

Statement of the National Institution for Human Rights on the Human Rights Watch report on the Human Rights situation in Bahrain

25 November 2015

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) has reviewed the contents of the recent Human Rights Watch (HRW) report concerning the Kingdom of Bahrain's human rights situation.

The report referred to NIHR and its role in enhancing and protecting human rights, as well as the reforms Bahrain has implemented over the past few years, including: the establishment of the General Secretariat of the Ombudsman, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) within the Public Prosecution, the Prisoners' and Detainees' Rights Commission (PDRC), and the NIHR. The report also notes Bahrain's legislative amendments that have been updated in line with international conventions.

However, the HRW report overlooks the positive role played by the aforementioned institutions for the improvement of the human rights situation. These institutions are carrying out wide-ranging work within Bahrain, despite a lack of cooperation from certain international organizations, which offer only negative criticism and do not shed light on continued efforts to protect and promote human rights and apply international standards of best practice, and even clinging to previous events such as the HRW call for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to end cooperation with

the Kingdom of Bahrain. It is a negative approach that does not serve the capacities development of the human rights defenders.

This recommendation undermines various efforts to improve human rights work within Bahrain, and is not in line with the international responsibility of human rights organizations. It is also particularly disappointing at a time when the NIHR is intensifying its efforts to accelerate the implementation of various human rights programs. which will have the greatest impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

NIHR is committed to addressing all human rights complaints and allegations, whether the claims are submitted to the NIHR or identified through NIHR's monitoring processes. NIHR is communicating with all official bodies as per its Law no. 26/2014.

NIHR welcomes the significant progress that has been made in improving the conditions of correctional and rehabilitation centers, and the services provided to detainees. NIHR also welcomes all efforts that has been given to reach a conclusions to the complaints received, particularly the recently investigations by SIU against accused MOI employees.

The NIHR will communicate with HRW regarding the positive developments in human rights field that have been overlooked in its report.