

## **57th session of the Human Rights Council**

### **Item 4: Human Rights situations requiring the Council's attention - General Debate**

Mr President,

Right Livelihood and ALQST for Human Rights express deep concern at the continued repression of fundamental rights in Saudi Arabia, which remains unaddressed by the Council.

There, anyone exercising their fundamental freedom remains at risk of arbitrary arrest and extremely lengthy sentences. Human rights defenders who complete their unjust sentences are seeing new charges brought against them, are faced with indeterminate travel bans or, such as in the case of Mohammed al-Qahtani and Issa al-Nukheifi, are forcibly disappeared.

While, earlier this year, Saudi Arabia accepted 83% of the recommendations received during its last Universal Periodic Review -including the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance - its blatant refusal of recommendations requesting the authorities to refrain from reprisals against human rights defenders cast doubts on any genuine political will to align with their international human rights obligations.

Mr. President,

Accountability is crucial for the cycle of repression to end. Yet, UN special procedures and international experts have been denied access to the country since 2017. We therefore call on the Council to address the situation of human rights in Saudi Arabia under item 4 and urge Saudi Arabia to implement accepted UPR recommendations, ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stop its persecution of peaceful activists and unconditionally release all human rights defenders arbitrarily detained.

Thank you.