



2 March 2012

Her Excellency Fatima al-Balooshi
Minister of Human Rights and Social Development

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned human rights organizations, would like to thank you for your 28 February 2012 letters and your offer of assistance with arranging our upcoming visits to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

At the same time, we must object to the conditions placed on our visits, in particular the extremely short timeframe. The five-business-day limit appears to be arbitrary and will greatly impede our ability to monitor and research human rights developments.

In addition, while we greatly appreciate your willingness to arrange meetings for our organizations with relevant government officials, it is critical for us to know which meetings you are suggesting, with whom and at what time, as we need to be able to schedule a variety of additional meetings with community leaders, organizations, and other individuals who may have pertinent information about recent events in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

We consider the limit imposed on the duration of our stay in Bahrain to contradict the oral commitments you and other officials made in meetings with our representatives, and to the United Nations, regarding access for international human rights organizations. In addition, informing us of these constraints so close to our planned departure dates calls further into question the King's commitment to interact with us on a constructive basis.

We therefore respectfully request that you reconsider these limitations and respond positively to our requests to visit for more than five days.

We thank you again for your invitation and look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely,

Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui
Deputy Director,
MENA
Amnesty International

Brian Dooley
Director, Human Rights
Defenders
Human Rights First

Sarah Leah Whitson
Director, MENA
Human Rights Watch

Richard Sollom
Deputy Director
Physicians for Human Rights

cc: Khalifa Al Khalifa Director, Human Rights Organizations