



SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights

**Annual Report on SALAM DHR's
Activities in**

2020

Contents

Summary	1
Geographic Expansion	2
Press Releases	2
Reports	4
Statements	9
Events	14
Internships	16
Opinion Pieces	17
Future Perspective	18

Summary

2020 was an extraordinarily successful year for SALAM DHR. Despite a global pandemic created by Covid-19, SALAM DHR quickly and effectively adapted to a digital model, where most activities occurred remotely. Over the course of 2020, SALAM DHR issued five press releases, nine reports, 12 official statements and two opinion pieces. It attended one human rights council session and held six events. Our internship recruited and trained 20 interns and officiated 20 internal sessions, with a range of experts, that contributed to their development. SALAM DHR takes immense pride in the hard work of its dedicated staff and interns and the growth it has engendered over the past year. It has set a model that is being further developed in 2021.

SALAM DHR Activities & Metrics - 2020	
Activity	Metrics
Official Statements Published	12
Reports Published	6
Press Releases Published	5
Opinion Pieces Published	2
Events Held	6
Human Rights Council Sessions Attended	1
Interns Recruited	20
Internal/Development Sessions Held	20

SALAM DHR promotes working partnerships. It is a member of the [European Network on Stateless](#) (UK/Europe); [CIVICUS](#) alliance (South Africa/ global); [World Coalition against the](#)

[Death Penalty](#) (France/global) other partnerships and, at the time of writing it is developing a structural agreement with the The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project ([ACLED](#)); for the purposes of its research and advocacy outputs, it has partnered with tens of organisations, including: Amnesty International, Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, MENA Rights, Organisation Mondiale Contre a Torture and others.

SALAM DHR is registered with the [European Union Transparency Register](#) and is open to public scrutiny.

SALAM DHR is present on the following media platforms: (1) Twitter: [@SALAM_DHR](#) - 4600 followers on the English feed; 2772 on the Arabic, [@SalamDHR_AR](#); (2) YouTube: [SALAM DHRS](#) - 1025 subscribers; variety of viewing figures, but specific outputs sometimes also carried live on Gulf media channels, including Aljazeera and clips seen via Twitter link; (3) LinkedIn: [Salam DHR](#) - 147 followers

Geographic Expansion

Over the course of 2020, SALAM DHR established an office in Beirut, Lebanon and became a certified NGO in France, with a working group based out of Paris. It also established working groups in Italy and Ireland a two specialised working groups in Brussels, Belgium and Geneva, Switzerland. In 2021, SALAM DHR plans to expand into the United States and establish a specialized working group in Washington DC. It has also set up exploratory groups to investigate expansion into Germany and Australia.

Press Releases

[14 January 2020](#) - Salam DHR published the 36 names of Bahraini prisoners who had been sentenced to death for 'political' crimes, the acts of which are not internationally recognisable as criminal under international law. At the time of publication, the Government of Bahrain had executed five of these prisoners and 12 were either awaiting the King's ratification of their death sentences or were living in exile, having been unfairly tried and

sentenced by a Bahraini court in absentia. Nine of these prisoners were attempting appeals or living outside of Bahrain while 10 had seen their sentences changed to life imprisonment following an appeal.

[20 March 2020](#) - SALAM DHR Chairman Jawad Fairouz published the article, 'The World's Stateless, 2020: The Deprivation of Nationality' which highlights the practice of citizenship revocation in Bahrain. An estimated 990 Bahraini nationals have had their citizenship revoked. Proportionally, this would be the equivalent of 495,000 US citizens losing their citizenship. The practice of citizenship revocation is subject to comprehensive restrictions under international law; citizenship is considered what Hannah Arendt defined as the 'right to have rights', meaning that such rights and freedoms, some of which are considered inalienable, are lost. The practice also adversely affects the victims' families as well as future generations.

Thus far, action towards ending this practice has been limited, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' programme on statelessness has not adequately addressed people who have had their citizenship revoked and action from NGOs has been limited to thematic organisations. Some progress has been made on this issue; the Government of Bahrain reinstated citizenship to 551 individuals in 2019. However, those individuals do not enjoy all the rights that citizenship usually promises, such as freedom of movement and the right to own property.

