



Madam Rapporteur,

IDO, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, would like to raise our concerns regarding systematic policies of discrimination against the indigenous stateless peoples, known as “*Bedoon*” in Gulf Cooperation Council.

There are approximately 112,000 *Bedoon* residents in Kuwait, who do not hold Kuwaiti citizenship. The *Bedoon* are thus considered illegal residents in their country, despite many having lived in Kuwait since long before the Kuwaiti state was founded. Kuwaiti law does not outline any clear path to citizenship for *Bedoon* populations.

Because *Bedoon* lack official citizenship documentation and are considered illegal residents, they face social, political, and economic barriers. *Bedoon* populations face obstacles in obtaining public services, such as state medical care and attending state-funded schools. *Bedoon* are often forced to work for lower wages than those who enjoy citizenship. And, because they are considered illegal, *Bedoon* cannot participate in any political processes, thus denying them representation in Kuwaiti government.

The Kuwaiti government has further prevented *Bedoon* from efforts to advocate for their right to citizenship. *Bedoon* are not allowed judicial recourse to argue their cases for citizenship. Kuwaiti law makes it illegal for *Bedoon* to protest, and efforts to do so have at times been met with a violent response from security forces. The Kuwaiti government has also subjected a number of protestors to arbitrary detention.

Madam Rapporteur, the deprivation of citizenship for indigenous *Bedoon* populations does not meet international human rights standards and is in contravention to a number of treaties to which Kuwait has acceded. What measures can the State of Kuwait take in order to support and protect the rights of the indigenous *Bedoon* people?

Thank You.