

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies:

14th HRC session - 11 June 2010

“Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies expresses concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in Bahrain since its UPR review in April 2008.

In a positive development, migrant workers in Bahrain are now allowed to move from one sponsor to another. However the sponsorship system itself, form of exploitation that is reminiscent of slavery, has not been abolished.

One of the major commitments made by Bahrain during its review was to cooperate more with the UN Special Procedures. Yet since 2006 no Special Rapporteur has visited Bahrain, including the SR on migrants who requested a visit 5 years ago.

CIHRS welcomes Bahrain’s UPR Progress Report for 2010 and urges all States to adopt this good practice.

Concerning section 2 of this report dealing with Bahrain’s obligations in line with International Human Rights Convention, including efforts to combat discrimination. Discrimination on the grounds of gender and religion continues to occur in Bahrain in a systematic manner. Shiites face clear and severe discrimination by the government of Bahrain. Although they constitute the majority of the native population (two-thirds), they occupy less than 15% of senior positions in the Kingdom. The freedom of Shiites to practice their religious rites is restricted by government decrees that limit freedom of religion in Bahrain.

Women in Bahrain continued to be denied the ability to acquire citizenship for their children in cases where the father is not Bahraini.

The government has increased persecution of independent civil society institutions, particularly human rights groups. Some have been banned, their activities restricted and their members harassed and tortured. To begin to address these human rights challenges we encourage the National Human Rights Institution of Bahrain to seek accreditation with the International with the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions in order to validate adherence to the Paris Principles.”