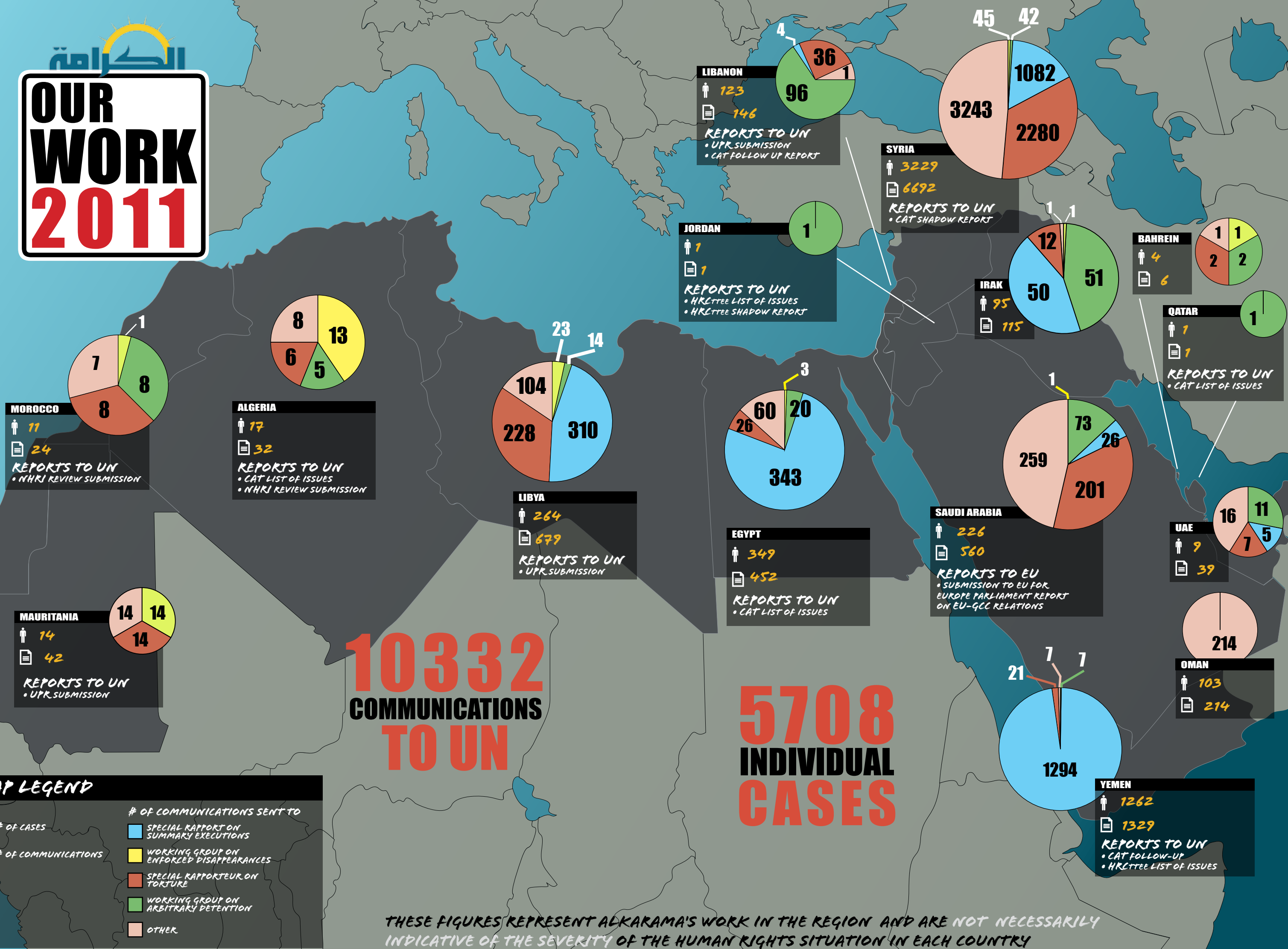


OUR WORK 2011



10332
COMMUNICATIONS
TO UN

5708
INDIVIDUAL
CASES

MAP LEGEND

- # OF CASES
- # OF COMMUNICATIONS
- SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON SUMMARY EXECUTIONS
- WORKING GROUP ON ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES
- SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE
- WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION
- OTHER

THESE FIGURES REPRESENT ALKARAMA'S WORK IN THE REGION AND ARE NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF THE SEVERITY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN EACH COUNTRY

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The winds of freedom that have swept through the Arab world since the beginning of the year, referred to by many as the "Arab Spring", have withstood four seasons and continue to generate broad socio-political transformations in the region.

Anxious to maintain the status quo, the region's authoritarian regimes have launched a heavy-handed, at times brutal, response to their people's call for freedom resulting in a significant increase in human rights violations. Torture, arbitrary detention and extrajudicial executions continue to be the price of liberty paid by courageous men and women throughout the Arab world oppressed for far too long.

Throughout this extraordinary year, Alkarama was present at the frontlines as the events of the Arab Spring unfolded, standing firmly by the protagonists of these historical changes as well the victims of these violent times. The organisation's access to information enabled us to make a significant contribution to documenting and clarifying the human rights situation in the region, particularly in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

Alkarama will remain vigilant in countries where regimes attempt to halt the course of history by continuing to smother the voices of their citizens. Where new governments have come to power, the organization will also stay alert to their management of future conflicts and their respect for human rights.

Dr. Abdul Rahman Omair Al-Naimi
President of the Alkarama Foundation

ALKARAMA is a geneva-based organisation working to gather evidence of human rights abuses in the arab world



OUR FOUR PRIORITIES

KILLINGS

Arbitrary, extrajudicial or summary execution of a person without a fair trial

DISAPPEARANCES

A person abducted or detained without the state acknowledging the act or informing relatives

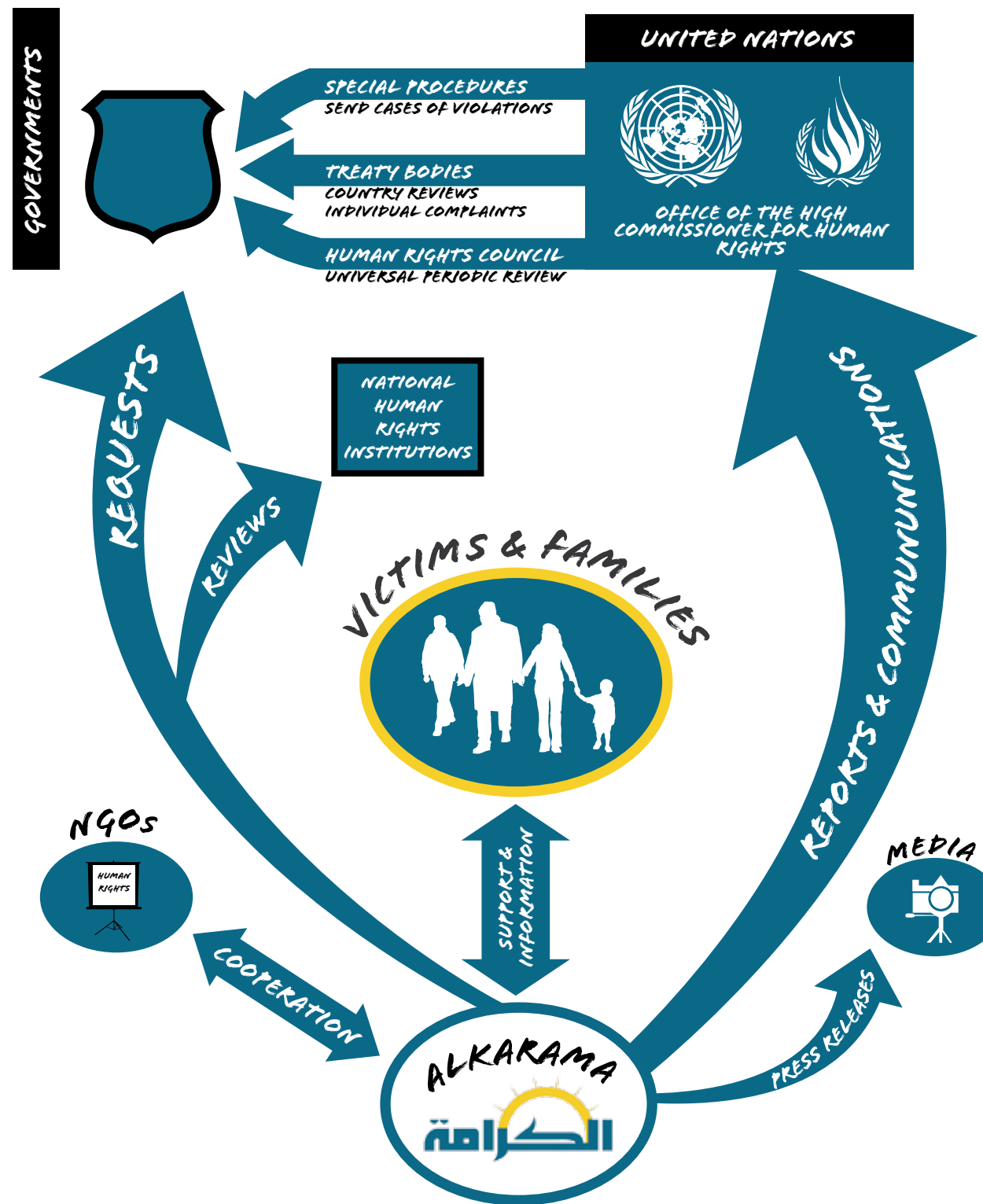
TORTURE

Inflicting severe physical or mental pain or suffering to obtain information or a confession, or to punish or intimidate a person

ILLEGAL DETENTION

Arbitrarily depriving a person of their liberty in violation of their fundamental rights

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PRIX ALKARAMA 2011

The Alkarama Award is presented each year on Human Rights Day, the 10th of December, to a human rights defender who has significantly contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights in the Arab world.

In 2011, the laureates were Dr. Aida Saif El-Dawla, an Egyptian psychiatrist, and Dr. Said Ben Zair, a Saudi Arabian professor. The award was presented to the laureates in a ceremony on 6 December 2011 at the International Conference Centre in Geneva (ICCG).

According to Rachid Mesli, director of Alkarama's Legal Department, "Dr. Saif El-Dawla's struggle against torture throughout the last thirty years has been exemplary. As for Dr. Ben Zair, in the past 16 years, he has only spent three years in freedom. He has never been given a fair trial and remains in detention to this day despite the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention having called upon the Saudi authorities to release him."

Please send us your suggestions for candidates for the 2012 Alkarama award to award@alkarama.org

ALKARAMA'S FUNDING

The majority of Alkarama's funds in 2011 were made up of donations from members of the Foundations council as well as private donations from individuals. In 2011 Alkarama also received funding from the Fund for Human Rights of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in support of the work with the UN treaty bodies.

Support us !