[29 March and 30 March 2020](#) - Alongside the Australia-based Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR) and the Lebanon-based Bahrain Forum for Human Rights (BFHR), SALAM DHR called for urgent action to be taken regarding poor conditions in Bahraini prisons and the need for the Government of Bahrain to uphold public health standards and human rights whilst combating the Covid-19 epidemic. Thanks to these actions and the efforts of many others, the Government of Bahrain recognised there is a risk of Covid-19 transmission in Bahraini prisons and acted by releasing several prisoners. However, the vast majority of Bahrain's political prisoners remain incarcerated in poor conditions and are in immediate danger of infection. Moreover, the Government of Bahrain was slow to repatriate Bahrainis stranded abroad during the first wave of the pandemic.

28 November 2020 - SALAM DHR gave exposure to the issue of sportswashing by posting an open letter, requesting that Formula 1 suspend holding races in Bahrain until its government takes action to end long-standing human rights abuses. In the letter, SALAM urged the UN to call upon Formula 1 to suspend races until the Government of Bahrain can tangibly show that its practices comply with minimum human rights standards. The letter also urged the United Nations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and International Labour Organisation to pressure the Government of Bahrain to:

- Release all political prisoners of conscience
- End the practice of torture and ill treatment as well as restrictions on freedom of expression
- Provide redress to those who have faced arbitrary punishment at the hands of Bahraini authorities
- Ensure the Bahrain Lawyers Association has civic independence

Reports

The promotion and protection of internationally recognised human rights standards and the principles of democracy inform and shape Salam DHR's research and outputs. Such standards are at the heart of the documents detailed below.

19 February 2020 - SALAM DHR published a briefing on the human rights situation in Bahrain in 2019. The report found that state repression in Bahrain, which intensified in 2011, has continued to worsen since 2016. It noted that although the Government of Bahrain has made some concessions, such as restoring the citizenships of 551 individuals and issued non-custodial sentences, such reformist policies are incomplete and co-exist with other repressive measures. For instance, several long-term prison sentences have been issued against political prisoners, the government has ended the moratorium on the death sentence, and torture and ill-treatment in Bahraini facilities remains prolific. Information from these findings was shared with the MEPs, who went on to condemn Bahrain's lack of human rights reform in March 2021.

3 May 2020 - Marking the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, SALAM DHR released the report, 'Bahrain Gagging Mouths'. The report catalogued the complete lack of independent media in Bahrain and the current methods the Government of Bahrain utilises to stifle freedom of speech and press. It urged the Government of Bahrain to give international journalists unconditional access to the country and to amend its laws and practices so that it can accommodate a varied and independent media. This information has been shared with MPs and MEPs throughout Europe as well as senators and congressmen in the United States, who have expressed interest and concern.

27 May 2020 - SALAM DHR released the report, 'Who is a Prisoner of Conscience? Sheikh Ali Salman As a Model'. It used the treatment of Sheikh Ali Salman, the Secretary-General of the Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, as an example of how the Bahraini legal system treats political dissidents. The report found that while the constitution of Bahrain claims to uphold freedom of speech and expression, there are numerous laws in place that contravene these rights, and such legislation is routinely used to target politicians from the opposition.

The report recommended that the international community urge the Government of Bahrain to adhere to international law and work towards harmonising its domestic legislation with it. Furthermore, the Government of Bahrain should abolish every law and legal article that restricts freedom of speech and press, release all prisoners of conscience, and adopt a policy of peacefully engaging with the opposition on the principle of political partnership.

25 June 2020 - On the International Day in Support of the Victims of Torture, Salam DHR released 'Bahrain: A Pattern of Torture'. The report details the history of the torture by authorities in Bahrain from the 1970s-present and how Bahraini security forces continues to engage in human rights abuses that contravene both international law and the Constitution of Bahrain. The report also catalogues the methods of torture and ill-treatment used in Bahrain and provides profiles of known abusers and victims. It recommends that:

- Strict measures are implemented to eliminate the culture of impunity that exists for perpetrators of torture in Bahrain
- Legal procedures are initiated to hold perpetrators of torture accountable

- Mechanisms for the compensation and redress for victims of torture bare established, such as the adoption of legislation that ensures redress and rehabilitation
- The civilian judiciary undergoes major reforms to ensure its independence
- Legislation related to trying civilians in military courts be repealed and judgements they have issued against civilians should be suspended
- Detainees who gave confessions extracted under torture should be released
- Bahrain join the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture
- Bahrain implement all the recommendations made by the BICI and UN on combating torture.

