

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO BAHRAIN
(UPR May 2012)

DENMARK

- Will the Government of Bahrain ensure that the trials of the 21 political and human rights prisoners - including human rights defender Abdulhadi Al Khawaja - will be fair and in accordance with international standards including the rule of law?
- How will the Bahraini Government ensure that all security and prison personnel who have made use of “excessive use of force”, including inflicting torture on detainees, are held fully accountable?
- Will Al Khawajas lawyer be able to present evidence and hear out witnesses related to the allegations that Abdulhadi Al Khawaja was subjected to mistreatment and torture by security personnel during his arrest as well as during his prison stay in the coming trial in the civilian court system?

GERMANY

- The Bahrain International Commission of Inquiry (“Bassiouni-Commission) documented a prevailing “culture of impunity” regarding human rights violations by security forces. What did the Government of Bahrain do so far to hold those responsible for human rights violations accountable?
- What has the Government of Bahrain done to prevent future cases of torture and ill-treatment by members of the security forces?
- Why has Bahrain postponed the visit of the Special Rapporteur in Torture and when does the Government of Bahrain intend to receive him in Bahrain?

IRELAND

- Will Bahrain consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights?
- What measures is Bahrain taking to ensure that civilians receive trials meeting international standards in civilian courts in line with its obligations under the ICCPR?

- What plans does Bahrain have to implement in its domestic law its obligations under the ICCPR and CAT and explicitly prohibit torture in national legislation?

NGO activity

- Will Bahrain consider amending the 1989 Societies Act No 21 governing the activities of civil society to bring it in line with international standards?

CEDAW

- Will Bahrain consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW and removing its reservations to CEDAW?
- Will Bahrain consider raising the legal age for marriage for females to 18?

LIECHTENSTEIN

Liechtenstein stresses the importance to ensure accountability for the human rights violations and to ensure due process standards in the prosecution of alleged offences in the context of the violent crackdown on civilian protesters in spring 2011. In that regard, Liechtenstein would be grateful for additional clarification on the following issues:

- What measures have been adopted to address the assessment of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) “that the lack of accountability of officials within the security system has led to a culture of impunity” as stated in its report?
- Whether all convictions and sentences rendered by the National Security Courts have been subject to full review in the ordinary courts in accordance with fundamental principles of due process as recommended by the report of the BICI?
- How victims of human rights violations and their families of victims have been compensated by the GoB?
- How the GoB has followed up to the visit of the President of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court to Bahrain in 2009 with respect to becoming a State Party of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court?

NORWAY

- Which of the recommendations from the BICI report have so far been implemented, and how will the Bahraini Government implement any remaining recommendations?

- How does Bahrain work to protect human rights defenders (whom are granted special protection under international human rights law)?
- What steps, if any, have Bahrain taken to give the children of Bahraini women and non-Bahraini fathers the right to Bahraini citizenship?

SLOVENIA

- What measures have been taken by the Government to restore peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people in the country, in particular with regard to the freedom of assembly and freedom of expression
- What is the state of play regarding pending requests for visits by special procedure mandate holders (Special Rapporteur on migrants and Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association)?

UNITED KINGDOM

- We would be grateful for information on the extent to which civil society was consulted in the preparation of your national report and how civil society will be included in the follow-up?
- What steps has the newly established Special Investigations Unit taken to investigate allegations of officials responsible for or complicit in acts of mistreatment or torture?
- Can the government confirm that all those held solely for participating in peaceful protests and who did not advocate violence have been, or will be, released?
- What plans do you have to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment?
- The UK notes with concern the increase in sectarian rhetoric in the media. What steps are you taking to address this, whilst guaranteeing the right to freedom of opinion and expression?

SWEDEN

- What measures is the Government of Bahrain taking to ensure that BICI's recommendations will be fully implemented at all stages?

- What measures is the Government of Bahrain taking to ensure respect for freedom of associations in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Bahrain?

NETHERLANDS

- According to several human rights organizations there is strong evidence that human rights defenders like former president of the Bahrain Teachers' Association (BTA) Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb have recently been tortured in detention in Bahrain (A/HRC/WG.6/13/BHR/3, par.25) . To what extent does the government of Bahrain intend to follow up on its acceptance of the recommendation regarding the conduct of an independent, impartial and thorough inquiry into the source of threats, ill-treatment, torture and all forms of intimidation and harassment as well as unfair trial and initial arbitrary detention?
- Will the government of Bahrain ensure that all allegations of unlawful killings and excessive force against protesters are independently, promptly and thoroughly investigated; that those responsible are brought to justice; and that appropriate reparation are provided to victims?
- Human Rights Defender Nabil Rajab was recently charged for using social media to insult Bahraini authorities and encourage demonstrations. What measures have been taken to ensure that journalists and human rights defenders like Mr. Rajab (A/HRC/WG.6/13/BHR/3, par.40) perform their work without intimidation, hindrance, or harassment?