Banque Raiffeisen
CH-1242 Satigny
IBAN: CH73 8021 0000 0063 5406 0
SWIFT: RAIFCH22
Fondation Alkarama

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

• 27 JANUARY 2011
Human rights defenders from the Gulf visit Alkarama in Geneva

• 21 FEBRUARY 2011
Urgent appeal to the High Commissioner for Human Rights calling for the opening of an ICC investigation into Libya

• 3 MARCH 2011
Alkarama collaborates with the Commission of Inquiry on the situation of human rights in Libya established by the HRC

• 23 MARCH 2011
Launch of the 2010 annual report

46TH SESSION CAT
MAY 2011
• KUWAIT 11-12 MAY

• 2-7 AUGUST 2011
Organization of a press conference in Beirut in support of Alkarama's representative, victim of legal persecution

• 4-11 AUGUST 2011
Visit to Morocco in context of review of the country before the CAT

• 13-15 AUGUST 2011
Visit to Kuwait to examine the state report to the HRCttee

• 21-28 SEPTEMBER 2011
Visit to Benghazi and Tripoli to reinforce relations with civil society

12TH SESSION UPR

OCTOBER 2011
• SYRIA 7 OCTOBER

103TH SESSION HRCttee

OCTOBER 2011
• KUWAIT 20-21 OCTOBER

• 22 - 29 OCTOBER 2011
Visit to UAE
Observation of the trial of Defenders of Human Rights

• 14 NOVEMBER 2011
Participation in the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Paris

47TH SESSION CAT
NOVEMBER 2011
• MOROCCO 1-2 NOV

• 6 DECEMBER 2011
ALKARAMA AWARD presented to Dr. Aida Saif El Dawla (Egypt) and to Dr. Said bin Zair (Saudi Arabia)

• 22 - 25 DECEMBER 2011
Visit to Egypt

• 25 - 29 DECEMBER 2011
Visit to Yemen to examine the state report before the HRCttee

JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER

ALKARAMA



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The winds of freedom that have swept through the Arab world since the beginning of the year, referred to by many as the “Arab Spring”, have withstood four seasons and continue to generate broad socio-political transformations in the region.

Anxious to maintain the status quo, the region’s authoritarian regimes have launched a heavy-handed, at times brutal, response to their people’s call for freedom resulting in a significant increase in human rights violations. Torture, arbitrary detention and extrajudicial executions continue to be the price of liberty paid by courageous men and women throughout the Arab world oppressed for far too long.

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Dr. Abdul Rahman Omair Al-Naimi
President of the Alkarama Foundation

VISION

Our vision is an Arab world where all individuals live in dignity, freedom, and protected by the rule of law.

MISSION

Alkarama is a non-governmental organization for the defense and protection of victims of human rights violations in the Arab World, and in particular of the right to life, physical integrity and liberty. Alkarama uses, as a priority, the mechanisms of international law.

THE FOUNDATION COUNCIL

A foundation under Swiss Law since 2007, the Council of the Alkarama Foundation is composed of:

- Dr Abdul Rahman Omair Al-Naimi (Qatar) - President
- Dr Abbas Aroua (Algerie) - Secretary
- Mr Khalifa Mohd Al-Rabban (Qatar)
- Dr Ahcène Kerkadi (Switzerland)

DIRECTORS

- Dr Mourad Dhina - Executive Director
- Mr Rachid Mesli - Director of the Legal Department

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACRONYMS

| | | | |
|-----------|--|-------|---|
| HRC | - Human Rights Council | WGAD | - UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention |
| HRCttee | - Human Rights Committee | WGEID | - UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances |
| CAT | - Convention/Committee Against Torture | SRT | - UN Special Rapporteur on Torture |
| ICCPR | - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights | SUMX | - UN Special Rapporteur on Summary Executions |
| ICPPED | - International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance | HRD | - UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders |
| NHRI | - National Human Rights Institution | FRDX | - UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression |
| ICCPR-OP1 | - First Optional Protocol to the ICCPR | IJL | - UN Special Rapporteur on the Independents of Judges and Lawyers |
| OPCAT | - Optional Protocol to the CAT | | |
| UPR | - Universal Periodic Review | | |
| ICC | - International Criminal Court | | |

AOOTHER TERMS

| | |
|------------------|--|
| COMMUNICATION | : Alkarama's transmission of information about one individual case to one UN special procedure mandate-holder |
| INDIVIDUAL CASE | : The documenting of an individual victim of a human rights violation |
| ROME STATUTE | : The International Criminal Court's founding treaty |
| LIST OF ISSUES | : A contribution to a list of questions drawn up by the experts of the CAT or HRCttee for a state party under examination |
| SHADOW REPORT | : A report to the CAT or HRCttee providing independent information about the implementation of the relevant treaty by the country in question |
| FOLLOW UP REPORT | : A report to the CAT or HRCttee providing independent information about the implementation of the relevant treaty and recommendations issued by the two committees by the country in question |

ALGERIA

Algeria is rocked by riots on a daily basis. Following major demonstrations in January 2011, the authorities announced the lifting of the state of emergency in place since 1991 as well as the adoption of a number of measures regarding the freedom of the press and of association. The main provisions of the state of emergency have nonetheless remained in effect, such as the banning of all protests in the capital, or have been integrated into the law. The announcement of legislative elections in May 2012 shows to what extent the authorities are refusing any democratization of the current system: the adoption, towards the end of 2011, of a law on political parties placed serious restrictions on the civil and political rights of several members of the opposition. Tensions remain high between the government and civil society concerning the impunity of the security forces and armed groups that are responsible for grave crimes committed during the “Black Decade.”

