



BAHRAIN

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SUBMISSION FOR THE UN UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW 27TH SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP, APRIL/MAY 2017

FOLLOW UP TO THE PREVIOUS REVIEW

Following its previous Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2012, Bahrain accepted 145 recommendations, partially accepted 13 and rejected 18 recommendations. Amnesty International welcomes Bahrain's engagement with the UPR process, including the publication of an Interim Report in September 2014 on the implementation of UPR recommendations.¹

As was recommended during its previous review,² the authorities have brought the definition of torture in national legislation in line with international standards and have criminalized acts of torture by introducing a number of amendments to the Penal Code.³ However, reports of torture and other ill-treatment, particularly of detainees arrested on suspicion of terrorism or other security-related offences during interrogation at the Criminal Investigations Directorate, in Manama, continue to reach Amnesty International. The majority of such allegations is either dismissed by the Public Prosecution or not investigated adequately or promptly by the Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior or the Special Investigations Unit (SIU). These institutions were established in 2012 to investigate allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and ensure accountability (see also below).

Bahrain also accepted recommendations to cooperate with UN Special Procedures,⁴ including by issuing a standing invitation to the Special Procedures. However, the Bahraini authorities have not allowed any Special Procedure mandate holders to visit in the four-and-a-half years since the last review.⁵ Bahrain twice postponed at very short notice agreed visits by the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, the latest scheduled to take place in May 2013.⁶ Similarly non-

¹ *Kingdom of Bahrain: Universal Periodic Review, Interim Report*, available at: <http://www.upr.bh/index.php/progress-report-2014/> (accessed on 8 August 2016).

² Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Bahrain*, A/HRC/21/6, 6 July 2012, recommendations 115.18 (Uruguay), 115.22 (Spain), 115.88 (Maldives), 115.92 (Slovakia).

³ Law No. 52 of 2012 amended Articles 208 and 232 of the Penal Code on 9 October 2012.

⁴ A/HRC/21/6, 6 July 2012, recommendations 115.59 (Austria), 115.60 (Latvia), 115.61 (Latvia), 115.62 (Uruguay), 115.63 (France), 115.64 (Korea), 115.65 (Slovenia); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Bahrain (addendum)*, A/HRC/21/6/Add.1/Rev.1, 12 October 2012, paragraphs 16, 18.

⁵ Bahrain has received visit requests from the Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (30 October 2013), the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (in 2012 and again in February 2016), the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression (14 November 2014), and the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights (9 July 2015).

⁶ The Special Rapporteur, Mr Mendez, stated "This is the second time that my visit has been postponed, at very short notice. It is effectively a cancellation as no alternative dates were proposed nor is there a future road map to discuss." - Bahrain / Human rights: Government effectively cancels UN Special Rapporteur on torture's visit, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13261#sthash.J7vBbW4b.dpuf> (accessed 8 August 2016).

governmental organizations have frequently been denied access to the country.⁷

The Bahraini authorities accepted a number of recommendations relating to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly⁸ and stated in their interim report that they had implemented these recommendations.⁹ Some positive amendments were made to the Penal Code in 2013, such as the removal of Articles 134bis and 174.¹⁰ However, the majority of domestic legislation that criminalizes the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly remains in place and has been used to detain a number of prisoners of conscience.¹¹ Prisoners of conscience - including those detained during the 2011 uprising – remain in prison, human rights defenders continue to work in a hostile environment, and impermissible restrictions on political associations remain in place.^{12 13}

Bahrain also accepted recommendations calling for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) report.¹⁴ Established by King Hamad to investigate the crackdown on anti-government protests in 2011, BICI submitted its final report to King Hamad in November 2011.¹⁵ He publicly welcomed the report and committed his government to full implementation of its recommendations. However, progress to fully implement the BICI recommendations has been limited. Despite the government's claims that it has fully implemented all BICI recommendations, the Chair of the BICI stated in August 2016 that of the 26 recommendations only 10 have been "substantially implemented" and 16 "partially implemented".¹⁶

THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

Special Investigations Unit

⁷ Amnesty International visited in January 2013, May 2014, and January 2015, but each of these visits were restricted to five days and the organization has not been able to visit since.

