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Bahrain

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1. Introduction

The Kingdom of Bahrain submitted its first national report in April 2008. The Human Rights Council adopted the report in June of the same year. Bahrain accepted all nine recommendations of the Council and committed to 37 voluntary commitments.

Since the adoption of the first report, Bahrain has worked to implement these recommendations and commitments through all relevant parties, including government agencies, official institutions, and civil society organizations.

After the first report was submitted to the Human Rights Council, Bahrain launched a National Action Plan to fulfil its voluntary pledges and commitments in respect to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of 29 May 2008, with a focus on the following key principles:

- Participation of all relevant government and non-governmental entities, including the judicial authority, members of parliament, NGOs, political associations, and the private sector as appropriate.
- Transparency.
- Responsibility.
- Cooperation between the government and the people in Bahrain, and cooperation between Bahrain and the Human Rights Council.
- Commitment to results.

On 10 June 2008, the National Action Plan was converted into a special project to support Bahrain's UPR outcomes and voluntary commitments in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bahrain. The project extends for four years (2008-2012) and focuses on the following five basic outcomes:

Outcome 1: human rights information.

Outcome 2: human rights applications.

Outcome 3: application of the human rights approach to development programmes.

Outcome 4: a national system for the protection and support of human rights.

Outcome 5: strengthening of the normative framework.

The Council of Ministers decreed the formation of a Supervisory Committee for Monitoring Implementation of Voluntary Commitments, Recommendations, and Outcomes Pertaining to the UPR. The committee comprises government agencies, official institutions, relevant civil society organizations, the UNDP office in Bahrain, and the National Foundation for Human Rights (one of the voluntary commitments in the first report).

This report treats what has been achieved regarding the strengthening and protection of human rights and implementation of the recommendations, outcomes, and voluntary commitments of Bahrain in respect to the first report it submitted to the Human Rights Council.

2. Methodology and process for preparing the report

a. Methodology for preparing the report

The supervisory committee, in its November 2011 meeting, recommended requesting that the relevant official agencies and civil society organizations provide it with information and achievements concerning the outcomes and recommendations of the human rights UPR during 2008-2012. The supervisory committee emphasized the need to base the information on transparency, participation, responsiveness, accountability, non-discrimination, and inclusion.

b. Process for preparing the report

Based on the decision of the supervisory committee in its December 2011 meeting, a group was formed of government agencies and relevant civil society organizations to draft and formulate Bahrain's second national report for the human rights UPR. The group met to establish a structural framework for formulating and distributing tasks after receiving all information from the above-mentioned entities. It prepared an preliminary draft of the report according to the general guidelines adopted under Human Rights Council resolution 1/5 of 18 June 2007 for preparing information in the UPR framework. The report was presented at the supervisory committee's February 2012 meeting for discussion in preparation for the adoption thereof in its final form.

3. Action taken regarding recommendations arising from the first UPR round (2008)

a. A gender perspective should be included in the planning of the next stages, including the outcome of the review

The Supreme Council for Women [SCW] has organized multiple campaigns to implement this recommendation, the most recent being a national conference for Bahraini women during 8-10 November 2010. The conference was designed to raise awareness, introduce the concept of integrating women's needs in the development process, and introduce planning and analysis methods for implementing the ministries' plans and programmes accordingly. This was done in preparation, in cooperation with all state authorities, for the issuance of an integrated national plan to include the gender perspective in the plans and general budgets of all state authorities. The conference's outcomes included the establishment of a national model for integrating women's needs in the development path. The conference also recommended establishing 12 equal opportunity units in the various ministries and forming a national committee to follow up on and implement the national model for integrating women's needs in the government's work programme. A national committee was established to serve as the national mechanism for monitoring and implementing Royal Order No. 14 of 2011. The committee will strongly support the efforts being made to transform ideas about integrating women's needs into a tangible reality that takes into account the needs of women and men alike in the development system.

The government's action programme for the 2010-2014 legislative session includes guidelines and responsibilities for sustaining efforts to empower women economically, politically, and socially through a number of mechanisms and

measures, including integration of women's needs in development and promotion of the role of the SCW.

Accordingly, the SCW prepared an "Executive Plan for the SCW to Monitor Implementation of the Government's Work Programme Directed at Women". The plan was submitted to the Council of Ministers. The key components of the plan include legislation, integration of women's needs in development, employment, citizenship, housing, Sharia law, and the Alimony Fund. In the same framework, the SCW recently restructured its general secretariat consistent with its priorities in the coming period to integrate women's needs in development and strengthen equal opportunity by establishing a department tasked with integrating women's needs within the organizational structure of the SCW's general secretariat. The SCW is currently working to update and develop the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women consistent with the Excellence Programme, which focuses on outcomes and measurement of the effects of the programmes and projects implemented for women in particular and society in general. In addition, in the past few years, women have held a number of leading decision-making posts. Women participated in the 2010 parliamentary elections, in which a woman was victorious. In the municipal elections held in the same year, a woman won for the first time and was recommended for the position of the municipal council chair in her electoral district, reflecting the council members' confidence in her. In the 2011 supplementary parliamentary elections, three other women won membership in the Council of Representatives.

b. Initiating a public campaign with the view to removing reservations to CEDAW, ratifying the Optional Protocol and harmonizing national legislation with the Convention. Bahrain was invited to inform about plans in this regard.

The concerned agencies in Bahrain are studying the possibility of withdrawing or reformulating several reservations concerning articles of the Convention to avoid conflicting with the Islamic Sharia. They are also studying the possibility of narrowing the scope of the reservation to article 2 to the status of women in the family. Regarding the reservation to article 9 (2), concerning citizenship, the proposed amendment of the Nationality Law is currently being discussed with the concerned authorities with a view toward authorizing the granting Bahraini citizenship to the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners according to objective rules and standards that protect the rights of this group and do not conflict with the principle of state sovereignty. The concerned authorities in Bahrain are seeking, in cooperation with the legislative authority, to expedite examination of this draft law.

