

Mr. President and Honorable Panelists,

According to Article 26 of the Convention, state parties must take habilitation and rehabilitation measures to ensure persons with disabilities can attain maximum independence and are fully included, and can fully participate in all aspects of life.

We are concerned that Bahrain is not fully implementing all of these measures and treating persons of disabilities in line with the Convention. Our documentation affirms several reports that Bahrain lacks the infrastructure, legal, and policy frameworks to support and aid disabled persons' habilitation and rehabilitation in society. Thus, Bahrain has failed to live up to the standards laid out in Article 26, a failure echoed by its inability to live up to its treaty obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Rehabilitation has also been recognized as including redress for victims of serious human rights violations, in particular under the Convention Against Torture. Under the CAT, victims of torture are guaranteed fair and adequate compensation including the means of full rehabilitation. However, prisoners of conscience who have suffered injuries, including long-term injuries following torture, once they have been released have been unable to receive support and redress from the government.

Rehabilitation also encompasses social services, education, and employment. However, Bahrain does not provide these services in an adequate and reasonable way. Rather, the government has reduced the budget of social affairs services and has even closed down community-based initiatives that work with persons of disabilities.

Honorable panelists, what legislation would you recommend Bahrain enact to ensure persons with disabilities have full access to rehabilitation services? Furthermore, what expertise can you lend to Bahrain to ensure the government not only has strong legal statutes, but strong and effective policies to put this legislation into place?

Thank you