⁸ A/HRC/21/6, recommendations 115.99 (Canada), 115.100 (Czech Republic), 115.101 (Germany), 115.146 (France), 115.157 (Netherlands), 115.160 (Costa Rica), 115.161 (Australia), 115.163 (Japan); ⁸ A/HRC/21/6/Add.1/Rev.1, paragraph/s 5, 11, 16, 18, 23.

⁹ *Kingdom of Bahrain: Universal Periodic Review, Interim Report*, available at: <http://www.upr.bh/index.php/progress-report-2014/> (accessed on 8 August 2016), pp. 49-77.

¹⁰ Article 134bis and Article 174 criminalized the participation in events held abroad to discuss the internal situation in Bahrain without the permission of the Government as well as the possession of pictures tarnishing the reputation of the country.

¹¹ In particular, Articles 214, 215 and 216 of the Penal Code criminalize "insulting the king", the national flag or emblem, a foreign country or an international organization. In 2014, the authorities increased the penalty for publicly insulting the king, the Bahraini flag or the national emblem to up to seven years imprisonment and a heavy fine.

¹² Amnesty International, *Behind the rhetoric: Human rights abuses in Bahrain continue unabated* (MDE 11/1369/2015), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/1396/2015/en/> (accessed on 17 August 2016).

¹³ In March 2015 the Shura Council approved amendments to Article 364 of the Penal Code increasing the penalty for "insulting parliament, the Shura Council, security forces, judges or public interest" to two year's imprisonment and the penalties for encouraging others to do the same. In September 2015 the Cabinet approved regulations which penalize media outlets for "spreading false or damaging information that could affect foreign relations".

¹⁴ A/HRC/21/6, recommendations 115.28 (Norway), 115.43 (Sweden), 115.45 (Turkey), 115.124 (Denmark), 115.127 (Thailand), 115.128 (Belgium), 115.132 (Qatar), 115.133 (Egypt), 115.134 (Jordan), 115.135 (Kuwait), 115.136 (Oman), 115.137 (Saudi Arabia).

¹⁵ Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, *Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry*, available at: <http://www.bici.org.bh/BICIREportEN.pdf> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

¹⁶ Professor Cherif Bassiouni, was inaccurately quoted by the Bahrain News Agency in May 2016 as saying that all BICI recommendations had been fully implemented, however he has since refuted this. He stated that two recommendations in particular should remain a priority for the government of Bahrain: "the release of persons convicted on the basis of their beliefs and actions, based on freedom of opinion and expression... and, the pursuit of investigations of those responsible for the killing of five persons under torture and the ascertainment of their superiors' responsibility." *Bahrain: The Right Thing To Do*, available at: <http://mcherifbassiouni.com/bahrain-right-thing/> (accessed on 8 August 2016).

Three months after the BICI presented its report to King Hamad, the Public Prosecutor established the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) within the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) to be “exclusively charged with determining the criminal liability of government officials who committed illegal acts resulting in killing, torture, injury or abuse, including officials in leadership positions, under the standards of superior responsibility”.¹⁷ The SIU is mandated to refer cases to the court of first instance, and send cases to the appeals court and the cassation court. In July 2013, the Public Prosecutor issued Special Directives to the SIU¹⁸ which cover its formation, authority and responsibilities and provide a Code of Conduct for SIU officials when carrying out their investigations. According to the authorities, the Special Directives comply with the Istanbul Protocol.¹⁹ However, in several cases of torture reported to Amnesty International, it appears the SIU failed to comply systematically with these standards.²⁰ The SIU’s staff is composed of former Public Prosecution officials and judicial police officers, seconded from the Ministry of Interior, raising concerns over independence and impartiality, especially as these staff still receive their salaries from the Ministry of Interior.

