

Mr. President,

Alsalam Foundation, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, would like to thank the your office for its recent communication regarding institutionalized discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities in Bahrain. Your reporting found that the Kingdom of Bahrain systematically discriminates against its religious and ethnic minorities, including its Shia, Baharna, and Ajam populations.

In Bahrain, security forces regularly target Shia citizens for participating in protests. Between 2012 and 2015, the government's inappropriate use of tear gas against Shia caused at least 38 deaths, and at least 18 Shia died from shotgun-related injuries during the same period. In December 2014, a Bahraini court sentenced Mohammed Ramadan and Husain Ali Moosa, both Shia, to death. The majority of political prisoners in Bahrain today are Shia.

Bahrain has also revoked the citizenship of many Shia under the anti-terror law, leaving them stateless. The government has specifically targeted political dissidents for citizenship revocation and deportation. A majority of the more than 250 individuals naturalized in Bahrain since 2012 were Shia.

Furthermore, a number of Shia mosques that were rebuilt following the 2011 protests were subsequently destroyed, and a number of mosques destroyed in 2011 were never rebuilt. In January 2014, Bahraini security forces reportedly left hate messages on the walls of a Shia mosque. Security forces have also attacked Shia performing Ashura rituals and blocked roads to prevent people from praying in a central mosque, as in the village of Deraz.

We therefore urge all states, including Bahrain, to actively work to combat all religious and ethnic discrimination, and to protect the rights of all minorities.

Thank you.