



Mr. President,

ADHRB would like to call the Council's attention to an ongoing technical cooperation program between OHCHR and Saudi Arabia that will reach its conclusion this year. We urge Saudi Arabia and OHCHR to not only renew this program but to include independent civil society in future agreements.

Saudi Arabia's judicial system is notoriously opaque and arbitrary, without a codified penal law or institutional guides to sentencing. Within this system, hearings and trials rarely conform to international standards of due process or fair trials.

With a view toward bringing Saudi Arabia's judiciary closer in line with international standards, OHCHR has run a technical cooperation program with the purpose of training Saudi judges and lawyers in international standards of due process and fair trials. At the conclusion of this program, Saudi Arabia's judicial system continues to have significant structural deficiencies, including concerning torture, coerced confessions, and denial of the right to counsel.

We therefore call on Saudi Arabia to continue its efforts towards reforming its judicial practices. We also call on Saudi Arabia, as a member state of the Human Rights Council, to publicly recommit to technical cooperation with OHCHR and to expand the reach of this program to include a greater number of judges and lawyers, but also to include a formal role for and protection of independent civil society.

Thank you,