



Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain would like to call the Council's attention to the long-standing and ongoing human rights violations carried out by the Government of Saudi Arabia, which we believe provide ample evidence to support our call on all states to contest the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's re-election to the Human Rights Council this October.

The HRC was established by the General Assembly to be "responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe." The HRC replaced the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) after it had become undermined by countries with poor human rights records becoming members.

Since joining the Council in 2014, Saudi Arabia has not only carried out gross and systematic human rights violations, but it has also used its diplomatic weight in the Council to silence civil society and bully the United Nations and senior diplomats. Human Rights Defender Samar Badawi remains under travel ban in Saudi Arabia since she participated in the 27th Session of this Council. More recently, exiled Saudi human rights activist Ali Al-Dubaisy has also been accused of undermining Saudi national security through his engagement with the UN. Moreover, we were appalled to hear of Saudi Arabia's successful campaign to strong-arm UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to remove Saudi Arabia from the UN's child rights blacklist.

It is no secret that Saudi Arabia's actions are at odds with the object and purpose of the Human Rights Council. Public executions, torture, criminalization of free speech, religious intolerance and gender discrimination are hardly the qualities that were envisioned for Council members. Additionally, Saudi Arabia's actions to prevent an International Commission of Inquiry on Yemen are an affront to the very essence of the HRC's mission.

Therefore, we hope that all States which profess to care about promoting human rights and safeguarding the integrity of this Council, will oppose Saudi Arabia's membership this coming October.

Thank You.