[24 October 2020](#) - SALAM DHR published 'The Bidoon in Kuwait: History at a Glance'. The report highlights the plight of the Bidoon, an indigenous stateless community in Kuwait. It profiles how their exclusion from Kuwaiti nationality condemns them to a life of precarity, isolated from public life and deprived of access to basic services. As stateless individuals, they are denied the 'right to have rights' and thus denied their inalienable human rights.

The report traces the issue to back to 1959, where Bedouin communities faced bureaucratic obstacles and discrimination when they applied for Kuwaiti citizenship. In some instances, these communities were not even informed they needed to apply for citizenship. The report finds that the primary reasons this issue has not been resolved include:

- Continued intra elite contestation against the Bidoon
- Conflicting narratives that reflect societal prejudices against the Bidoon in Kuwait
- Continuing systematic issues with registration
- Bidoon activism has yet to become influential in Kuwait

The report concludes that there have not been any major shifts in government policy to rectify the systemic issues that affect Bidoon and Kuwait and activism will likely need to intensify before such changes can occur. The report has been instrumental in establishing new networks of Bidoon activists within Kuwait and throughout Europe and the United States, who have been able to meet and strategize through SALAM.

11 November 2020 - SALAM DHR published 'G20 Countries and the Human Rights Crisis in Bahrain' to increase awareness of international policy towards reform in Bahrain for activists and other interested readers. Written by an intern whose work was supervised by Salam DHR, the report analysed the possible role the G20 could take in attempting to improve human rights and democracy in Bahrain. It concluded that the G20 is unlikely to have a unified vision on human rights and democracy due to differing values and interpretations from its member nations. Moreover, these member-states have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo and are unlikely to act against the Government of Bahrain in this field.

1 December 2020 - SALAM DHR released the report, 'Bahrain: The Employment of the Covid-19 Pandemic for Religious Persecution'. The report highlights the Government of Bahrain's crackdown on freedom of religions, specifically against the Bahraini Shi'a community. Over the past year, Shi'a imams have been censored and mass worship, along with funeral processions, were prevented under the pretext of halting the spread of Covid-19, despite other mass events, such as football games, occurring without government regulation. While Shi'a activities were already restricted in Bahrain, the government has capitalised on the pandemic to expand such practices. The report made several recommendations:

- The Government of Bahrain should cease all sectarian persecution
- New laws should be drafted and enacted that criminalise encroachment on religious rights
- The Government of Bahrain should not interfere with funeral services
- The Government of Bahrain should grant UN special rapporteurs access to the country to make an objective assessment of sectarian issues there
- Members of the Human Rights Council in Bahrain should support the right of Shi'a citizens to exercise their freedom of religion
- Parties involved in the encroachment of religious freedoms should be held accountable

4 December 2020 - On the International Day of Democracy, SALAM DHR released 'Bahrain: Absolute Monarchy Takes Root'. The report analyses the relationship between Bahrain's

ruling Al Khalifa family and its relationship with the state and legislation. It finds that the royal family is for all intents and purposes above the law in the Kingdom of Bahrain, possessing near absolute power. The current constitution of Bahrain was unilaterally drafted by the King of Bahrain. The upper houses of Parliament are also appointed by the King and its members are explicitly loyal to him and the royal family: that loyalty is prioritised over knowledge or expertise.

The King also has immense influence over the revocation of citizenship in Bahrain. The mass revocation of citizenships has disproportionately affected Bahrain's opposition, essentially decapitating them. The report finds that Bahrain is not a legitimate democracy because loyalty to the royal family currently serves as a de facto litmus test for who can and can't run for political office. The largest opposition parties are currently banned, and thousands of Bahrainis have been denied the right to vote or run for office. Moreover, state censorship in Bahrain is so prolific that any alternative voices to the monarchy cannot be heard via official channels. This information has been shared with MEPs in the European Union and they cited it when condemning human rights abuses in Bahrain in March 2021.

