

# Anti-government protests in Bahrain

February/March 2011



## The situation

In February 2011, political opposition groups and anti-government protesters initiated demonstrations across Bahrain. Centred on the Pearl Roundabout in the capital, Manama, the demonstrations led to clashes between police and protesters on 14 February 2011. On 17 February 2011, the police used teargas, rubber bullets and batons to disperse protesters who were camping overnight at the Pearl Roundabout. The attacks left at least four people dead and numerous injured.



## Assistance

*13 February 2011: Countrywide anti-government demonstrations are planned for 14 February in Bahrain. A significant security force presence is expected on 14 February, particularly in the capital, Manama. There is an incidental threat to persons in the vicinity of the protests, should they become confrontational or violent.*

On 13 February, red24 proactively sent out an alert advising our clients about upcoming protests in Bahrain as part of the wave of political unrest in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. Following a marked increase in the widespread unrest and heightened tensions, red24 amended the country risk rating and travel advice for Bahrain. An online indepth analysis was

uploaded to keep clients up-to-date with the situation and to explain how the unrest in Bahrain differed from that in Egypt, and what the key political and security issues were for the country. red24's 24/7 Crisis Response Management (CRM) centre was ready to take calls from clients and was available for assistance concerning briefings, sending out SMS and email alerts or responding to evacuation requests on the ground.

In one particular case, red24 kept close watch of a client on business in Bahrain and provided him with red24's latest analysis and advice on the situation. After a verbal briefing the client decided to continue his planned travel to Bahrain, knowing that red24 would contact him every day on his journey, ensuring he was safe. red24 logged his itinerary on TravelTracker together with his flight and hotel information, ensuring he was always contactable should the situation in Bahrain worsen. At the same time, red24's Analyst and Security teams monitored the client's routes of travel and provided him with any relevant updates. red24 kept in contact with the client until he reached a safe destination after the planned four-day trip.

In another case, red24 was contacted by a client who was concerned about 17 employees located in Bahrain. After

red24's CRM centre provided the client with a briefing on the area where the employees were situated, the client decided not to evacuate the employees from the country. red24 maintained regular contact with the client, providing him with up-to-date briefings on the situation in Bahrain.



*31 March 2011: There is a high threat of violence at all public gatherings in Bahrain at this time. The measures by the government have resulted in a decrease in civil unrest; however, sporadic protests and clashes with the security forces continue to be reported. Due to ongoing political instability in the country, red24 advises against all non-essential travel to Bahrain.*

## Action

Following further developments in the unrest in Bahrain, red24's CRM centre was contacted by a client who wanted to evacuate two employees and their respective families situated in two different locations in Bahrain. Our team contacted the families immediately; one family of five had made plans to reach the airport by themselves as they had

secured a flight out of the country. Through regular contact, red24 ensured they arrived safely at their final destination. The other family was assisted by a red24 consultant on the ground, who escorted the family to the airport, where flights had been arranged for them. red24 stayed in contact with the family until they confirmed they too had arrived safely at their final destination.

Protests had been going on throughout February; in mid-March the government banned all public gatherings and declared a three-month state of emergency.

