



Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, together with Defenders for Medical Impartiality welcome this opportunity to address this council on the violation of the right to freedom of expression occurring in Oman.

On 28 July, the Internal Security arrested Ibrahim Al Maamri, the editor-in-chief of "Azaman Newspaper." On 3rd of August it arrested journalist Zaher Al Abri and on 9th of August it arrested journalist Yusuf Al Haj after publishing an article criticizing the country's judiciary. The Ministry of Information ordered to shutdown Azaman newspaper immediately. On 26 Sep, the court sentenced Ibrahim and Yusuf for 3 years and to pay 130 000 dollar on bail if appealed, and Zahir for one year and to shut down the paper forever.

On 14th April, the Internal Security placed in solitary confinement the writer Abdullah Habib for 21 days, for writing a historical article about the war in South of Oman in the 1970s. On 16th of April, the internal security held in solitary confinement the writer Sulaiman Al Mammari for 33 days, after writing an article that covers the detention of Abdulla Habib.

Mohammed Al Fazari, the editor-in-chief of "Muwatin Electronic Magazine", has been held in solitary confinement several times, and had to leave the country and seek asylum abroad.

Many provisions of the Royal Decree Press and Publications Law 49/1984 are incompatible with freedom of expression. Besides, the Telecommunications Act of 2002 and Cyber Crimes Law place a series of unjustifiable restrictions on freedom of expression.

We call on the government of Oman to release all arbitrary detained activists and to effectively uphold the tenets of the VDPA in national legislation and in practice.

Thank you.