In the absence of a will on the part of the government to clarify the thousands of cases of enforced disappearances, Alkarama submitted a general allegation to the Working Group requesting that they recognize this serious violation of human rights as a crime against humanity. Finally, the NHRI, which still fails to meet the “Paris Principles”, had its downgrading confirmed by the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs; Alkarama submitted a contribution to the Committee in the context the review of Algeria’s NHRI.

OUR CONCERNS

- The superficiality of announced political reforms
- The pressures on, and persecution of, individuals in the political opposition
- The continued practice of incommunicado detentions by the services of the Department of Intelligence and Security (DRS)
- The 11 December 2011 law regarding political parties, severely restricting public freedoms

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Guarantee civil and political rights of all citizens without exception or discrimination
- Repeal the 2006 Charter for National Reconciliation granting impunity to those responsible for crimes against humanity
- Bring to justice those who committed grave human rights violations during the “Black Decade”
- Ratify the OPCAT, the ICCPED, and the Rome Statute

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✓

CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Legislative elections in May 2012 • UPR in June 2012
- State report to be submitted to the CAT before June 2012
- State report due to the HRCttee since November 2011
- Request from the WGEID to carry out country visit pending since 2011, from the WGAD since 2009

BAHRAIN

As in other Arab countries, the Bahraini population took to the streets in early 2011 to denounce social injustice and advocate political and constitutional reforms. Overwhelmed by the scale of the demonstrations, authorities turned to violence to suppress the demonstrators. At the height of the crisis between the opposition and the royal family, Saudi armed forces intervened militarily at the request of the Bahraini authorities. Many members of Bahraini civil society have been targeted and persecuted for their political activism. Cases of torture, arbitrary detention, and grossly unfair trials before military courts (which have since been abolished) were reported.

The acts of repression led the royal authorities to establish a commission of inquiry composed of credible and independent individuals. Violations of human rights were identified and recognized by the authorities who have accepted the recommendations of the commission. These recommendations constitute a serious foundation on which to base a settlement of the conflict.

Alkarama has followed these events closely and expressed concerns about human rights violations against political activists and human rights defenders. Our organization has submitted cases of arbitrary detention to the United Nations Working Group as well as a contribution to the Universal Periodic Review of Bahrain which is scheduled for May 2012.

- Violations of freedom of expression and association
- Arbitrary detention and unfair trials before military courts
- Excessive use of force and the increased practice of torture
- Modify internal legislation to guarantee freedom of expression in all its forms
- Bring an end to the systematic arrest of political opponents and human rights defenders for their political or human rights activities
- Bring an end to the use of torture and ill treatment; investigate torture allegations

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

- Visit from the SRT scheduled for July 2012
- UPR in June 2012
- State report due to the HRCtee since 2007
- State report due to the CAT since 2007

Egypt

Clashes between security forces and demonstrators lead to the deaths of at least 840 people and the injury of some 6000 during three weeks of protests that began on 25 January 2011 and continued until 11 February, the date of President Mubarak's departure. The transfer of power to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) continues to be a serious concern for civil society. Since this transfer occurred, more than 12,000 people have been brought before military courts, including minors. Although the SCAF has pledged to lift the state of emergency in force since 1981, it is still invoked to quell protests. Several waves of arrests and measures aimed at intimidating the population were reported by NGOs, who were in turn accused by authorities of "interfering in state affairs." Meanwhile, freedom of expression has been limited, resulting in the arrests of many influential bloggers. Several people were also killed in November as a result of the disproportionate use of force by the military.

Since the eruption of the revolution in January, Alkarama has alerted the UN Special Procedures of more than 300 documented cases of torture and summary execution. The disproportionate use of force by the police and military as well as the waves of arrests of critics of the military remain major concerns during this transitional period.

OUR CONCERNS

- Disproportionate use of force and the continued practice of torture
- Violent repression by the security services of peaceful protests denouncing the seizing of power by the army
- The prolongation of the state of emergency and the prosecution of civilians before military courts
- Attacks on freedom of expression

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Immediately transfer power to civilian authorities
- Take all appropriate measures to remedy violations of fundamental rights
- End trials of civilians before military courts
- Guarantee freedom of expression

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Elections to the Lower House scheduled for January 2012
- Presidential elections scheduled for June 2012
- State report due to the HRCtee since 2004
- State report due to the CAT since 2004
- Examination of the NHRI scheduled for October 2012

2011 was a year of political stalemate in Iraq, which continues to grip the country despite the power-sharing agreement between the three main communities which was approved by the parliament in 2010. Despite the withdrawal of US troops in December 2011 after nine years of a war whose consequences continue to affect the country, a new political crisis based on continuing sectarian tensions seems imminent. In this context, the “Arab Spring” has taken on a special meaning in that demonstrators’ demands have focused on corruption and the country’s economic recovery. Also, a wave of executions took place in autumn 2011 following unfair trials that were held from 2008—2010. All of these trials were based on confessions extracted under torture by the US occupation forces as well as the Iraqi security services.

Alkarama appealed to the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on Summary Executions following numerous testimonies by prisoners who faced execution and other ill treatment while in detention. These detainees were deliberately excluded from the amnesty issued by the Iraqi authorities in 2008. The case of the Tunisian Yousri Triki shows that many were executed despite interventions from their countries of origin.

OUR CONCERNS

- Sectarian violence resulting from the political stalemate in the country
- Execution of people condemned to death in unfair trials, the ill-treatment inflicted on prisoners, and the fear that their situation will deteriorate further
- The impunity of those who have committed grave violations of human rights, whether they are members of the foreign occupation forces or the Iraqi security services

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPPED ✓

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Suspend the application of death sentences handed down in unfair trials and establish an independent monitoring body for all places of detention to protect detainees
- Put an end to enforced disappearances and close all secret detention centers
- Fight against impunity by initiating legal inquiries and investigations against those who have committed serious human rights violations
- Ratify OPCAT

UPCOMING...

