

## **The Universal Periodic Review of**

### **The Kingdom of Bahrain**

#### **Twenty-Seventh Session of the UPR Working Group Human Rights Council**

1. This statement has been prepared by the Manama Centre for Human Rights, an NGO registered in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and endorsed by a number of Bahraini NGOs as provided in the annex.
2. The issues highlighted and recommendations made in this submission are considered in particular thematic areas, based on an overview of developments in the legal framework, the Kingdom of Bahrain's position towards regional human rights instruments, serious observations on the necessity for a personal status law, observations on the right to health, and, concluding recommendations.

#### **Constitutional, Legislative and Institutional Framework**

3. The constitutional amendments in the Kingdom of Bahrain (2012) which gave more legislative powers to the elected Council of Representatives are a significant step in the promotion of the right to political participation as provided in Article 21 of the UDHR and Article 25 of the ICCPR.
4. The establishment of the National Institution for Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain is highly welcomed, and the Manama Centre for Human Rights observed its compliance with the Paris Principles.
5. The Manama Centre for Human Rights regrets that the National Institution failed to acquire full accreditation, but welcomes its attempt to improve legislative and practical issues to further comply with the principles of best practice afforded by corresponding accredited NHRIs.
6. The suspension of Al-Wafaq Society by the judiciary in Bahrain was a necessary step to maintain peace and security, due to the Society's involvement with external actors, and the necessity to maintain the rule of law in a small developing nation, with numerous religious and political complexities.

#### **Regional Human Rights Instruments**

7. The adoption of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Human Rights Declaration (2014) is a necessary step to promote fundamental rights and freedoms in the region. The Kingdom of Bahrain's role in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration is highly acknowledged.

8. The Manama Centre for Human Rights urges the government of Bahrain to take all political and legislative measures to sign and ratify the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights.
9. The Manama Centre also calls on the Kingdom of Bahrain to withdraw all reservations on the Arab Charter for Human Rights.

### **Personal Status Law**

10. The Manama Centre for Human Rights highly regrets the Kingdom of Bahrain's lack of a personal status (Shiite) law.
11. Although there is strong objection from a number of radical Shiite groups, the Kingdom of Bahrain needs to keep into consideration that such absence of a crucial legislation is a violation of the UDHR, ICESCR, CEDAW and CRC.

### **Right to Health**

12. The Manama Centre observed the statistics provided by the Supreme Health Council and the Ministry of Health on the number of individuals infected by HIV AIDS which number as of 2016 in around 364.
13. The low number of infected individuals shows the commitment of the relevant authorities in the prevention of STDs in accordance with international principles and standards and is highly recognized.

### **Recommendations**

14. The Manama Centre for Human Rights and endorsing organizations recommend the Kingdom of Bahrain to take the following measures:
  1. The issuance of a Shiite personal status law.
  2. The ratification of the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights.
  3. The withdrawal of all reservations on the Arab Charter for Human Rights.
  4. To take all necessary legislative measures to ensure the accreditation of the National Institution for Human Rights.
  5. To continue its efforts in providing security against political insurgency by some radical groups.

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ANNEX

Endorsing Organizations

**Bahrain Society for Sociologists**

**Child's Wish Society**

**Let us Change Society**

