

## Eleventh Session of the Forum on Minority Issues, 2018

### Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV)

#### Statelessness in Bahrain



Organization for Defending Victims  
of Violence

#### Mr. President

In Bahrain, statelessness is a longstanding problem for ethnic and religious minorities. By revoking nationality of more than 760 Bahrainis till today, the government has been wielding citizenship as a weapon of control and oppression. Stateless people are denied the right to have legal residency, the right to freedom of movement, to own property and to hold government jobs. They are also prevented from starting a business and borrowing loans or even sending their children to public schools and to receive free medical care. The stateless can also get deported at any time and many stateless dissidents are arbitrarily imprisoned under the country's anti-terrorism law<sup>1</sup>.

What is worse is that the Kingdom is adding to the number of stateless people in the country<sup>2</sup> by arbitrarily revoking<sup>3</sup> people's citizenship as a punishment for political dissent and activism, in breach of the international law, including Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, moving in the opposite direction of the United Nations' goal to end statelessness by 2024.

#### Mr. President

Being seriously concerned with the situation of stateless minorities in Bahrain, the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), calls on the Kingdom to immediately stop the exercise of nationality revocation and reinstate all victims so that they can enjoy equal human rights.

ODVV calls on the working group on minority issues to closely study and monitor the situation of stateless people in Bahrain offering recommendation to the government to stop systematic violation of the right to identity and nationality while providing the victims with compensation and redress.

1 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/bahrain-is-stripping-dissidents-of-their-citizenship-and-the-us-is-silent/2017/07/08/3ad347d0-5154-11e7-91eb-9611861a988f\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.7d528268fd52](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/bahrain-is-stripping-dissidents-of-their-citizenship-and-the-us-is-silent/2017/07/08/3ad347d0-5154-11e7-91eb-9611861a988f_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.7d528268fd52)

2 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/05/bahrain-citizenship-of-115-people-revoked-in-ludicrous-mass-trial/>

3 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/02/04/bahrain-new-deportations-nationals>