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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Qatar

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its seventh session from 8 to 19 February 2010. The review of Qatar was held at the 1st meeting, on 8 February 2010. The delegation of Qatar was headed by H.E. Mr. Ahmad Bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Member of the Council of Ministers. At its 5th meeting, held on 10 February 2010, the Working Group adopted the report on Qatar.

2. On 7 September 2009, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Qatar: Gabon, Hungary and Japan.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1, the following documents were issued for the review of Qatar:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/7/QAT/1) and (A/HRC/WG.6/7/QAT/1/Corr.1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/7/QAT/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/7/QAT/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Argentina, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Qatar through the troika. The questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation considered that the review process was an important way to fulfil Qatar's human rights obligations at the national level. The national report was the result of a broad consultative process and expanded partnership with all categories and sections of society, as well as with related stakeholders.

6. The promotion and protection of human rights constituted the backbone of Qatar's comprehensive constitutional, economic, social and cultural reform policy, as emphasized in the comprehensive development vision, Qatar National Vision 2030, which was approved in 2008 and included important topics relating to key human rights issues in the areas of education, health, the environment, rights of expatriate workers, women's empowerment, the rights of the child, the elderly and the disabled.

7. The Constitution embodied the main principles steering Qatar's policy, including its emphasis on the principles of the separation of powers, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary and fundamental rights and freedoms. The third chapter of the Constitution was devoted to fundamental rights and freedoms, and guaranteed economic, social, cultural, civil, political and collective rights, such as the right to development. Constitution article 146 stipulated that human rights provisions and public freedoms may not be amended, except where the objective was to provide more guarantees to citizens. Fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution had been promoted through the issuance of a set of national laws.

8. Several institutions concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights had been established at the governmental and non-governmental levels. The delegation referred to the establishment of the National Human Rights Committee according to the Paris Principles, and which had been accredited by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. The delegation mentioned the establishment of the Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue, which was aimed at spreading and promoting the culture of dialogue and peaceful coexistence; the Arab Democracy Foundation, aimed at encouraging the Arab region to strengthen the culture of democracy; and the Doha Centre for Media Freedom.

9. The right to education was enshrined in the Constitution; education was compulsory and free of charge. A national plan for education had been developed in 2003 to provide education for all and an evaluation of progress was conducted in 2007. Qatar was keen to promote inclusive education that included all learners without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion or other grounds. The Supreme Education Council had been established in 2002 as the highest authority responsible for drawing up education policy; Emiri decision No. 14 of 2009 organized the Council in the context of the procedures aiming to implement Qatar National Vision 2030. The Council aimed at improving the level of education to meet the State's needs for qualified human resources.

10. Expenditure on education had increased. Qatar had adopted a pioneering policy to encourage scientific research, as exemplified by the allocation of 2.8 per cent of GDP to research, and the establishment of the Qatar National Research Fund in 2006. In addition, an endowment fund for education expenditure had been set up from part of the investment in Qatar's gas wealth.

11. Qatari laws and legislations guaranteed the right to access to medical care services without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, belief, language, age or disability. The delegation reported on the establishment of the Supreme Council of Health, which designed health policies and strategies and adopted development and scientific research plans.

12. Qatar's policy of openness was exemplified by the hosting of international conferences on issues such as development, democracy, human rights and the promotion of a culture of peace.

13. The delegation referred to Qatar's constitutional commitment to respect international charters and covenants and to implement all international instruments to which it was a party. Qatar had submitted periodic reports to the various monitoring mechanisms while striving to respect the time frame set by them. Qatar had played a pioneering role in the adoption of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Qatar has adopted in recent years a strategic policy on general reservations with the purpose of reviewing them.

14. Qatar was considering accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

15. In the context of efforts towards capacity-building at the international level, the endeavours of Qatar and OHCHR had been crystallized through the establishment in Doha of the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region. The Centre had been inaugurated in May 2009 and was expected to contribute to training, developing and building capacity.

16. Qatar had accepted the request made by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially children and women, to visit the country. The competent authorities were considering a draft law on combating human trafficking and a draft law on domestic workers.

17. Although Qatar had witnessed tangible developments at the legislative, institutional and awareness levels, and despite the existence of political will and financial resources, it faced temporary difficulties in promoting and protecting human rights in an ideal manner, including the recent legislative and institutional developments and dealing with international human rights mechanisms. Moreover, the technical capacities of human resources remained at the stage of construction and development.

18. Internationally, Qatar believed in the importance of developmental partnerships to assist in achieving sustainable economic development. The delegation reported on the establishment of the Qatar Development Fund, in which human rights constituted the most important pillars of the international assistance provided, and on the development programmes to be implemented by the Fund.