- State report due to the HRCtee since 2000
- Request from the WGEID to carry out country visit pending since 1995 and from the IJL since 2008

JOURNALISM

Demonstrations first broke out in Amman in late 2010, calling for social justice in response to the on-going economic crisis in the country. As of January 2011, the demands evolved into a widespread protest movement calling for political reforms. Under pressure from those taking to the street, King Abdullah reshuffled his cabinet twice between February and October 2011 and announced in June that the government would now be appointed by parliament. Violent clashes erupted in March 2011 between demonstrators, disappointed by the insufficient reforms announced, and pro-government activists resulting in numerous injuries. Although there has not been systematic repression of the demonstrations, many journalists and political activists have been subjected to targeted reprisals.

In addition, many Islamist detainees held arbitrarily began hunger strikes throughout the year to protest against the conditions of their detention, ill-treatment, and unfair trials before military courts.

Alkarama continues to follow the situation of Mr. Issam Al Uteibi who has been detained since 17 September 2010; he was condemned to five years in prison on 4 January 2012 for having expressed his political opinions. In 2011, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention adopted a second Opinion that reaffirmed the arbitrary nature of his detention.

OUR CONCERNS

- Insufficient political reforms
- Prolonged arbitrary detention of political opponents because of their political views
- Unfair trials before special courts, poor prison conditions, and a lack of action from the authorities with regards to allegations of torture

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Guarantee freedom of expression and cease persecution of political activists and journalists
- End the trials of civilians before military courts
- Ensure that all allegations of torture and arbitrary detention are examined in impartial judicial proceedings

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- UPR in October 2013

KUWAIT

Anticipating the unrest erupting in other Arab countries, the authorities in Kuwait reacted by offering financial assistance to their citizens. This handout, however, only concerned nationals, and as a consequence the “bidouns” (Arabic for “without”, those inhabitants without recognized citizenship) held demonstrations between January and February 2011 that were brutally repressed by the authorities. Migrant workers and “bidouns” continue to be discriminated against and their human rights are routinely violated. Although the country has an elected parliament, restrictions on civil and political rights, including the right to establish political parties, continue to be denounced by human rights defenders. In the context of the “Arab Spring,” the year ended with a serious political crisis in the form of an occupation of parliament in November by protestors with the support of parliamentarians. The Emir thus had to dissolve parliament following the resignation of the government and announced new elections.

Alkarama participated in the examination of Kuwait by the Human Rights Committee in September 2011 following a field mission in August to document attacks on freedom of association and expression in recent years. Several representatives of Kuwaiti civil society were also brought to Geneva to participate in the examination of the state.

- Numerous restrictions on civil and political rights
- Lack of citizen participation in political life
- Discrimination against and ill-treatment of “bidouns” and migrant workers
- Repeal the Law of 1979 relative to the freedom of assembly
- Authorise the creation of political parties
- Cease all discrimination against “bidouns” and migrant workers

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

- Legislative elections scheduled for February 2012

LEBANON

Following a long period of political paralysis as a result of the departure of former Prime Minister Saad Hariri, the establishment of a new government in July 2011 failed to ease the tensions that remained high between the various political factions in the country. The establishment of an NHRI to ensure the respect of human rights and the adoption of several pieces of legislation related to the prevention of torture has still not been accomplished. Torture remains a common practice in many places of detention. Indeed, several uprisings of detainees in Roumiyeh prison erupted in May, October and November 2011 to protest their mistreatment. Four people were killed during these uprisings. Several civilians were also subjected to unfair trials before military courts and human rights defenders have been intimidated or faced retaliations.

Alkarama is particularly concerned about the constant harassment of several human rights defenders by the intelligence services of the army, notably that of our representative in Beirut Mr. Saadeddine Shatila. Alkarama has urgently called on the UN Special Procedures to intervene in his case as he faced the threat of legal prosecution as a result of his work documenting grave violations of human rights in Lebanon.

OUR CONCERNS

- Persistence of torture in detention centres
- Reprisals against and intimidation of human rights defenders
- Excessively long periods of preventive detention and poor detention conditions

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt the NHRI and National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture law, as required by the OPCAT
- End trials of civilians by military tribunals and prolonged preventive detention

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✓

UPCOMING...

- Legislative elections scheduled for 2013
- State report due to the HRCttee since 2001
- State report due to the HRCttee since 2001
- Request from WGEID to carry out country visit pending since 2007

LIBYA

In the context of the Arab revolutions, the anti-government protests in Libya rapidly escalated into a full armed conflict. On 26 February 2011, the UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Colonel Gaddafi and his entourage and, at the request of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, called on the prosecutor of the ICC to open an investigation for crimes against humanity. As the result of an impending attack on Benghazi in March 2011, the UN adopted a resolution authorizing the use of armed force. After eight months of conflict marked by war crimes and flagrant violations of human rights, the opposition forces captured, summarily executed Colonel Gaddafi and took control of the entire country. Thousands of detainees remain in prisons and detention centres, including improvised detention centres, most of which are controlled by revolutionary brigades. Many are held without having been the subject of fair judicial proceedings.

Alkarama has been following the situation on the ground for several years and in collaboration with local stakeholders has conducted field missions since the beginning of the events. Our researchers have documented many violations committed by belligerents and has brought these to the attention of the UN Commission of Inquiry. Alkarama also organized awareness-raising campaigns in the country to reinforce knowledge of, and respect for, humanitarian and human rights laws in all circumstances.