Regarding Bahrain's reservation to article 15 (4) of the Convention, it is noted that the Bahraini Constitution guarantees women unrestricted freedom of movement on a par with men. A husband may not withhold his wife's travel documents to prevent her from moving freely. Bahrain's reservation is thus limited in effect to the matrimonial residence, which must meet all requirements imposed by the law and the Sharia [الشريعة -- read الشريعة] to thereby guarantee women their freedom, honour, and independence.

c. Bahrain can conduct wide consultations between different authorities, in particular the legislative authority, with the view of adopting a family law

Law No. 19 of 2009 on Family Provisions (Sunni School Section) was promulgated after being approved by the Consultative Council and Council of Representatives. The SCW recognizes the importance of this law for family stability, which plays a key role in regulating family relations, including marriage, divorce, the effects thereof, and alimony. The SCW is therefore implementing an ongoing legal education programme to raise awareness about the law. The programme targets women in various sectors and specialties and young people of both sexes. The SCW is also currently coordinating with the Supreme Judicial Council to prepare a study on the law's illuminating articles and the effect of its application in the Sharia courts. It is hoped that the study will reflect the extent to which promulgation of a law dealing with family affairs according to the Sunni school has succeeded. Efforts continue to promulgate a section of the law based on the Ja'fari school of religious thought. In this regard, a husband and wife belonging to the Ja'fari school may seek a legal decision based on the Sunni school section of the law, provided their marriage contract was documented in the Sunni courts. In addition, the Women Support Centre associated with the SCW is working to assess the needs of women and provide counselling, guidance, and preventive and treatment services for family problems. It also provides free legal aid and legal counselling. In addition, efforts have been made to promote the Family Success offices of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs, and Endowments and the family counselling offices of the Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development, which provide family counselling services, legal aid, and legal advice.

In a noteworthy development, the government has submitted a draft law to amend Law No. 8 of 1989 Promulgating the Court of Cassation Law. The amendment is intended to establish a specific chamber in the Court of Cassation to examine Sharia cases. A key feature of the amendment is that it provides for the Court of Cassation to conduct judicial oversight of the courts of first instance and appeal courts and to determine whether legal procedures are conducted according to the law in the Sharia courts. The aforesaid draft will be referred to the legislative authority.

d. Bahrain could consider signing the Convention on the Protection of Persons from Enforced Disappearance

Bahrain has initiated the adoption of constitutional measures to join the Convention on the Protection of Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

e. The draft law on the provision of citizenship to children where the father is not a Bahraini citizen would be considered a priority

As stated regarding the second recommendation (b) above, the proposed amendment of the Nationality Law is currently being discussed with the concerned agencies with a view toward authorizing the granting Bahraini citizenship to the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners according to objective rules and standards that protect the rights of this group and do not conflict with the principle of state sovereignty. The concerned authorities in Bahrain are seeking, in cooperation with the legislative authority, to expedite examination of a draft amendment to the Nationality Law. The following temporary measures have been

taken to grant women a right equal to that of men with respect to the granting of Bahraini citizenship to their children:

- A joint committee has been formed of representatives of the concerned agencies to study the possibility of granting Bahraini citizenship to entitled persons according to objective standards and rules. His Highness, the dearly beloved King, issued a royal order in December 2011 granting Bahraini citizenship to 335 children of Bahraini women married to foreigners.
- Law No. 35 of 2009 was promulgated to treat the children of Bahraini women married to non-Bahrain men as Bahraini citizens with respect to the exemption of children from fees for government, health, educational services, and permanent residence in Bahrain. This law is intended to improve the living conditions of this group. The minor child of a Bahraini woman may be granted an entry visa for a visit or permanent residency (entry) at no cost based on the sponsorship of the child's mother. An adult son or unmarried adult daughter of such a woman may also be granted an entry visa at no cost based on the mother's sponsorship when the children enrolls in the educational system.

f. Bahrain would inform the Human Rights Council in the next review of Bahrain that will be held after four years on the status of adoption of new legislation on female domestic worker

The government has referred a new draft labour law to the legislative authority for discussion and passage. The law includes a special chapter that regulates the labour of domestic workers and the like. Key provisions of the draft law include exemption of domestic workers from judicial fees. The draft also requires the writing of a labour contract that covers the nature of the work, contract duration, wage, wage payment method, vacations, and severance pay. The Ministry of Interior has established a hotline (80008008) to make it easy for domestic workers who are subjected to violations to lodge complaints, so that legal measures may be taken in regard thereto. There is also an association for the protection of foreign labourers, the Migrant Workers' Protection Society.

g. The draft press law ought not to be unduly restrictive on freedom of expression

In May 2008, the Council of Ministers referred a draft law to amend the Press Law to the legislative authority for discussion and approval. The draft law repeals punishment of journalists, establishes professional and ethical rules to prevent misuse of the profession, and prohibits the closure of newspapers and entry of foreign literary works in the absence of a judicial decision.

h. Bahrain could consider inviting the United Nations to a workshop on follow-up to the UPR

During 19-20 November 2008, a regional/international conference entitled "Comparative UPR Experiences: Past, Present, and Future", was held with broad participation involving representatives from 23 countries and a number of specialized international organizations and domestic civil society organizations in Bahrain. The conference focused on the following goals:

- a. Exchange of expertise regarding the best practices in the UPR process.

- b. Study and identification of the challenges in this regard and ways of dealing with them.
- c. Publication of the best UPR practices in the Arab world.
- d. Initiation of a constructive dialogue among states subject to the review process in the past, other states whose reports have yet to be reviewed, UNHRC members, other UN member states, and all national players in Bahrain, both governmental and nongovernmental.

i. The positive dynamism of the information sector of Bahrain should be recorded.

The Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes this assessment and is working continually to develop the media sector, including the audio, visual, and print media.