19. Qatar had strived, and continued to strive, as a mediator in the settlement of disputes.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

20. During the interactive dialogue, 49 delegations made statements. Additional statements by the 26 delegations that could not be delivered during the dialogue owing to time constraints are posted on the extranet of the universal periodic review when available.¹

21. A number of delegations thanked the Government for the comprehensive national report, prepared through a large consultation process, and for its comprehensive presentation, which allowed for an assessment of Qatar's human rights promotion and protection efforts. Recommendations made during the interactive dialogue are to be found in chapter II of the present report.

22. The United Arab Emirates noted with appreciation the attention that placed human rights at the centre of constitutional, political, economic and cultural reform. The fact that Qatar had ratified a number of human rights conventions reflected that vision. It referred to the importance accorded to integrating human rights in the school curriculum in many fields and the focus on awareness on children's rights. It asked questions related to housing and the role played by civil society in legislation concerning both the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It made a recommendation.

23. Bahrain noted the adoption of a number of initiatives and policies to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular to strengthen the right to education of persons with disabilities and to combat trafficking in persons. Bahrain paid tribute to the efforts made to provide educational and rehabilitation services to the disabled and to integrate them into society, as it was done through formation of committees to provide the necessary environment and the holding of training sessions for workers. Bahrain made a recommendation.

24. Saudi Arabia appreciated the achievements of Qatar at the legislative and institutional levels to strengthen and protect human rights. It commended the fact that articles included in the Constitution of Qatar underlined the principles of interdependence and indivisibility of human rights, and noted the existence of a number of institutions

¹ Afghanistan, Argentina, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Maldives, Nigeria, Palestine, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United States of America.

working on human rights. It enquired about the harmonization of national law with international instruments. Saudi Arabia made recommendations.

25. Kuwait welcomed the establishment of the Human Rights National Committee and paid tribute to Qatar for its decision to host the Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region. All these measures reflected the transparency adopted by Qatar in order to strengthen and promote human rights. Kuwait asked to what extent governmental institutions were coordinating with civil society on issues related to human rights and what measures had been taken in order to combat trafficking in persons. Kuwait made recommendations.

26. Algeria enquired about the reasons for the non-adoption of the press and publications law, and on the role of the Training and Documentation Centre for Human Rights for South West Asia and the Arab Region, recently established in Qatar. Algeria congratulated Qatar on hosting the centre, and made recommendations.

27. The Sudan commended the reform policy in which human rights were at the core of constitutional and economic, social and cultural reform, and the accession of Qatar to various international conventions, as a reflection of its commitment to strengthen, respect and promote human rights. It welcomed efforts to set up various institutions to protect women and children. It praised the Qatari peace initiative to support the peace process in Darfur.

28. Cuba encouraged the leadership of Qatar in the area of economic and social development, and recalled that Qatar had hosted numerous international debates, the second South summit, among others. Cuba congratulated Qatar for its significant progress in education, health, the fight against trafficking of persons, the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of women and children. Cuba made recommendations.

29. Lebanon welcomed the large number of laws providing for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, including those related to health, mandatory education and the well-being of citizens. Lebanon highlighted the accession of Qatar to numerous protocols and conventions relating to human rights in recent years, the constructive cooperation with United Nations special procedures and the efforts made to raise awareness in the country about a human rights culture. Lebanon made a recommendation.

30. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya noted that the Government put human rights at the core of its constitutional, economic and political reform. It greatly valued the measures taken, such as the establishment of directorates of human rights in different ministries and the Supreme Council for family affairs, to strengthen the family and other various institutions serving various groups, such as disabled persons and migrant workers. The increased participation of women in different fields was also raised. It made a recommendation.

31. Slovenia welcomed the accreditation of the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar with "A" status by the International Coordination Committee. Slovenia commended Qatar for adopting a plan of action for the World Programme for Human Rights Education focusing on the national school system. However, Slovenia expressed concerns on pending challenges, namely in the areas of discrimination and violence against women, sexual abuse, the exploitation of children and the death penalty. Slovenia made recommendations.

32. Oman noted that the national report gave an image of the state of human rights in Qatar, its achievements and the challenges it faces. Oman referred to the development and achievements in many economic and standard of living areas, such as education and health. It agreed that Qatar's human rights record should be addressed in the context of this comprehensive development.

33. Yemen noted that Qatar had made remarkable progress in all areas, realizing broad development. Yemen noted that human rights were at the heart of comprehensive reform,

and asked about measures taken to guarantee the political and civil rights of women, and was interested to know whether the National Human Rights Committee was in line with the Paris Principles. Yemen made recommendations.

34. Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed the accession of Qatar to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a commitment to empower women and ensure their fundamental rights. It highlighted the increased number of women studying at different levels of the education system, and being largely represented in business and commercial spheres. Venezuela made recommendations.

35. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea noted with appreciation the establishment of the national human rights committee and the creation of departments dealing with human rights issues in several ministries. It highlighted the achievements made in many areas, such as education and health care, and saluted the State's efforts to enhance and strengthen its human rights legislative framework by ratifying and acceding to numerous international and regional human rights conventions. It made a recommendation.

