Country/entity	Bahrain
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	His Majesty Delivers a Speech to Citizens Concerning Request to Amend Some Articles of the Constitution, 15 January 2012
Date	15 Jan 2012
Agreement status	Unilateral document
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	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 -
)

Stage	Implementation/renegotiation
Conflict nature	Government
Peace process	Bahrain: Reform-based peace process

Parties	His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa
Third parties	-
Description	Short speech by King Hamad bin Khalifa detailing reforms to Bahrains political institutions and outlining economic development goals, as well as requesting that society work together to ensure that "young people respect the law".

Agreement document	BH_120115_His Majesty Delivers a Speech to Citizens Concerning Request to Amend Some Articles of the Constitution.pdf (opens in new tab) | Download PDF

Groups

Children/youth	Groups→Children/youth→Rhetorical Page 2, ...Furthermore, we call upon all segments of society – the community and the family – to work together to ensure that our young people respect the law. This is a responsibility that must be shouldered by all, especially when respect for the law is linked to the principles of coexistence, tolerance, harmony and love...
Disabled persons	No specific mention.
Elderly/age	No specific mention.
Migrant workers	No specific mention.
Racial/ethnic/ national group	No specific mention.
Religious groups	No specific mention.
Indigenous people	No specific mention.
Other groups	No specific mention.
Refugees/displaced persons	No specific mention.
Social class	No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender	No specific mention.
Men and boys	No specific mention.
LGBTI	No specific mention.
Family	Page 2, We cannot fail at this point to emphasize that democracy is not just literature, or constitutional and legislative provisions. Democracy is a culture and practice, commitment to the rule of law, respect for the international principles of human rights, coupled with serious national political action that represents all spectrums of society without exclusion or quotas. In parallel with this crucial step that we take today, we call for other important steps to be made to reinforce the democratic culture and practice on the land of our beloved country. Furthermore, we call upon all segments of society – the community and the family – to work together to ensure that our young people respect the law. This is a responsibility that must be shouldered by all, especially when respect for the law is linked to the principles of coexistence, tolerance, harmony and love.

State definition

Nature of state (general)	Page 1, ... to reflect our commitment to the stability of the nation, the unity of its people, and the realization of their aspirations, taking into consideration the best interests of the homeland, and the interests of present and future generations of citizens to develop our democracy and our political programs.
State configuration	No specific mention.
Self determination	No specific mention.
Referendum	No specific mention.
State symbols	No specific mention.
Independence/ secession	No specific mention.
Accession/ unification	No specific mention.
Border delimitation	No specific mention.
Cross-border provision	No specific mention.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed)	Governance→Political institutions (new or reformed)→New political institutions (indefinite) Page 1, The amendments add new guarantees to be applied when exercising the right to dissolve the Council of Representatives. They require and entail consultation with the Chairman of the Shura Council, the Chairman of the Council of Representatives, and the President of the Constitutional Court, while previously it required only the consent of the King and the Prime Minister. Further, in respect of the appointment of members of the Shura Council, the amendments call for a Royal Decree to be issued by the King prior to the order of appointment setting out the method, procedures, and guidance that govern the selection process. Page 2, In line with the conclusions of the National Consensus Dialogue, these constitutional amendments aim to reflect the popular will in the formation of the government based on its program. The Council of Representatives will discuss the government program after it swears the constitutional oath. Moreover, it has the right to approve or reject the government program, and if the program is approved, the government has secured the confidence of the Council. In addition, the proposed recommendation consolidates the oversight role of the Council of Representatives as a sole monitoring Power. Thus, the recommendations grant the Council the right to end cooperation with government, and to initiate discussions on any public theme. The amendments add additional guarantees to ensure the participation of the Council of Representatives collectively during the discussions of the questions addressed to Ministers, and to set a timeframe for the government to justify any rejection of the demands of the Council. Alongside this, the Council has been vested with the constitutional right to question and withdraw confidence from Ministers, as well as to set up Committees to conduct such questioning. While the Constitution had previously given jurisdiction to the Chairman of the Shura Council to refer the bills approved by the two Chambers to the Prime Minister to pass them, and given him priority to preside over the meetings of the National Council, the amendments have vested these jurisdictions and this priority to the Chairman of the Council of Representatives.
Elections	No specific mention.
Electoral commission	No specific mention.
Political parties reform	No specific mention.
Civil society	No specific mention.