- Difficulties in achieving national reconciliation and the absence of effective control by the judicial authorities over revolutionary units or brigades
- The absence of judicial proceedings to guarantee the rights of detainees and the absence of monitoring by the judiciary of their detention
- Torture and ill-treatment inflicted on detainees by several revolutionary units and brigades
- Investigate acts of violence and other violations committed by all parties in the recent conflict and bring those responsible to justice
- Quickly establish judicial proceedings to guarantee and protect the rights of detainees and a body to monitor all places of detention without exception
- Ensure harmonization of domestic law with international human rights standards

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✓
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

- General elections in June 2012
- State report due to the HRCtee since 2010
- State report due to the CAT since 2006

MAURITANIA

Carried by events in the region, a protest movement known as the “Youth Coordination” was formed and held several protest between February and April 2011, which were suppressed by the authorities. On 1 August, the Head of State tried to diffuse the protest movement by re-launching the “National Dialogue” established by the 2009 Dakar Agreement. Several political parties however called for a boycott of the constitutional reforms proposed, deeming them inadequate. The legislative and municipal elections scheduled for October were postponed indefinitely. In this context of social and political tension, the continued detention of Mohamed Lamine Ould Dadde, a former member of the NHRI, is misuse of the judiciary for political purposes.

In addition, the government’s security policies and counter-terrorism measures have resulted in serious human rights violations.

Alkarama, for example, alerted the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances of the situation of several detainees who continue to be victims of reprisals. At least 14 people sentenced in the context of the fight against terrorism, several to the death penalty, were transferred to secret locations in May 2011 while they were supposed to serve their sentences in Nouakchott prison. In January 2011, Alkarama submitted a report to the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs regarding the application by Mauritania’s NHRI to be accredited by the Committee.

OUR CONCERNS

- A political situation marked by chronic instability and the absence of the rule of law
- Excessive counter-terrorism measures following the application of the anti-terrorism law passed in 2010, use of secret detention and torture during police custody
- Poor prison conditions for detainees given harsh sentences, including the death penalty, following unfair trials

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish reforms to ensure effective rule of law
- Put an end to arbitrary detention, secret detention, and torture while in police custody
- Guarantee the right to a fair trial
- Ratify the ICCPR-OP1, the OPCAT, and the ICPPED

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Legislative elections in April 2012
- Forthcoming review before the CAT
- State report due to the HRCtee since 2006

MOROCCO

Morocco was not left untouched by the uprisings that shook the Arab world in 2011. The “20 February Movement” gathered thousands of peaceful protesters across the country to challenge the government and demand constitutional reforms and social justice. Though the authorities did not prevent the protests, several activists were subjected to pressure or reprisals for their actions. On 9 March 2011, the king announced a comprehensive reform of governmental institutions that resulted in the adoption of a new Constitution in July 2011 and the holding of early parliamentary elections in November 2011.

During this year, Alkarama informed the UN Special Procedures of numerous cases of enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detention following unfair trials. An Opinion was adopted by the WGAD recognizing the arbitrary nature of the detention of Mr Hassan Echerif El-Kettani, who was detained following an unfair trial and has since been freed. Alkarama submitted a report on the major challenges faced by the country to the Committee against Torture in the context of the Committee’s review of Morocco. The report called for an end to the violations that result from Morocco’s security policy as well as for the implementing of judicial reform. Alkarama contributed a report to the second review of Morocco before the HRC as part of the 2nd cycle of UPR reviews which will begin in 2012.

OUR CONCERNS

- Inadequate prison conditions for detainees, in particular for those accused of terrorism who have been subjected to torture and unfair trials
- The gaps in the laws relating to torture, and in particular its imprescriptibility
- Impunity of those responsible for serious human rights violations during the “Years of Lead”

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement all recommendations issued by the Committee against Torture in 2011 and ensure comprehensive reforms that guarantee the total independence of the judiciary
- Harmonize the new Penal Code with international human rights standards
- Repeal the parts of the Anti-Terrorism Law 03-03 that infringe on personal liberty, particularly those concerning the definition of a terrorist infraction and police custody

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- UPR in June 2012
- State report due to the HRCttee since 2008
- Request from the WGAD to carry out country visit pending since 2009

OWMAN

The Sultanate of Oman was not left unscathed by the protest movement that shook the entire Arab world. As of March 2011, demonstrations erupted in the large cities expressing the social malaise felt by the population, especially among young Omanis. As a result of the Omani authorities' reaction to these demonstrations - that made it clear that they would not hesitate to use disproportionate force against peaceful demonstrators - the movement began to call for political change. As is the case in other Gulf monarchies, the protests centre on the question of greater citizen participation in the country's political processes.

The adoption of a number of social policies helped to diffuse the tensions, however only at the cost of increased limitations on freedom of expression, exemplified by the adoption of a new restrictive press law.

Alkarama informed the UN Special Procedures of the deaths of at least two protesters, Abdellah Al-Ghamlassi on 27 February 2011 and Khalifa Al-Alaoui on 1 April 2011. We also alerted the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Expression and the Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Assembly of the cases of hundreds of protesters, journalists, and human rights defenders who were arrested without any judicial warrants and detained arbitrarily, some following clearly unfair trials.

OUR CONCERNS

- Brutal repression of peaceful protests and arbitrary detention of protesters
- New restrictions on freedom of expression under the new press law

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Revise the new press law
- Guarantee the right to freedom of assembly
- Put an end to prolonged arbitrary detentions

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ~~X~~ CAT ~~X~~ ICCPPED ~~X~~

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ~~X~~
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ~~X~~

UPCOMING...

