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Universal Periodic Review

Written statement* submitted by the Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[24 August 2012]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Towards respect for human rights in Bahrain

The Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty (NPRTT), in consultation with the Bahraini organization BRAVO and the radical organization No Peace Without Justice, would like to bring the attention of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to the continued human rights abuses perpetrated by the Government of Bahrain in light of the HRC's adoption of the Final Report of Bahrain's UPR, and call for international intervention towards the respect of human rights in Bahrain.

The Government of Bahrain has continuously flouted the spirit of the UPR by actively participating in the process in Geneva while at the same time continuing to perpetrate gross abuses against its own civilians. A number of violations have occurred even since the last UPR session for Bahrain. This is perhaps best illustrated by the punitive measures the Government took against Bahraini civil society participants at the last session on Bahrain in Geneva, in direct contradiction to the statement of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Government continued to flout human rights when it released intimate video footage of an activist with his wife as revenge for his continued work drawing attention to the abuses. The Government has continuously attacked human rights defenders, on social media and through Government-friendly newspapers which are supported and funded by pro-government journalists and other backers. The authorities' militant use of tear gas on peaceful protesters has resulted in miscarriages and other injuries, while security forces beat, torture, humiliate and even kill the disabled. Most regrettably, the security forces have physically attacked, illegally detained and tortured children, resulting in mental and physical injury and death. This directly contravenes the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which enumerates rights to life, survival and development, non-discrimination, adherence to the best interests of the child as the guiding principle in a State's interaction with children and respect for the views of the child. Bahrain has the youngest child in the world to be prosecuted under terrorism laws.

Despite the promise generated by Bahrain's highest authorities' acceptance of the BICI report, human rights abuses faced by Bahrain's political opposition and constituents continue unabated, greatly hampering the possibility of any meaningful change for the country's political future, both in the short- and long-term. Further, the Bahraini government has failed to take any real steps to adhere to the many recommendations made by States as published in the "Annotations to the agenda for the twenty-first session of the Human Rights Council".

We call on the Bahraini Government to cease these brutal human rights abuses. We demand that they allow fair trials for those doctors and medics who have been held without charge and tortured in retaliation for medically assisting injured protesters. We demand the immediate release of all prisoners who have been jailed for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. We demand the release of all remaining prisoners of conscience. We urge the international community to demand that Bahrain complies with its responsibilities and implements all necessary measures to ensure that its citizens can actively engage in democratic reform and contribute to anchoring of their country's future on democracy, rule of law and respect of fundamental human rights. This includes first and foremost to respect and protect the fundamental rights of its citizens.

Thus far, the people of Bahrain have persevered alone in their pursuit of a free and democratic Bahrain. Today, it is even more urgent for the international community to abide by its duty and responsibility to protect those who are threatened for advocating openly for the end of the longstanding culture of impunity that remains intact in the country to this day.