Traditional/ religious leaders	No specific mention.
Public administration	No specific mention.
Constitution	Governance→Constitution→Constitution affirmation/renewal Page 1, Our loyal people have demonstrated that their will, despite all events, is devoted to continuing the reform project, to preserving the achievements of the Charter and the Constitution, and to accelerating progress and momentum through constitutional institutions. Governance→Constitution→Constitutional reform/making Page 2, In addition, the amendments set out the competent authority for drafting bills, raising constitutional amendment proposals, proposing laws or draft Constitutional amendments, and determining the necessary period of time to refer such bills to the Council where the proposal was originated. These amendments allow both Councils to more easily set the state budget, in a way that helps to effectuate the new budget at the beginning of the fiscal year, and preclude the announcement of a budget of more than two fiscal years. In line with the conclusions of the National Consensus Dialogue, these constitutional amendments aim to reflect the popular will in the formation of the government based on its program. The Council of Representatives will discuss the government program after it swears the constitutional oath. Moreover, it has the right to approve or reject the government program, and if the program is approved, the government has secured the confidence of the Council. Page 2-3, Constitutional and political reform cannot be attained, or continue to exist, in a vacuum, but it is in parallel and closely related to economic reform, development efforts and to the social reform that takes into account the interests of all citizens of this country.

Power sharing

Political power sharing	Power sharing→Political power sharing→Proportionality in legislature State level Page 1, Accordingly, and in line with our mandate to propose constitutional amendments and to honor our promise, we will later issue a Royal Decree to refer to the Council of Representatives and the Shura Council, requesting the constitutional amendments as stated in the recommendations of the National Consensus Dialogue. The philosophy and motivation behind this request is to open new horizons for our democracy, based on the National Consensus Dialogue recommendations, and to reflect our commitment to the stability of the nation, the unity of its people, and the realization of their aspirations, taking into consideration the best interests of the homeland, and the interests of present and future generations of citizens to develop our democracy and our political programs. Power sharing→Political power sharing→Form of 'veto' or communal majority State level Page 2-3, In line with the conclusions of the National Consensus Dialogue, these constitutional amendments aim to reflect the popular will in the formation of the government based on its program. The Council of Representatives will discuss the government program after it swears the constitutional oath. Moreover, it has the right to approve or reject the government program, and if the program is approved, the government has secured the confidence of the Council. In addition, the proposed recommendation consolidates the oversight role of the Council of Representatives as a sole monitoring Power. Thus, the recommendations grant the Council the right to end cooperation with government, and to initiate discussions on any public theme. The amendments add additional guarantees to ensure the participation of the Council of Representatives collectively during the discussions of the questions addressed to Ministers, and to set a timeframe for the government to justify any rejection of the demands of the Council. Alongside this, the Council has been vested with the constitutional right to question and withdraw confidence from Ministers, as well as to set up Committees to conduct such questioning. Power sharing→Political power sharing→Segmental autonomy State level Page 1-2, Further, in respect of the appointment of members of the Shura Council, the amendments call for a Royal Decree to be issued by the King prior to the order of appointment setting out the method, procedures, and guidance that govern the selection process.
Territorial power sharing	No specific mention.
Economic power sharing	No specific mention.
Military power sharing	No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

Human rights/RoL general	Page 2, We cannot fail at this point to emphasize that democracy is not just literature, or constitutional and legislative provisions. Democracy is a culture and practice, commitment to the rule of law, respect for the international principles of human rights, coupled with serious national political action that represents all spectrums of society without exclusion or quotas. In parallel with this crucial step that we take today, we call for other important steps to be made to reinforce the democratic culture and practice on the land of our beloved country. Furthermore, we call upon all segments of society – the community and the family – to work together to ensure that our young people respect the law. This is a responsibility that must be shouldered by all, especially when respect for the law is linked to the principles of coexistence, tolerance, harmony and love.
Bill of rights/similar	No specific mention.
Treaty incorporation	No specific mention.
Civil and political rights	No specific mention.
Socio-economic rights	No specific mention.

