

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

Oral Intervention

Agenda Item 6: UPR Review - Bahrain

8th Session of the Human Rights Council – Geneva

9 June 2008

Delivered by Abdulhadi Alkhawaja

Thank you Mr. President.

The Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies applauds Bahrain for its cooperation with the UPR and the pledges it has made during this process.

The Cairo Institute asks this Council to take in consideration the joint written statement submitted to this session by the Cairo Institute, the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights and the Bahrain Human Rights Society. That statement contained an evaluation of the UPR process when dealing with Bahrain.

Mr. President..

During the UPR review of Bahrain, an insufficient amount of consideration was given to political and civil rights. In this regard, the Cairo Institute would like to highlight the following:

1. The people of Bahrain are unable to change their government peacefully
2. The king of Bahrain rules the country with the assistance of his uncle, as prime minister, and 12 other members of the royal family as ministers.
3. The Royal Court controls state revenues, public lands and grants nationality to non-Bahrainis on political and sectarian grounds,
4. According to a constitutional amendment created by the King, the King appoints half of the members of the National Assembly. The king also appoints all members of the Constitutional Court and all members of the Supreme Judicial Council.

On the other hand, Bahraini citizens are denied the right to petition their government;

- Most recently, the Royal court has rejected a new petition, signed by more than 54,000 citizens, calling for the resignation of the current Prime Minister, accusing him of being responsible of human rights violations during the last 37 years in power.
- The authorities have used force, to disrupt two seminars related to this petition, which have lead to many arrests, and injuries of innocent civilians, including Majeed Al-Qattan, 26 years old, who is still in critical condition at Salmaneya hospital, after being shot in the head by a rubber bullet.

Thank you Mr. President.

