

Mr. President,

Alsalam and ADHRB would like to thank the thematic mandates of the Special Procedures for their continued engagement on ongoing thematic human rights violations in Bahrain.

In the most recent joint communications report, four mandates expressed serious concern over reprisals against activists like Ebtisam al-Saegh, who was tortured by Bahrain's National Security Agency for her human rights work.

Just last month, the authorities undertook similar reprisals against four women for allegedly 'hiding fugitives' – a charge commonly used to target the families and friends of protesters and activists. On 21 February 2018, a Bahraini court sentenced Medina Ali and three other women to three years in prison after trials marred by reports of torture and forced confessions. They state that the authorities subjected them to sectarian hate speech, and threats of rape, Ms. Ali reports being violently beaten.

Despite new complaints of human rights abuses in every communications report since 2011, the Government of Bahrain still fails to work constructively with the Special Procedures. Bahrain has denied all mandates access since 2006, despite repeated requests.

We therefore call on States, including Bahrain, to act decisively to address issues raised by the Special Procedures, and to facilitate immediate access to address issues including torture, arbitrary detention and the rights of human rights defenders.

Thank you.