The independence of the SIU is also compromised by its location, as it is housed within the same building as the PPO. This makes it difficult for detainees and others to distinguish between the SIU and the PPO and may deter individuals from discussing their experiences of torture and other violations and abuses with the SIU for fear of reprisals by the authorities.

In its September 2014 report,²¹ the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) noted that the SIU “in its current form does not have the aspired independence and impartiality to ensure effective investigations,” and recommended that it be relocated to a different building from the PPO.²²

Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior and Ombudsman of the National Security Agency

The Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior was established in February 2012 with a mandate to receive and examine allegations of human rights violations committed by Ministry of Interior staff, and refer these to the relevant authorities, including the SIU. The Ombudsman of the National Security Agency (Inspector General) was also established in February 2012 to receive and examine complaints of human rights violations against members of the National Security Agency and to refer cases to the relevant authorities, in coordination with the PPO.

The decrees establishing both mandates stipulate that they are to be independent,²³ yet they fail to provide the necessary safeguards, particularly with regard to the manner of appointment and dismissal. At present, these powers lie with the Minister of Interior with regard to the Ombudsman of the Interior, and with the Head of the National Security Agency (NSA) and the President of the Council of Ministers with regard to the Inspector General.

The National Institution for Human Rights

The mandate of the National Institution for Human rights was amended in 2014 to bring it in line with the Paris Principles. In addition to human rights education and awareness-raising, it reviews draft and existing legislation for compliance with

¹⁷ Articles 4 and 5 of Resolution No. 28 of 2012.

¹⁸ Resolution No.26 of 2013 on the Issue of Directives to the Special Investigation Unit.

¹⁹ The Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

²⁰ Amnesty International, *Behind the rhetoric: Human rights abuses in Bahrain continue unabated* (MDE 11/1369/2015), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/1369/2015/en/> (accessed on 17 August 2016), p. 17.

²¹ National Institution for Human Rights, *Second Annual Report of the National Institution for Human Rights 2014 – Kingdom of Bahrain*, available at: <http://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/eLibrary/AnnualReport2014.aspx> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

²² In January 2015 the head of the SIU informed Amnesty International of the government’s intention to relocate the SIU, but did not give further details and it is not known why the move has not yet taken place.

²³ Decree No (27) of 2012 Concerning the Independent Ombudsman’s Office in the Ministry of Interior, available at: <http://www.ombudsman.bh/en/legal-references/ordinance-27-of-2012/> Decree No. 28 of 2012 Regarding the Ombudsman Office and Professional Standards Office in NSA, available at: <http://www.theioi.org/ioi-members/asia/bahrain/inspector-general-office-national-security-agency> (both accessed on 8 September 2016).

international human rights laws and standards, investigates complaints of human rights violations and abuses, and makes recommendations. In May 2016 it received a “B” status rating from the International Coordinating Committee.²⁴

THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly

Crackdown on opposition groups

Since Bahrain’s last UPR, the authorities have continued to target the political opposition in Bahrain, imprisoning the leaders of the major opposition groups and restricting their activities. On 30 May 2016, the Appeal Court in Manama more than doubled the prison sentence against Sheikh Ali Salman, the Secretary General of Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, Bahrain’s main opposition party, extending his prison sentence from four to nine years on charges including “publicly insulting the Interior Ministry” and “publicly inciting others to disobey the law”.²⁵

This verdict was followed by the dissolution of Al-Wefaq itself on 17 July 2016 and the liquidation of its assets over claims that Al-Wefaq had supported violence in Twitter posts in 2015, encouraged mass marches and sit-ins to incite sectarian opposition and showed solidarity with a person convicted of incitement to hatred against the regime (this referred to their Secretary General, Sheikh Ali Salman).²⁶ To Amnesty International’s knowledge, the authorities presented no credible evidence to show that Al-Wefaq is anything other than a peaceful opposition movement.

