

# BAHRAIN

Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" for promoting Human and Constitutional Rights

Repression is not a solution

## Time to pay attention

The launch of a major study by the British Bar Human Rights Committee and the Parliamentary Human Rights Group on 28 October has confirmed the cause of the crises: the unconstitutionality of the government's practices and procedures.

Whether it is a sign of maturity or bankruptcy, the actions of the Government of Bahrain over the past few months indicate a marked shift in its traditional policies, especially those with regards to the relations with the United Kingdom. Also, whether it is a result of provocation or a sign of desperation, the vicious attacks by local media on the British Government indicates a serious crisis of confidence between London and Manama. A semi-official newspaper (Akhar Al-Khalij) called on the British Government to apply the new anti-terror laws on the BBC because "it is involved in propping up terrorism in Bahrain". To the Al Khalifa any challenge to their dictatorship is a terrorist act. Every civil action by groups or individuals is considered a conspiracy to undermine the security of the state. Writing slogans on the walls is one of those serious acts that are considered serious crimes. They base their judgement on their conception that whatever they do is the right thing for the people of Bahrain who have no right to demand anything else. The master-slave relationship is still the order of the day in this Gulf island.

The opposition in Bahrain has refrained from violent acts and confined its activities to civil resistance. They will continue to do so. From, left, right and centre, the people are determined to pursue their civilised campaign to attain a degree of freedom necessary to create a modern civil society based on democratic institutions.

The Al Khalifa have often justified their refusal of the concepts of human rights, democracy and civil society claiming they contradicted their traditions. According to the bedouin heritage, the chief of the tribe is there to be obeyed and served and not to be questioned. The idea of accountability does not exist in their traditions, and hence they resist fiercely any attempt to bring about a situation in which the members of the ruling tribe may be held accountable. The opposition has attempted to act in accordance with constitutional law, tradition, logic and international conventions, and presented the legitimate demands of the people through petitions and letters to the ruler. He has failed to act in a statesmanship manner and

preferred to offer a deaf ear to the people.

The situation has been exacerbated by the employment of harsh tactics against the innocent people, and events spiralled to the point of no return. Today, the people have vowed not to normalise relations with the Al Khalifa until they have succumbed to the will of the people, and initiated a process of dialogue leading to the reinstatement of the Constitution and the election of the National Assembly.

The opposition, on the other hand, has succeeded in internationalising their case and won the support of parliaments, political parties and human rights groups because their cause is just, and have attained international recognition. The danger is that if the crisis persists, the people may change their ultimate demands and change their position with regards to coexistence with the Al Khalifa family. There are indications that things are starting to move in that direction, and the worry is that the whole country may plunge in a bloody conflict. The opposition has refused to be drawn into violence, but the extent of terror being unleashed by the foreign-staffed security forces and riot police on the population may force some people to start defending themselves employing any means at their disposal. The Al Khalifa have failed to heed the call for reform and has opted to enforce its despotic rule by the use of arms. This is at a time when other governments in the region have realised the importance of transparency and started to update their system of governance.

Even the Saudis are likely to improve their internal situation especially if Prince Abdulla becomes the king. There have been indications that a more open internal policy is being contemplated by him. The Qataris are to have their first municipality elections, which is possibly to be followed by parliamentary ones. Such eventualities are hard to contemplate or accept by the Al Khalifa of Bahrain who have pioneered the policies of torture and mass arrests. They have adopted policies that rely mainly on repression and denial of basic rights as a means to contain the situation. They have embarked on programmes aiming at attaining a degree of sympathy from certain quarters in the West.

What is certain to make this change is a brave decision by the Amir to uphold the rule of constitutional law in the country and allow a freely elected parliament to function. Anything short of this is unlikely to produce tangible results in the fields of security, stability and development. The friends of the Al Khalifa are encouraged to bring home to them that their future depends on good government based on respect of human rights. Torture, repression and lack of freedom is the way to demise of despotic regimes.

