

<b>Country/entity</b>	Bahrain
<b>Region</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>Agreement name</b>	National Action Charter of Bahrain
<b>Date</b>	15 Feb 2001
<b>Agreement status</b>	Unilateral document
<b>Interim arrangement</b>	Yes
<b>Agreement/conflict level</b>	Intrastate/intrastate conflict

### **Bahraini Uprising (2011 - )**

Following uprisings across the MENA region in early 2011, protests ensued on February 14, 2011, aimed at generating social reforms and greater social equality for Bahrain's Shi'a majority. Following the deaths of two protesters in the first two days, a sit-in was held at the Pearl Roundabout in Manama on February. The next morning, security forces stormed the camp, killing 4 protesters, marking a turning point in the conflict. Protests picked up momentum and by April 2012, over 80 protesters and security forces had been killed in violence from both sides. In December 2013, there were impromptu 183 protests alone. Sectarian tensions are further heightened by the recruitment of Sunni Muslims into the National Army from abroad, and the deployment of soldiers from the predominantly Sunni GCC Joint Shield Force. There is also an indication of state-sponsored systematic destruction of Shi'a mosques across Bahrain following the protests.

On July 2, 2011, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa instigated the Bahrain National Dialogue as a means to promote reconciliation between the government and Bahrainis. 300 participants were involved with 37% representation dedicated for political organisations, 36% for CSOs, 21% for opinion leaders and 6% for media representation. Opposition parties were only granted 5 seats, and there was much criticism of the un-balanced nature of the National Dialogue. The National Dialogues were suspended by January 2014. Parliamentary Elections later that year boycotted and dismissed by the Shia opposition as a farce, followed by the arrest of the opposition (Al-Wefaq) leader Sheikh Ali Salman, ensuing into protests and clashes between his supporters and security forces. Systemic harassment and prosecution of Shias continue.

Close  
Bahraini Uprising (2011 -  
)

<b>Stage</b>	Framework/substantive - partial
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Government
<b>Peace process</b>	Bahrain: Reform-based peace process

<b>Parties</b>	Al Kahlifa Family of Bahrain, as well as "50 national figures"
<b>Third parties</b>	-
<b>Description</b>	the National Action Charter was created in a unilateral response by the ruling Al Khalifa family of Bahrain to quell growing dissent among segments of Bahraini society, particularly the Shi'a majority. The Charter emphasizes the role of the Al Khalifa family in Bahrain's history, national unity and democratic principles. It contains a bill of rights.

**Agreement document** [BH\\_010215\\_National Action Charter.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

## Groups

**Children/youth** Groups→Children/youth→Rhetorical  
Page 7, Sixth - Family as the basis of society  
Based on the firm belief that family is the nucleus of the society and that good family is key to a cohesive society as well as key to upholding religious and ethical values and national sense of belonging, the state protects the legal form of family as well as maternity and childhood, provides care to children, protects them from exploitation and moral, physical and spiritual negligence. In particular, the state pays special attention to physical, moral and mental development of youth. In this respect, the state ensures necessary social security for citizens in cases of aging, invalidity, orphanage, widowhood and unemployment. The state also secures social insurance services for citizens in such cases. The state secures health care and puts in place health policies that are conducive to achieving the objective of health for all. The state ensures the solidarity of the society in sharing burdens arising from natural calamities and disasters, compensation of those who may be injured due to war or on account of military duty. The state endeavors to support women's rights and the enactment of laws on protection of family and family members.

**Disabled persons** Groups→Disabled persons→Rhetorical  
Page 7, Sixth - Family as the basis of society  
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**Elderly/age**

Groups→Elderly/age→Rhetorical

Page 7, Sixth - Family as the basis of society

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**Migrant workers**

No specific mention.

**Racial/ethnic/  
national group**

Groups→Racial/ethnic/national group→Anti-discrimination

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

1- All citizens are equal before the law in terms of rights and duties, without distinction of race, origin, language, religion or belief. This has been reiterated by H.H. the Amir in his first address to the people in the wake of his assumption to the power.

**Religious groups**

Groups→Religious groups→Rhetorical

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

This is based on a broader principle, namely, that people are equal insofar as human dignity is concerned, a principle that has been consecrated by Islam since fourteen centuries. Addressing believers during his 'Hajjatul Wada'a (or the last pilgrimage).

Prophet Mohammed laid emphasis on this principle by saying that people are as equal as dents of a comb are, that no Arab claims a preference over an 'Ajami' (or a non-Arab) and no white man can claim preference over a black man except on the basis of righteousness and good deeds. A natural flow of this great principle of Islam and indeed humanity is a set of related principles, namely:

Groups→Religious groups→Anti-discrimination

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

1- All citizens are equal before the law in terms of rights and duties, without distinction of race, origin, language, religion or belief. This has been reiterated by H.H. the Amir in his first address to the people in the wake of his assumption to the power.