4. The normative framework for human rights

a. The Constitution

The government has referred constitutional amendments that were agreed in the National Consensus Dialogue to the legislative authority for discussion and passage. The most salient amendments include: participation of the popular will in the selection of the cabinet through submission of the government's programme to parliament for its approval; transfer of the speakership of the National Assembly to the speaker of the Council of Representatives; the requirement to consult with the speaker of the Consultative Council, speaker of the Council of Representatives, and the president of the Constitutional Court before dissolving the Council of Representatives; and the establishment of rules for the selection of members of the Consultative Council.

b. National laws and legislation

- Family provisions law: The beloved monarch of the country, the King of the kingdom of Bahrain, issued Law No. 19 2009 on Family Provisions (Sunni School) after it was approved by the Consultative Council and the Council of Representatives.
- Activation of article 25 of the Law on the Labour Market Regulatory Authority, and the issuance of Decree 79 of 2009 on Procedures for Transferring a Foreign Worker to Another Employer.
- Decree Law No. 35 2011 amending several provisions of Law No. 33 of 2002 on Workers Trade Unions allows any two or more similar trade unions to establish a trade union federation.
- Law No. 1 of 2008 on the Combating of Trafficking in Persons TIP has been promoted through the establishment of a unit to combat trafficking in persons in the Ministry of Interior, the assignment of a special public prosecutor to investigate TIP cases, and the establishment of a shelter (safe house) for foreign female TIP victims. In addition, a safe house has been designated to shelter homeless foreign women subject to deportation to their countries without being charged in a criminal case to protect them from TIP crimes. Bahrain is also in the process of establishing a shelter for male TIP victims. A number of TIP cases have been adjudicated, and other such cases are under investigation (one of the commitments mentioned in the first report).

c. Draft national laws

- The Bahraini government has referred a new draft law to the legislative authority for study and passage. The law includes a special chapter regulating the work of domestic workers and the like.
- A draft law amending several provisions of the 1963 Nationality Law is currently being discussed with the concerned authorities with a view toward authorizing the granting Bahraini citizenship to the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners according to objective rules and standards that protect the rights of this group and do not conflict with the principle of state sovereignty. The concerned authorities in Bahrain are seeking, in cooperation with the legislative authority, to expedite examination of this draft law.
- Child protection law: The government has submitted a draft child protection law in implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The most salient provisions of the law include raising the age of majority to 18 and establishing the right of children to health and education. The government will work to implement this law in cooperation with the legislative authority.
- Draft law regulating the activity of NGOs: Decree Law No. 21 of 1989 has undergone a number of amendments consistent with the development of the activity of civil society organizations. The most recent such amendment, in 2010, requires the conversion of NGOs into associations. That notwithstanding, the state, desiring to develop NGO activity, has, in cooperation with an international organization, formulated a new draft law on NGOs as an outcome of the visions of the National Consensus Dialogue.

d. National measures and policies

- A centre for the protection of children has been established. It evaluates and monitors children exposed to abuse, physical and psychological harm, neglect, and sexual assault. It provides and facilitates evaluation, investigation, treatment, and follow-up services for such children in coordination with the various relevant government and private entities, and it operates a round-the-clock hotline (child support and help line).
- An National Fund for the Compensation of Victims harmed in the incidents of February-March 2011 has been established under Decree Law No. 30 of 2011. In addition, Decree No. 13 of 2012 was issued to regulate the fund's operating method. The fund's management comprises five members, including two from the judiciary, two from civil society organizations, and one from the government.
- A national committee has been established to follow-up on the national model for integrating women's needs in development.
- The Supreme Judicial Council has issued rules regulating visits and inspections of prisons, detention sites, and sites where precautionary measures are executed. The visits and inspections are carried out by a group of judicial officials, including the president of the Court of Appeal and members of the Public Prosecution Office. They examine detention and arrest warrants, ascertain that inmates receive decent treatment and the necessary medical and

social care, listen to prisoner complaints, and ascertain whether arrests have been conducted legally.

- The Supreme Judicial Council has decreed the establishment of a chamber in the major court and minor court to examine claims for damages arising from the incidents that occurred in Bahrain last year.
- The Ministry of Interior has issued a Code of Behaviour for Police Personnel.
- National Strategy for the Child.
- National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities.
- National Strategy for the Elderly.

e. Official authorities and government organizations concerned with human rights

- **Public Prosecution Office:** A specialized Public Prosecution Office has been established to monitor the integrity of the enforcement of criminal justice measures and to conduct active investigations according to the Istanbul Principles [Principles on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2000)] and United Nations Criminal Justice Standards. This is accomplished through training and the necessary consultations regarding the requirements of procedural, administrative, and legislative rules. A specialized office attached to the Public Prosecution Office has been established to handle human rights and detainee affairs and to receive complaints in these areas. It examines and follows up on cases referred to it. It also trains the judicial apparatus and members of the Public Prosecution Office to help them prevent and eliminate torture and abuse. A special investigation unit attached to Public Prosecution Office has also been established. It has jurisdiction to investigate, take action in, and determine liability in crimes of torture, injury, and abuse committed by government officials.
- **Ministry of Interior:** A Complaints and Human Rights Department was established in 2004. It receives complaints against ministry employees. It handles the complaints with complete transparency, referring them to the Legal Affairs Department to ascertain the legality of measures taken. A Human Rights Committee was established in 2005 to be concerned with human rights issues. It prepares training courses and lectures on the enforcement of laws and measures concerning human rights. An independent Office for the Secretary-General of Grievances has been established in the ministry. It receives and examines complaints submitted to any agency against members of the general security forces. It is currently preparing a study on the creation of a structure for a public inspectorate based on the recommendation of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry. The Ministry of Interior has also signed an MOU with the International Committee of the Red Cross. The MOU provides for: ICRC visits to Bahraini prisoners to ascertain whether the Prison Administration is observing the minimum rules for treating prisoners; the ICRC's provision of support and guidance to the ministry to avoid any shortcomings in this regard; and the ICRC's provision of training in human rights rules and standards for the treatment of prisoners. The ICRC is currently conducting a field visit to implement the MOU. In addition, the Ministry of Interior is on the way to signing an MOU with the United Nations Office on

Drugs and Crime to build the capacity of police officers to fight crime within the framework of international human rights standards.

