

Friends of Bahrain: Bringing Bahrain's story to the world

June 30, 2011

[video opens with: Human rights expert Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni was recently appointed to chair the independent commission investigating the unrest in Bahrain. At a press conference on 30 June 2011 he was asked about his benchmarks for success for the commission.]

Question asker: Indistinguishable...and what is the benchmark for success, your success?

MCB: I don't know anything in life where somebody can ensure, or predict, a guarantee a success. I can only tell you that my colleagues and I are people that have devoted our lives to international criminal justice and human rights. And the only thing that we can do is to assure you that we will continue to do our best. And we will do whatever we can to ensure the best possible result. We are convinced that the best possible result is to leave from the mistakes of the past, so that this country doesn't have to repeat the same mistakes in the future. And that learning from these experiences can become the basis of doing the reforms that are necessary in this society. Now bear in mind that this society has gone through a very interesting experience, maybe starting in 1999 and then in 2007, opening up to some type of democracy and the fact that the king has accepted and independent international commission, the way his is now, is also an unprecedented experience in the Arab and the Muslim world. And I think all of this augurs well and what we need it to use this as an opportunity for all the people in Bahrain, in all the sectors, to be able to better understand what happened, so as to not repeat the same mistakes. And to examine the policies that may have produced these mistakes to make sure that these policies have changed. So this is what our expectations and our hope is and I think it will largely depend on how much support, participation, and involvement we can have, on the one side from the opposition, from civil society, from human rights organizations, from people who have been victimized and also from the government. The idea of having a transparent approach to find out if someone has been mistreated in prison, has anyone been tortured, why has this person been killed. So all of these are important questions...