

**National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) sets up a special committee to monitor the human rights situation arising from the recent unfortunate events that have occurred in the Kingdom of Bahrain**

Manama, March 28, 2011

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) announced on February 23, 2011 the formation of a special committee "to monitor and follow-up, "the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain in light of the recent unfortunate developments in the Kingdom. The committee is concerned with the follow-up, monitoring and documenting of these human rights violations in addition to preparing a professional human rights report to be submitted to His Majesty the King, in accordance with the NIHR's terms of reference stipulated in the Royal Order No. (46)-2009 on the establishment of the NIHR.

The NIHR pointed out that within this context the Institution issued its first statement on February 16, 2011 on the developments of events in Bahrain and the second on 21 February 2011 on the national dialogue initiative as well as the latest developments in the kingdom, calling on all parties to show restraint. The NIHR also called for the formation of an independent commission which began to investigate and review all the circumstances, attacks and violations that led to deaths and injuries on both sides.

The NIHR also stated that as part the assumption of its national responsibility, the NIHR's Special Committee has developed an action plan to monitor and follow up the human rights situation in the Kingdom. It set out to visit the injured and victims in Salmaniya Medical Center to assess their cases and met the director and officials at the hospital, who provided the Committee with a lot of information supported by documents, photos and reports on the course of events in the hospital. This was followed by a visit to a military hospital during which the Committee visited the University of Bahrain's injured students, in addition to the victims injured due the events that took place next to the Financial Harbor. During the visit, the Committee collected information from the injured.

The NIHR pointed out that in its efforts to establish the facts, the NIHR's Special Committee also visited the University of Bahrain, during which it met the University President and his deputies in order to identify what has happened in the University with regard to the events, attacks and chaos on March 13, 2011, which led to the occurrence of many direct injuries to students and the damage to the University's buildings, equipment and educational systems. Such acts of vandalism and sabotage fall within the crimes stipulated in the Penal Code, and in this framework, the NIHR feels sorrow and deep concern about the transfer of protests and political differences to the University campus terrorizing and endangering educational sites, and infringing on the inherent right to education.

In this context, the NIHR's Special Committee communicated with the injured residents through their embassies to enquire about their conditions and offer condolences and sympathy to the victims and their families, in addition to obtaining information on the injured and victims and their needs. In this regard, the Committee visited some embassies whose subjects have been abused. Among the embassies visited the Indian and Bangladeshi embassies. The Committee requested from both embassies any information on the number of injured and victims subjected to coercion or threat in any form. During the meetings with the officials in those embassies, the Committee expressed deep regret at the harm and violation of human rights their citizens endured on the land of Bahrain, reaffirming the role these migrant workers play in advancing economic development in Bahrain, in addition to the importance of not dragging these migrant workers into any internal disputes, given that their role is to stimulate the economy in Bahrain. In this context, the Committee is also scheduled to visit the Embassies of Pakistan and the Philippines to enquire about their nationals and the cases of abused among their subjects.

The Committee also met members of the U.S. Embassy to brief them on the role of the NIHR during the current crisis, the Special Committee set up to address the problems arising from the recent events and the efforts made in this context, in addition to meeting a number of personnel concerned with the field of human rights.

The NIHR said that since its inception, it has faced a lot of challenges due to the magnitude and complexity of the unfortunate events, in addition to the different narratives, information and data available, which requires more efforts and expertise in human rights in the process of examination, cross-examination and information verification before incorporating them in the final report.

The NIHR stated that it is now in the process of collecting and analyzing all the documented information. Once examined and all sources of such information verified, the NIHR will prepare a detailed report on the developments of human rights-related events in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which will then be submitted to His Majesty the King, in accordance with the provisions of Article (14) of the Royal Decree No. (46)-2009 on the establishment of the NIHR.