- **The Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development:** Decree No. 60 of 2011 changed the name of the Ministry of Social Development to the Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development. The decree also created the human rights sector.
- **The Ministry of Education:** The Ministry of Education has formed a team to prepare an educational working plan in the area of human rights to support educational curricula and strengthen the culture of human rights. The goals of the plan are to:
 - o Develop awareness of the values of citizenship and human rights among students, teachers, and school administrations.
 - o Disseminate the values of citizenship and human rights in the school environment.
 - o Prepare teaching and training aids and place them at the disposal of instructors and teachers.
 - o Deepen human rights concepts in educational curricula.

The plan is being activated in academic year 2011-2012. A number of activities have been carried out to:

- o Plan the integration of human rights education in all sectors of the educational system in Bahrain.
- o Design teaching, learning, evaluation, and educational activities consistent with the goals of human rights education.
- o Develop a schedule for the development of the school environment to harmonize with the goals of human rights education.
- o Build the capacities of leaders in education who are concerned with human rights.
- o Disseminate a culture of human rights education and human rights practices in schools and outside schools among parents and in the media.
- o Develop a guide for teachers involved in human rights education (one of the commitments in the first report).
- **The Supreme Council for Women:** The general secretariat has been restructured and the Women's Grievance Centre has been updated, so that it is now an integrated women's support centre providing for the needs of women in various groups, including divorced, abandoned, nursing, head-of-household, and battered women. The centre provides counselling and guidance services, family problem prevention and treatment services, legal aid, legal counselling, and other important functions.
- **The National Foundation for Human Rights:** Royal Decree No. 46 of 2009, issued on 11 November 2009, establishes the National Foundation for Human Rights and provides for its operating budget. The foundation's members were

appointed in April 2010, and its general secretary was appointed in December 2010 (one of the commitments in the first report).

f. National machinery for strengthening and protecting human rights:

- **The National Committee for Following up on and Implementing the National Model for Integrating Women's Needs in the Government's Work Programme:** This committee is the machinery for national follow-up. It will strongly support the efforts being made in this regard to transform the integration concept into a tangible reality that takes into account the needs of both men and women in the development system.
- **The High Human Rights Coordinating Committee:** The concerned ministries participate in this committee, which examines correspondence concerning special human rights measures and the machinery associated therewith. The committee studies topics relating to the protection and strengthening of human rights, and it arranges the prompt preparation of responses to such correspondence (one of the commitments in the first report).
- **Supervisory Committee for Monitoring Implementation of Voluntary Commitments, Recommendations, and Outcomes Pertaining to the UPR:** This committee was established after Bahrain's first UPR report to the Human Rights Council was adopted. Its members include representatives from each ministry, government institution, and civil society organization and from the National Foundation for Human Rights and the UNDP office in Bahrain. It monitors implementation of voluntary commitments, outcomes, and recommendations pertaining to the UPR (one of the commitments in the first report).
- **National Committee for the Development of Education and Training:** The committee supervises quality assurance regarding educational outputs and the compatibility of educational outputs with the labour market.
- **National Committee for the Care of Persons with Disabilities:** The committee--whose members include representatives of the relevant government agencies and civil society organizations-- is concerned with the affairs of persons with disabilities.
- **National Committee for the Care of the Elderly:** The committee--whose members include representatives of the relevant government and nongovernmental entities--prescribes public policies for programmes and projects relating to the elderly.
- **National Committee for Childhood:** The committee's members include representatives of the relevant government entities and civil society organizations. It is concerned with everything related to the affairs of children.
- **National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons:** The committee comprises government agencies and civil society organizations concerned with combating trafficking in persons (one of the commitments in the first report).
- **Committee to Follow up on Foreign Victims of Trafficking in Persons:** the committee comprises government agencies concerned with providing the necessary care and assistance to foreign victims of trafficking in persons (one of the commitments in the first report).

- **National Team for Monitoring the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:** The Supreme Council for Women formed a team, whose members include representatives of ministries, official institutions, and the National Foundation for Human Rights.

g. Non-governmental organizations

Decree Law No. 21 of 1989 regulates the activity of NGOs. The government has also prepared a new draft law which regulates the activity of civil society organizations and which is more evolved than the previous law. In addition, the Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development has implemented a comprehensive policy to ensure the provision of technical, logistical, and financial support to nongovernmental organizations in various fields, including institutional support, to enable them to play a leading role and to train and qualify their staff in NGO activity areas. The ministry also financially supports NGO development projects that serve society as well as the Community Partnership Programme, which qualifies NGOs to be active partners with the ministry in running various social institutions. As of January 2012, the number of registered non-governmental associations and organizations totalled 569, including national and foreign organizations and non-Muslim houses of worship. The human rights associations in Bahrain include the following:

- Bahrain Human Rights Society.
- Bahrain Society for General Freedom and Support of Democracy.
- Bahrain Society for Monitoring Human Rights.
- Bahrain Transparency Society.
- Bahrain Jurists Society.
- Society for Human Rights Principles.
- Observatory for Human Rights
- Society of Man
- Human Rights Dignity Society
- Manamah Centre for Human Rights

The Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development also supports NGOs through the following support programmes:

1. Technical support programmes for NGOs (National NGO Support Centre). The following come under the umbrella of these programmes:
 - Evaluation of the institutional capacities NGOs through field visits to NGOs to assess institutional performance and prepare an analytical report on each organization's performance and a pilot plan to develop institutional performance.
 - Organization of training programmes for NGOs based on their actual needs, future development plans, and priority needs.
 - Provision of technical advice to NGOs as needed.
 - Support of the institutional capabilities of partner organizations.