Groups→Religious groups→Substantive

Page 7, Third - Freedom of belief

The state ensures freedom of belief. Freedom of conscience shall be absolute. The state maintains inviolability of houses of worship and guarantees freedom to practice religious rites according to considered custom of the land.

Page 8, Eighth - Education, culture and science:

... Law organizes religious education ...

**Indigenous people** No specific mention.

**Other groups** No specific mention.

**Refugees/displaced persons** No specific mention.

**Social class** Groups→Social class→Anti-discrimination  
Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality  
1- All citizens are equal before the law in terms of rights and duties, without distinction of race, origin, language, religion or belief. This has been reiterated by H.H. the Amir in his first address to the people in the wake of his assumption to the power.

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**Gender**

**Women, girls and gender**

Page 2, We shall remain hand in hand and united over the course of this process and I hereby stretch my hand to every single Bahraini, men and women, as it showed the pledge of allegiance and it will show a new formula of allegiance. The new formula and the national modernization shall be the features of our best days to come.

Page 7, Sixth - Family as the basis of society

Based on the firm belief that family is the nucleus of the society and that good family is key to a cohesive society as well as key to upholding religious and ethical values and national sense of belonging, the state protects the legal form of family as well as maternity and childhood, provides care to children, protects them from exploitation and moral, physical and spiritual negligence. In particular, the state pays special attention to physical, moral and mental development of youth. In this respect, the state ensures necessary social security for citizens in cases of aging, invalidity, orphanage, widowing and unemployment. The state also secures social insurance services for citizens in such cases. The state secures health care and puts in place health policies that are conducive to achieving the objective of health for all. The state ensures the solidarity of the society in sharing burdens arising from natural calamities and disasters, compensation of those who may be injured due to war or on account of military duty. The state endeavors to support women's rights and the enactment of laws on protection of family and family members.

Page 9, Chapter II: Government System

Seventh - People's right to participation in Public Affairs

Citizens, men and women alike, have the right to participate in public affairs and political rights including suffrage and the right to contest as prescribed by law.

Page 13-14, Chapter VII: Foreign Relations

... It is noted that since it joined the United Nations, Bahrain has contributed to all UN activities, resolutions, events, agreements and conventions, particularly those related to human rights, civil, political and socioeconomic rights, women's rights as well as the work of UN specialized agencies. In the realm of international economic and trade relations, the considered policy of the state of Bahrain stands for free international trade, movement of investment, capital and labour while taking into account national interests of individual countries. In so believing, the state of Bahrain maintains that each country enjoys the better title over its own natural resources that cannot be disposed of under any external pressure or dictation.

**Men and boys**

Gender→Men and boys→Gender neutral wording

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**LGBTI**

No specific mention.

**Family**

Page 7, Sixth - Family as the basis of society

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## State definition



**Nature of state  
(general)**

Page 2, ... Bahrain was one of the lands that welcomed the call of Islam at an early date and willingly converted to Islam. Furthermore, Bahrain was an early, staunch supporter of Islam. It carried its banner across the Gulf down to India. Bahrain's resources substantially contributed to the "Beitulmal" (or Treasury) of Islam's realm. Its men of letters made early contributions to Islamic civilization through their jurisprudence and literary works particularly during the Caliphate period. Such contribution made all the more natural that Islamic value of tolerance, justice and piety have been deeply embedded into the very conscience of the Bahrain people...

Page 5, First - Goals and basis of Government

Government goals are to protect the country, to maintain national unity and to achieve comprehensive, sustainable [and] protected [sic]. Development in political, socioeconomic, cultural and other fields. Justice is the basis of government. Equality, rule of law, liberty, security, peace, education, social solidarity and equal opportunity are all core principles of the society that are ensured by the state. Over the years, those core values- solemnly attached to by the Amir, government and people of Bahrain-have been the basis of government. They are reinforced by solidarity, cooperation and cohesion between the ruler and the people. Justice is one such principle that has remained an article of faith that is further ensured with the upholding of values including solidarity and cordiality.

