



**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING
FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS** Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

**His Excellency, the Secretary General of the United Nations
Mr. Ban Ki-moon,**

Your Excellency,

The human rights organizations that signed this statement praise your commitment in defense of human rights especially during this time where we are experiencing a serious decline of human rights situations, in particular in the Arab region, which is threatening the historical gains achieved by human rights institutions and activists including the UN Human Rights Council.

We the undersigned NGOs are seriously alarmed by Bahrain's restrictions civil society especially the restrictions preventing them from engaging with the UN. We are seriously outraged by the bold statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, Khalid Bin Ahmad Al Khalifa, during a press conference on 29th August 2016 stating "we will not pay attention to any voice extorting us from abroad, especially the Human Rights Council of the United Nations in light of the size of the politicization..." He also reaffirmed the government's commitment to maintain peace and order by any means which is the utmost disregard to the several call for reform from the human rights council and the office of the High commissioner.

The continued disrespect to the Human Rights council and the office of the High Commissioner despite a wave of massive criticisms because of detentions, illegal summons and blockage, revocation of nationality and travel ban on human rights defenders shows there is a dire need to send a firm message to the Government of Bahrain in order to promote and protect the human rights principles that all member states should adhere to.

ICSFT in special consultative status with the ECOSOC / Center Oecumenique des eglise 150, Route de Ferney 1211, Offices: 191&192, Geneva, Switzerland, Tel: +41227884808/ 5&6- Fax:+ 41227884807- Website: www.icsft.net- Email: uncoordinator@icsft.net / info@icsft.net



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

Your Excellency,

While we are preparing for the upcoming 33rd Human Rights Council session in September, as per the usual the government of Bahrain continues its tradition of banning human rights activists from traveling to Geneva which is a clear violation of one's human right to free movement. Such acts not only show a complete disregard for the functioning of the United Nations as a whole but also highlight the fact that, despite repeated calls for action by States to end all such violations, impunity continues to surround them.

Bahrain is using the travel ban as a tool to intimidate and silence freedom of expression and to prevent civil society from engaging with the UN. This form of government reprisals against human rights defenders is designed to prevent reporting on severe ongoing rights abuses in the country. Article 12 of the ICCPR states that, 'everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own'. As a signatory to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Bahrain is obliged to uphold international standards of freedom of movement and freedom of expression.

In addition, as Bahrain UPR is coming up during the 3rd cycle we call on the government to immediately stop the ongoing reprisals against human rights defenders who are engaging with UN mechanisms including the UPR.

In light of this heightened violence on civil society by the Bahraini government, we call for the immediate release of all human rights defenders in Bahrain and for the removal of the imposed travel bans which unfairly restrict activists' freedom of movement, in particular from coming to Geneva to attend the 33rd HRC session.

ICSFT in special consultative status with the ECOSOC / Center Oecumenique des eglise 150, Route de Ferney 1211, Offices: 191&192, Geneva, Switzerland, Tel: +41227884808/ 5&6- Fax:+ 41227884807- Website: www.icsft.net- Email: uncoordinator@icsft.net / info@icsft.net



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

We also request that the President of the HRC, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the corresponding Special Rapporteurs Special Rapporteurs' call on the Bahraini authorities to immediately and unconditionally lift the travel ban imposed on Bahrain's civil society activists and guarantee Bahraini human rights defenders are free from intimidation and restrictions on their work, including at the 33rd UN Human Rights Council Session.

Sincerely,

The undersigned NGOs support and endorse this letter

Signed:

1. International Council Supporting Fair Trial & Human Rights
2. Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture
3. Salam for Democracy & Human Rights
4. Bahrain Forum for Human Rights
5. Bahrainin German organization for Human Rights and Democracy
6. Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights