



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 6

Universal Periodic Review

### **Written statement\* submitted by Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, 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 May 2020]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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## **Continuous decline for Human Rights in Kuwait**

On the 29th of January, the periodical review for the state of Kuwait was done by the Human Rights Council; more than 70 Recommendations were submitted to Kuwait in addition to the Recommendations approved by the Council since the 2015 review. Despite our extensive reporting, as well as our contributions and participation in numerous rights activities trying to emphasize the importance of the Recommendations and Kuwait's need to follow them; Kuwait still continues to ignore and fails to implement the Recommendations of the Human Rights Council. These Recommendations include: the amendment of national legislations to confirm to Kuwait's commitment from 1996 for Political and Civil Rights, in addition to the fact that said laws violate Article 36 of the Constitution and their application has led to the imprisonment of Twitter users with sentences of (800) years. Also, the fact that there (16) Kuwaiti refugees and political asylum seekers as well as prisoners of conscious imprisoned up to date.

### **Kuwaiti Political Asylum Seekers**

Since the start of what has been known as the Kuwaiti Movement in light of the freedoms movements in the area, the state cracked down on activists in Kuwait including parliament members. Some of which were politically prosecuted for the alleged breaking into the parliament/council, some 69 Kuwaiti citizens were prosecuted for assaulting the security guards without evidence of assault or presence of any security guards. They were prosecuted in court and sent to prison, therefore, they decided to seek asylum. There are other prisoners of conscious. All of them in total are (16) Kuwaiti asylum seekers to be added to the history of political asylum seekers in Kuwait due to political conflicts with the authorities.

### **Releasing Prisoners because of the Corona virus**

The Kuwaiti government released prisoners like other countries in response to Covid19. Kuwait only released criminal prisoners and continued to imprison prisoners of conscious and political prisoners. They are stuck inside prison, the state refused to release them despite reports of the Covid19 virus spreading among prisoners.

### **The Stateless/Bidoun**

The issue of the stateless persons/Bidoun continues, their humanitarian crisis continues despite many Recommendations issued by the Human Rights Council. Kuwait refuses to implement the recommendations.

### **Kuwaiti Women Married to Non-Kuwaitis**

#### **The Kuwaiti Woman**

Kuwaiti women still face unaccepted and provocative discrimination in numerous aspects. All the positive aspects are not of real value. This is because the Kuwaiti women still face discrimination in passing her nationality to her children. This is an issue faced by more than (20) thousand Kuwaiti females. The number is increasing due to the new children; the total number of persons is estimated to be (60) thousand persons.

### **Human Rights Council Mechanisms**

Human rights activism advanced globally and achieved great advancements on all levels. Relevant international agreements are reasonably respected among the international community. This of course includes the Human Rights Council; we have before requested for the Human Rights Council Mechanisms to be developed so as to enforce its Recommendations regarding countries that refuse to implement the Recommendations as

well as countries that do not abide to the international human rights standards and related agreements.

### **Human Trafficking**

Amidst the Corona virus outbreak, human trafficking issues surfaced strongly due to the implementation of the guardian system which we have before requested to be cancelled. Nevertheless, the government knew and cooperated with the resident permits sellers; this resulted in the formation of human trafficking rings that used to operate under government authority. The government used to issue for them official work permits as a way of buying their loyalty to be used in political mobilisation works and campaigns. This resulted in the scandals of hundreds of thousands of workers which were revealed and the government prosecuted several of them. We supported the government's step but it was not enough to eliminate human trafficking which the government acknowledged for the first time.

### **Human Rights International Court**

In light of the global developments and advancements, it is important to have an international human rights court like other international courts such as the European Human Rights Court and the African Human Rights Court.

The Gulf Civil Society Organisations Forum and Khiam Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture requests the council to request the government of the state of Kuwait to set forth a specific timeline for the implementation of the periodical review recommendations, particularly, the approval of administrative and legal legislations aimed at implement the said recommendations and integrate them into the Kuwaiti national law; in addition to providing a fast and democratic resolution for the issue of stateless persons as to be considered Kuwaiti citizens; the return of all political asylum seekers; the cancellation of all charges against Twitter users; public freedoms; take extraordinary steps to fight the Coronavirus Covid-19 including protection for prisoners against the virus and the release of the vulnerable persons as proposed by the Higher Commission for Human Rights; and we also call for the cancellation of the guardian system which will help fight human trafficking.

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The Gulf Civil Society Organisations Forum, NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.