Page 5, Chapter I: Basic principles of the society

No society can be as stable for scores of centuries as successful in building a distinctive civilization as Bahrain unless the same is solidly attached to a set of core values that ensure its cohesion, progress and development and strengthens its entity as a state. With its solemn belief in Islam and Arab identity and true to its deep-rooted traditions, the Bahraini society has been attached to a set of core principles that are congruent with Arab-Islamic values. These core values and principles must be upheld and safeguarded as they are co-opted by the entire society. They have always been and maintained through generations since time immemorial in the interest of both people and the state. Hence, these core values and principles are sacrosanct. Neither a public authority nor a citizen can compromise any of them. These core values and principles can be enumerated as follows:

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

First - The Amir

Government system of Bahrain shall be a constitutional monarchy as may be prescribed by the constitution and the Amiri Decree on succession. The Amir is the head of state. His person is inviolable. He is the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, the symbol of national stability and the fulcrum of government system of the state of Bahrain. The Amir exercises his powers through ministers who are accountable to him. He appoints to, and relieves from, premierships and ministerial posts within his powers as prescribed by the constitution.

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

Fourth - People as the source of all powers

Government system of the state of Bahrain is a democracy where all powers vest with the people. Sovereignty is exercised as prescribed by the constitution.

Page 11, Chapter IV: National Security

... It [The Bahrain Defence Force] is a symbol of national unity, a support to our brethren and nation so as to ensure security and stability, not only for our fatherland but also for our beloved Gulf region and, indeed, the Arab World. ...

Page 13, 14, Chapter VII: Foreign Relations

**State configuration** No specific mention.

**Self determination** No specific mention.

**Referendum** Page 1-2, This will be submitted to a general public referendum according to the procedures in this regard, in order receive the opinions and views of the people. Once we are satisfied that there is general consensus about this draft, we shall endorse it as a basis for our national path, upon which we shall be guided in processing the national action and complement the modernizing of the state institutions and its constitutional power, while implement in each stage those parts deemed to be in line with the aspirations of the citizens, ...

**State symbols** Page 14, Outlook  
First - The Name of the State of Bahrain  
An amendment of the constitution shall determine the official name of the state of Bahrain as may be adopted by the Amir and the people of Bahrain.

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System  
Third- Islamic Shari'a and Legislation  
Islam is the religion of the state. Islamic Shari'a is the principal source of legislation.

**Independence/  
secession** No specific mention.

**Accession/  
unification** No specific mention.

**Border delimitation** No specific mention.

**Cross-border  
provision** Page 12-13, Chapter VI: Gulf Relations  
The government and people of Bahrain firmly believe that the peoples of GCC countries share the same goals, interests and destiny. They share blood relationships that are further galvanized by common history, culture and custom. These have been sufficient grounds for Bahrain to be a founding member of GCC along with other sisterly Gulf Arab countries.  
A serious cooperation among GCC countries is of utmost importance to the highest interests of all sisterly member-states, including maximum development for the countries and peoples of GCC. In this respect, GCC has proved to be capable of defending the freedom and sovereignty of its member-states and to serve as a shield to protect their independence. Therefore, the state of Bahrain shall always work, with all its force, to strengthen GCC and to support the just causes of its sisterly member-states. The state of Bahrain considers this as one of its policy core constants that are organically related to Bahrain belief that its security and prosperity are part and parcel of those of other sisterly GCC member- states.  
The state of Bahrain shall work closely with its sisterly GCC member-states for greater coordination, rapprochement and integration within GCC particularly in those areas that still require a more effective coordination such as economic integration, defence cooperation, information as well as people's participation in GCC organizations.

**Governance**

**Political institutions (new or reformed)**

Governance→Political institutions (new or reformed)→New political institutions (indefinite)

Page 1, Today is the dearest day in the history of Bahrain and a glorious moment in our dignified and honoured path. We confidently can say that your accomplishing of the national charter draft, represents an advanced step in the course of the modernizing the political structure of the state including the systems and institutions, in such a way that meet the aspiration of the progressing of the people of Bahrain towards further civilized progress and rising.

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

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Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

Fourth - People as the source of all powers

Government system of the state of Bahrain is a democracy where all powers vest with the people. Sovereignty is exercised as prescribed by the constitution.

Page 9, Chapter II: Government System

Fifth - Separation of Powers

With a view to consecrating a stable democracy, the government system is based on checks and balances, i.e., the separation of, and cooperation among, the three powers namely, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary as set forth in the constitution. H.H the Amir is at the helm of the three powers.

**Elections**

Page 5, ... And in implementation of the process of modernizing state's powers and institutions, in preparation for the electing of a freely elected representative council along with an appointed council comprising deep-visioned experts, eventually leading to a constitutional invigoration and institutional modernizing on a well-balanced formula that takes into consideration the lessons of the past and prepares for the future, the Committee reaffirms its absolute support that enables Bahrain to continue its aspired path for a better future. ...