## The regime celebrates a fictitious UNDP report

On 5 October, the Bahraini regime celebrated the so-called high standard of achievement in human development. This was supposed to be a celebration of a report published by the United Nations Development Programme. Human rights campaigners contacted the UNDP offices in New York and Geneva only to be told that no such report had been published by the UN agency. It transpired that UNDP resident coordinator, Faisal Abdul Qadir, was behind a report commissioned by the University of Bahrain. That report is full of flagrant lies and misinformation.

A significant proportion of the report went on to emphasise the regime's "long standing commitment to promote the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Bahrain". The report blazed with claims of the existence of 138 "independent" NGOs in Bahrain. It proclaimed that 60-90% per cent of NGOs thought that the regime supports them and does not interfere with their independence. The NGOs are governed by Law No. 21 of 1989 which empowers the Labour Minister to dissolve NGOs as has been the case with the Bar Society (an independent Lawyers Society dissolved by the government last February because it resisted regime's interference).

Moreover, the dictatorial law empowers the Minister to attend their executive meetings. The unconstitutional dissolution of the Bar Society was deliberately ignored by Faisal Abdul Qadir, the person who authored the report. More than 50 attacks on mosques and assembly halls have also been ignored.

The intimidation of the Oroba Club has been reported upside down. The closures of the Islamic Enlightenment Society in 1984 together with several schools and libraries have all been ignored by the report. The report did not mention that the government spends 18% on defence and around 16% on security, as compared to 2% on development. These estimates have been mentioned by several independent reports and are based on professional and diplomatic sources. The Financial Times of 28 May 1998 said "one US analyst, a regular investor, remarked that in Bahrain substantial revenues from oil sales were un-accounted for. In Bahrain's 1998 budget there are no references to revenue estimates from any of the country principle state-owned industries".

It is worth noting that one of the topics discussed in the Bahraini Bar Society in the seminar that caused its dissolution was the claim that Bahrain achieved a high standard of human development. "If so", the seminar concluded, "figures must have been faked".

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## Attacking Sitra

The security forces (made up of Baluchi, Syrian and Jordanian mercenaries) launched an offensive on Sitra on 2 October following a mass gathering by citizens who congregated to pay their final tribute to the latest victim of the inhuman regime. Tear gas and rubber bullets were used on the crowds of people who have taken part in the commemoration of the 3rd day (according to tradition) of the death of Mr. Mohammed Al Sayah. The 28 year-old victim died in hospital after long painful agony caused by a virulent illness he had developed during the torture sessions (conducted by the Jordanian officer Mahmood Al-Akkori) in detention.

The security forces broke into houses to intimidate the residents of Sitra and set up checkpoints at the main two entrances of the town. The most affected houses were those near the cemetery and Dar Al Hussain assembly hall where Mr. Al Sayah had been buried and commemorated. In one instance, they raided the house of Mr. Yousif Ahmed Yousif, a teacher, Kharjiyh (Sitra), and subjected his son (Ahmed, 19) to a brutal beating in front of Mr. Yousif's family. Then they attempted to arrest Ahmed and the reason given for his beating and arrest was that he "pretended" to be the son of Mr. Yousif. The mercenaries have released Ahmed after reluctantly accepting his passport as an evidence that he is the son of his father and that he is staying in his house. No other reason have been given for his beating.

The following persons were arrested on the first night of the attack on Sitra on 2nd October. They are: Ebrahim Hamid, 22 ( This is his fourth arrest), Hussain Hamid, 16, Seyed Diy'a Seyed Amir, 16, Kharjiyh (Sitra ), Ebrahim Ahmed, 26, Mihz'a (Sitra). The above mentioned have been subjected to brutal beating on the spot and then were taken to the Adliya detention centre. Others who have been arrested are: Hamid Ali Jaffar, 18, Nabih Saleh. There remain a number of arrested persons who have not been identified as yet. The 18 year Zuhair Nooh, Sitra, who was arrested on 2 October, had been brutally beaten by batons on the spot and then was taken away to the East Rif'a torture centre.

Early evening on 4th October, security forces raided houses of the besieged Ma'amir village and intimidated, arrested citizens and destroyed the contents of their houses. The following are known to have been arrested during the raid: Seyed Saleh Seyed Ahmed, 23, Seyed Sadiq Seyed Ahemd, 19, Seyed Jami Seyed Abas, 23, Ali Abdulla Hussain, 18. All have been taken to the East Rif'a torture centre.