[26 December 2020](#) - SALAM DHR issued, to the EU's External Action Service, a comprehensive briefing on the human rights situation in Bahrain in November 2020. We can share a copy on demand. It highlighted that although the Government of Bahrain has attempted to present itself as a 'reforming power' that is pro-human rights, its key objective is to prevent international scrutiny into its continuously poor human rights record. The briefing drew attention to ongoing human rights violations that continue to occur in Bahrain, such as the ill-treatment of prisoners of conscience, revocation of citizenship, and harassment of lawyers and human rights activists.

Considering these findings, SALAM urged the European External Action Service to pressure the Government of Bahrain to:

- Release political prisoners and commute all cases involving the death penalty
- End harassment against members of the Bahrain Lawyers' Association, including politically motivated legal actions against lawyers

- Take public, transparent steps to address specific treaty body concerns and make necessary changes to Bahraini legislation and practice so they align with said treaties
- Openly engage with independent human rights bodies and positive, quantitative response to at least one letter from special procedures
- Develop institutional mechanisms for restoring citizenship to Bahrainis who have had theirs revoked
- Involve independent human rights groups in the development of Bahrain's human rights

As of April 2021, the Government of Bahrain, under pressure from the international community, has released 60-70 prisoners, including prisoners of conscience.

Statements

[30 January 2020](#) - SALAM DHR released the statement 'Kuwait: Take Concrete Steps to End the Suffering of Stateless Bidun'. It stated that over the past 30 years, the Government of Kuwait has repeatedly and systematically violated the rights of its stateless community, which is estimated to be between 90 to 100,000. SALAM DHR; the Rights Realization Centre; the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, and an informal network of activists and academics urged the Government of Kuwait to boldly take action to promote and protect the right to nationality in Kuwait. Accessing the text of the statement via Twitter, scores of stateless residents in Kuwait expressed gratitude for the support shown to their beleaguered community.

[9 February 2020](#) - SALAM DHR called on the Government of Bahrain to 'Respect Freedom of Expression and Allow the Reopening of the "Jerish Years" Blog by Researcher Jasim Hussain'. Hussain was arrested on 28 January on the charges of 'publishing false information' and 'misuse of social media'. He was released on bail on 4 February 2020. The statement indicated that Hussain is an active researcher with many publications to his name and that his detention, along with the deletion of his blog, are flagrant violations of human and constitutional rights. Moreover, it contravenes international treaties Bahrain is a party to.

SALAM urged the Government of Bahrain to allow Hussain to continue his activities on Instagram without restrictions or conditions.

[9 March 2020](#) - Three Bahraini organisations: SALAM DHR, the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights and the Bahrain Forum for Human Rights called upon Bahraini authorities to take measures to protect detainees from Covid-19, in alignment with the [Nelson Mandela Rules](#). It was stressed that the Government of Bahrain must take exceptional measures to prevent an outbreak in Bahraini prisons, such as releasing as many non-violent detainees as possible.

[17 April 2020](#) - SALAM DHR called upon human rights bodies, including the International Red Cross, to investigate conditions in Bahraini prisons. Brothers Mohammed and Ali Fakhrawi were used as examples of systematic torture in Bahraini custody. The Fakhrawi brothers first became active in public affairs in 2004 and have been repeatedly targeted by Bahraini authorities since. They were arrested in September 2015 and have been subjected to acts of torture and ill-treatment since. Throughout their incarceration, they have been deprived of the most basic human rights, and consequently, SALAM called upon international human rights organisations to pressure Bahraini authorities to investigate conditions in Bahrain's prisons.

[18 April 2020](#) - 67 Arab and international NGOs, including SALAM DHR, urged the Government of Bahrain to respond to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' call to release prisoners who were classified as at risk if they contracted Covid-19. It was stated that prisoners called upon Bahraini authorities to take positive action.

[3 June 2020](#) - On the occasion of the UN's [World Bicycle Day](#), SALAM DHR drew attention to Bahrain's record of sportswashing its human rights abuses and called upon the World Body for Cycling to commit to its responsibility to respect human rights and prevent cycling from being used by the Government of Bahrain to launder its violations. The Government of Bahrain has continuously used sporting events to obscure its authoritarian practices and use of torture, such behaviour includes Team McLaren Bahrain, who SALAM compelled to not to turn a blind eye to such abuses. Moreover, SALAM argued that human rights violations

committed by the Government of Bahrain means that Team McLaren Bahrain is in violation of the Union Cycliste Internationale code of ethics.