Page 14, Outlook

... Second - The Legislature

The provisions of part 4 Chapter 2 of the constitution on the legislature shall be amended to be consistent with democratic and constitutional developments worldwide in so far as the introduction of bicameral system is concerned. This would mean that one chamber is constituted through free, direct elections whose mandate will be to enact laws while a second one would have people with experience and expertise who would give advice as necessary. Laws shall be enacted as prescribed in detail by the constitution and in congruence with constitutional norms and traditions followed in deep-rooted democracies. The people's consensus on this charter is a true reflection of their will to have a more stable, prosperous future under the leadership of H.H Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Amir of the State of Bahrain. We pray to God Almighty to help us be among "those who faith- fully observe their trusts and their covenants" as described in the Holy Quran. In God Almighty "we put our trust." Verily, God Almighty "is the best to protect and the Best to help."

**Electoral  
commission**

No specific mention.

**Political parties  
reform**

No specific mention.

**Civil society**

Page 7, Fifth - Civil Society Activities

With a view to enabling the society to make use of all civil capabilities and activities, the state ensures the freedom to form non- governmental, scientific, cultural, professional associations and unions at a national level for legitimate purposes through peaceful means under terms and conditions as may be prescribed by law. No one shall be forced to join an association or union or to remain member thereof.

**Traditional/  
religious leaders**

No specific mention.

**Public  
administration**

No specific mention.

**Constitution**

Governance→Constitution→Constitutional reform/making

Page 4, ... in view of the royal will to usher the country into the third millennium as a truly modern one that is empowered with a full-fledged political, constitutional frame work conducive to proper responses to local, regional and international developments; ...

Page 4, ... It is further resolved that the constitution of the country shall be amended in such a way as to allow making use of other democracies' experiences in broader participation in government and administration, including their putting in place of a bicameral system where the legislature can have the double advantage of learned and experienced citizens in the Shura council on the one hand and the interaction with people's opinion from all schools of thought through a freely, directly elected chamber.  
...

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

Second - Constitutional Form of the State

In view of the stability enjoyed, progress achieved, strides made and challenges surmounted by Bahrain by the Grace of God Almighty, and in view of the fact that it has assumed its full-fledged role as a state both in terms of international relations and sovereign institutions based on equality of all citizens, common good and national unity, it is deemed proper that Bahrain should join democratic constitutional monarchies with a view to meeting peoples aspirations to further progress.

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

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## Power sharing

**Political power sharing** No specific mention.

**Territorial power sharing** No specific mention.

**Economic power sharing** No specific mention.

**Military power sharing** No specific mention.

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## Human rights and equality

**Human rights/RoL general** Page 3, ... Under Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Bahrain gained its full independence as a state that upholds democracy, institutions and rule of law. ...

Page 4, ... Having established modern institutions based on democracy, constitutional institutions and the rule of law since its independence; having fully assumed its full role as a state both in terms of its inter- national relations as well as its sovereign institutions that are based on justice, equality and care for citizens rights since independence ...

Page 5, First - Goals and basis of Government  
... Equality, rule of law, liberty, security, peace, education, social solidarity and equal opportunity are all core principles of the society that are ensured by the state.

Page 9, Chapter II: Government System  
Sixth - Rule of Law and Independence of the Judiciary  
Government in the state of Bahrain is based on the rule of law. The independence and immunity of the judiciary are two key guarantees for protecting rights and freedom. The state shall complete the judicial system as prescribed in the constitution. It shall specify the judicial authority vested with the jurisdiction over disputes as to whether a given law or executive regulations are consistent with the constitution. The state shall specify a judicial authority vested with the jurisdiction of the Attorney General.

**Bill of rights/similar** Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality Individual freedoms quality, justice and equal opportunity are core principles of the society. The State shoulders the responsibility of ensuring them for all citizens on an equal footing. This is based on a broader principle, namely, that people are equal insofar as human dignity is concerned, a principle that has been consecrated by Islam since fourteen centuries. Addressing believers during his 'Hajjatul Wada'a (or the last pilgrimage). Prophet Mohammed laid emphasis on this principle by saying that people are as equal as dents of a comb are, that no Arab claims a preference over an 'Ajami' (or a non-Arab) and no white man can claim preference over a black man except on the basis of righteousness and good deeds. A natural flow of this great principle of Islam and indeed humanity is a set of related principles, namely:

**Treaty  
incorporation**

No specific mention.



## Civil and political rights

Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Torture

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

3- No person shall in any way be subjected to any kind of physical or moral torture, inhumane, humiliating or indignant treatment. Any confession or utterance obtained under torture, threatening or persuasion shall be null and void. In particular, an accused shall not be subjected to any physical or moral harm. Law ensures punishment of those who commit an offense of torture, a physically or psychologically harmful act.

Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Equality

Page 3, ... They stand for freedom, equality, justice, democracy and participation in governance by all. ...

Page 4, ... Having established modern institutions based on democracy, constitutional institutions and the rule of law since its independence; having fully assumed its full role as a state both in terms of its inter- national relations as well as its sovereign institutions that are based on justice, equality and care for citizens rights since independence ...

Page 5, First - Goals and basis of Government

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Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

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1- All citizens are equal before the law in terms of rights and duties, without distinction of race, origin, language, religion or belief. This has been reiterated by H.H. the Amir in his first address to the people in the wake of his assumption to the power.

Page 7, Seventh - Employment as both a duty and a right

This is in the interest of individual dignity and public good. Subject to public law and order, every citizen has the right to practice a profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business. Taking into account that save in a case prescribed by law for a national necessity and against a fair consideration, no one shall be forced into a specific job, the State ensures employment opportunities under fair terms and conditions for citizens within national economic development programs. Subject to rules of social justice, the law organizes employer- employee relations on an economic basis.

Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Liberty and security of person

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

2- Personal liberty is ensured under the law. Unless according to procedure established by the law and under judicial supervision, no person shall be arrested, detained in custody, inspected or put under house arrest, restricted residence or movement.

Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Humane treatment in detention

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality

3- No person shall in any way be subjected to any kind of physical or moral torture, inhumane, humiliating or indignant treatment. Any confession or utterance obtained under torture, threatening or persuasion shall be null and void. In particular, an accused shall not be subjected to any physical or moral harm. Law ensures punishment of those

**Socio-economic rights**

Human rights and equality→Socio-economic rights→Property

Page 9-10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society

Second - Private Ownership

Private ownership is inviolable. Subject to law, every person has the right to dispose of his property. Subject to a fair compensation, a private property shall be expropriated only for public good purposes within the scope set forth in and as prescribed by law.

Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society

Third- Economic Justice and Balanced contracts

Private ownership, capital and work are individual rights of a social nature. Law organizes such rights and the practice thereof on an economic and socially equitable basis. Law determines rules that ensure a balanced relationship among elements of production as well as balanced contractual relationship.

Human rights and equality→Socio-economic rights→Work

Page 7, Seventh - Employment as both a duty and a right

Employment is a duty of every citizen. This is in the interest of individual dignity and public good. Subject to public law and order, every citizen has the right to practice a profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business. Taking into account that save in a case prescribed by law for a national necessity and against a fair consideration, no one shall be forced into a specific job, the State ensures employment opportunities under fair terms and conditions for citizens within national economic development programs. Subject to rules of social justice, the law organizes employer- employee relations on an economic basis.

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**Rights related issues**

**Citizenship**

No specific mention.

## Democracy

Page 1, It is our pride to achieve this national unanimity in the form of the charter draft after several gatherings of useful dialogue with various sectors of our civilized community and its representatives. Accordingly you had gathered within the context of this national committee and from various positions, thus enriching the common visions with constructive views and free exchange of opinion in free Bahrain, to strengthen the principles of human coexistence and civilized dialogue which embodied, and over ages, the democratic feature and practices that are formulated today by the charter. You have in fact demonstrated your ability to process this pioneering mission in the history of the nation and proved your competence to shoulder the task for the interest of all citizens. These are only the first step that precedes a number of dialogue and forums within our national course, fortunately coinciding with last ten days of Ramadan, a document which shall be remembered by next generations as Ramadan document.

Page 3, ... Under Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Bahrain gained its full independence as a state that upholds democracy, institutions and rule of law. ...

Page 3, ... Under H.H the Amir, Bahrain has witnessed a vigorous leap forward to further democracy in response to people's aspiration to a modern state that continues to enjoy security, stability and prosperity, a state where constitutional institutions capable of meeting the aspirations of both leaderships and the peoples and where justice and rule of law reign supreme, be completed. At this historic juncture, the people of Bahrain are resolved to have a shining morrow. They stand for freedom, equality, justice, democracy and participation in governance by all. ...

Page 4, ... Having established modern institutions based on democracy, constitutional institutions and the rule of law since its independence; having fully assumed its full role as a state both in terms of its inter- national relations as well as its sovereign institutions that are based on justice, equality and care for citizens rights since independence ...

Page 4, ... It is hereby resolved that national, political and constitutional constants, including the democratic, constitutional monarchy under which the king serves his people and symbolizes their independent identity and their aspirations to progress, shall be attached to it. ...

Page 5, ... . And considering the response received from the members of the Committee to agree with the scope of the wide vision of H.H the Amir Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa whose democratic style was clearly manifested in his dialogue, in his meetings with various national sectors and several national public gatherings, the Committee expresses its deep honour and pride over the close bond and cohesion between the leader and the people, which in fact form a solid foundation for the national action and a true pillar to preserve the cultural and civilized accomplishments in the country and also affirming the adherence to non-squandering of any inch of the soil of this cherished nation. ...

