

Mr. President,

We would like to bring the Council's attention to the recently-ended hunger strike carried out by prisoners in Bahrain, who protested poor prison conditions.

The close to 700 prisoners in Jau Prison and Dry Dock Detention Center, began their hunger strike on 15 August to protest abusive conditions, including detention in *de facto* isolation, barriers during family visitation, religious discrimination, and beatings by prison guards.

The prisoners reported that they were held in isolation: small cells for over 23 hours a day, with individuals with whom they do not share a common language, culture or religion. They claim this is an intentional move by the prison authorities to isolate political prisoners while still claiming they are not held in solitary confinement.

Their concerns around barriers during family visitation arise from glass walls that prevent them from touching or hugging their loved ones during visits. They also report religious discrimination, with guards humiliating and insulting prisoners' religious practices and beliefs. They also protested prison guard brutality, including random beatings and physical abuse.

While poor detention conditions are nothing new in Bahrain - since 2017, Bahrain's prison administration has actively prevented political prisoners and activists from receiving medical care by placing conditions on receiving medical care – the prisoners attempted to use one of their few points of leverage to call attention to these abuses.

Bahraini must end these practices and release all political prisoners, and Member States must urge Bahrain to respect prisoners' rights.

Thank you.