36. Tunisia highlighted the progress made by Qatar in many areas of human rights and sustainable development, occupying the thirty-third place in the human development report of 2009. It commended the establishment of many national mechanisms and institutions to protect and promote human rights, in particular children and women. Tunisia made recommendations.

37. Pakistan noted that Qatar's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights was reflected in its detailed constitutional provisions, a comprehensive policy reform, the establishment of a number of institutions and the hosting of the Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region. Pakistan appreciated the role played by the family as a fundamental unit of society, and welcomed amendments in the composition of the national human rights committee, which makes it more consistent with the Paris Principles. Progress made in promoting gender equality and empowering women, as well as efforts to protect the rights of expatriate workers, had also been noted. Pakistan made recommendations.

38. The Philippines noted that Qatar had made impressive progress in ensuring a high level of human development for its citizens, and commended the Government for its proactive measures to improve the access and quality of education and health services for its people. An institutional framework for human rights had been put in place, the Constitution guaranteed legal protection, and Qatar had ratified a number of international human rights instruments. The Philippines acknowledged the positive steps taken to strengthen protection of the human rights and welfare of expatriate workers. It made recommendations.

39. Sri Lanka commended the adoption of a comprehensive policy reform aimed at ensuring that human rights were at the core of the constitutional, political, economic, social and cultural development of Qatar. Comprehensive policy reforms and legislative and institutional developments would continue to promote human rights, including the role of women in society. Sri Lanka made a recommendation.

40. Turkey welcomed the achievement made in the areas of human development and the efforts to accede to international human rights instruments. It stressed the consistent efforts of Qatar to strengthen the status of women in society, and appreciated its accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Turkey commended the establishment of the "Your link" initiative and the opening of the Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre. Turkey emphasized the independence of the judiciary and welcomed the legislation guaranteeing the financial independence of the courts. Turkey made recommendations.

41. The delegation mentioned that a number of efforts had been made to promote human rights education and to include human rights concepts in curricula at the various levels of education.

42. The delegation stated that a programme for the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been elaborated in cooperation with the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and UNESCO. A number of educational materials had been developed in this regard, and many workshops had been organized to train educators and specialists in the utilization of these materials.

43. The delegation stated that the rights of the child had been included in the curricula of military academies and various military training schools, and referred to the incorporation of human rights and sustainable development curricula in higher education. At the regional level, Qatar had participated in the formulation of the Arab plan for education on human rights.

44. The penal code had criminalized a large number of acts that could be defined as trafficking in persons, and had adopted the principle of universal jurisdiction with regard to crimes of human trafficking. The labour law had also addressed a number of issues related to the organization of work, the protection of the rights of workers and the prohibition of employing women and children in dangerous or hazardous work.

45. According to the delegation, Qatar had adopted a national strategy to combat human trafficking, which focused on combating child labour, in particular in camel racing. Law No. 22, adopted in 2005, prohibited bringing children into Qatar to work in camel racing; no breaches to this law had been recorded since. Qatar had joined the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol thereto to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. It has also acceded to the ILO Convention on Forced Labour.

46. The delegation reported that the Qatari foundation to combat trafficking in persons aimed at formulating policies, implementing laws and regulations and making recommendations with regard to combating human trafficking. The foundation also supervised the Qatari home for shelter and humanitarian assistance, which provided medical, psychological and social support to victims. It had organized training sessions for officials from the Ministry of the Interior and other departments dealing with human trafficking.

47. Qatar had acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Government had continued its efforts to promulgate legislation in all areas to strengthen the rights of women and purge the existing texts, which contained discrimination against women. The most important of these were law No. 11 of 2004, which criminalized the crimes of rape and related indecent acts; law No. 2 of 2007 on housing, which enabled nationals to enjoy the right to housing between man and women; the law on passports, which had eliminated the condition of the husband's approval for the issuance of a passport to the spouse; the laws on human resources and labour, which had established equality between men and women in access to work and wages, while taking into account the specificities of women, and prohibiting the employment of women in dangerous work. Also, a large category of women were afforded social protection and housing through a number of laws.

48. The delegation mentioned that the Qatari foundation for the protection of women and children aimed at protecting the unity of the family and society as a whole, and the protection of women and children from violence. Various shelters had been established to protect victims, provide them with legal assistance and integrate them into society. The foundation had offices in various medical and security institutions. It had offered training to

personnel dealing with children and women, and organized a number of awareness-raising campaigns. It provided services to nationals, non-nationals and those who visited the country.