2. Financial support programmes for NGOs (NGO Support Fund). The following come under the umbrella of these programmes:

- A programme for annual financial grants provided by the Ministry of Social Development in cooperation with a group of national institutions in the private sector.
- A programme to monitor development projects that have received financial grants in previous years.

3. Programmes to provide facilities for use by NGOs and various departments of the ministry to hold various meetings and training programmes.

4. Logistical support, including the provision of buildings and land for NGOs.

5. Community partnership programmes with NGOs (one of the commitments in the first report).

5. Bahrain's human rights commitments

a. International human rights conventions

Bahrain reaffirms its full commitment to UN aims and principles and its determination to guarantee conditions that permit Bahrain and all peoples to live and flourish in a peaceful system encompassed by justice. This commitment is perhaps best highlighted by Bahrain's signing of seven of the nine conventions concerned with human rights. Bahrain has also begun taking constitutional measures to join the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. On the 30 June 2010, it joined the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratifying that convention in 2011 (one of the commitments in the first report).

b. Reports submitted by Bahrain under human rights conventions

Bahrain continues to fully implement the recommendations of the committees supervising compliance with human rights conventions, and to work with the concerned agencies in Bahrain to submit its reports at the designated times. Bahrain submitted its second and third report on its implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which discussed Bahrain's report in June 2011. It submitted its third report on its compliance with the CEDAW to the concerned committee on 14 July 2011. Bahrain is currently in the process of preparing reports required under other human rights conventions (one of the commitments in the first report).

c. Regional human rights conventions

Bahrain has ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights and will submit its report to the Arab Human Rights Committee of the League of Arab States in September 2012.

d. Bahrain and special measures in the framework of the Human Rights Council

Bahrain, desiring to fulfil its international obligations in the field of human rights, has endeavoured to cooperate with all of the various international human rights mechanisms, such as treaty bodies, special rapporteurs, working groups, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], and reporting systems, as follows:

- Bahrain received 36 letters containing urgent allegations and calls after its first report was adopted in June 2008, and it responded to all of them. In addition, Bahrain affirms its full cooperation with United Nations agencies concerned with human rights (one of the commitments in the first report).
- Upon Bahrain's invitation, his Excellency Ambassador Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoihi, the President of the Human Rights Council in 2009, visited Bahrain during 16-20 May 2009 to consult (one of the commitments in the first report).
- During 21-23 April 2010, Ms. Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights, visited Bahrain. She met with senior Bahraini officials and civil society organizations (one of the commitments in the first report).
- An invitation was sent in 2010 to the President of the Human Rights Council in 2010, his Excellency Ambassador Sihasak Phuangketkeow, to visit Bahrain to exchange information and to consult. However, he was unable to attend (one of the commitments in the first report).
- In November 2011, Bahrain sent an invitation to the current President of the Human Rights Council, her Excellency Ambassador Laura Dupuy Lasserre, to participate in the ceremony for the delivery of the report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry on 23 November 2011. She was unable to attend due to a prior engagement (one of the commitments in the first report).
- In November 2011, Bahrain invited Ms. Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights, to participate in the ceremony for delivery of the report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry on 23 November 2011. She was unable to attend due to a prior engagement. She sent in her stead Mr. Peter Grohmann, the UNDP Resident Representative in Bahrain.
- Bahrain's Supreme Council for Women sent an invitation to the Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, and to members of the United Nations CEDAW Committee, Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani and Ayse Feride Acar, to attend the 10th anniversary ceremony of the Supreme Council for Women and to celebrate Bahraini Women's Day, which is an important national holiday, to familiarize them with Bahrain's achievements and activity in the field of empowering women. However, they were unable to attend.
- Bahrain agreed to a visit by the special rapporteur on torture, who was contacted to set a date and agenda for the visit, which is to be scheduled for July 2012. Bahrain is studying requests of the special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, special rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, and special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (one of the commitments in the first report).

6. Capacity building

a. General capacity building

Bahrain held the following workshops and training courses for employees of government agencies and relevant civil society institutions to build their capacities in the field of human rights (one of the commitments in the first report) in cooperation with the OHCHR, international, domestic, and regional civil society organizations, and states with experience in this regard:

- A workshop was held on 22-24 July 2008 to introduce the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (the Paris Principles) and Best Practices for National Institutions for Human Rights. The workshop, held in cooperation with the OHCHR, targeted government agencies, civil society organizations, political associations, members of the legislative and judicial authorities, and human rights activists.
- A workshop was held in cooperation with the World Health Organization on 13-14 May 2009 to introduce health sector workers to human rights.
- A workshop was given in cooperation with the OHCHR on 7-8 December 2009 to familiarize media workers in government agencies, civil society organizations, and domestic and foreign newspapers with "human rights and responsibilities" in connection with their work.
- The human rights UPR supervisory committee held a workshop during 8-17 July 2010 to enhance the effectiveness of members of the National Foundation for Human Rights in performing their tasks after the foundation was established.
- The human rights UPR supervisory committee held a workshop on combating corruption, with the support of the Bahrain Transparency Society.
- A training workshop in observing and monitoring human rights was held during 31 May -3 June 2010 to train workers in government agencies and relevant civil society organizations in the method for writing UN reports, particularly in the field of human rights.
- A workshop on labour inspection was held, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization during 26-30 December 2010 for inspectors of the Ministry of Labour and Labour Market Regulatory Authority. The workshop focused on labour and occupational health and safety standards.
- A workshop on "Human Rights Fundamentals for Human Rights Defenders" was held in cooperation with the Geneva Institute for Human Rights during 7-8 June 2011 at the Community Development Centre in Jordan to introduce human rights defenders and activists in youth associations to the main, basic human rights principles.
- The human rights UPR supervisory committee organized, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development, two courses for a training diploma in international and constitutional law, human rights, and universal periodic reports. The first course was held from 1 March to 4 June 2009, and the second from 9 October 2011 to 23 October 2012. This

programme, which is designed to build the capacities of employees of the government sector and relevant civil society organizations, was held at the Centre for Constitutional and Legal Studies and Consultations at the University of Bahrain.

