

Mr. President,

Alsalam Foundation, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain and the Bahrain Institute for Rights & Democracy, would like to draw the Council's attention to Bahrain's failure to cooperate with the Special Procedures and acts of reprisals against this Council.

Bahrain has failed to allow any Procedures a country visit since 2006, and has twice cancelled a visit by the Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez. Mr. Mendez first requested a country visit to Bahrain in 2011. However, Bahraini authorities have repeatedly postponed his visits, citing delays in the "ongoing national dialogue," which has been officially suspended since January 2014.

After the government postponed his May 2013 visit, Mr. Mendez rendered Bahrain's action "a cancellation." This month, Mr. Mendez reported that he was seeking the assistance of the United Kingdom in finally securing a visit to Bahrain. We support Mr. Mendez in these efforts and call on the UK government to assist the Rapporteur by any means in finally carrying out this country visit.

Regarding the work of the Human Rights Council, this session Bahrain has imposed travel bans on any individual attempting to travel to Geneva to participate in the HRC. We are currently aware of nine individuals affected by these bans, including human rights activists, labor activists and family members of victims.

Given the widespread and systematic abuses in Bahrain, it is paramount that Bahrain recommit itself to positive, constructive and proactive engagement with both this Council and the Special Procedures. We therefore call on Bahrain to issue standing invitations to any mandate to visit the kingdom, and to lift all restrictions on human rights defenders, particularly in relation to their engagement with this Council.

Thank you.