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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[17 August 2021]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Human Rights in Kuwait

We observed closely the status of human rights in Kuwait during the few past months, which witnessed long lock-downs due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Despite that, anti-corruption activists as well as rights activists conducted public activities around (Al-Irada) Square, the designated spot for public protesters. The peaceful public protests, completely legal under the constitutional rights (Articles 36 & 44) were violated. Telling the authorities about the time and place of the protest did not save the protesters from the security forces violations and breach of constitutional and legal rights; these include:

1. Denial of access to parking lots near the designated peaceful protest location for the purpose of limiting the protesters mobility, forcing them to take long walks in terribly hot and humid weather conditions.
2. Intimidation of protesters by taking photos of their official identity documents without permission.
3. The confiscation of any protest materials including signs and banners bearing the peaceful protesters words as well as sound microphones.
4. The harassment of peaceful protesters by making phone calls to their families and relatives, informing them that their sons and daughters names are among the state security wanted lists.
5. We sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Nasser al-Mohammed al-Sabah, asking about the government delay in implementing the human rights recommendations; unfortunately, the Ministry refused to receive our letter and the Minister did not reply to our request for a meeting in person.
6. As for the legislative institution, headed by the speaker Mr. Marzouq Al-Ghanim, our requests to amend laws found in violation of human rights according to the recommendations of the Human Rights Council, are still ignored. The mostly government dominated legislative institution has been ignoring our requests made since the year (2018). It is becoming clearly obvious to us that the government lacks the will to amend laws that violate (Article 36) of the Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; all of which are ratified by the Kuwait in the year (1996).
7. The total year count of prison sentences served by Twitter users and political activists based on the oppressive laws in violation of (Article 36) of the Constitution and other relevant agreements reached (830.4 - Eight-Hundred and Thirty Years and Four Months) -- a historic and unprecedented phenomenon never witnessed in any nation's history in the world.
8. The stateless Kuwaiti people (Bidoun) crisis is still not properly addressed. It deteriorates by the day and stateless children are born and grown in the midst of the crisis.
9. Kuwaiti women are still suffering from discrimination due to the violation of (Article 29) of the Constitution; Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis are not equal the Kuwaiti men.

The Recommendations:

1. We demand the development of the Human Rights Council mechanisms aimed at countries delaying and suspending the implementation of the Human Rights Council.
2. Encourage the state of Kuwait to implement the Human Rights Council recommendations, particularly recommendations related to freedoms, since Kuwaiti courts of law are still issuing verdicts based on laws in violation of freedoms and humans rights.

3. We urge the civil and religious freedoms Special Rapporteur to visit Kuwait to assess and report on freedoms in all aspects and respects to the Human Rights Council.
4. We urge your honorable Council to adopt a recommendation for the state of Kuwait aimed to suspend all oppressive laws violating and limiting freedoms, as to be amended, according to the Human Rights Council; this is for the purpose of stopping the increasing violations made in the name of the law against Twitter users and political activists.

Gulf Civil Society Association Forum, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.