



**Statement of the National Institution for Human Rights
renews its categorical rejection to repeat the publication of photographs
and the names of the defendants**

25 October 2014

National Institution for Human Rights observed that the Ministry of the Interior has published, through its official account at social networking (Twitter) and some of the local daily newspapers, the names and photographs of the accused, suspects, as expressed by the Ministry of the Interior in the commission of the criminal arson in the Jidhafs municipality building and some private cars.

Based on the institution competencies contained in paragraph (e) of Article (12) of Law No. (26) for the year 2014 on the establishment of the National Institution for Human Rights, which stipulates that the national institution is to "monitor cases of human rights violations, conduct the necessary investigation, and draw the attention of the competent authorities with submission of proposals relating to the initiatives to put an end to such situations and, where necessary, to express an opinion on the position of these entities and their reactions ", the national Institution renews its categorical rejection to repeat this approach, emphasizing the need for concerned authorities' adherence to the provisions of the Constitution and in particular paragraph (c) of Article (20), which stipulates that: "the accused is innocent until proven guilty in a legal trial at which he has the necessary guarantees for the exercise of the right of defense at all stages of the investigation and the trial according to the law", as well as committing to the text of Article 83 of the Decree Law No. (46) for the year 2002 on the Law of criminal Procedure, which considers the investigation procedures and their results as "secrets."



In the same context, the National Institution reminds that this publication is a clear violation of the first paragraph of Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that "every person charged with a crime is presumed innocent until legally proven guilty in a public trial at which he has had the necessary guarantees for his defense" and the second paragraph of Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stipulates that: "It is the right of everyone charged with a criminal offense to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law."

Though the national institution rejects these criminal acts that affects the security and stability of the kingdom and their impact on individual's enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms, it considers that publication of the names and photographs of the suspects as a clear violation of the principle of presumption of innocence, and to prejudice the human dignity of the accused, as the international human rights instruments unequivocally proves that those committed to law enforcement should adhere to the law, at the stage of collecting evidence or at the stage of primary investigation or during the proceedings before the courts, and not to express their views publicly with respect to the guilt of the accused before the court reached a final judgment in the case. They must be prevented from raising advance suspicions about people belonging to a specific ethnic or sectarian group, as such a deployment and the raise of suspicions will have direct impact on public opinion, which may generate a conviction that may affect the litigation. This has been indicated by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination concerned with the follow-up of States Parties in international conventions for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination that the Kingdom of Bahrain has joined under Decree Law No. (8) for the year 1995.