

Mr. Rapporteur,

IDO, together with Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy would like to thank you for your recent communication with the Government of Bahrain regarding the systematic pattern of discrimination employed by the government to repress the country's native majority Shia population.

In your communication, you and other mandate holders raised your concerns over "patterns of continuous discrimination against Shia citizens (mainly Baharna and Ajam)... which are undermining their rights to freedom in the area of religion, expression and culture."

You went on to express your "grave concern... about the wide spectrum and frequency of violence and discriminatory acts against the Shia, including destruction of mosques, obliteration from historical narratives and public space, misinformation and discrediting of the Shia faith in school textbooks and discriminatory treatment in the media, public employment, housing policies and access to citizenship, which point towards a systematic pattern of violence and discrimination against Shia Bahraini, their culture and religion."

In addition to sharing the concerns your mandate raised, we have become further alarmed by attacks on Shia religious processions during the Ashora holiday, and attempts by the government to forcibly restrict public spaces to deny Shias the ability to gather in large numbers to pray, as happened recently in the village of Deraz.

We therefore would like to ask if your mandate has received any credible indication that the Government of Bahrain intends to positively and substantively respond to the concerns raised in your communication, and what steps you would recommend to Bahrain toward dismantling this system of repression?

Thank you.