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

Second - Constitutional Form of the State

In view of the stability enjoyed, progress achieved, strides made and challenges surmounted by Bahrain by the Grace of God Almighty, and in view of the fact that it has assumed its full-fledged role as a state both in terms of international relations and sovereign institutions based on equality of all citizens, common good and national unity, it is deemed proper that Bahrain should join democratic constitutional monarchies with a view to meeting peoples aspirations to further progress.

Page 9, Chapter II: Government System

Fifth - Separation of Powers

**Detention procedures** No specific mention.

**Media and communication** Rights related issues→Media and communication→Media logistics  
Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality  
7- Personal correspondence shall enjoy inviolability and secrecy. Mail, cable, telephone, electronic and other correspondence shall be protected. Save in cases where law deems it necessary, and subject to judicial supervision, such correspondence shall not be censored or inspected.

Page 7, Fourth - Freedom of expression and publishing  
Every citizen shall have the right to express himself orally, in writing or in any other way of expression of personal opinion or creativity. Under this law, freedom of scientific research, publishing, press and printing are ensured within the scope specified by law.

**Mobility/access** No specific mention.

**Protection measures** No specific mention.

**Other** No specific mention.

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## **Rights institutions**

**NHRI** No specific mention.

**Regional or international human rights institutions** No specific mention.

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## **Justice sector reform**

**Criminal justice and emergency law** Justice sector reform→Criminal justice and emergency law→Reform to specific laws  
Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality  
4- An offense and punishment for the same shall be established only by law. No person shall be convicted of any offence except for violation of a law in force at the time of the commission of the act charged as an offence.

**State of emergency provisions** No specific mention.

**Judiciary and courts**

Page 4, ... ; in view of H.H the Amir's aspirations to further deepen democracy through a more balanced structure that maintains constitutional political participation of both government and people, checks and balances, strengthens the judiciary's mechanics and allows for the creation of a constitution court, an auditor general and an administrative supervisory authority; ...

Page 9, Chapter II: Government System

Sixth - Rule of Law and Independence of the Judiciary

Government in the state of Bahrain is based on the rule of law. The independence and immunity of the judiciary are two key guarantees for protecting rights and freedom. The state shall complete the judicial system as prescribed in the constitution. It shall specify the judicial authority vested with the jurisdiction over disputes as to whether a given law or executive regulations are consistent with the constitution. The state shall specify a judicial authority vested with the jurisdiction of the Attorney General.

**Prisons and detention**

No specific mention.

**Traditional Laws**

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

Third- Islamic Shari'a and Legislation

Islam is the religion of the state. Islamic Shari'a is the principal source of legislation.

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## **Socio-economic reconstruction**

**Development or socio-economic reconstruction** Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Socio-economic development  
[Summary] Charter makes several references to "development".

Page 10-11, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society

Seventh - Labour and training

The State of Bahrain maintains that the greatest assets in it are its own citizens who have proved themselves in educational and cultural attainment, and distinctively so.

Therefore, providing citizens with support through continuous training and retraining would ensure infusing fresh blood and experience into labour market, with ensuring greater employment opportunities for citizens.

**National economic plan** Page 9, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
First - The Principle of Free Economy

The economic system of the state of Bahrain is based on individual initiative, freedom of capital movement in terms of investment and transfer. It lays emphasis on the role of private sector in resource development as well as in activating the economy. Over the year, this economic system has provided for a tangible economic and investment activity and resulted in substantial capital inflows for investment. An open-door policy must be accompanied by a new public administration mindset, one that is oriented to streamlined procedure, transparency, elimination of jurisdictional overlapping, improved services and updated economic legislation within a framework of integrity and equal opportunity. In order for auditing and administrative supervision to be effective and for bureaucracy to become more transparent, there is a need to institute an Auditor General and an Administrative Supervisory Authority.

Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society

Fourth - Diversification of Economic Activity and Sources of National Income

The state of Bahrain has been a pioneer of diversification of economic activity and sources of national income among Gulf Arab countries. The idea was to avoid dependence on a single main source of income, to be able to ensure a reasonable standard of living for future generations and to avoid vulnerability to external economic fluctuation. As a result, Bahrain has grown into an important regional financial center and an internationally acclaimed tourist-attracting point. Through support made available to manufacturing, high value added, informatics and services industries, it has been possible to develop a platform for economic development and to offer employment opportunities to citizens.