4 July 2020 - SALAM DHR issued the statement 'Bahrain: Lawyers Do Not Have Sufficient Independence ... And the Law Does Not Protect Their Profession'. It highlighted how lawyers frequently face restrictions, are threatened, and have retaliatory cases issued against them for defending human rights activists and political dissidents. An example of this practice is the case of Abdullah Al-Shamlawi, including in connection with providing legal opinions critical of Bahraini legislation that restricts public freedoms.

The 1980 Bahraini Bar Act and its amendment do not adequately protect the legal profession. Although there have been promises made about a new Bar Act being issued, it has stalled in parliament and its current draft contains numerous legal observations within it that are inconsistent with [UN principles on the independence of the judiciary](#). SALAM emphasised that the lawyers and their associations must have full independence, in accordance with the principles adopted at the UN adopted in 1990. The event helped establish that SALAM is an ally of Bahraini lawyers that have been persecuted by the GOB and that it is willing to give them a platform to meet and collaborate.

7 July 2020 - SALAM DHR praised the United Kingdom's adoption of Magnitsky style sanctions against human rights abusing nations. It added, however, that such sanctions will only be effective if they are evenly applied, such as to human rights abusing states like Bahrain. SALAM urged the UK government to demonstrate its commitment to human rights by extending the provision of the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 to Bahraini figures responsible for flagrant human rights abuses that hold assets in the UK or seek to travel to the UK. Bahraini officials who have directed operations for the National Security Agency should be included with such sanctions.

20 July 2020 - Three human rights organisations, including SALAM DHR, welcomed the statement from the High Commissioner for Human Rights condemning the arbitrary use of the death penalty against Muhammad Ramadan and Hussein Moosa, whom the authorities tortured to 'confess'. SALAM DHR, the Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, and the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights urged the Government of Bahrain to fulfill its

obligations to prevent all acts of torture and ill-treatment. They also urged Bahraini authorities to cease any plans to implement the death sentences for Ramadan and Moorsa, and to ensure that they are tried in accordance with international standards. It examined due process flaws in each of the 2 of death penalty cases reviewed.

[22 July 2020](#) - SALAM DHR, in coordination with the Beirut office Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, organised a webinar on ‘Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Bodies’. This event was attended by 45 human rights defenders from around the world. SALAM hosted Serina Hammoud of the OHCHR, who gave a presentation on the functions and procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Bodies. Hammoud stressed that the OHCHR’s mission was to promote and protect human rights around the world via appointed special rapporteurs. However, she also iterated that the OHCHR needs factual, clear, updated, non-partisan, information and is dependent on freedom of movement and free access to relevant materials. It cannot force a national government to allow them in and its recommendations are non-binding. The OHCHR’s power comes from the fact it lends credibility to human rights activists around the world, which can put international pressure on governments.

[20 November 2020](#) - SALAM DHR released a joint statement with the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, ‘Children of Bahrain are Victims of an Uncertain Future’. It highlighted that while Bahrain has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it continues to arrest children on political charges. Moreover, it noted that children are used as bargaining chips in acts of extortion and revenge in Bahrain. Many of these children are from poorer, marginalised backgrounds, who are often forced to work to support themselves and their families, meaning their education is effectively denied and a cycle of poverty is reproduced. The statement made several recommendations to the Government of Bahrain:

- Immediately and unconditionally release detained children
- Harmonise penal legislation with Article 3 of the Bahraini Child Law
- End the targeting children and allow them to complete their studies
- Bahrain must affirm its commitment to obligations arising from the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Grant nationality to every Bahraini child whose nationality was revoked or not yet granted
- Ensure children have access to social security and that they receive adequate cash and social assistance

9 December 2020 - SALAM DHR and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights made a joint statement 'From Paris to Manama: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Constitution of Rights and Freedoms'. SALAM DHR and BCHR noted that Bahrain has not implemented the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that serious violations of human rights continue. SALAM DHR and BCHR called on the Government of Bahrain to:

- Commit to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international covenants, and treaties, especially those that have been ratified
- Harmonise legislation with international agreements and implement it in a tangible, serious manner
- Adopt Community Partnership in promoting human rights and adopt the partnership approach in preparing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating national human rights

Events

20 February 2020 - SALAM DHR, Latitude Law and Consonant hosted an educational event on how to apply for asylum in the UK as a GCC citizen. Latitude Law is a specialist law firm based in Manchester and is focused on immigration law. Latitude Law boasts possibly the largest dedicated immigration law team in the North of England. Consonant is an NGO based in London aimed at working with migrants, refugees and long-settled British communities to assure people have a voice in the issues that affect them. Every year they help hundreds of people get protection from persecution so they can live in safety and build new lives.

The event began with an introduction by SALAM's Chairman, Jawad Fairouz, who announced plans to create a booklet on the asylum process in the UK. Gary McIndoe, from Latitude Law, gave a short presentation on the asylum process in the UK. Ayshea Azam, from Consonant, provided an overview of asylum hearings and the processes involved. Immigration and human rights lawyer, Azhar Iqbal, advised on how soon one should apply for asylum, with information on accessing legal aid and relevant supporting documents that would be required. This was followed by information on UK detention centres, the grounds under which the Home Office can detain people and affirming that all people are entitled to legal representation if they are the victims of persecution. This was followed by questions and answers from the panellists. Feedback on the event was positive, attendees noting they had a far better understanding of immigration policy in the UK as well as possessing access to valuable legal advice.

24 February-7 March 2020 - SALAM DHR participated in the Human Rights Council 43rd regular session in Geneva. SALAM DHR was represented by four delegates: Jawad Fairouz, Drewery Dyke, Ebrahim Sarhan, and Mohammed Sultan. While in Geneva, the team engaged with the missions of, amongst others, the USA, Estonia, Mexico and the UK, in relation to the human rights situation in Bahrain, and worked with ECOSOC partners, CIVICUS to ensure that Bahrain and Gulf-related issues were addressed in interactive dialogues with UN Special Procedures, while developing partnerships with other organisations, such as the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ).

22 May 2020 – Sayed Yusuf Al-Mouhafdha, Vice President of SALAM DHR, participated in ‘Beyond Covid-19: A Nine-Year Lockdown for Bahrain’. The event examined the restrictive conditions in Bahrain and the ways Bahraini security forces restrict freedom of movement within the country.

23 October 2020 - SALAM DHR held the international webinar, ‘The Stateless Bidun of Kuwait Must Now be Able to Proclaim “Ana Kuwait (I am Kuwaiti)”’. The event was held to discuss what was at stake for Kuwait’s stateless Bidoon community in the Kuwaiti election of December 2020. It included several speakers from a range of different organisations and backgrounds. They spoke on issues ranging from the views of veteran activists to legal assessments of laws currently under consideration.

22 November 2020 - SALAM DHR engaged with six other human rights NGOs in a teleconference: ‘Prospects of Revoking Nationality in Bahrain’, which was broadcast live on YouTube in Arabic with a simultaneous translation into English. The event was moderated by the chairman of Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Baqir Darwish, who spoke about Bahrain’s policies on the revocation of citizenship. SALAM DHR was represented by human rights defender and activist, Ebtsam Al-Saegh, who outlined the difficulties facing Bahrainis who have had their citizenship revoked, and by Muhammad Sultan, who gave information on the ‘ana Bahraini’ website, which focusses on documenting, collating and archiving all cases of Bahraini citizenship revocation as a reference for those studying the topic. The event has contributed to an ongoing campaign to provide knowledge about the revocation of nationality in Bahrain and providing a space for victims of state-enforced statelessness in the Gulf to collaborate and support one another.

30 November 2020 - SALAM DHR held the event, ‘Bahrain: The Employment of the Covid-19 Pandemic for Religious Persecution’, which launched the report by the same name. The event had five speakers: Zouhair Makhoul – Tunisian MP and advisory board member of the Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Sheikh Husain Al Akraf – a researcher and Islamic reciter, Sayed Abbas Shubbar – the head of the Religious Freedoms Committee at SALAM DHR, Gina Rebai – a researcher at BFHR, and Nassr Eddine Al Rami – a human rights defender and researcher in religious affairs.