- Request from the FRDX to carry out country visit pending since 2011

PALESTINE

The events that shook the Arab world during 2011, particularly in Egypt and Syria, have had a number of repercussions on the Palestinian situation in general. Both the Palestinian population and their leaders have invoked the spirit of the “Arab Spring” in Gaza and the West Bank. This led to some improvement in relations between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. On another level, an agreement was negotiated for the gradual release of 1,027 Palestinian prisoners and the return of an Israeli soldier captured by Hamas. A diplomatic victory was also won by the Palestinian Authority with the recognition of Palestine as a member state of UNESCO.

Nevertheless, the Israeli army continues to regularly use force against the Palestinian population. Several peaceful protesters were killed by live ammunition fired at demonstrators celebrating the Nakba on 15 May 2011.

Alkarama has been informed of acts of intimidation against human rights defenders and brought before the UN Special Procedures the case of Fuad Al-Khuffash. The Director of Al-Ahrar Organization for Prisoner Studies and Human Rights and a member of Alkarama, he was arrested by the Israeli army at Nablus in the West Bank.

OUR CONCERNS

- Repression of peaceful protests with the use of excessive force by the Israeli army
- Reprisals against, and intimidation of, human rights defenders
- Restrictions on freedom of expression

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- End extrajudicial executions and all excessive use of force to repress peaceful protests
- End all measures of reprisals and intimidation against human rights defenders
- End the use of torture in detention centres

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR X CAT X ICCPED X

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL X
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL X

UPCOMING...

- General elections in May 2012

Spared by the widespread protest movement that shook the Arab world during the past year, Qatar has nevertheless been slow to implement reforms allowing broader participation in the political life of the country.

The level of respect for human rights in Qatar is primarily manifested in the authorities' treatment of migrant workers. The Human Rights Council recommended during Qatar's UPR that the country repeal several discriminatory laws aimed at migrant workers. Although a large number of people deprived of nationality have recently been regularized, some of them are still excluded from this regularisation.

Additionally, a number of people were arrested this year and held in incommunicado detention by the State Security services before being freed without trial. Several reported having been victims of torture and ill treatment, as was the case with Salem Hassan Khalifa Al Kuwari who was the object of an Opinion by the WGAD that stated his detention was arbitrary.

Alkarama alerted a number of the UN Special Procedures of the arrest on 1 March 2011 of the organisation's former Secretary-General, Sultan Khalifa al-Khulaifi, who was arrested by agents of the State Security services and detained for one month. He was eventually released without any judicial procedure being brought against him.

OUR CONCERNS

- The delay in reforms announced by the officials as well as the continuing restrictions on several civil and political rights
- Discriminatory measures against migrant workers and stateless persons
- Arbitrary detention and ill-treatment in detention

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Undertake political reforms to ensure effective participation by citizens in electing the assemblies provided for by the Constitution
- Take appropriate measures to regularize all stateless persons
- Abolish arbitrary detention and ill-treatment in detention
- Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the OPCAT

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✗ CAT ✓ ICPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Review before the CAT in November 2012
- Elections for the renewal of the Advisory Council (Majlis al-Shura) in 2013
- UPR in May 2014

SAUDI ARABIA

Despite increasingly strong calls by civil society calling for political reforms to increase the participation of Saudi citizens in running their country, royal authorities remain unwilling to consider the possibility of change. The current Interior Minister, who was appointed Crown Prince this year, is responsible for a campaign of repression that has targeted thousands of people over the last few years, including human rights defenders and peaceful political activists who have been arbitrarily detained and convicted in unfair trials. Reformists are particularly targeted for reprisals. This year has seen a substantial increase in the number of family members of detainees daring to break the culture of fear and denounce abuses by the authorities by, for example, calling for the release of their relatives during peaceful demonstrations outside of the Interior Ministry.

This year Alkarama submitted more than 150 cases to the UN Special Procedures. Despite a large number of Opinions issued by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention regarding detainees in Saudi Arabia, the authorities refused to cooperate with UN mechanisms. Alkarama decided to present the 2011 Alkarama Award to Dr Said bin Zair, who has been arbitrarily detained for over 16 years in the Kingdom.

OUR CONCERNS

- The complete absence of citizen participation in political life and lack of prospects for reform
- Systematic repression of political and human rights activists under the pretext of the fight against terrorism
- General practice of arbitrary detention and unfair trials
- The use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in detention

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Put in place political reforms for citizen participation in the running of the country
- Put an end to the practice of arbitrary detention and torture and abolish the Special Criminal Court of the Ministry of the Interior
- Ratify the ICCPR and cooperate with the UN Special Procedures

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR **X** CAT **✓** ICPPED **X**

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL **X**
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL **X**

UPCOMING...

- UPR in October 2013
- State report due to the CAT since October 2002
- Request from the WGAD to carry out country visit pending since 2008 and from the SRT since 2010

SYRIA

More than 6000 people have been killed since the beginning of the uprisings of the Syrian people, and the number continues to grow as the repression of the protest movement intensifies and the clashes between the military and deserters become more common. The security services directly under the control of the President have orchestrated a systematic repression of political opponents as well as the civilian population. Measures to alleviate the unrest such as the lifting of emergency rule, amnesty, and political reform have not been carried to fruition and have failed to defuse the crisis. Despite the intervention of the majority of the international community, including members of the Arab League, the government continues to rely on violent confrontation to address the crisis and there is a serious risk that the situation will deteriorate rapidly.