49. Canada congratulated Qatar on the recent inauguration of the Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre in Doha, and welcomed the prominence of women's rights in Qatar's political dialogue. While noting recent progress regarding women's right to work, Canada was concerned by the continued application of discriminatory policies against women vis-à-vis the family law and freedom of movement, as well as reports that, despite laws that defined violence against women as assault, Qatari officials were reluctant to treat violence against women as a criminal offence. Concerns were also expressed regarding the strict controls on press freedom and freedom of expression, as well as migrant workers' rights. Canada made recommendations.

50. The Islamic Republic of Iran appreciated the efforts and commitments made through the presentation of the report to further promote and protect human rights, and to address the challenges, especially the achievements in education and health care, in particular the reduction of child mortality and the improvements in maternal health. It noted the establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs to enhance the status of family. It made recommendations.

51. Singapore noted the long-term commitment of Qatar to safeguard the rights of its citizens with the impressive constitutional and institutional reforms undertaken. Singapore welcomed Qatar's continued efforts to human rights cooperation and promotion activities. It appreciated Qatar's commitment to combat human trafficking and support the rights of migrant workers.

52. Uzbekistan commended the positive efforts made in such areas as promoting gender equality, protecting the rights of people with disabilities, combating trafficking in human beings, protecting the rights of migrants, promoting the rights to health and education, developing national institutions and strengthening regional cooperation in this area. Uzbekistan welcomed the accession of Qatar to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It asked for additional information concerning the difficulties and obstacles faced in promoting and protecting human rights.

53. Kyrgyzstan particularly welcomed the achievements in the area of education and health, notably concerning gender equality. It noted the efforts made in other areas, such as fighting corruption, democracy and women's rights. The steps taken to protect people with disabilities were also commendable. It encouraged Qatar to continue its active promotion of the rights of migrants and to strengthen national human rights institutions.

54. Egypt highlighted the fact that Qatar was keenly attached to promoting human rights and strengthening institutions nationally, and also promoting education and scientific research. The Constitution adopted the principle of the interdependence, interconnection and indivisibility of all human rights, and also attached importance to all human rights on an equal footing, stressing the role of family as the heart of society.

55. Kazakhstan commended the continued efforts made by Qatar to accede to the core international conventions, particularly its recent accession to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Kazakhstan questioned Qatar on the increasing the number of women graduates from university and acceding into higher positions in the public and private sectors. Kazakhstan made recommendations.

56. Hungary underlined the serious improvements made specifically in the field of women's rights. Noting the excellent work carried out by the Qatari National Human Rights Committee in recent years, Hungary asked if the Government intended to involve it

in the follow-up process of the implementation of recommendations deriving from the universal periodic review. Hungary was also interested in learning about the actions taken to facilitate the election of elected members of the Advisory Council and if Qatar intended to allow the formation of political parties. The adoption of a new long-term programme regarding human rights education, and some provisions of the Family Act and the Nationality Act, which may perpetuate discrimination against women and girls, were also issues of concerns.

57. Nicaragua noted the commitment of Qatar to the promotion and protection of human rights and the notable achievement in this regard, in establishing a number of governmental institutions, and in improving the gender perspective, allowing the participation of women in decision-making processes. Nicaragua made recommendations.

58. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomed the commitment of Qatar to improving human rights, to enhance the rights of women and children, and the work of the National Human Rights Committee. It was concerned that domestic law could allow for discrimination against women and non-Qatari nationals, particularly migrant workers, although it was pleased that Qatar had acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women . It welcomed the willingness to engage on human rights issues, including by hosting the annual Democracy, Development and Free Trade Forum. It made recommendations.

59. Norway welcomed Qatar's accession in 2009 to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, but remained concerned about Qatar's reservations to it. Norway was also concerned about the work and living conditions of foreign workers. While indicating that it opposed the death penalty, Norway appreciated that no death sentences had been carried out in 2009. Human rights defenders played an important role in fostering a culture of human rights. Norway made recommendations.

60. The Syrian Arab Republic referred to the efforts made to ensure comprehensive and sustainable development and to the development of legislation to comply with human rights principles and gender equality. Qatar had acceded to a number of core human rights instruments, worked effectively with treaty bodies to improve its implementation and worked effectively and objectively as a member of the Human Rights Council. Qatar continued to offer its good offices to settle regional crises. It raised questions on workers complaints and migrant workers and made a recommendation.

61. The Russian Federation appreciated the progress achieved in human development, education and health, and the high standards of living. It noted the progress in the realization of civil and political rights, the efforts to improve legislation and institutions, and the increased awareness of society regarding the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. It made a recommendation.

62. Malaysia commended Qatar for its commitment to promote human rights, including by establishing numerous governmental and non-governmental institutions, acceding to regional and international treaties and its cooperation with OHCHR. It noted the achievements in political, economic and social areas, despite the challenges faced. Further improvement to human rights would be possible through constructive dialogue with international human rights mechanisms. It made recommendations.

63. Mexico welcomed the State's commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, as represented in its newly adopted Constitution and the objectives of National Vision 2030. Mexico noted the accession of Qatar to numerous international and regional instruments, although it underlined the need to accede to the two international covenants. Mexico recognized efforts made for fighting trafficking, particularly among women and children, as well as the support provided for the victims. Mexico enquired whether

legislation punishing criminals includes international legal standards and, if the law is equally implemented for national citizens and foreign migrants. It made recommendations

64. Djibouti welcomed the fact that Qatar was planning to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and included in its Criminal Code the definition of torture contained in article 1 of the Convention against Torture. It wanted to know the sanctions envisaged to punish those responsible for acts of torture. Special attention should also be paid to fighting human trafficking and providing support to victims, to ensure their reintegration into society. Djibouti noted with satisfaction the amendment of the decree on the national human rights institution, to bring it into line with the Paris Principles. Djibouti made recommendations.

65. Brunei Darussalam supported Qatar's endeavours to develop and enrich the standard of living of its people through health care, education and employment. It welcomed the constructive dialogue with the international human rights mechanisms and its pledge to draw international best practices into its relevant domestic policies and legislations. It encouraged Qatar to continue its efforts to guarantee fundamental human rights and freedoms as enshrined in its Constitution. It made recommendations.

66. Azerbaijan welcomed the greater commitment to establishing a number of national institutions to promote and protect human rights. Azerbaijan appreciated achievements in ensuring high living standards, reducing maternal and infant mortality, ensuring freedom of religion, and including human rights education in school curricula. Azerbaijan noted that Qatar was on the verge of achieving the goal of primary education, and mentioned the increasing cooperation of Qatar with OHCHR. Azerbaijan made recommendations.

67. While welcoming Qatar's accession to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Sweden indicated that domestic legislation still discriminated against women and requested the delegation to elaborate further on the measures taken to ensure women's equal rights, including with regard to marriage and divorce. Sweden also requested the delegation to elaborate on measures the Government might be considering to ensure that no one was discriminated against, including on the grounds of sexual orientation or identity, in line with the Yogyakarta principles. Sweden made recommendations.

68. Netherlands welcomed the cooperation with Special procedures and the challenges to further boost the role of women in society. It referred to concerns regarding the possibility for foreign employees to leave the country, to domestic violence affecting Qatari and non-Qatari women and to women's low representation at senior Government positions. It made recommendations.

69. Brazil noted that education was compulsory and free, thus contributing to a sharp decrease in illiteracy rates. It highlighted that Qatar was about to achieve all Millennium Development Goals prior to 2015, and had one of the highest standards of living in the world. Brazil commended Qatar for its recent accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its efforts to guarantee higher levels of education and more opportunities to women. However, Brazil expressed concerns about alleged discrimination towards women, and the constraints on inheritance rights on the basis of religion and discrimination towards non-citizens. It enquired whether Qatar was considering the ratification of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol thereto.

70. Nepal noted that Qatar had an impressive record in attaining welfare and economic development, which had helped to raise the quality of living and the life expectancy of its people. It noted with satisfaction the establishment of a national human rights committee, its accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It also

noted with appreciation the legislative and administrative measures taken to deal with the protection and welfare of migrant workers and to improve their situation.

71. Spain noted with interest the creation of the national human rights committee and the national committee for integrity and transparency. It expressed concerns about the death penalty and made recommendations.

72. France raised two questions regarding the specific manner in which Qatar was implementing its 2003 judicial reform, and its intention to make a reform to re-establish equality between its nationals. France made recommendations.

73. Morocco commended Qatar on its progress in promoting and protecting human rights, which was clear from its interest in protecting the political, social, economic and cultural rights of its nationals and residents. The sustained improvement in human development was significant, in particular for women and children. Morocco noted the positive measures taken at the legislative and institutional levels for the protection of children, such as the setting-up of women and children foundations and the national foundation to combat trafficking in persons. It requested additional information on the role and aims of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and on the human rights dimension on Qatar's cooperation strategy. Morocco made a recommendation.

74. Belarus noted that the Constitution clearly emphasized the need to protect and promote human rights. Qatar had been taking comprehensive measures to implement, at the level of legislation and practice, the human rights provisions of the Constitution. Qatar had joined a number of international human rights instruments. The effective measures taken by Qatar to combat trafficking in human beings could be an example for other countries. Belarus made recommendations.

75. Indonesia took note of the interest in Qatar's intention to accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It appreciated the efforts made to meet its commitments to human rights. It commended the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights and similar institutions for the coordination and dissemination of a human rights culture. It referred to the active participation of civil society and the private sector in handling the issue of trafficking in persons and the protection of women and children. Indonesia welcomed the establishment of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and the creation of the Doha Center for Media Freedom. Indonesia made recommendations.

76. Bosnia and Herzegovina highlighted that Qatar had achieved significant human development progress and was on target to achieve the Millennium Development Goals prior to 2015, though some weaknesses relating to the role of women in public life and the gender gap in education remained. It appreciated the efforts to prohibit the use of child labour and assist victims of abuse and trafficking. It made recommendations.

77. Chile noted that the new Constitution enshrined human rights, and congratulated it on the accreditation of the National Committee of Human Rights with "A" status. Chile noted the special interest in women rights, and congratulated Qatar on its ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Chile made recommendations.

78. Bangladesh noted the remarkable economic growth combined with pro-people policy initiatives that had contributed to the overall improvement in human rights. Bangladesh hoped that Qatar would be able to tackle the welfare challenges of migrant workers and facilitate the full repatriation of children involved in camel racing and support their family reunification. Bangladesh encouraged Qatar to continue its efforts to advance the role of women in socio-economic activities and engage them as key partners in the development process. Bangladesh made recommendations.

79. In responding to questions, the delegation stated that, in addition to the constitutional protection of expatriate workers, law No. 14 of 2004 guaranteed a number of rights to expatriate workers and protected their rights. Qatar had signed a number of bilateral agreements with the countries of expatriate workers aiming at regulating and protecting the rights and obligations of workers and employers. The labour relations department was created in 2009 to arbitrate between employers and employees promptly. The Supreme Council for the Judiciary had created specific tribunals to examine workers complaints and accelerate their processing, where litigations fees are waived.

80. The labour law had adopted the principle of equality in all rights and obligations between the national and expatriate workers, including regarding contracts, working hours, compensation, medical care and leave.

81. The Constitution contained a number of provisions for the protection of the family, motherhood and childhood. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs was the main mechanism involved with child rights, and followed up on international instruments regarding family and children. A number of governmental and non-governmental institutions had been established to promote and protect the rights of the child. The law had prohibited child labour of those under the age of 16.

82. A national committee headed by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs endeavoured to implement law No. 2 of 2004 regarding persons with special needs. A number of institutions had been established to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Qatar had nominated in 2003 the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, and a national Qatari was a member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In collaboration with the Arab League, the Council had elaborated an Arab dictionary for the deaf. Qatar had organized a number of meetings and workshops on the rights with disabilities, and had sponsored a resolution for the commemoration of the international day on autism during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

83. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue and listed below enjoy the support of Qatar:

1. To consider ratifying two core United Nations human rights instruments, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Slovenia);
2. To consider ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);
3. To strengthen efforts towards the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Brazil);
4. To continue to accede to core international human rights instruments (Kazakhstan);
5. To continue the process of accession to international human rights instruments and improvement of the national human rights legislation, especially in the context of priorities identified in the comprehensive plan of development known as Qatar National Vision 2030 (Belarus);

6. To continue to honour its international human rights commitments through compliance with its obligations (Nicaragua);
7. To share its experience with interested countries in the area of fighting corruption (Yemen);
8. To intensify efforts to guarantee equal opportunities for women in the public service, especially in senior governmental positions (Netherlands);
9. To continue its efforts to strengthen the role of women in society and to include women in an effective manner in the development process, supporting women to enable them to participate in economic activities in the country (Kuwait);
10. To continue taking measures to promote and empower women and to enable them to participate in a more effective manner in public life (Algeria);
11. To continue to remove any impediments that could hamper Qatari women's full participation in society (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya);
12. To continue to formulate and implement policies that enhance and develop the capacity of women to fulfil their responsibilities as key partners in the development process (Pakistan);
13. To continue to promote women's rights and empowerment, with a view to further enhancing their participation in economic and political life (Philippines);
14. To continue to empower the status and participation of women in social and business spheres (Turkey);
15. To further enhance the representation of women in all fields of society (Azerbaijan);
16. To continue its efforts to ensure the civil and political rights of women (Yemen);
17. To continue efforts to ensure that women fully participate in society (Nicaragua);
18. To continue implementing policies that will enhance and develop women's capacity as key partners in the development process (Indonesia);
19. To continue to intensify efforts with positive measures to ensure the effective promotion and protection of women's rights, in harmony with customs and traditional values of its society (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
20. To continue its efforts to improve the status of women and ensure their full participation in all areas of life (Belarus);
21. To continue efforts to promote gender equality and empower the position of women (Bosnia and Herzegovina);
22. To continue to improve policies and training programmes regarding the promotion and protection of the rights of the child (Indonesia);
23. To continue its efforts to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities (Bahrain);
24. To continue its efforts to develop the capacities of the institutions dealing with vulnerable groups, in particular persons with disabilities (Nicaragua);