[17 December 2020](#) - SALAM DHR held the webinar 'Bahrain: Accountability for Perpetrators and Redress for Victims'. The focus of the event was on UN treaty bodies, human rights sanctions frameworks in the context of the Magnitsky Act, and visions for human rights reform. It was broadcast live on YouTube in English and Arabic. Six panellists were in attendance: Niccolo Figa-Talamanca, Amy Whittle (former intern), Amelie Bamford (former intern), [Tara O'Grady](#), and Sayed Yousif Almuhafda, SALAM DHR's Deputy Head..

Internships

[7 July 2020](#) - SALAM DHR launched its [International Internship Programme](#), recruiting 20 interns to advocate for human rights, democracy, and sustainable development. The programme's aim is to train a generation of advocates who will pressure democratic governments to condemn human rights abuses in the Gulf and seek to ameliorate them. SALAM provided these interns with some training in international law, UN treaty bodies, and UK democratic procedures and recruited two additional interns to focus on advocacy work in the UK parliament, along with the initial 20 members. The programme also hosted 20 internal sessions with numerous speakers, including human rights experts, politicians and academics, to give the interns unique perspectives on highly relevant issues regarding Bahrain, the MENA region and human rights. The programme has been a resounding success and SALAM has continued to expand its scope and expertise in 2021.

- On 4 November 2019, SALAM DHR published a report entitled [Brexit and Bahrain: what does Brexit mean for the United Kingdom's \(UK's\) foreign policy towards Bahrain?](#) by Ethan Sykes, then a student at Lancaster University, one of the organisation's first interns.
- On 1 November 2020, SALAM DHR published a report entitled [G20 Countries and the Human Rights Crisis in Bahrain](#), by Laura da Costa, then a student at Lancaster University.
- On 5 January 2021, SALAM DHR published a report entitled [Promise vs. action: the issues with compliance to UN human rights mechanisms and the continuation of](#)

[human rights violations in Bahrain since 2015](#) by Amy Whittle, then a student at Lancaster University.

Opinion Pieces

[9 January 2020](#) - SALAM DHR published 'Bahraini Human Rights Organisations: Upholding Death Sentences Against Bahraini Victims of Torture Confirms that the Justice system is a Sham'. The joint article by SALAM, the Bahrain Forum for Human Rights and the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights argues that the issuance of death sentences on 8 January 2020 shows that the Government of Bahrain's claims that it is responding to international recommendations are false. Instead a familiar pattern continues: following a flawed trial process, people are sentenced to death. The United Nations Committee Against Torture has stated that a new trial was necessary in Bahrain. A retrial was held but the sentences were upheld, revealing systemic issues within the Bahraini justice system.

[18 December 2020](#) - SALAM DHR published 'Religious Pluralism and Obscuring Sectarianism: Hegemony and Shi'a Invisibility in Bahrain'. The article argued that over the past decade, Bahrain has actively attempted to rehabilitate its image in the international sphere. Such promotions, however, have been mostly cosmetic, as Bahrain's Shi'a population remains a target of sectarian policies and hate speech. Such policies are not merely discriminatory but part of the cultural hegemony. Since 2011, the Government of Bahrain has sought to regulate the Shia's community leadership, and this heavy regulation, alongside a cultivated image of religious tolerance, is part of a hegemony that seeks to make Bahrain's Shi'a population, as well as their mistreatment, invisible.

Looking Forward

Our achievements over the past year have reaffirmed the tremendous importance of SALAM DHR's mission to promote human rights and democracy in the Gulf and to advocate for victims of statelessness around the globe. Our achievements have given us immense pride, and we intend to expand all our digital, regional and international activities horizontally and vertically over the next year. Our growth, work output, and our ability to collaborate and advocate leave us optimistic about SALAM DHR's prospects and the goals we'll accomplish



SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights

English: @salam_DHR | **Russian:** @SalamDHR_RU | **Spanish:** @SalamDHR_ES | **Arabic:** @SalamDHR_AR

www.salam-dhr.org | info@salam-dhr.org



Salam_Dhr



SalamDHR1



Salam DHRS