**Natural resources** Page 9, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
The state of Bahrain has made great strides in the field of economic development with a view to raising per capita income. This has been achieved despite high population density and scarce natural resources including land and water. It is due to wise policies put in place by the leadership and government to ensure a streamlined effective use of available resources that Bahrain has achieved such an outcome. This has helped Bahrain achieve a higher level of human development and economic freedom. However, policies that would ensure a stable economic growth rate that offsets high population growth rate must be put in place. This charter reiterates that the state of Bahrain is solemnly attached to the following economic fundamentals:

Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
Fifth - Environment and Wildlife

Due to increasing pressure on scarce natural resources, the state of Bahrain has been bent upon rationalizing utilization of natural resources, environment- friendly development and public health. In so doing, it takes into account worldwide trends in preventing, and addressing, major environmental problems. This is being done through a national environment protection strategy, taking appropriate legal measures and procedures with a view to reducing pollution from different sources. Other incentives being put in place include: offering facilities to manufacturers to shift to clean production and requiring that Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) be made before a project is launched. Moreover, the State puts in place measure to protect wildlife, particularly different habitats of fauna and flora of which Bahrain is famous. This is being done through developing appropriated plans for land use and coastal zone management and delimitation of a system of sanctuaries such as the Al- Areen and Hawar sanctuaries, the latter along with surrounding waters being of a worldwide fame for its rare species of animals and birds.

**International funds** No specific mention.

**Business** Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
Fourth - Diversification of Economic Activity and Sources of National Income  
The state of Bahrain has been a pioneer of diversification of economic activity and sources of national income among Gulf Arab countries. The idea was to avoid dependence on a single main source of income, to be able to ensure a reasonable standard of living for future generations and to avoid vulnerability to external economic fluctuation. As a result, Bahrain has grown into an important regional financial center and an internationally acclaimed tourist-attracting point. Through support made available to manufacturing, high value added, informatics and services industries, it has been possible to develop a platform for economic development and to offer employment opportunities to citizens.

**Taxation** No specific mention.

**Banks** No specific mention.

## Land, property and environment

**Land reform/rights** Land, property and environment→Land reform/rights→Land reform and management  
Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
Fifth - Environment and Wildlife  
Due to increasing pressure on scarce natural resources, the state of Bahrain has been bent upon rationalizing utilization of natural resources, environment- friendly development and public health. In so doing, it takes into account worldwide trends in preventing, and addressing, major environmental problems. This is being done through a national environment protection strategy, taking appropriate legal measures and procedures with a view to reducing pollution from different sources. Other incentives being put in place include: offering facilities to manufacturers to shift to clean production and requiring that Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) be made before a project is launched. Moreover, the State puts in place measure to protect wildlife, particularly different habitats of fauna and flora of which Bahrain is famous. This is being done through developing appropriated plans for land use and coastal zone management and delimitation of a system of sanctuaries such as the Al- Areen and Hawar sanctuaries, the latter along with surrounding waters being of a worldwide fame for its rare species of animals and birds.

**Pastoralist/  
nomadism rights** No specific mention.

**Cultural heritage** Land, property and environment→Cultural heritage→Intangible  
Page 2-4, Bahrain's History: Civilization and Contemporary Awakening:  
[Summary] Section has extensive references to Bahrain's cultural heritage, real and imagined.

Page 5, Chapter I: Basic principles of the society  
No society can be as stable for scores of centuries as successful in building a distinctive civilization as Bahrain unless the same is solidly attached to a set of core values that ensure its cohesion, progress and development and strengthens its entity as a state. With its solemn belief in Islam and Arab identity and true to its deep-rooted traditions, the Bahraini society has been attached to a set of core principles that are congruent with Arab-Islamic values. These core values and principles must be upheld and safeguarded as they are co-opted by the entire society. They have always been and maintained through generations since time immemorial in the interest of both people and the state. Hence, these core values and principles are sacrosanct. Neither a public authority nor a citizen can compromise any of them. These core values and principles can be enumerated as follows:

Page 6, Second - Protection of individual freedoms and equality  
This is based on a broader principle, namely, that people are equal insofar as human dignity is concerned, a principle that has been consecrated by Islam since fourteen centuries. Addressing believers during his 'Hajjatul Wada'a (or the last pilgrimage). Prophet Mohammed laid emphasis on this principle by saying that people are as equal as dents of a comb are, that no Arab claims a preference over an 'Ajami' (or a non-Arab) and no white man can claim preference over a black man except on the basis of righteousness and good deeds. A natural flow of this great principle of Islam and indeed humanity is a set of related principles, namely:

**Environment**

Page 10, Chapter III: Economic Fundamentals of the Society  
Fifth - Environment and Wildlife

