

# HUMAN RIGHTS IN KUWAIT

*UPR Info* Pre-sessions

# Situation in Kuwait

## Bidoon “Stateless Nationalities”

- More than 20 recommendations were addressed to the State of Kuwait on the issue of the Bidoon, including the need to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961, and other recommendations that Kuwait categorically refused to respond to and take note of.
- Regardless, the State of Kuwait in the last universal periodic review confirmed its determination to provide a decent life for illegal residents. Unfortunately, there is a serious deterioration in this issue, considering Kuwait witnessed suicide cases. In addition to depriving Bidoon children of education in public schools, stripping the judicial system of the power to settle private citizenship cases for the Bidoon, freezing of bank accounts and cancelling their cultural activities.

# Recommendations

## Bidoon “Stateless Nationalities”

- Empower the judicial system to decide on private citizenship cases for the Bidoon in order to facilitate the submission of evidence and plead their cases for citizenship.
- Enable children who have acquired Bidoon status by inheritance to register them and give them the right to acquire citizenship in accordance with article 24 of the ICCPR.
- Removing the Central Agency from addressing the situation of illegal residents because of its ineffectiveness in dealing with the Bidoon case and replacing it with a law guaranteeing all their civil and social rights.
- Giving the stateless persons a civil document enabling them to exercise all their civil and political rights.

# Situation in Kuwait

## Democracy and freedom of opinion & expression

- Several countries including the United States of America, Estonia and Italy recommended the state of Kuwait to ensure the full right of freedom of opinion and expression, especially through social media.
- Implementing the Penal Code and its amendments relating to state security crimes which aims to widen the charge against persons and to impose prison sentences and severe fines.
- Arrests have been compounded by peaceful protests over the past few years, particularly among the Bidoon.
- The government has introduced new comprehensive powers to ban content, block access to the Internet.
- The legislature passed the new Kuwaiti electronic media law to increase the suffering of journalists and frighten media professionals.

# Recommandations

## Democracy and freedom of opinion & expression

- End repression of peaceful demonstrations and respect their obligations under international and national human rights instruments.
- Guarantee the right to freedom of opinion and expression, allowing the use of social media without undue restrictions or limitations.
- Regulate the freedom of the press and media and reviewing existing laws, including the press and publication law, in accordance with the standards of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Immediately release all prisoners of conscience and issue a general amnesty for all charges related to freedom of opinion and expression.

# Situation in Kuwait

## Corruption and the plunder of wealth

- Recommendations on the need to establish an anti-corruption body submitted by Rwanda and Bhutan.
- Inequality in income distribution in Kuwait reached 80.9% in 2018.
- Corruption has become very prevalent in the corridors of government institutions.
- Billionaire robberies in the K-Dow case, oil projects and social insurance.
- The tampering with the general reserve funds and the reserve of future generations, investments in the Investment Authority and the Investment Office (KIO) in Britain, and the establishment of projects costing billions that are fake or inflated.
- Losses from the cessation of production in the region of Khafji cost \$ 12.5 billion and in the Wafra region cost \$ 2.9 billion.
- Participating in absurd wars and spending billions in it and providing support for the repression of peoples in the Gulf region

# Recommendations

## Corruption and the plunder of wealth

- Amending the Law of the General Authority for Combating Corruption and the relevant laws in tenders, development initiatives and RMB accounting.
- Adoption of the transparency law proposal and access to information.
- Expedite the development and implementation of a national strategy to combat corruption and general reform of state institutions.
- Allow civil society to work freely in support of efforts to promote integrity, combat corruption, stop wasting people's wealth and prosecute corrupt people.

# Thank you

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From all the members of our coalition:

- ❑ International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights (ICSFT)
- ❑ International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL)