

Mr. President,

Ahead of Kuwait's 3rd cycle UPR, we would like to draw the Council's attention to Kuwait's ongoing human rights violations, especially concerning non-citizens and stateless persons, also known as *bidoon*, in contravention to recommendations it received during its 2nd cycle Universal Periodic Review in 2015.

When Kuwait underwent its 2nd cycle Universal Periodic Review it received several recommendations pertaining to the rights of the stateless persons and *bidoon*, as well as freedom of expression, assembly, and association.

The more than 100,000 stateless persons in Kuwait are routinely denied access to social services and employment, despite calls from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urging Kuwait to guarantee their inclusion. They also face torture and abuse, particularly when they attempt to exercise their rights to freedom of assembly and expression. For example, authorities recently detained stateless persons activist Abdulhakim al-Fadhli for participating in a peaceful demonstration in 2012.

The Kuwaiti government also restricts Kuwaitis' rights to freedom of speech and expression, with authorities using provisions in the constitution, national security law, and other legislation to prohibit peaceful expressions of dissent. These restrictions extend to the internet, where freedom is limited and authorities monitor online activity and social media sites to surveil and target individuals who express anti-government ideology.

The UPR mechanism only works if states take it seriously and implement the recommendations. We call upon Kuwait to implement all UPR recommendations received and improve their rights record following their upcoming 3rd cycle Universal Periodic Review.

Thank you