Late at midnight on 5th October, the security forces conducted another attack on Sitra. The first property they raided was the house of Mr. Ali Al Shiekh Abdul Hussain Al Satrawi, 32, ( An Engineer in the Ministry of work and an active member of Sitra charity fund), where they have intimidated his family and destroyed the contents of his house. Following that they broke into a number of houses and arrested their residents. They are: Mr. Mansoor Al Sayah, 34 ( brother of the late victim Mohammed Al Sayah), Mr. Mohammed Mansoor, 24 (member of Sitra's Unified Society), Mr. Mohammed Al Ajami, 42 ( This is his second

arrest), Mr. Abdul Zahra Abd Ali Ahmed, 22, Mr. Abdul Amir Al Sindi ( an officer in the Ministry of Interior).

## OMCT Urgent Action

OMCT has issued an urgent plea for Intervention following the death of Mr. Mohammed Al-Sayyah, 28 years old, on September 30, 1998, under torture. OMCT expressed its grave concern about the conditions of detention, torture and death in custody in Bahraini jails. The Intervention urged the Bahraini government to order a thorough and impartial investigation into the death of Mr. Mohammed Al-Sayyah, in particular, the torture against him and all other detainees, in order to identify the persons responsible and bring them to justice. Also, it called on the Bahraini government to ensure the right of Mr. Al-Sayyah's family to adequate compensation and redress and to conform to the norms and articles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights standards.

## Prison Protest

On 5th October, prisoners in the (new) Jaw prison refrained from seeing their families in protest for their detention without trial for more than two years. Amongst those detained are: Seyed Adnan Seyed Mihin, 23, Sitra, Hassan Farhan, 27, Sitra, Mahdi, 25, Sitra, Zakaria Hisi, 23, Sitra, Ebrahim Al Qumaish, 23, Sitra, Ahmed Radi, 40, Abu Sayb'a as well as 16 other persons from the same village.

## EU Views on Human Rights

The European Commission has replied to a question tabled by the European Parliament member Robert Evans on the human rights abuses in Bahrain. Mr. Evans asked " Would the Commission inform me of what action the Commission is considering in light of the continued human rights abuses taking place in Bahrain, highlighted by several international human rights organisations? Of particular pressing concern is the dissolution and possible court case against the Bar Association, the banning of several journalists and the continued imprisonment of opposition leaders, held for over two years without trial."

The European Commission responded "the Commission does not have any bilateral contractual arrangement with Bahrain providing a framework for dialogue on human rights issues. However, in the joint council the Community and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) concluded in 1989, questions concerning human rights and democracy are raised. The Commission encourages Bahrain and the other GCC countries to promote democracy and to become signatory parties to and fully apply international instruments in relation to human rights. The reinforced political dialogue between the Community and the GCC practiced since 1996 has provided a new forum for raising questions of human rights and democracy with the GCC authorities. The negotiation of a free trade agreement can also be used as a vehicle for raising concerns on human rights and democracy."

## British Secretary & Bahrain

Questions are being raised about a planned visit by the British Defence Secretary, George Robertson to Bahrain with reference to the

European Parliament (EP) decisions and resolutions. An EP resolution passed on 18 September 1997, the second of its kind, called on the European Union Member States to " refrain from supplying arms or security support to the government of Bahrain". Moreover, it went on to request the European Council to " take initiatives in order to obtain similar restraint at international level until democratic conditions have been restored". Mr. Robertson had stated "I would hope to make progress on this initiative when I am able to visit. We have long-standing links, and have been recently assisting with the establishment of the Bahrain Military College".

## Jailed citizens suffer

Another innocent citizen has been let go from prison after the regime found that its life is probably going to end shortly. Mr. Seyed Majeed, Markh, has been admitted to Salmania Hospital (Ward 412) suffering from leukemia. Mr. Majeed was brutally tortured over a period of time while in detention. No visits are permitted even from his kinship. Three other Bahrainis had exactly the same fate. On the other hand, Ali Al Kais, 23, Bani Jamra, is suffering from a liver problem. Mr. Kais has been subjected to brutal torture under the hands of the regime's torturers. He was placed in solitary cell and visits have been banned. Also, Salman Yousif, 17, Karanah, is suffering from sickle cell and has been in detention for more than two years.