Ebrahim Sharif, former Secretary General of the National Democratic Action Society (*Wa’ad*), a secular political opposition party in Bahrain, was imprisoned for one year following a sentence imposed on 24 February 2016, for a speech he made in July 2015, charged with “incitement to hatred and contempt of the regime”. Sharif was released on 11 July 2016 after completing his prison sentence. However, the prosecution appealed against Sharif’s acquittal of a second charge, relating to the same incident, of “incitement to overthrow the regime by force and illegal means” and appealed for a longer sentence for the first conviction. Ebrahim Sharif could now face up to 13 years in prison if convicted on appeal of both charges.^{27,28}

Law on political associations

The Bahrain maintains laws that impede the operation of political associations. In September 2013, the Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs issued Decree 31 of 2013 which requires political associations to inform the Ministry at least three working days in advance of any meetings with foreign political organizations, including diplomatic representatives or other representatives of foreign governments. All such meetings must take place in the presence of a Bahraini

²⁴ Global Alliance of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Report and Recommendations of the Session of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA)*, Geneva, 9-13 MAY 2016, available at: <http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/ICCACcreditation/Documents/SCA%20FINAL%20REPORT%20-%20MAY%202016-English.pdf> (accessed on 26 September 2016).

²⁵ Amnesty International, *Bahrain shatters façade of reform with ruthless persecution of key opposition leader*, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/06/bahrain-shatters-facade-of-reform-with-ruthless-persecution-of-key-opposition-leader/> (accessed on 16 August 2016). He was originally sentenced on 16 June 2015 by the High Criminal Court after an unfair trial for speeches that he made in 2012 and 2014, including at his party’s General Assembly when he reaffirmed the party’s determination to pursue power in Bahrain through peaceful means to achieve the reform demands of the 2011 uprising and to hold those responsible for human rights violations to account.

²⁶ Amnesty International, *Bahrain ramps up assault on human rights by dissolving leading political group*, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4484/2016/en/> (accessed on 16 August 2016).

²⁷ Ebrahim Sharif’s arrest, on 12 July 2015, came one month after his early release from a previous prison sentence for leading widespread peaceful anti-government protests in 2011, alongside 12 other leading opposition activists. His next court appearance is scheduled for 13 October 2016.

²⁸ Amnesty International, *Urgent Action: Freed Prisoner of Conscience Back in Court* (MDE 11/4547/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4547/2016/en/> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

government representative. In August 2014, the Minister was empowered through Law 34 of 2014 to file court cases to close political associations for up to three months to allow them to correct breaches of the Law on Political Associations, the Constitution or other laws. In the case of a "serious breach", which the law does not define, the Minister of Justice may file a case to close an association entirely.²⁹

In June 2016, the King issued another amendment to the Law on Political Associations (Law 26 of 2005), prohibiting members of a political society from engaging in religious preaching and prohibiting leaders of a political society from giving religious speeches, sermons or guidance. These amendments follow previous amendments to the law made in 2014,³⁰ prohibiting political associations from "using a religious platform to spread their principles, objectives and programmes or use religion as a reference" (Article 10 as amended) and from "directing [their] activities and programmes for sectarian goals or to damage national economy or the public interests of the state" (Article 6 as amended). These restrictions violate the right to freedom of association and breach Bahrain's international obligations under Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.³¹

Harassment of and attacks against human rights defenders

As of August 2016, there were at least 17 prisoners of conscience detained solely for expressing their right to freedom of expression.³² Nabeel Rajab, the President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, was arrested on 13 June 2016 and is on trial facing charges of "spreading false rumours in times of war",³³ "insulting public authorities"³⁴ and "insulting a foreign country"³⁵ in relation to tweets published in 2015. In his comments, he criticized the war in Yemen and made allegations of torture in Jaw prison after a prison riot in March 2015. He also faces a further charge of "undermining the prestige of the state," in relation to an open letter published in the New York Times on 4 September 2016.

