



Mr. President,

IDO, Americans for Human Rights & Democracy in Bahrain and Salam would like to call the Council's attention to the Bahraini government's widespread and systematic abuses of human rights, often in the name of countering "terrorism." Under this pretense, the authorities have imposed increasingly severe restrictions on basic freedoms and have arbitrarily arrested and tortured activists, opposition figures, journalists, and religious leaders.

This year, Bahrain reversed several of its only criminal justice and security sector reforms. In January, the king restored law enforcement powers to the National Security Agency, the kingdom's primary intelligence service. This reversed a 2011 recommendation to restrict the NSA's authority after it was found to systematically commit rights abuses. Later, in April, the king amended the constitution to allow military courts to try civilians charged with terror offenses, further empowering so-called counterterror authorities like the NSA.

Bahrain's authorities have used these powers to launch a crushing reprisal campaign against human rights defenders and other members of civil society. Days after it regained its arrest authority, the NSA was implicated in a bloody raid on a peaceful sit-in that led to the death of an 18-year-old. Following the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of this Council in March, the NSA repeatedly detained and tortured human rights defender Ebtisam al-Saegh over her activism.

All objective criteria for action identified by the Council have been met. It is time for staunch condemnation in the form of a resolution to alter Bahrain's devastating course.

Thank you.