## Teenagers tortured:

The security forces arrested two boys in mid October from Duraz and brutally beaten them on the spot. They were then taken to the torture centre in Budaya Police HQ for more abuse. The two children are: Sadiq Abdulla Yousif, 12, and the son of Mahdi Abd Alnabi Al Marzuq, 12.

## Forcible exile

Mohammed Abase Ali Kamal, a Bahraini, is being held in Pakistan's Airport following his deportation from Bahrain Airport upon his arrival with his Philippine wife from the Philippines via Pakistan in mid October. Mr. Kamal has been attempting to return home for several times but to no avail. The Bahraini authorities would not allow his entrance at the Bahraini Airport. He was first deported from Bahrain in 1981, after releasing him from prison. Mr. Kamal carries a Bahraini passport No. 183755, issued on 24 August 1977. Bahrain is the only country in the world that forcibly deports its citizens by throwing them out on planes bound to other countries.

## CPP's letter Intercepted

In line with its goodwill and determination to pursue peaceful means for achieving democratic reforms in Bahrain, the Committee for Popular Petition (CPP) submitted a letter to the Bahraini Amir on 18 October 98. The letter was sent by registered mail, requested an appointment with the Amir Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa for the submission of the Popular Petition. The petition signed by more than 25 thousand Bahraini people calls on the Bahraini Amir to introduce democratic reforms as prescribed by the country's 1973 constitution.

The Bahraini Interior Ministry intercepted the Committee for Popular Petition's letter submitted to the Bahraini Amir.

Afterward, the Ministry of Interior sum-



moned two leading pro-democracy personalities and members of the CPP. Mr. Ali Rabi'a and Mr. Isa Al Jawdar have been interrogated by Ahmed Abd Al Rahman Bu Ali, the Finance Director of the Ministry of Interior, Abdul Salam Al Ansari, Manama's Police Director, and the Prosecutor General Isa Bu Khuwwa. Threats of arrest were directed to Mr. Rabi'a and Mr. Al Jawdar by the interrogators in the event the CPP attempted to submit such a letter again.

### Pickets in London & Durham

The Bahraini exiles in Britain picketed in front of the entrances of the Lumley Castle Hotel in Durham and the Hayt Carlton Hotel in London to protest against the Bahraini regime's atrocities against Bahrainis. The pickets coincided with the "Made In Bahrain" week that has been organised by the Bahraini regime. Pamphlets were distributed to the visitors who expressed deep concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in Bahrain.

### Report on State Security Court

The detailed report on State Security Court that was jointly launched on 28 October by the (British) Bar Human Rights Committee and the Parliamentary Human Rights Group has received international coverage by Reuters, the BBC and similar media organisations. The report scrutinised the procedures and practices of the State Security Court from a legal perspective. The report highlighted the historical background for the current political instability and called on the international community to play its part in urging the Bahraini government to stop violating human rights through the flawed state security system. On 29 October, the BBC Arabic Service broadcast an interview with Mark Muller, the Vice Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee, in which he explained the defects of the State Security Court. He also called for an end to the intimidation of Bahraini lawyers, whose society had been dissolved by the authorities last February (see page 4).

### Mosque Vandalised

In line with its policy for intimidating and terrorising citizens, the Bahraini regime ransacked, on 28 October, "Zain Al Abidin" Mosque in Bani Jamra and brought to ruin its contents.

### Harassment of jailed leaders

The Bahraini regime is continuing its psychological torturing of the detained leading pro-democracy personalities. It has stepped up its cruel treatment of the leader of the constitutional movement in Bahrain Sheikh Al Jamri over the past few weeks. This came following the regime's failure to force Al Jamri to succumb and sign falsified accusations especially prepared by the intelligence department. The 60 year-old Al Jamri has been placed into solitary cell in September.

