

Item 6 – UPR of Bahrain

Speaker : Mondher AL-KHOR

FIDH, Bahrain Human Rights Society and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights welcome the pledges of Bahrain to finally support most of the UPR recommendations, in particular those raised by the BICI, which our organizations find to be of particular importance. While certain efforts have been made by the Bahraini authorities to address some of the BICI recommendations, the FIDH report released yesterday concludes that the government continues to deny a majority of Bahrainis their fundamental rights on a daily basis, and that it uses government institutions to attack or control the population, creating an atmosphere of mistrust and fear.

Excessive use of force and tear gas by police forces has been regularly documented, in direct violation of BICI and UPR recommendations. FIDH also received testimony from witnesses and families of victims of the repression who had been attacked in order to silence them.

Furthermore, local and international NGOs have documented a rise in the repression of human rights defenders since the last UPR session, as the authorities are increasingly punishing people for highlighting human rights violations. This upward trend of repression is undeniable when one considers the escalating criminalization of human rights defenders, such as Nabeel Rajab, who was sentenced to three years imprisonment on August 17th for his participation in peaceful protests.

Cases of torture and inhumane treatment have also been documented since the last UPR review, and allegations of confessions obtained under torture remain un-investigated, highlighting the Government of Bahrain's flagrant disregard for the pledges it has made.

Bahrain's cooperation with UN mechanisms and independent monitors remains limited. Our organisations call upon the Government of Bahrain to effectively cooperate with NGOs and lift all restrictions on access and movement in the country, as stated in the UPR recommendations.

Our organisations insist on the urgent need to reform all laws that discriminate against women, including those pertaining to family life, and to ensure the full compliance of all legislation with the CEDAW.