

Item 6: Universal Periodic Review.

Saudi Arabia

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence



Mr. President

Unfortunately, there has been systematic discrimination and hostility against religious minorities especially Shia citizens by the Kingdom in Saudi Arabia. Shia minorities are banned from performing their religious rituals and are criminalized if they do so.

According to religious provisions of public courts, Shia are not given the right to make an appeal. Also, the Shia face serious restrictions for job opportunities and government positions. This is while Saudi accepted UPR recommendations to protect religious minority rights in the first cycle.

The kingdom has ratified a new counter terrorism law that criminalizes any speech critical of the government or any attempts to make reforms or fight against corruption and discrimination. The new law puts more restrictions on the freedom of speech and grants the police force extensive powers for arbitrary arrests of human right activists without being monitored by the judiciary.

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) expresses serious concerns over suppression and restriction of religious minorities especially the Shia by Saudi as a member of the Human Rights Council. ODVV calls on all international human right organizations to react toward the violence against the Shia minority and political prisoners.

ODVV also calls on Saudi to investigate the methods of eliminating discrimination against the Shia minority and to promote and protect interfaith dialogue.