25. To bring the 2004 Law No 2 on persons with special needs into line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Russian Federation);
26. To continue efforts to prohibit the use of child labour (Bosnia and Herzegovina);
27. To continue its support for the foundations that provide services to women and children victims of abuse and violence (Islamic Republic of Iran);
28. To take measures to strengthen and guarantee the effective implementation of legal measures against domestic violence, sexual abuse and the exploitation of women and children (Mexico);
29. To continue its efforts to prevent domestic violence, notably by reinforcing the legal framework and increasing the protection of victims and the prosecution of reported cases (Slovenia);
30. To conduct an awareness and education campaign to prevent violence against women and prosecute those who commit crimes of violence against women (Canada);
31. To actively improve the protection of female domestic workers against violence and sexual abuse (Norway);
32. To make efforts to ensure that the police prioritizes and investigates cases of violence and sexual abuse against female domestic workers (Norway);
33. To continue its efforts to promulgate laws against human trafficking and on domestic workers (Malaysia);
34. To consider using the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking developed by OHCHR as a reference guide in its policies and programs (Philippines);
35. To continue its efforts to prevent impunity for perpetrators of human trafficking and towards the principle of non-criminalization of victims (Turkey);
36. To further intensify its efforts to combat human trafficking (Azerbaijan);
37. To continue the work to ensure fair trials, particularly in cases of the death penalty, ensuring the right to be judged by an independent, impartial and competent court, the right to effective judicial protection, the right to have enough time and facilities to properly prepare the defence of a defendant, the right to the presumption of innocence, the right to appeal and the right for a sentence to be commuted (Spain);
38. To share its experiences in strengthening its judiciary system (Brunei Darussalam);
39. To consider raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility (Brazil);
40. To elaborate a national plan of action on children's rights in the juvenile justice system (Kazakhstan);
41. To share its best practices in terms of promoting education for children with disabilities (Brunei Darussalam);
42. To continue its efforts to further strengthen the foundations of the family and its associated values among society (Islamic Republic of Iran);

43. To continue to pursue social policies in keeping with well-established family values, and not to be intimidated by suggestions on social norms that are controversial, non- universal and specific to certain societies (Bangladesh);
44. To take further measures to facilitate access to health-care services for the enjoyment of the right to health by all (Bangladesh);
45. To sustain its efforts with regard to health and education (Cuba);
46. To continue its efforts and dedication to ensure education enrolment for all categories of society (Algeria);
47. To continue practical steps already taken to disseminate a culture of human rights in education institutions, utilizing the media for this purpose (Saudi Arabia);
48. To continue efforts to spread a culture of human rights in Qatar (Syrian Arab Republic);
49. To step up efforts to strengthen public education, awareness programmes and skill training, particularly aimed at increasing the awareness of human rights in Qatar (Malaysia);
50. To continue efforts to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers, and to share its leading experience in this area in international forums (Saudi Arabia);
51. In line with its ongoing efforts, to continue to strengthen its labour laws and to improve the living and working conditions of foreign workers (Pakistan);
52. To continue to strengthen measures to protect and promote the welfare and human rights of all expatriate workers in Qatar, especially women domestic workers (Philippines);
53. To continue its active and leading participation in the Abu Dhabi dialogue process (Philippines);
54. To make further efforts to promote and protect the rights of expatriate workers, who make a significant contribution to the economic development and prosperity of Qatar (Sri Lanka);
55. To continue its efforts to protect the rights of expatriate workers (Azerbaijan);
56. To reinforce measures to prevent violence against foreign domestic workers and bring to justice those responsible for such crimes (Netherlands);
57. To continue efforts to combat discrimination against women, particularly migrant women (Brazil);
58. To continue its leadership and international cooperation in the international agenda for the development of countries of the South (Cuba);
59. To continue its policy of development based on respect for human rights (Lebanon);
60. To continue work on and consider expansion of its Reach Out to Asia Programme (Philippines);

61. To continue its achievements in the field of human rights as an encouragement factor for the promotion and protection of human rights (United Arab Emirates);
62. To continue its efforts to deepen and strengthen human rights in the country (Algeria);
63. To continue its efforts to promote human rights, which have reached a notable level in Qatar (Tunisia);
64. To continue to address human rights challenges in line with international human rights standards (Bosnia and Herzegovina);
65. To take more concrete measures aiming at fostering a genuine human rights culture with due regard for national and regional particularities, as well as historic, cultural and religious backgrounds (Islamic Republic of Iran);
66. To continue to strengthen its cooperation with civil society organizations in promoting and protecting human rights in areas such as the administration of justice, education, public health, migrant workers and gender equality (Malaysia);
67. To continue to strengthen cooperation with civil society organizations (Bosnia and Herzegovina);
68. To continue its policy focusing on principal human rights issues, in particular in the framework of its comprehensive development vision known as Qatar National Vision 2030 and of its own civilization and religious identity (Morocco);
69. To continue to promote dialogue among the various religions and civilizations, and to promote the culture of dialogue and peaceful coexistence (Algeria);
70. To continue its civilized choice aimed at strengthening dialogue among religions and spreading the values of moderation and tolerance (Tunisia);
71. To continue to play a leading role in facilitating global conferences on interreligious and inter-civilization dialogue, democracy, human rights and a culture of peace (Malaysia);
72. To continue its role in promoting genuine interfaith dialogue (Indonesia);
73. To involve civil society in the implementation of recommendations, and follow up from the present review (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
74. To establish an effective and inclusive process with civil society to follow up on universal periodic review recommendations (Norway);
75. To establish a follow-up mechanism related to the implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review and associate the national institution fully in its work (Djibouti);
76. To strengthen its cooperation with OHCHR, including with regard to the training of relevant public officials, on the basis of identified technical assistance needs and with a view to establishing a multi-year programme (Djibouti).

