



Human Rights Council – 36th session

Item 6 – Adoption of the report on the UPR of Bahrain

Oral statement

Mr. President,

Today's final outcome report for the UPR of Bahrain raises serious concerns about Bahrain's commitment to human rights protection. The UPR review was marked by the Kingdom's denials of all serious violations, as reports emerged of systematic travel bans, judicial harassments and even torture being used to exclude prominent human rights defenders from the UPR process.

During the UPR review, several recommendations were made to the government of Bahrain concerning the treatment of their detainees, torture allegations and the protection of human rights defenders who wish to cooperate with the UN. But since the the UPR, the Kingdom has perpetrated more human rights violations: on May 26, a few weeks after the UPR review, WHRD Ebtisam Al-Saegh was summoned by the National Security Agency, tortured and raped by her interrogators. Ebtisam previously engaged in UPR-related advocacy activities.

In the last weeks, according to BCHRs reports, the Bahraini government issued over 20 summons calling activists, opposition members, journalists and human rights defenders to interrogation by the terrorist prosecution. Amongst them, there were also human rights lawyers and 4 BCHR members, all charged under the new anti-terrorism law. FIDH and BCHR regret that Bahrain refused to commit to repeal its anti-terrorism law, while the Bahraini authorities are using this law's provisions to persecute HRDs and to enforce censorship on social media.

In July of 2017, President of BCHR and deputy secretary General of FIDH, Nabeel Rajab was sentenced to two years of imprisonment after an unfair trial. The process of Rajab's trial has come under massive criticism from the international community as the trial has been subject to a series of delays, a lack of legal evidence for the charges and ill-treatment during detention.

Finally, Bahrain pledged to cooperate with the HRC and its mechanisms but failed to invite key Special Rapporteurs any time soon. We urge the Gouvernement to respond to many credible allegations of serious human rights violations by inviting an OHCHR team to visit the country.

Thank you Mr. President.