The authorities have intensified their clampdown on human rights defenders and civil society since June 2016. Between June and September 2016, 24 individuals, including human rights defenders, former prisoners of conscience, a lawyer and a journalist, have faced official travel bans or been prevented from travelling abroad to participate in human rights

²⁹ Amnesty International, *Behind the rhetoric: Human rights abuses in Bahrain continue unabated* (MDE 11/1369/2015), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/1369/2015/en/> (accessed on 17 August 2016).

³⁰ Law 34 of 2014.

³¹ Amnesty International, *Authorities must halt repression after week of intensified clampdown on human rights* (MDE 11/4312/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4312/2016/en/> (accessed on 17 August 2016).

³² These include: Dr 'Ali al-Ekri (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/058/2012/en/>), 'Abdelwahab Hussain (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Mohammad 'Ali Ridha Isma'il (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Mohammad Hassan Jawad (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Abdulhadi al-Khawaja (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Abdullah al-Mahroos (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Fadhel Abbas Mahdi Mohamed (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/3622/2016/en/>), Hassan Mshaima' (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), 'Abdul-Hadj 'Abdullah al-Mukhodher (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Sa'eed Miraza al-Nuri (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Sheikh 'Ali Salman (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/2882/2015/en/>), Dr Saeed al-Samahiji (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/3527/2016/en/>), Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/053/2012/en/>), Nabeel Rajab (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4600/2016/en/>), Ibrahim Karimi (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/3860/2016/en/>).

³³ Article 133 of the Bahraini Penal Code.

³⁴ Article 126 of the Bahraini Penal Code.

³⁵ Article 215 of the Bahraini Penal Code.

advocacy meetings, including to the UN Human Rights Council sessions in June and September 2016.³⁶

Restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly

In August 2013, the government amended Article 11 of the Law on Public Gatherings, banning indefinitely all public assemblies in Manama, with the exception of demonstrations to be held in front of international organizations, and subject to prior written permission from the Head of Public Security.³⁷ This law also subjects all other demonstrations outside Manama to the written permission of the Head of Public Security.³⁸

These amendments restrict the space and time available for people to demonstrate peacefully. When protests occur outside of Manama, they are often accompanied by a heavy police presence and clashes between protesters and the police. There are allegations that the police use excessive force to disperse the protesters, which in some cases has resulted in deaths and injuries. Hundreds of those protesting have been arrested and many charged with “rioting” or “illegal gathering” and subsequently imprisoned. Activists who monitor protests and document instances of use of excessive force by the police have also been arrested.

Following the revocation of Sheikh Isa Qassem’s nationality (see below), scores of protesters and at least 60 Shi’a clerics were summoned and arrested in relation to a sit-in in the village of Duraz, which began in June 2016. As of September, four clerics have been sentenced to between one and two years in prison in relation to the sit-in and nine others remain in detention and are facing trial.³⁹

Revocation of nationality and forced exile

Since 2012, the Bahraini authorities have arbitrarily revoked the Bahraini nationality of at least 316 people,⁴⁰ including Sheikh Isa Qassem, the spiritual leader of Al-Wefaq, effectively rendering the majority of them stateless. Stripping citizens of their nationality without due process is arbitrary and in violation of Bahrain’s international human rights obligations. Since 2014, at least six individuals have been forcibly expelled from the country, including two Shi’a clerics and a human rights lawyer.⁴¹

Unfair trials, torture and other ill-treatment

Unfair trials of government critics and opponents, including protesters, have become a prominent feature of the human rights landscape in Bahrain since 2011. In practice, the judiciary lacks independence, frequently fails to address serious rights violations and abuses, and is used as a tool of state repression.⁴²

Since protests began in 2011, Bahrain’s courts have convicted hundreds of people on charges such as rioting, illegal gathering, and committing terrorism-related offences in trials that fail to comply with international standards on fair trials. In many cases that Amnesty International has reviewed, defendants were denied prompt access to legal assistance or their allegations of torture in pre-trial detention were dismissed without thorough investigation. Defence lawyers are often denied full access to the case files, are not permitted to cross-examine witnesses fully, and have requests to call

³⁶ Amnesty International, *Bahrain: End heightened crackdown on peaceful critics* (MDE 11/4749/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4749/2016/en/> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

³⁷ This amendment was introduced via Decree 22 of 2013.

