

ADHRB, Formula One Reach Agreement on Human Rights Framework for Bahrain

Press Release

10 April 2015

For Immediate Release

Following Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain's (ADHRB) successful mediation of a complaint to the United Kingdom National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises—concerning Formula One Management's lack of due diligence considerations regarding possible human rights impact in Bahrain—Formula One has committed itself to respecting human rights in Bahrain and other countries in which it conducts business. ADHRB praises Formula One's decision to adopt a human rights policy and examine its impact in Bahrain, and thanks the OECD National Contact Point of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for their role in the successful mediation process.

In 2014, ADHRB submitted a complaint to the OECD regarding Formula One's links to adverse impacts on human rights in Bahrain in relation to its annual race. The UK National Contact Point for the OECD accepted that the complaint merited examination “on issues relating to Formula One World Championship Limited and Formula One Management Limited's management systems, due diligence, human rights policy and communications with stakeholders and business partners,” and suggested that the parties mediate in order to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution.

Following the successful conclusion of those mediation proceedings, Formula One has for the first time in its history publicly committed to respecting internationally recognized human rights in all of its operations. Included in this commitment is a promise to develop and implement a due diligence policy in which Formula One analyzes and takes steps to mitigate any human rights impact that its activities may have on a host country, including on the human rights situation in Bahrain. The new policy represents a significant first step in addressing human rights abuses occurring in Bahrain during the annual Formula One race.

Playing a key role in the mediation was Nabeel Rajab, member of ADHRB's advisory board and the President of Bahrain Center for Human Rights. While the mediation process was on going and only two weeks before the 2015 race, authorities in Bahrain detained Mr. Rajab. ADHRB understands that this arrest amounts to a signal that the government will broach no criticism or dissent before or during the race, which has previously attracted significant anti-

government protests. ADHRB does not link Formula One Management in any way to the arrest. The US State Department has called for his immediate release.

“Formula One’s development of a human rights policy is a big step forward for the advancement of human rights, both in Bahrain and throughout the world,” said Husain Abdulla, the Executive Director of ADHRB. “We hope that this policy shows the Government of Bahrain that it cannot torture its citizens, that it cannot put down peaceful protests, that it cannot silence dissent without serious and actual repercussions and accountability.”

ADHRB welcomes the engagement of Formula One during the mediation, and will work to monitor the conduct of Formula One Management in upholding its new human rights policy regarding the human rights impacts in future Bahrain races. ADHRB will continue to scrutinise adverse human rights impacts during events held by Formula One Management in Bahrain, and hold them to account with the standards set in their new human rights policy and internationally recognised human rights law.

Joint Statement between ADHRB and Formula One Management

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) and Formula One entered into mediation in order to discuss the matters raised by ADHRB in its complaint under the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (“Guidelines”) to the UK Government’s National Contact Point.

As a result of that process, Formula One Group has committed to taking a number of further steps to strengthen its processes in relation to human rights in accordance with the standards provided for by the Guidelines. Formula One also takes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to respect internationally recognised human rights. Formula One’s written policy commitment to respect human rights is available at <http://www.formula1.com/content/fom-website/en/toolbar/legal-notice.html>.

ADHRB has agreed to stop further pursuit of its complaint and stated that it “welcomes this opportunity to engage on human rights issues in Bahrain”.

Both parties would also like to thank the NCP and mediator for their work on this matter.

The participants in the mediation on behalf of ADHRB were Husain Abdulla (Executive Director of ADHRB), Nabeel Rajab (ADHRB Advisory Board Member) Ahmed Ali (ADHRB Advisory Board Member) and Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei (ADHRB Board Member).

Formula 1 & ADHRB – Public Statement re. F1 Bahrain – 10-4-15