



General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 August 2017

English only

Human Rights Council

Thirty-sixth session

11-29 September 2017

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the Conseil International pour le soutien à des procès équitables et aux Droits de l'Homme, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 August 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).



Bahrain's National Security Agency and Its Violations

With regard to the responsibility of Bahrain's national security, four institutions share responsibility for the maintenance of both internal and external national security, through the terms of reference granted to them in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, national laws and regulations.

These four institutions are:

- Bahrain Defence Force (BDF)
- Ministry of Interior (MoI)
- National Guard
- National Security Agency (NSA)

The National Action Charter, adopted on February 14, 2001, set out the general framework for the national security of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

In 2002, the National Security Agency (NSA) was known as the 'General Directorate of State Security Investigations'. Ian Henderson headed the British administration from 1966 to the date of his sacking in 1998. Henderson was succeeded by Khalid bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

The National Security Agency was established by Royal Decree No. 14 of 2002. Pursuant to this decree, the National Security Agency (NSA) replaced the 'General Directorate of State Security'.

Since its establishment in 2002, the National Security Agency has been playing a substantial role in:

- Penetrating civil society institutions and monitoring activists;
- Pursuing political opponents and human rights defenders, in Bahrain and abroad;
- Subjecting dozens of citizens to wounds and suffocation due to the use of excessive force against protest activities;
- Exercising systematic torture;
- Fabricating or exaggerating terror events or plans to justify intensive security measures, and running media campaigns at home and abroad to discredit activists and opposition, and justifying arrest campaigns, unfair trials and harsh court rulings against violators of the political system;
- Issuing travel restrictions;
- Issuing decisions to withdraw nationality; and
- Dissolution of associations and suspension of their activities.

On November 31, 2011, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued Royal Decree No. 115 of 2011 withdrawing the NSA's powers regarding law enforcement and made it an agency to collect information, monitor and detect all harmful activities related to espionage.

On January 5, 2017, the King of Bahrain backtracked and issued Decree No. 1, which granted officers, non-commissioned officers and members of the National Security Agency the status of judicial officers.

With regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the practices and abuses committed by the National Security Agency are incompatible with this Covenant, in particular:

- Detaining citizens on security cases; without a warrant
- Presenting photographs of the accused in the audio-visual media and issuing verdicts before the verdict
- The campaign of verbal abuse and contempt against citizens and human rights activists
- Revoking nationality
- Banning demonstrations

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry has confirmed, "The National Security Agency follows a systematic practice of physical and psychological ill-treatment which in many cases has amounted to torture in relation to a large number of detainees held in their custody." However, the expenditure of the National Security Agency increased from about 18 million BD in 2011 to 35 million BD in 2015.

The following are known facilities that the NSA use to commit violations:

1. The current headquarter of the National Security Agency in Muharraq
2. The headquarter of the National Security Agency (basement) in Al Qala'a
3. Jau Central Prison
4. The dry dock Detention Facility (a short-term detention unit)
5. Al Hid Prison
6. Al Noaim Police Station
7. Qudaibiya Police Station
8. Rifa'a Police Station
9. Al Wusta Central Province Police Station
10. Asri Prison
11. Al Budaiya Police Station
12. Exhibition Police Station
13. Hamad Town Police Station (Round 17)
14. Al Hooria Police Station
15. Isa Women's Detention Centre
16. Nabih Saleh Police Station.
17. Samaheej Police Station
18. Sitra Police Station
19. Umm Al Hassam Police Station
20. Ghuraifa police station

Bahraini human rights organisations have documented numerous human rights abuses by members of the National Security Agency (NSA) at the security compound in Muharraq city, specifically on the third floor, room number one, including:

- Interrogation and investigation of the human rights defenders, in violation of the law, for long hours while standing and blindfolded
- Lawyers were not allowed to follow the proceedings of the investigation, contrary to Article 20 of the Constitution
- Severe beatings
- Disrespect the detainees' religion
- Blasphemy, insult and humiliation
- Psychological torture
- Verbal harassment, sexual assault and erosion
- Electric shock
- Threats and intimidation regarding family members if they do not cease their activism
- Forced to publicly announce their resignation from their human rights activism

Human rights defender Ebtisam Alsaegh confirmed that officials of the National Security Agency (NSA) subjected her to severe psychological and physical torture, including sexual assault, in retaliation to her work.

