

# \*Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society (BHRWS) Shadow Report\*

\*CEDAW Committee\*

\*The 76th CEDAW Session (22 June 2020)\*

## 1/ Bahrain: Protect Women's Rights

The advanced legislation in Bahrain as well as the numerous systems and decisions have protected the rights of Bahraini women and contributed to protecting women from all forms of violence and discrimination.

In the national achievements made by women thanks to the tremendous support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the constant care of the government.

The great care is given to Bahraini women by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of HM the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW), which contributed to their progress and participation to the kingdom's development process. It hailed the role of SCW in achieving partnership and competitiveness in an advanced community by working out ambitious strategies.

Bahrain has realized for decades the outstanding role of women in the growth of the community and its prosperity.

Therefore, the kingdom has boosted women's presence and participation in various fields by passing legislation and issuing resolutions and organizational by-laws which granted women all their rights.

## 2/ equality and leaving no one behind

In the Kingdom of Bahrain, always keen to promote the value of religious tolerance, peaceful coexistence and combat all forms of discrimination within the Bahraini society and among all segments of the population.

Bahrain strictly stands against all forms of discrimination such as gender, racial, colour, language, political, sectarian and ethnic discrimination as well as renounces all forms of violence and hatred. We are all equal under the rule of law.

Respecting human rights are essential for achieving sustainable development.

The Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirms its responsibilities to respect, protect and promote human rights. This is reflected in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the National Action Charter, which enriched the cultural heritage of the Kingdom and

affirmed the rule of law, the integrity of justice and its independence as a basis for governance in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Supreme Council for Women (SCW) has been established to empower women and reinforce equal opportunities in all aspects of practical and social life.

SCW is the backbone for any women against violence and discrimination in the Bahraini community.

Women's political rights have been a cornerstone of the political reforms initiated by His Majesty King Hamad with, women being given the right for the first time to vote and stand as candidates in national elections with an amendment to the constitution in 2002.

The extension of equal political rights has been accompanied by a self-conscious drive to promote women to positions of authority within the government.

The Supreme Council for Women under the leadership of Her Highness Shaikha Sabeeka bint Ibrahim bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa, Spouse of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, King of Bahrain, Chairwoman of the Supreme Council for Women, continues to push boundaries for the protection and advancement of women. The Council's efforts have been demonstrably recognised regionally and internationally.

HM The King set up the Supreme Council for Women in 2001 to develop the role of women in Bahrain.

The progress made in the position of women has been echoed in other sectors of Bahraini society and internationally where democracy is being emphasised first and foremost.

Bahrain's successful reform programme stands out as a model for other regimes in the region.

The council has been keen to ensure that women are economically independent by developing new plans to set up a comprehensive training centre for women, which will provide Bahraini women with the necessary skills and expertise to develop their own handicrafts and service industries. The council has extended its facilities by setting up offices in all four governorates, as well as at the council premises, to receive feedback on any grievances and complaints.

Bahrain has an integrated system and many key players to combat discrimination.

The Kingdom is considered one of the leading countries in guaranteeing the rights of the child through the issuance of Child Law.

In this law, the child's education, health, work, events, and family custody, treatment and many aspects of the child are protected and addressed.

**3/ Bahrain: Takes step towards unified family**

Family law that aims to improve the legal status of women regardless of their sect.

The law made major breakthrough for families in general and women in particular in the country.

The bill governs personal status and family matters such as marriage, divorce and custody and covers the rights of men and women from both the Sunni and Shiite sects, the two main components of the Bahraini society.

#### 4/ Bahrain: Amend Citizenship Law

The Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society (BHRWS), in conjunction with other Bahrain women's rights groups, has launched a campaign to extend equal citizenship rights to women by amending a provision of the country's citizenship law.

Children of Bahraini women living in the country are denied citizenship if their fathers are not Bahraini nationals, while children of Bahraini men automatically become citizens, even if their fathers are not living in Bahrain and their mothers are not Bahraini.

#### Lack of Conformity of the Current Law to Bahrain's Constitution and CEDAW

The Supreme Council for Women supports the Bahraini Parliament to convene to amend the law and the King of Bahrain give a lot of citizenship to them.