Mr. Hassan Mushaima'a, Mr. Abdul Wahab Hussain, Sheikh Hassan Sultan and Sheikh Hussain Al Daihi and Sheikh Al Rayash have been in solitary detention for some months. The regime is in despair after these distinguished personalities have declined to sign pre-prepared confessions. Various trickery and immoral methods have been used by the regime to pressure the pro-democracy leaders to turn their backs from the legitimate demands.

The regime is furious that it was forced by the UN Sub-commission on Human Rights to succumb to the will of international community and agree to accede to Article 20 of the UN Convention Against Torture and allow the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to visit Bahrain. The regime holds the Bahraini opposition responsible for forcing it to comply with UN demands.

### British MPs in Bahrain

British MP Ken Purchase has told the Bahraini regime what the British Foreign Minister for Middle Eastern Affairs had exactly said one month ago during his visit to Bahrain on 14 September 98. Mr. Fatchett emphasised in his statement last September the independence of the British media. He rebuffed the allegations made by the Bahraini regime of UK government control over the media and declined the Bahraini regime's demands to interfere with the BBC. Likewise, Mr. Purchase has also stressed the independence of the British media, in particular, the BBC World Service saying "we have gone to some lengths to explain that the British government reluctantly, if at all interferes with the contents of what is broadcast by the BBC World Service."

Mr. Purchase is visiting Bahrain along with other seven British members of parliament (Clare Ward, Labour, Nigel Jones, Liberal Democrat, Nigel Evans, Conservative, Dan Morris, Labour, Ashok Kumar, Labour, Lindsay Hoyle, Labour, Lawrence Cunliffe, Labour). The visit is sponsored by the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Bahraini Ambassador to Britain Abdul Aziz Bin Imbarak Al Khalifa who is accompanying the British MPs visiting Bahrain has prophesied a UK government crackdown on British media in order to hamper the Bahraini opposition from expressing its views "through various communication channels, including fax and Email."

The Bahraini opposition welcomes the British MPs visit to Bahrain and call upon them to investigate the human rights situation in the country. We hope that they will visit Bahraini prisons, meet with detainees and engage in a dialogue with Bahraini people. We sincerely hope that the trip will allow the MPs to appreciate the agony of the oppressed Bahrainis.

### Asbestos in Solitary Cell

While the Bahraini government is planning its "Made in Bahrain" week in London towards the end of October, more information has been revealed about the "excellence" achieved in the torture industry. The regime is exposing his victims of torture to the harmful and prohibited asbestos material. This material has been prohibited from use because of its serious implication on health. The risks to health from exposure to asbestos are known to the world. These risks affects the lungs' tissues and other internal organs. In Al-Qal'a prison there exists a cell which is entirely insulated by Asbestos substance. Mats of asbestos material are piled in the cell that is used for solitary confinement of citizens. So far, three Bahrainis died as a result of developing cancerous diseases while in prison. All three were admitted to the asbestos cell for long periods. The latest victim of this inhuman policy was Mr. Mohammed Al Sayyih who died on 30 September 1998.

### Other Torture Methods

Every day, there emerge a new story of the ordeal of Bahraini citizens inside the torture chambers of the Bahraini dictatorship. The following story is not uncommon in Bahrain, but it sheds some light on the savageness of the regime in Bahrain. Mr. X (his real name is held for protection), had a visit by his family in prison and told them the methods of torture he was subjected to. First, he was placed into a solitary cell for a few days, during which, he was not allowed to use the toilets. Second, he was stripped off and left naked for a few days. Later, his naked body had been placed into a soaked blanket and was rolled on the ground and beaten mercilessly with batons. In more than one instance, he was tied up by both hands and legs. Then he was pulled up in the air so that his hands and legs are lifted up while his stomach face down in a bow-like situation. Then, the torturers would lower his stomach into an electrified bath causing unbearable pain. Other torture method they used on him was the injection of hot water into an enema tube which ruins the intestines. On the verge of death, he was treated at the military hospital to save his life for another torture session.