- The human rights UPR supervisory committee supported the book of journalist Amani al-Musqati, *Milaff al-Bahrain al-Huquqi fi Jinev min al-Ijra' 1503 ila al-Muraja'ah al-Dawriyah al-Shamilah [Bahrain's Rights Dossier in Geneva - from the 1503 Procedure to the Universal Periodic Review]*.
- The SCW sponsored a workshop given by Dr. Muhammad Khalil al-Musa on 6 June 2010 on the method for preparing periodic reports and implementing recommendations in connection with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Participants included the National CEDAW Implementation and Monitoring Group, who learned about the legal value of, and mechanism for dealing with, the committee's concluding observations. Participants also studied Jordan's experience in preparing the fourth and fifth periodic reports.
- The SCW sponsored a workshop given by the expert Ms. Samihah Abu Satit to the National CEDAW Implementation and Monitoring Group on "Mechanisms for Monitoring the CEDAW Recommendations and Preparing Future Periodic Reports". The workshop, held on 27 September 2010, also included a presentation on Egypt's experience in this regard.
- The SCW sponsored a workshop given by the expert Ms. Ayidah Abu Ras during 19-20 January 2011 to train the National CEDAW Implementation and Monitoring Group in providing training to raise awareness of the CEDAW to facilitate its broader diffusion in society and promote the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women regarding the CEDAW report .

b. Capacity building for law enforcement officers

1. Judges and employees of the Public Prosecution Office and Ministry of Justice
 - A workshop was given on "Protection from, and the Criminalization of, Torture under the United Nations Convention against Torture" during 6-7 April 2009 to introduce torture crimes to law enforcement officers and employees of relevant civil society organizations. The workshop was given in cooperation with the Association for the Prevention of Torture and Amnesty International.
 - A workshop entitled "Detention and Prison Administration" was given in cooperation with the ICRC during 3-4 June 2009 to introduce employees of the Ministry of Interior, relevant government agencies, and civil society organizations to international detention standards and prison administration methods.
 - A training course was given in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration on combating trafficking of persons and human rights during 28-31 March 2010 to introduce employees of the Ministry of Interior, Public Prosecution Office, and judges to advanced methods for investigating and collecting evidence in TIP crimes.

- A workshop was given during 21-22 June 2010 to introduce the concept of torture to law enforcement officers in cooperation with the Association for the Prevention of Torture and Amnesty International.
 - A workshop was held in cooperation with the ICRC during 18-20 May 2008, 10-11 May 2009, and 23-25 May 2010 to familiarize employees of the Public Prosecution Office and the Ministry of Justice and judges with international humanitarian law.
 - A workshop was held on 27 October 2008, 22 February 2010, and 30 May 2010 in cooperation with the Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies in the Ministry of Justice to familiarize members of the Public Prosecution Office with the rights and guarantees of defendants during the initial interrogation under the Bahraini Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - A workshop was held in cooperation with the University of Ulster in the United Kingdom on 17 March 2009, 21 April 2009, 23 June 2010, 30 March 2011, and 17 April 2011 to familiarize members of the Public Prosecution Office and judges with international and regional human rights mechanisms.
 - A workshop was held in cooperation with Ulster University in the United Kingdom on 15 June 2009 to familiarize members of the Public Prosecution Office and judges with the fundamentals of freedom of expression and freedom of information.
 - A workshop was held on 18 November 2009 in cooperation with a former judge of the International Criminal Court on the international criminal judiciary and the latest developments relating thereto for members of the Public Prosecution Office and judges.
 - A workshop on international law and human rights was held in cooperation with University of London during 8-10 November 2010 to familiarize members of the Public Prosecution Office and judges with international rules on human rights.
 - A workshop was held on 20-21 November 2011 in cooperation with the former public prosecutor of New South Wales and human rights advisor in the United Kingdom to familiarize members of the Public Prosecution Office with international fair trial standards.
 - Multiple workshops were held for judges of the Sharia courts on the application of the provisions of the Family Law, with a focus on the rights of the wife and children.
 - A workshop was held for judges in cooperation with the SCW on how women can use the Alimony Fund
2. Officers, personnel, and members of the Ministry of Interior
- 24 internal courses and 10 external specialist courses were held in the field of human rights for members of the Ministry of Interior, including officers, personnel, and civilians, during 2008-2011.
 - Two three-credit hour courses entitled "The Role of the Police in Protecting Human Rights" and "Combating Trafficking in Persons " were given during 2008-2012 for members of the Royal Police Academy.

- The Officers Training College in the Royal Police Academy held a training course during 12-16 February 2010 on "The Role of the Police in Protecting Human Rights".

c. Capacity building for Ministry of Education staff

- A workshop was held during 26-27 October 2009 on the rights of children at various educational levels in cooperation with UNESCO.
- A workshop on the method for "Promoting the Teacher's Guide to Human Rights Education, and the Operating Mechanism and Follow-Up Plan for the Human Rights Education Plan in Bahrain" was held on 12 December 2010 in cooperation with the UNDP in Bahrain and UNESCO.
- A workshop on "Transferring the Effect of Training to Schools and Spreading the Culture of Dialogue, Peace, and Human Rights in Support of Sustainable Development" was held during 24-25 December 2010 in cooperation with UNESCO.
- A course entitled "Human Rights Games Package for Children Ages 6 to 12" was held during 26-29 September 2011 in cooperation with the Arab Network for Human Rights and Citizenship Education (ANHRE) of Jordan.
- A workshop entitled "For the Sake of a Bright Tomorrow" was held in December 2011.
- Training workshops in the method for teaching human rights subjects were held during 2009-2010 for private school teachers.

d. Capacity building for primary school students

- The content of the human rights conventions ratified by Bahrain has been included in the curriculum and books used at the primary and secondary levels.

e. Capacity building for university students

- Human rights is taught as a subject in the College of Law at the University of Bahrain.

