

H.E. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifah
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P.O. Box 547
Government Road, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

Dear Prince Khalifah,

The recent events in Bahrain has concerned many people around the world. It really pains me to see peaceful Bahrainian demonstrators my age being whipped, punched and shot at by Bahrainian security forces and mercenaries. There have been numerous videos and reported incidents where the Bahrainian police and military fired at, tortured and executed demonstrators who were peacefully protesting in Manama. These videos of a brutal and violent military crackdown showed the world the other side of Bahrainian society—a dark side hidden away from the millions of tourists who visit your beautiful island every year.

Bahrain is home to a progressive and cosmopolitan society where women are allowed to work and vote alongside their male counterparts. Bahrain is a symbol of moderation and serves as a model for the rest of the middle east. However, the Bahrainian government's recent crackdown on innocent demonstrators has called into question its commitment to modernization and democracy. The brutal crackdown has also exposed the ugly truth behind Bahraini's politics—the disenfranchisement of the Shia majority . Owing to the valiant efforts of selfless Bahraini protestors, the beautiful political facade has finally fallen.

These crusaders for democracy are currently risking their lives to bring about a new era in their beloved nation's history. I cannot stand by idly as your soldiers mutilate my innocent compatriots and harass local and foreign journalists. Many journalists have risked their lives to bring the truth to the world. It is only right for me to urge you to stop your campaign of terror against your own people and allow them to freely express their views in a peaceful manner. As history clearly shows, oppressive regimes don't last very long. Hence, it is definitely more sensible to treat your people with respect and dignity or you might fuel their hatred for the regime and risk further alienation from the country you love. The will of the people must always be respected and you will soon find out that the harder you try to oppress them, the stronger and more resolute they will become.

Furthermore, the very survival of your regime depends on the presence of the Fifth Fleet on your soil. The U.S. Government has stated on countless occasions that economic growth must be matched with equal liberalization in the socio-political sphere. Bahrain has come a long way since it granted voting rights to women and we urge the Bahraini government to proceed down this path of progress and moderation and exercise restraint when dealing with the protestors.

In light of numerous firsthand accounts of human rights abuses, torture, unlawful detention and intimidation, we strongly urge you to implement the following measures before it is too late.

- Immediately and unconditionally release any remaining prisoners of conscience who have been locked up for exercising their right to freedom of expression.
- Disarm and deport all mercenaries working for or within the government

- Disclose immediately the whereabouts of those detained, allow them immediate access to their family members, lawyers of their choice and ensure they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment.
- Ensure that protesters' rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly are fully respected and upheld, and that they are able to demonstrate free from fear of harassment or intimidation.
- Exercise maximum restraint when dealing with the protestors
- Protect the demonstrators and protestors
- Arrest thugs who are harming and killing of innocent protestors and swiftly bring them to justice
- Respect the rights and will of the people
- Increase the participation of the Shia minority in government
- Organize free and fair elections and begin taking steps towards a fully democratic form of government

Please treat your own people with respect and dignity and they will return your goodwill in kind. You just need to take the first step and see a different paradigm. The protestors are demanding reforms in the government and the political system. We believe that the government should immediately begin direct negotiations with the opposition before the Bahraini people starts to begin regime change. Most importantly, we urge the government to avoid another bloodbath as this wave of democracy sweeps across the Middle East.

May peace be with you.

Yours Sincerely,