Another story of yet another torture survivor out of hundreds of Bahrainis suffering inside the chambers of torture in Bahrain. Mr. B (name held for protection) has been arrested and was taken to one of the torture centres. In there, he was stripped off by the security forces. Then an interrogation officer told him to "confess that you have carried out these acts of sabotage or you are going to be forced to sit on this bottle". This method of torture has been repeatedly reported by Bahrainis as a common method used by the regime's torturers.

### More attacks on the BBC

The Bahraini regime has let loose its trumpet-blowers for yet another round of slandering against the BBC. This comes after the regime's failure to convince eight British MPs who visited Bahrain last week to condemn the BBC or the opposition. "A lady and her dog boby" said an article in the semi-official newspaper (Akhbar Al Khalij). It went on to describe that the lady as being the British government and the dog as the BBC World Service. It maliciously proclaimed Britain and the BBC as terrorists seeking to vandalise, steal and terrorise in mean cold-blooded way. One article also called for the implementation of the new British "anti-terror" laws against the BBC, because the latter "has turned itself to serve terrorism".

Akhbar Al Khalij on 13th and 14th October said the BBC World Service is a "terrorist organisation" seeking to instigate violence in the country and the toppling of the Al Khalifa regime.

Over the past few months, the BBC has been enduring constant slandering by the Bahraini regime. All allegations have been rebuffed by the UK government as unfounded and baseless rhetorical propaganda. The Bahraini regime has always sought to accuse other outside government for its gross misconduct. In the past it was Iran, but now Iran is reported in the regime's media as a "friendly Muslim country that has upgraded its relationship with Bahrain by appointing a senior foreign ministry official as an Ambassador to Bahrain".



## Press Conference in the British Parliament

## The State Security Court is an "Engine of Repression"

The Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and the parliamentary Human Rights Group launched a major report on the State Security Court in Bahrain in a press conference held on 28 October at 6.45 p.m. in the British Parliament.

The 75-page report entitled "The Crisis of Human Rights in Bahrain, The Rule of Law Under Threat: A Report on the Practice and Procedure of the State Security Court in Bahrain" detailed how the State Security Court (SSC) is used in Bahrain as an integral component in the engine of repression.

Lord Avebury stated "Over the last thirty years, there has been a move towards popular participation in government almost everywhere in the world. Bahrain is unique in having had a partially elected legislative body under its constitution of 1972, and having then reverted to an absolute hereditary autocracy in 1975.

The Amir rules by decree, having only a hand picked advisory council, the members of which he can appoint and dismiss at his pleasure. The Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Ministers of the Interior, Transport, Justice, Housing and Industry are all members of the royal family. So are the head of the security service, the governor of the capital city, Manama, the governor of Muharraq, the head of the Amiri Court, and two of the three judges of the State Security Court".

He went on to say "States which have friendly relations with Bahrain, including the US and Britain in particular now have the basis on which to make detailed representations for reform, and the UN Human Rights Commission may also wish to pay attention to these findings. Lawyers and their organisations could take the opportunity of raising the matter in their contacts with the Bahraini authorities".

Lord Avebury pointed out that since 1994, the Bahraini government refused all initiatives for dialogue and had instead resorted to detaining the leading pro-democracy figure Sheikh Al-Jamri. The ICRC confirmed that it conducted 33 visits in 1997, toured 23 detention centres and inspected the names of 2111 Bahraini citizens held in the centres. This is comparable to some 150,000 political prisoners if the same percentage were to apply in the UK. A shameful aspect of what is going on in Bahrain is the fact that Britons like Ian Henderson and Thomas Bryan head the security service. A British citizen by the name David Jump has been appointed by the Bahraini Interior Ministry as the main channel for matters connected to human rights. We hope that one day these will be made to answer for what they are doing in Bahrain.

The British Defence Secretary announced his intention to visit Bahrain amid calls from the European Parliament to refrain from supplying arms to Bahrain and until it restores democracy to the country. Since the Labour Party came to power arms of categories ML1, ML2 and ML4 had been exported to Bahrain. These are taking place while the security forces have increased their number to 30,000 as part of a demographic engineering. The government imported many thousands of Syrians into Bah-

rain for that purpose. He concluded by saying "this outstanding report is the first of its kind and highlights the distance to be travelled by the Bahrain government to bring itself in line with international standards".