³⁸ Demonstrations are also banned near hospitals, airports, commercial compounds and any other areas with security considerations, provided that these are defined by the Minister of Interior in advance.

³⁹ Amnesty International, *Bahrain: End heightened crackdown on peaceful critics* (MDE 11/4749/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4749/2016/en/> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

⁴⁰ Amnesty International, *Stop arbitrarily rendering citizens stateless* (MDE 11/0005/2015), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/0005/2015/en/> (accessed on 17 August 2016).

⁴¹ Amnesty International, *Bahrain: End heightened crackdown on peaceful critics* (MDE 11/4749/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4749/2016/en/> (accessed on 8 September 2016).

⁴² Amnesty International, *Behind the rhetoric: Human rights abuses in Bahrain continue unabated* (MDE 11/1396/2015), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/1396/2015/en/> (accessed on 19 August 2016).

independent experts rejected or ignored, thereby denying the defendants adequate time and facilities to prepare a defense. The courts often rely on information provided by preliminary police investigations or information from police informants as evidence, and either fail to order independent investigations into defendant's allegations of torture by police to coerce "confessions", or delay trials until investigations have been carried out.

The death penalty

The death penalty remains in force for murder, terrorism-related offences and other crimes, including drugs offences. Death sentences continue to be imposed, sometimes following unfair trials.⁴³

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE STATE UNDER REVIEW

Amnesty International calls on the government of Bahrain to:

Follow up to the previous review

- Ensure the full implementation of all the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, in particular to ensure thorough, impartial and independent investigations into all human rights violations and abuses committed during the uprising in 2011, including into superior responsibility, and immediately and unconditionally release all prisoners of conscience;
- Allow international NGOs to visit Bahrain and carry out their human rights work without restrictions, including by abolishing the current five-day limit for visits.

Human rights institutions

- Ensure the independence and impartiality of the human rights institutions, in particular the Special Investigations Unit and the Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior, in practice.

Crackdown on opposition groups

- Immediately and unconditionally release prisoners of conscience Sheikh 'Ali Salman and Fadhel Abbas Mohamed Mahdi held for exercising their right to freedom of expression;
- Allow opposition party members and leaders to exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, in line with international human rights law.

Laws on political associations

- Repeal or amend all laws that unduly restrict the activities of political associations, including Decree 31 of 2013, Law 34 of 2014, and Law 26 of 2015.

Harassment and attacks against human rights defenders

- Immediately and unconditionally release all prisoners of conscience imprisoned solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly;
- Lift travel bans restricting individuals' right to freedom of movement, association and expression.

Restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly

- Immediately lift the ban on peaceful protests in Manama and ensure that the right to peaceful assembly is not restricted.

⁴³ Amnesty International, *Bahrain: Further Information: Three death sentences upheld* (MDE 11/4197/2016), available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/4197/2016/en/> (accessed on 7 September 2016).

Revocation of citizenship and forced exiles

- End the practice of arbitrarily revoking citizenship, especially where this renders individuals stateless and forces them into exile;
- Reinstatement of citizenship of those arbitrarily stripped of their nationality, including those who had their nationality revoked in November 2012 and January 2015.

Unfair trials, torture and other ill-treatment

- Ensure that all trials are conducted in line with international fair trial standards, including by ensuring prompt access to legal assistance, equality of arms between the prosecution and the defence, and thorough investigations into allegations of torture in pre-trial detention.

The death penalty

- Commute all death sentences and immediately establish an official moratorium on executions;
- Restrict the use of the death penalty to crimes that meet the threshold of Most Serious Crimes under international law; with a view to abolishing the death penalty for all crimes.