Due to increasing pressure on scarce natural resources, the state of Bahrain has been bent upon rationalizing utilization of natural resources, environment- friendly development and public health. In so doing, it takes into account worldwide trends in preventing, and addressing, major environmental problems. This is being done through a national environment protection strategy, taking appropriate legal measures and procedures with a view to reducing pollution from different sources. Other incentives being put in place include: offering facilities to manufacturers to shift to clean production and requiring that Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) be made before a project is launched. Moreover, the State puts in place measure to protect wildlife, particularly different habitats of fauna and flora of which Bahrain is famous. This is being done through developing appropriated plans for land use and coastal zone management and delimitation of a system of sanctuaries such as the Al- Areen and Hawar sanctuaries, the latter along with surrounding waters being of a worldwide fame for its rare species of animals and birds.

**Water or riparian rights or access**

No specific mention.

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**Security sector****Security Guarantees**

Page 5, First - Goals and basis of Government

... Equality, rule of law, liberty, security, peace, education, social solidarity and equal opportunity are all core principles of the society that are ensured by the state.

Page 12-13, Chapter VI: Gulf Relations

The state of Bahrain shall work closely with its sisterly GCC member-states for greater coordination, rapprochement and integration within GCC particularly in those areas that still require a more effective coordination such as economic integration, defence cooperation, information as well as people's participation in GCC organizations.

**Ceasefire**

No specific mention.

**Police**

No specific mention.

**Armed forces**

Page 8, Chapter II: Government System

First - The Amir

Government system of Bahrain shall be a constitutional monarchy as may be prescribed by the constitution and the Amiri Decree on succession. The Amir is the head of state. His person is inviolable. He is the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, the symbol of national stability and the fulcrum of government system of the state of Bahrain. The Amir exercises his powers through ministers who are accountable to him. He appoints to, and relieves from, premiership and ministerial posts within his powers as prescribed by the constitution.

Page 11, Chapter IV: National Security

National security is the safeguard of the country, its territorial integrity and its socioeconomic and political gains. It supports comprehensive development efforts particularly in changing regional and international circumstances. The fulcrum of national security is to strengthen Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) with a view to enabling the same to properly discharging its duty. Also it calls for providing necessary equipment and other related requirements for security forces to ensure that they perform their duty in maintaining security and public law and order throughout the country. It also makes it necessary to strengthen the National Guards as a line of support for both BDF and Security Forces. The entirety of these efforts would support development efforts and maintain economic achievements, protect every inch of land, sea and air of Bahrain. To serve in national security system is a duty and a source of pride for every citizen. Hence comes the importance of the BDF.

It is a symbol of national unity, a support to our brethren and nation so as to ensure security and stability, not only for our fatherland but also for our beloved Gulf region and, indeed, the Arab World. Needless to say that, true to traditions of Bahrain, BDF has been, indeed, a bastion to defend our country's culture, ethics and well-being. It has been, since day one, a message of goodwill and peace to the entire mankind, an honest reflection of the values we all stand for. The fact that H.H the Amir, the Supreme Commander of BDF, is its first soldier and founder since 'the first light' is a source of full-fledged faith therein. In a world where science and technology advances are revolutionary, sources of threat, and harm to security are quite enormous; it becomes all the more necessary to secure advanced weaponry and security and defence systems. Of no less importance is the human element. As those systems should be run by men, policies related to training of qualified personnel and care for the welfare of BDF personnel are sine qua non for ensuring Bahrain's security.

In this respect, enhancing the capabilities and operational, logistics and technical preparedness of BDF, through training and organization of the best quality-, must be accorded the highest priority. The BDF's ability to fulfill its mandate cannot be considered in isolation. It is organically linked to a clear defence policy that is supported by detailed programs designed to help achieve relevant objectives. This calls for a regular review of our strategic vision, adaptation to new technologies and definition of perceived sources of threat.

**DDR**

No specific mention.

**Intelligence services**

No specific mention.

<b>Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Withdrawal of foreign forces</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Corruption</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Crime/organised crime</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Drugs</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Terrorism</b>	No specific mention.

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### **Transitional justice**

<b>Transitional justice general</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Amnesty/pardon</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Courts</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Mechanism</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Prisoner release</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Vetting</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Victims</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Missing persons</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Reparations</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Reconciliation</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Implementation**

**UN signatory** No specific mention.

**Other international signatory** No specific mention.

**Referendum for agreement** No specific mention.

**International mission/force/similar** No specific mention.

**Enforcement mechanism** No specific mention.

**Related cases** No specific mention.

**Source** Wikisource, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/National\\_Action\\_Charter\\_of\\_Bahrain](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/National_Action_Charter_of_Bahrain)

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