

Americans for Democracy



& Human Rights in Bahrain

Mr. President,

ADHRB wishes to call attention to escalating reprisals against civil society activists engaging with the Human Rights Council. In particular, the Kingdom of Bahrain has continued to intensify its long-running campaign of reprisals against activists participating in the Council.

In 2016, Bahraini authorities imposed travel bans on nearly 30 activists, preventing them from attending the 32nd and 33rd sessions of this Council. Then, while human rights defenders like Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei participated in the 34th session in March, authorities detained and tortured their family members in Bahrain.

Most recently, between Bahrain's third-cycle UPR in May 2017 and the current Council session, vehicles belonging to a number of civil society actors were found incinerated under suspicious circumstances. Soon after, the authorities detained one of the victims, activist Ebtisam al-Saegh, and subjected her to 7 hours of physical, sexual, and psychological torture. During her torture, National Security Agency officials questioned Ebtisam about her participation in HRC 34, her work with the UPR mechanism, and her cooperation with international human rights groups.

Mr. President, these acts, and all acts of reprisal are entirely unacceptable. This recent violent reprisal is exacerbated by being only the latest in an escalating pattern. We call on your office and that of the Secretariat to vocally and forcefully condemn these disturbing acts in the strongest terms.

Thank you.