



To the Governments of: Albania, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Spain

24 September 2015

**RE: HRC30 Joint Statement on Bahrain**

Excellences,

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations, write to voice our support for the joint statement on the human rights situation in Bahrain delivered by Switzerland at the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC). Since the last joint statement on Bahrain in June 2014, the human rights situation in the kingdom has deteriorated significantly. The government continues to effectively curtail Bahrainis rights to free and peaceful expression, assembly and association. Human rights defenders, political opposition leaders, members of the media, and youth have faced intimidation, arrest, arbitrary detention and acts of reprisal. Therefore, it is vital to refocus international attention on Bahrain and encourage the government to constructively address its human rights abuses by signing the new joint statement.

Public pressure on Bahrain continues to prove effective in safeguarding these rights in Bahrain. Following international criticism and pressure from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and from States, the king of Bahrain pardoned Nabeel Rajab, President of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, after serving over four months in prison for a tweet. Furthermore, OHCHR's negotiations for a program of technical capacity building in Bahrain has stalled over the intervening months since the last joint statement.

It is therefore critical to act now to maintain the level of international concern on the human rights situation in Bahrain. To abandon the collective attention on Bahrain in a time of such deterioration sends a dangerous message to the kingdom of Bahrain, and undermines both internal and external efforts to foster reform. Switzerland has indicated that this session's joint statement will be open for additional signatories throughout the session. We therefore call on your government, to recommit to supporting human rights in Bahrain, and to add your support to this joint statement.

Sincerely,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)

Amnesty International

ARTICLE 19

Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)

Bahrain Institute of Rights and Democracy (BIRD)

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

English Pen

European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR)

European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ECDHR)

Human Rights Watch

Index on Censorship

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

Pen International

Rafto Foundation

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

**Attached:**

HRC 30 Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in Bahrain;

Joint NGO Letter: Human Rights Situation in Bahrain (*Dated: 16 July 2015*)