



To the Governments of: Albania, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Spain

24 September 2015

RE: HRC30 Joint Statement on Bahrain

Excellencies,

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations, write to voice our support for the joint statement on the human rights situation in Bahrain delivered by Switzerland at the 30th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC).

Since the last joint statement on Bahrain in June 2014, the government has continued to curtail the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Human rights defenders, political opposition leaders, members of the media, and youth have faced intimidation, arrest, arbitrary detention, unfair trials and acts of reprisal by the authorities. Furthermore, negotiations of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) for a program of technical capacity building in Bahrain have stalled in the period since the June 2014 joint statement.

We urge your government, therefore, to sign the joint statement on Bahrain delivered by Switzerland at the HRC's 30th session in order to refocus international attention on human rights in Bahrain and encourage the government of Bahrain to constructively address its ongoing violations.

International pressure on Bahrain continues to assist in addressing human rights violations in Bahrain, as reflected by the decision of the King of Bahrain to release prominent human rights defender Nabeel Rajab under a royal pardon after he spent over four months in prison for a tweet criticizing the government.

It is critical, therefore, to take action now to reaffirm the high level of international concern over human rights conditions in Bahrain. To abandon collective pressure on Bahrain at a time when the situation is continuing to deteriorate would send an entirely wrong message to the Bahraini government, and undermine both internal and external efforts to foster genuine reform.

Switzerland has indicated that this joint statement will be open for additional signatories throughout the session. We therefore call on your government to recommit to supporting human rights in Bahrain, and to add your endorsement to this joint statement.

Sincerely,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)

Amnesty International

ARTICLE 19

Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)

Bahrain Institute of Rights and Democracy (BIRD)

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

English Pen

European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR)

European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ECDHR)

Human Rights Watch

Index on Censorship

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

Pen International

Rafto Foundation

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

Attached:

HRC 30 Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in Bahrain;

Joint NGO Letter: Human Rights Situation in Bahrain (*Dated: 16 July 2015*)