Mark Muller, Barrister and Vice Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee, introduced the report saying, "over the past four years, the Bar Human Rights Committee has been increasingly concerned with the systematic violation of human rights in Bahrain.

This report principally focuses on the SSC and dispassionately analyses its practices and procedures and compare them to the standards set by Bahrain's Constitution and International Conventions. The investigation brings to light the fact that the SSC doesn't comply with any accepted convention. The SSC had been intimately connected with the dissolution of the parliament in 1975 and manifestly violates all UN instruments. The SSC's legal entrenchment amounts to a co-ordinated oppression between the judiciary and the executive. The SSC is principally used for stifling the people of Bahrain from calling for democratic reforms. The report presents a number of recommendation and I hope you read them and support them. I commend the report to you".

Mr. Sabah Al-Mukhtar, President of the Arab Lawyers Association in the UK said "this report is professionally written and is readable by all people. Bahrain shares similarities with other countries in the region but is different in many respects. It is the only country that throws out its own population. Its population is highly educated and has long been calling for their rights. Even with a bad legal system, it is not adhered to.

There is the abuse that is over and above this bad system. Any person is systematically tortured. But if a person is thought to be a threat to the state, imagine what type of torture would he receive. Bahraini police doesn't need lots of arms to suppress the people. Even if there is a ban on arms, the police will still suppress the people. What is needed is economic and political pressure. It is hoped that politicians in the West do not politicise human rights. If a friendly regime abuses human rights, then the pressure should also apply".

Dr. Heather Deegan of Middlesex University said "there are several arguments presented by some people for rejecting democratisation. There are those who say that colonisation had a negative impact and that human rights and democracy are part of Western colonial concepts. In the past, we had the Cold War where strong communist parties had been supported by the Soviet Union on one side, while on the other there were CIA-led groups and autocratic leaders. All these have changed now. Democratisation can't be a top-down process, rather it is a constituency-based and a grass root movement. This is linked to the question of citizenship and their rights. Even if a country provides for the social welfare rights, political and civil rights must accompany these. The citizens must be able to form their associations and to engage in the political process".

Mr. Marc Pellas of the Paris-based Com-

mittee for Defence of Democratic Rights stated "We need to be frank here in Europe. When we speak to the French officials about the abuses of human rights in Bahrain and the Middle East, they say to us that there is business and commercial competition amongst the European governments and for this reason such issues tend to be swept under the carpet.

The European Parliament had issued resolutions about Bahrain, but the European governments paralyse the European Commission (EC). The EC links economic co-operation in Africa and other places to the respect of those countries to human rights. When it comes to Bahrain, this linkage is not applied. We need to urge the European governments (who make-up the EC) to publicly state their views about human rights in Bahrain and to raise these issues during their meetings with the Bahrain government. We need to ensure that the European governments do not put human rights in favour of commercial competition. The European corridors of power as well as the International Parliamentary Union and other international organisations should all be presented with this report and be urged to act for human rights".

Mark Muller concluded "It is within this Spirit that the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group call upon the Bahraini Government to guarantee its society's long-term stability and peace by implementing the following recommendations:

- 1) Restore the parliamentary system in accordance with the Constitution.
- 2) Implement the Constitution in its entirety, including the institution of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, and the Constitutional Court.
- 3) Amend the State Security Legislation and the provisions related thereto in the Penal Code by eliminating all provisions contained therein which violate citizens' constitutional civil rights.
- 4) Re-try all persons convicted by the SSC before the ordinary criminal courts or before any other tribunal that might be instituted by the National Assembly for that purpose.
- 5) Investigate all claims of torture and extra-judicial killings through impartial investigators and under international observation.
- 6) Issue legislation instituting the right of individuals subjected to these human rights violations to receive fair and adequate compensation.
- 7) Conduct impartial investigations on prison conditions under international observation.
- 8) Release the findings of the above investigations to the public.
- 9) Bring to justice all persons responsible for committing human rights violations, in relation to the events of 1995-1997, as well as before or after that period.
- 10) Ratify the international human rights treaties such as the ICCPR including its related protocol.
- 11) Observe all international legal and customary obligations concerning Human Rights".