On 23 May 2017, Adel Al Marzooq, head of the Monitoring Committee of the Unitary National Democratic Assemblage was reportedly that he was severely beaten, stripped of his clothes, threatened with rape, forced him to repeat the slogans "I am a traitor to the homeland", and pressured to resign from legal activism.

On 4 July 2017, the security forces raided and searched a house belonging to human rights activist Mohammed Khalil Al Shakhouri, in Karzakan, and transferred him to an unknown destination. Al Shakhouri was one of the jurists summoned in the security compound in Muharraq of the National Security Agency in May.

The NSA has also summoned large numbers of human rights activists in the recent weeks and subjected them to intimidation, reprisals, torture or other ill-treatment in order to force them to suspend their activities. The head of the Monitoring Committee at the Bahrain Human Rights Society, Abdul Jalil Yousef, was interrogated for four hours, during which he was subjected to abuse, threats and ill-treatment, and forced to resign from the human rights activism.

A few days before the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, on 22 June 2017, the National Security Agency (NSA) interrogated Mohammed Hassan with Officer Muhammad Hazeem torturing him, stripping his clothes, forcing him to stand for long periods of time, and threatening him with sexual assault.

On 1 August 2017, the National Security Agency summoned the activist in social media, Yousef Al Jamri, and interrogated him for 16 hours in three separate sessions, while he was blindfolded.

The following are or were NSA members who have been implicated in severe human rights abuses or extrajudicial killings:

Ian Henderson (deceased), Khaled Al Wazzan, Yousef Al A'arabi, Bassam Al Ma'araj, Khaled Al Ma'awda, Abdulaziz Atiyatullah Al Khalifa, Adel Fleifel, Farouk Al Ma'awda, Khalifa Ali Rashid Al Khalifa, Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Fahd Abdullah Al Fadala, Isa Majali, Isa Al Sulaiti, Khalifa Abdullah Mohammed Al Khalifa, Yousef Al Mana'ai, Talal bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

The following are victims who all died due in custody at the NSA:

Abdullah Al Madani (deceased 1976), Mohamed Ghuloom Bucheeri (deceased 1976), Saied Al Awaynati (deceased 1976), Jamil Ali Mohsen Al Ali (deceased 1980), Sheikh Jamal Al Asfour (deceased 1981), Dr Hashim Al Alawi (deceased 1986), Hussein Qambar (deceased 1995), Saeed Al Eskafi (deceased 1995), Abdul Karim Fakhrawi (deceased 2011), Zakaria Al Asheeri (deceased 2011), Jaber Al Alawiyat (deceased 2011), Hassan Jassem Al Hayeki (deceased 2016),

To The King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa:

- Implementation of BICI report recommendations about NSA and the trial of those officials who been accused of any human rights violations.

To The Government of Bahrain:

- Accountability of employees of the National Security Agency; involved in committing violations and the practice of torture and referring them to fair trials
- Amend Decree-Law No. 56 of 2002 to comply with the principles of human rights; and
- Abide by Article 8 of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which prohibits the torture or ill-treatment of any person.

To the international community:

- Pressure the Government of Bahrain to put an end to human rights violations committed by the National Security Agency;
- Form an international committee to investigate the violations committed against citizens and human rights defenders;
- Request the Government of Bahrain to allow the opening of a permanent Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to review Bahrain's implementation of its commitments to the recommendations made in Geneva; and
- Request the Government of Bahrain to extend an open invitation to the UN Special Rapporteurs to visit Bahrain and allow them unconditional access to all places of detention.

*Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.