



Statement by NIHR on International Day of Democracy

Manama on September 15, 2019

The world celebrates the International Day of Democracy on 15th September each year and reviews the status of democracy in various countries of the world, a goal that many people strive to achieve on the ground as it represents the natural environment necessary for the efficient and credible protection and realization of human rights. The UN has identified the theme of “Participation” as the theme of its campaign this year in order to remind people that democracy is linked to people, as it is built on inclusiveness, equal treatment and participation, and is therefore an essential building block for peace, sustainable development and human rights.

On this occasion, the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) is expressing its great appreciation for the efforts made by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of Bahrain, to establish democracy through his Reform Project, as the Kingdom of Bahrain has witnessed essential transformations towards strengthening the frameworks of democracy, consolidating the foundations of the rule of law and building an integrated legislative and legal system and public organizations that work to reinforce the human rights system, through the activation of the necessary elements of democracy stipulated in Article (1) Paragraph 6 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain, stating that: “Citizens, both men and women, are entitled to participate in public affairs and may enjoy political rights, including the right to vote and to stand for elections, in accordance with this Constitution and the conditions and principles laid down by law. No citizen can be deprived of the right to vote or to nominate oneself for elections except by law”.

In execution of its role in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms on the ground, the NIHR has observed the parliamentary and municipal elections of 2018 in the Kingdom of Bahrain, since its role comes from its firm belief that the participation in the management of public affairs is one of the aspects of democracy and one of the ways to promote the values of good citizenship, as the participation in the election process is one of the most prominent pillars of the Reform Project of His Majesty the King, which is based upon the establishment of a developed democratic system that relies on the integration and participation of individuals in making political decisions, as well as people’s exercise of its role in requiring decision-makers to establish policies that serve the public interest.

The NIHR is emphasizing that it works, with its wide mandate stressed by its Incorporation Law pursuant to the Paris Principles, to follow-up and monitor the adherence to the international conventions and treaties ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain on the promotion and protection of the values of democracy. It confirms the importance of concerted national efforts to promote and reaffirms the values of true democracy in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 2030, especially Goal 16, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.