



Mr. President,

We raise our concern over religious intolerance and discrimination as laid out in the DDPA. For example, Bahrain continues to target its majority Shia community with discrimination and repression.

This session, the Special Procedures released a communication highlighting the “systematic persecution and repression of the Shias in Bahrain through undue restrictions to their rights to freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, and peaceful assembly.”

This year, Bahraini authorities continued to harass and detain Shia religious leaders. The government revoked the citizenship of Sheikh Isa Qassim and other prominent clerics. The government uses travel bans and forced deportations to target opposition leaders.

Authorities forcibly suppress their rights to free speech, assembly, and association and interfere with Shias’ right to practice their religion by closing religious charities, raiding offices, and restricting Friday prayers and the practice of *khums*.

Of particular concern is Bahrain’s dissolution of the largest opposition party, Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society. A Bahraini court sentenced its Secretary-General Sheikh Ali Salman to nine years’ imprisonment for his peaceful political speech. These actions significantly stifle Shias’ political participation and expression.

We urge all state, particularly Bahrain, to end all forms of discrimination against all communities based on their religion or belief.

Thank you.