noted in the case of Bahrain, in domestic security forces?

Thank you