Rights related issues

Citizenship

Rights related issues→Citizenship→Citizen, general
Page 1, In the name of the Almighty God the most Merciful the most Gracious Dear citizens, Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you We are pleased to address you today, as we move forward on the path of development to enable Bahrain to build further gains.
...
The philosophy and motivation behind this request is to open new horizons for our democracy, based on the National Consensus Dialogue recommendations, and to reflect our commitment to the stability of the nation, the unity of its people, and the realization of their aspirations, taking into consideration the best interests of the homeland, and the interests of present and future generations of citizens to develop our democracy and our political programs.

Democracy

Page 1, Today, we will continue this march with anyone who has genuine patriotic desire for further progress and reform in all its forms, whether it is political, economic or social, on the basis of our common convictions that reflect the spirit of the times and meet the legitimate aspirations of all citizens to achieve further development consistent with the principles of a peaceful democracy.

Page 1, The philosophy and motivation behind this request is to open new horizons for our democracy, based on the National Consensus Dialogue recommendations, and to reflect our commitment to the stability of the nation, the unity of its people, and the realization of their aspirations, taking into consideration the best interests of the homeland, and the interests of present and future generations of citizens to develop our democracy and our political programs.

Page 2, We are confident that the Legislative Power will resume its constitutional responsibilities to make these amendments, responsive to the recommendations of the National Consensus Dialogue. However, the historic step we make today will open doors wide to democracy and develop its exercise, enabling future generations to build on it to reach new heights.

We cannot fail at this point to emphasize that democracy is not just literature, or constitutional and legislative provisions. Democracy is a culture and practice, commitment to the rule of law, respect for the international principles of human rights, coupled with serious national political action that represents all spectrums of society without exclusion or quotas. In parallel with this crucial step that we take today, we call for other important steps to be made to reinforce the democratic culture and practice on the land of our beloved country. Furthermore, we call upon all segments of society – the community and the family – to work together to ensure that our young people respect the law. This is a responsibility that must be shouldered by all, especially when respect for the law is linked to the principles of coexistence, tolerance, harmony and love.

Detention procedures

No specific mention.

Media and communication

No specific mention.

Mobility/access	No specific mention.
Protection measures	No specific mention.
Other	No specific mention.

Rights institutions

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

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law	No specific mention.
State of emergency provisions	No specific mention.
Judiciary and courts	No specific mention.
Prisons and detention	No specific mention.
Traditional Laws	Page 1, This will be for the benefit of our beloved country, and in the interests of its honorable children, with the aid of Almighty God, in adherence to the values of tolerance and coexistence in light of God's law, and Arab traditions. These are the values upon which we have all been brought up; and they have protected us against the dangers of intolerance and sectarianism.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction	Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Socio-economic development Page 2-3, Constitutional and political reform cannot be attained, or continue to exist, in a vacuum, but it is in parallel and closely related to economic reform, development efforts and to the social reform that takes into account the interests of all citizens of this country.
National economic plan	No specific mention.
Natural resources	No specific mention.
International funds	No specific mention.
Business	No specific mention.
Taxation	No specific mention.
Banks	No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights	No specific mention.
Pastoralist/ nomadism rights	No specific mention.
Cultural heritage	Land, property and environment→Cultural heritage→Intangible Page 1, This will be for the benefit of our beloved country, and in the interests of its honorable children, with the aid of Almighty God, in adherence to the values of tolerance and coexistence in light of God's law, and Arab traditions. These are the values upon which we have all been brought up; and they have protected us against the dangers of intolerance and sectarianism.
Environment	No specific mention.
Water or riparian rights or access	No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees	No specific mention.
Ceasefire	No specific mention.
Police	No specific mention.
Armed forces	No specific mention.
DDR	No specific mention.
Intelligence services	No specific mention.
Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces	No specific mention.
Withdrawal of foreign forces	No specific mention.
Corruption	No specific mention.
Crime/organised crime	No specific mention.
Drugs	No specific mention.
Terrorism	No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general	No specific mention.
Amnesty/pardon	No specific mention.
Courts	No specific mention.
Mechanism	No specific mention.
Prisoner release	No specific mention.

Vetting	No specific mention.
Victims	No specific mention.
Missing persons	No specific mention.
Reparations	No specific mention.
Reconciliation	No specific mention.

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.