7. Measures taken regarding the other voluntary commitments

In addition to the measures mentioned above, Bahrain has taken the following measures to implement its other voluntary commitments arising from its first report for the UPR:

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
1. Examination of the need to formulate a national, comprehensive human rights plan.	A draft plan has been prepared and sent to the committee tasked with implementing the outcomes of the National Consensus Dialogue. This is also one of the outcomes of the National Consensus Dialogue.
2. Examination of the possibility of revising several current reservations to conventions which it has joined. Bahrain has, for example, withdrawn its reservation to article 20 of the Convention against Torture.	The concerned agencies are studying these reservations and taking appropriate measures regarding them according to the Constitution and national laws.
3. Bahrain is committed to contributing to the ongoing process of formulating human rights standards in the United Nations and participating in UN human rights forums in which the human rights standards are discussed (e.g., the Forum on Minority Issues, which [convened in its inaugural session] in Geneva in September 2008).	1. Participation of a high-level Bahraini delegation in the Forum on Minority Issues in 2008. 2. Participation of a high-level Bahraini delegation at the Durban II Forum in 2009.
4. Continued active participation in meetings of the Economic and Social Council and its multiple committees, the General Assembly, and the Security Council.	Bahrain was selected a second time for membership in the United Nations Human Settlements Programme starting on 1 January 2012 for a period of four years. This committee is subordinate to the Economic and Social Council. Bahrain is keen on attending the periodic meetings of the committee, which are held at its headquarters in Nairobi. Bahrain is an active member of the United Nations. It participates in general discussions and the annual session of the General Assembly starting in September of each year. King Hamad Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifah, the beloved king of the country, participated in the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. In addition, Bahrain's permanent mission to the United Nations is keen on attending the meetings of the Security Council and monitoring the subjects put forth. Bahrain is committed to implementing Security Council resolutions and submitting periodic reports thereon. Bahrain was elected to serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year period (1998-1999).
5. Continued active participation in following up on the proceedings of the relevant conferences, including the upcoming review of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action [from] the World Conference against Racism.	Bahrain participated in the Durban conference held on to April 2009.

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
6. Submission of a report during the upcoming review on the implementation of current voluntary commitments.	This report states what has been achieved in respect to the Brian's voluntary commitments. Bahrain also submitted its annual report for 2009 and 2010 to the Human Rights Council. The report describes the progress that has been made in implementing the voluntary commitments, outcomes, and recommendations.
7. Bahrain's affirmation of its adoption of good practices in the commitments it will submit to the Human Rights Council on the occasion of the 2008 elections.	This indeed occurred. Bahrain was elected for a two-year period (2008 until July 2011).
8. Intensification of campaigns to inspect workers' housing to ascertain its suitability from a security, health, and humanitarian standpoint and its compliance with laws and decrees in this regard.	<p>- The General Directorate of Civil Defence in the Ministry of Interior enforces the Regulations on Fire Prevention and Protection Requirements in facilities pursuant to Ministerial Decree No. 167 of 2002. These regulations are applied as Bahraini requirements.</p> <p>- The competent ministerial committee (comprising the General Directorate of Civil Defence, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Urban Planning, and Ministry of Labour) inspects the housing of workers in the various governorates of Bahrain.</p> <p>-The Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Urban Planning grant licenses to an establishment or company only after ascertaining the suitability and safety of its housing for workers. Special protection and safety requirements have been established according to the type and size of residential buildings for workers, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provision of adequate exits for emergencies. b. Provision of fire alarms and smoke and heat detectors. c. Provision of emergency lights. d. Provision of signs pointing to emergency exits. e. Various pieces of fire-fighting equipment. <p>- In this regard, the Directorate of Protection and Safety subordinate to the General Directorate of Civil Defence conducted 267 inspection visits during 2008-2011.</p>

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
<p>9. Action to create an effective mechanism for correcting the housing conditions of workers suffering from humanitarian neglect on the part of some private-sector establishments.</p>	<p>The Occupational Safety Division in the Ministry of Labour compiles and updates information on worker housing sites and the number of workers housed therein through field surveys, direct contact with establishments subject to Ministerial Decree No. 8 of 1978 on the Health Conditions of Worker Housing, and intensification of worker housing inspection visits. The division also spreads awareness among employers of relevant legislation. It directs employers to contact and coordinate with other relevant agencies--e.g., the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, and General Directorate of Civil Defence--to ensure that housing meets the legal requirements.</p> <p>A working plan for a campaign to inspect worker housing has been initiated through the collection and updating of the Ministry of Labour's database on worker housing sites and the number of persons residing therein. This is being done through field surveys conducted by occupational safety inspectors and through direct contact with the managements of establishments. Information is collected concurrent with inspections. To ensure an effective housing inspection process, the Occupational Safety Division has undertaken to inspect the greatest number of housing sites in record time. A program for the inspection of the targeted establishments has been prepared according to the number of workers in each establishment, so as to cover as many workers as possible.</p> <p>The plan takes into account the need to inspect establishments with multiple branches and commercial and industrial groups in which there are multiple dwellings and managements overseeing them. Meetings are held with the concerned management personnel to ensure enforcement of health and safety measures and precautions in their housing.</p> <p>The ministry conducts a second inspection to ascertain enforcement of health and safety measures and precautions applicable to worker housing and whether all violations mentioned in the first inspection visit report have been eliminated. Any violations found are reported to the Public Prosecution Office.</p>

