
For Written Answer on : 10/03/2021
Question Number(s): 424 Question Reference(s): 12526/21
Department: Foreign Affairs
Asked by: Seán Haughey T.D.

QUESTION

To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if Ireland is supportive of the promotion of democracy and basic human rights in Bahrain; if Ireland can advance these objectives through the membership of the EU and the UN Security Council; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

REPLY

Respect for human rights is an integral part of Ireland's foreign policy and we consistently seek to raise our concerns on human rights issues through the most appropriate and effective channels. The human rights situation in Bahrain remains a matter of serious concern.

Although Bahrain has repeatedly stated its commitment to improving its human rights record and safeguarding human rights as enshrined in the Bahraini Constitution, we are concerned by ongoing instances of violations of fundamental freedoms, including violations of freedom of opinion and expression, as well as the targeting of human rights defenders.

Ireland also engages on the issue of human rights in Bahrain through the European Union, including through the EU Delegation in Riyadh which is accredited to Bahrain. The most recent EU-Bahrain Human Rights Dialogue took place on 22 February and was chaired by the EU Special Representative for Human Rights Eamon Gilmore. A number of issues of concern were raised with Bahrain at the forum, including rule of law, prison conditions, right to a fair trial, freedom of expression, freedom of association, death penalty, torture, and the impact of Covid-19 on the human rights situation.

Ireland has also raised concerns on human rights in Bahrain in relevant international fora, notably the UN Human Rights Council.

Ireland will continue to monitor developments in Bahrain, and to call on the Bahraini Government to deliver on its stated commitment to make progress in relation to human rights.