In this context, since the beginning of the repression Alkarama has alerted the Special Procedures of numerous cases of disappeared people, summary executions and arbitrary detention; in total more than 3000 victims have been identified. In addition Alkarama has received many testimonies of torture that we have also communicated to the High Commissioner for Human Rights' fact-finding commission as well as the commission of inquiry set up by the Council with which Alkarama has closely collaborated.

OUR CONCERNS

- The continuation of repression of popular demonstrations and the excessive use of armed force against civilians
- Secret detention and systematic use of torture
- Total impunity of the security services

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Put an end to the repression of the population
- Completely reform the political, judicial, and security systems
- Undertake inquiries concerning all allegations of human rights violations and prosecute those responsible

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Special report to CAT to be submitted before 9 March 2012
- Presentation of the follow-up report to the UN Commission of Inquiry
- Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Syria by the HRC
- State report due to the HRCtee since 2009

TUNISIA

More than 300 people lost their lives and many more were wounded during the country-wide protests from December 2010 to January 2011 that were triggered by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi. The determination of Tunisian citizens to end the oppression they were subjected to by the police state of President Ben Ali led him to flee the country on 14 January 2011 and seek refuge in Saudi Arabia. Since then several former officials of his regime who were responsible for torture or involved in corruption and repression have been tried, and many were convicted. Although the social and economic situation remains perilous, transparent legislative elections have been held and multiple parties were allowed to participate in the National Constituent Assembly in October 2011 following the establishment of a provisional government of national unity led by the Nahda party. The new authorities have taken many measures intended to prevent repetition of the abuses of the past by ratifying several international human rights instruments.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture visited the country for the first time. The drafting and adoption of the new Constitution is the next important milestone. The country is to be considered under the second cycle of the UPR in 2012 and Alkarama has decided to contribute to the process in a report that will focus on how the recommendations made by the Human Rights Council in 2008 have, or not, been implemented.

OUR CONCERNS

- Repression by the security forces of some rallies denouncing the slow pace of reforms or lack of improvement in the economy
- Continued cases of abuse by the police

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Take every step necessary to reform the police apparatus and to ensure the independence of the judiciary
- Prevent impunity for those responsible for grave human rights violations and make a total break with the policies of the former regime

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPPED ✓

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✓

UPCOMING...

- State report to be submitted to the HRCtee on 31 March 2012
- UPR in June 2012

UAE

During this year, serious restrictions were placed on the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens of the UAE, as was the case with the other Gulf monarchies in reaction to the “Arab Spring”. The situation of the “bidoun” and migrant workers has hardly improved and they remain subject to many forms of discrimination. Preventive measures were taken to ensure that no demonstrations could take place. Several local organizations, including the Association of Jurists, have had members of their Boards replaced by individuals close to the government, demonstrating its tightening grip over civil society. Several political opponents and human rights defenders launched a petition in March 2011 calling for the democratization of political life and denouncing corruption in the country. Torture is still practiced in some detention centres under the control of state security, including Al-Wathba.

Alkarama participated in a coalition of international NGOs that monitored the trial in November 2011 of Ahmed Mansour and other activists on trial before the Federal Supreme Court for having “publically insulted” the authorities. Alkarama also alerted the UN Special Procedures of other attacks on fundamental freedoms. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recognized the arbitrary nature of the detention of Ahmed Mansour and his colleagues as well as that of two Uyghurs for whom Alkarama has undertaken numerous actions since 2009.

OUR CONCERNS

- Attacks on the right to freedom of expression and political association
- Unfair trials, especially against human rights defenders
- Use of torture by the security services

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Guarantee freedom of association including that of the boards of directors of civil society organisations
- Guarantee the independence of the judicial branch
- Eradicate the use of torture in detention centres and combat impunity

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ~~X~~ CAT ~~X~~ ICPPED ~~X~~

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ~~X~~
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ~~X~~

UPCOMING...

- UPR in October 2013

YEMEN

Outraged by proposed amendments to the Constitution that would perpetuate President Saleh's rule, large portions of the Yemeni population took to the streets of Sana'a in January 2011. The popular protest movement grew and rapidly spread into many other cities. The political tensions which emerged were deeply influenced by tribal and regional issues. Negotiations between the authorities and the opposition took place despite continuing repression marked by the disproportionate use of force which resulted in at least a thousand deaths and many more injured. The President formally stepped down on 23 November 2011, transferring power to the Vice President after having obtained a guarantee of impunity.

Alkarama closely monitored the situation and submitted numerous cases of serious violations including summary executions of peaceful protesters to the UN Special Procedures. One of Alkarama's members in Yemen, Mr. Abdul Wahab Al Humaiqani, was himself the object of a targeted assassination attempt. Alkarama also submitted many cases of journalists who tried to ensure independent coverage of the events and were arbitrarily arrested and detained, including the case of this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, Ms Tawakkol Karman. In view of the upcoming review of Yemen before the Human Rights Committee, a country visit was carried out in December 2011.

OUR CONCERNS

- Excessive use of armed force to repress peaceful protests
- The intimidation and use of threats against journalists and human rights defenders
- Impunity for those responsible for serious human rights violations

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Immediately end all excessive use of force against peaceful protesters
- End reprisals against human rights defenders and journalists
- Put an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and other ill-treatment and end impunity for those responsible for grave human rights violations

WHAT IS RATIFIED

ICCPR ✓ CAT ✓ ICCPPED ✗

ICCPR OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗
CAT OPTIONAL PROTOCOL ✗

UPCOMING...

- Review before the HRCttee on 14 and 15 March 2012
- Presidential elections scheduled for February 2012
- Request by the SRT to carry out country visit pending since 2007