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
10. Bahrain's affirmation that its subsequent reports will include information on the review outcomes and the effects thereof on the human rights situation on the ground.	The annual report for 2009 and 2010 was submitted to the Human Rights Council.
11. Examination of the possibility of publishing an annual or periodic national report on human rights conditions on the ground.	A national report is published every four years on human rights conditions on the ground. The National Foundation for Human Rights also prepares an annual report on same subject .
12. Bahrain's serious examination of the possibility of promulgating a law against racial discrimination.	The possibility of promulgating such a law continues to be studied.
13. Bahrain's affirmation of its cooperation with the Committee against Torture regarding the application of article 20 of the Convention against Torture.	Bahrain is cooperating with all treaty bodies concerned with the Committee against Torture.
14. Bahrain's continued efforts to achieve comprehensive development while affirming the centrality of human rights to such development and the importance of supporting a culture of human rights through all available means in education, the media, and other areas.	- Government agencies, civil society organizations, the Bahrain Institute for Political Development, and the National Foundation for Human Rights undertake activities to propagate a culture of a human rights.
15. The Ministry of Interior's ongoing commitment not to interfere in peaceful marches as long as they are conducted within the framework of the law and participants therein do not commit acts of riotous assembly and rioting that are crimes under the law.	- The Ministry of Interior affirms its desire to enable persons to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to peaceful assembly, provided they do so in accordance with the conditions stipulated by the law. Decree-Law No. 18 of 1973 on Public Meetings, Marches, and Assemblies as amended by Decree No. 32 of 2006, requires notifying the Head of General Security of the place, time, and subject of any assembly to allow for the adoption of the necessary measures to enable participants to exercise their right to peaceful assembly while protecting their security and safety and preserving the freedoms of other individuals. Security personnel are present in the area of the assembly, but intervene only if assembly participants become other than peaceful or commit criminal acts under the law. In addition, Decree No. 57 of 2011 of the Minister of Interior establishes the duties and responsibilities of the committee that regulates the assemblies and demonstrations mentioned in article 6 of Decree-Law No. 18 of 1973 on Public Meetings, Marches, and Assemblies as amended by Decree No. 32 of 2006.

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Measures taken</i>
	<p>The Ministry of Interior received notification of about 15 marches and assemblies during 2008. Marches and assemblies totalled 112 in 2009 and 126 in 2010. The ministry received notice of 60 assemblies during 2011.</p> <p>The Ministry of Interior has prepared a draft law amending the law on public meetings, marches, and assemblies based on the agreed national dialogue visions. The amendment includes a number of provisions, the most important being: a prohibition on the participation of children in political marches and assemblies in observation of international human rights principles; emphasis on the role of police in providing protection for participants in these marches; establishment of rules regarding marches and assemblies so as not to damage the interests of society or impede or damage the national economy or public interests; emphasis on responsibility of the organizers of any assembly to maintain security; and a prohibition on holding assemblies near vital installations, airports, and hospitals. Constitutional measures have been taken to promulgate these amendments. In addition, Decree No. 27 of 2011 of his Excellency the Minister of Interior was issued to establish the duties and responsibilities of the committee that regulates assemblies or marches.</p>
<p>16. Bahrain's use of the periodic review as an additional framework to support the application of current means of appeal for justice, and examination of any practical procedures that facilitate this, consistent with its national law and commitments under international human rights conventions.</p>	<p>This is being done.</p>

8. Key national priorities and initiatives for surmounting the challenges and constraints and improving the human rights situation [following] the unfortunate incidents in Bahrain during February and March 2011

During February- March 2011, Bahrain witnessed unfortunate incidents, which began with multiple social and economic demands and evolved into acts of rioting and violence. The government of Bahrain took numerous measures to resolve the crisis before and after the declaration of a state of national safety.

a. Before the declaration of a state of national safety

His Majesty the Beloved King assigned His Royal Highness the Crown Prince to conduct a dialogue with numerous representatives of political associations, businessman, and a number of social leaders.

As the situation in Bahrain evolved and the protest movement gained momentum, the opposition re-examined its demands and established new demands in addition to its previous conditions for entering a dialogue. The government did not accept the new demands, and the initial dialogue initiative ultimately ended. Because of the serious crimes and illegal protests, which were destabilizing the country's security, it became necessary to declare a state of national safety under Royal Decree No. 18 of 2011. This was done on 15 March 2011 to secure the public safety of individuals, protect the rights, of individuals, and quickly gain control of the situation at the locations of the incidents. The aforesaid decree stipulated the procedures and measures required to achieve these objectives.

b. After the declaration of a state of national safety

In order to complement the first dialogue initiative and attempt to achieve national harmony to arrive at common denominators and realize the hopes of the Bahraini people, His Majesty the King proposed a National Consensus Dialogue. He assigned the speaker of the House of Representatives to lead the dialogue and to work to promote dialogue mechanisms and encourage participation in the dialogue through openness to all viewpoints. This dialogue produced a number of agreed visions which the government is implementing.

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry

Under Royal Order No. 28 of 2011, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry was established to conduct fact-finding regarding the incidents that occurred in Bahrain during February and March of 2011, ascertain the repercussions thereof, and submit a report thereon, including the commission's recommendations for avoiding a recurrence of such incidents in the future. His Majesty the King received the commission's report on 23 November 2011, after which he ordered the concerned government agencies and entities to implement the commission's recommendations through a National Commission for the Implementation of the Recommendations.

9. Voluntary commitments

1. Bahrain commits to completing work on the implementation of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.
2. Bahrain commits to working to implement the visions of the National Consensus Dialogue.

10. Conclusion

The Kingdom of Bahrain regards its second report as complementing the action plan to strengthen and protect human rights that was initiated when its first report was adopted. Bahrain will work to cooperate with the OHCHR in building capacities, training, and exchanging expertise with friendly countries.

Bahrain's political leadership has outlined a plan that includes many guarantees of human rights through its acceptance of the implementation of all National Consensus Dialogue visions agreed by all dialogue participants and its acceptance of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry; Bahrain looks forward to cooperating with all relevant partners in Bahrain and abroad to achieve the goals sought therefrom.