84. Qatar considers that recommendations Nos. 26 and 40 above are either already implemented or in the process of implementation.

85. The following recommendations will be examined by Qatar, which will provide responses in due time. The response of Qatar to these recommendations will be included in the outcome report adopted by the Human Rights Council at its fourteenth session:

1. To examine the possibility of ratifying other international conventions that it has not yet ratified, in particular the two International Covenants and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Algeria);
2. To Sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Spain);
3. To ratify international instruments still pending, particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Rome Statute (Chile);
4. To consider acceding to all core conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Norway);
5. To consider ratifying ILO Conventions 98 and 100 (Brazil);
6. To consider re-examining reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention against Torture with a view to withdrawing them (Brazil);
7. To include in its national legislation the concept of torture as defined in article 1 of the Convention against Torture, and to enact legislation to abolish all types of corporal punishment and other forms of cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment (Mexico);
8. To review the Family Code and the law on nationality, in particular to ensure gender equality in the area of divorce and the acquisition of nationality by affiliation (France);
9. To extend an open and permanent invitation to all special procedures (Spain);
10. To extend an open and standing invitation to special procedures mandates holders (Chile);
11. To review legislation concerning family law and laws relating to the authority of guardians over women, and to amend or repeal laws that discriminate against women (Canada);
12. To amend or repeal national laws that discriminate against women and do not prevent violence against women sufficiently, including family laws, laws and procedures related to the authority of guardians of women, nationality laws and housing regulations (Slovenia);

13. To implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child contained in paragraph 65 of document CRC/C/QAT/CO/2 (Slovenia);
 14. To prohibit all forms of corporal punishment against children, both boys and girls (Chile);
 15. To adopt a national plan against gender-based violence. To identify and remedy those areas in the national legislation that might be discriminatory, including family laws, laws and procedures relating to the authority of guardians of women, nationality laws and norms relating to housing (Spain);
 16. To increase the age of criminal responsibility to a minimum of 12 years, in line with recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Chile);
 17. To lift restrictions on the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and to take steps to promote freedom of the press in all forms of media (Canada);
 18. To take appropriate measures to disseminate widely and ensure full observance of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (Norway);
 19. To facilitate independent participation of civil society in the democratization process, and to lift restrictions on the freedom of the right of association and assembly, in accordance with international human rights standards (Netherlands);
 20. To protect its migrant workers from exploitation by ensuring that applicable laws and practices conform to international human rights standards guaranteeing migrant workers their human rights, including the right to freedom of movement (Canada);
 21. To ensure that its domestic laws guarantee the protection of the human rights of migrant workers, including their right to freedom of movement and the right to an adequate standard of living (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
 22. To guarantee the human rights and freedoms of migrant workers through the promotion of legislation on migration that ensures decent and respectful treatment towards this vulnerable group, as well as its access, without discrimination, to, inter alia, health and education systems; accession to the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families would be an important step in that regard (Mexico);
 23. To make further changes to the legislation on sponsorship to protect the rights of migrants, and to abolish the requirement that employers give consent before exit permits are issued for foreign employees (Netherlands);
 24. To take necessary measures in the light of the law of 2009 and, in particular, reform the sponsorship system in order to protect employees in the event of conflict (France).
86. The following recommendations did not enjoy the support of Qatar:
1. To continue to focus work on the rights of women and children, and to lift its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to guarantee fair and equal legislation (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

2. To consider withdrawing, as soon as possible, its reservation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to ensure that its national law and practice is in conformity with it (Norway);
 3. To review its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women with a view to withdrawing them, especially the reservation to the right of a child to obtain Qatari nationality from a Qatari women married to a foreign man (Netherlands);
 4. To end discrimination against women by amending its legislation to guarantee women equal rights, in accordance with its international obligations, including with regard to marriage and divorce (Sweden);
 5. To take legislative measures to eliminate discrimination against women, particularly in the area of marriage and divorce (Chile);
 6. To ensure that LGBT persons are not discriminated against and, as an immediate step, to amend the provisions of the penal code criminalizing consensual sexual activity among persons of the same sex and to ensure that no one is punished for such activity under Sharia law (Sweden);
 7. To consider establishing an official moratorium on the use of death penalty with a view to abolishing it, as provided by General Assembly resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 (Slovenia);
 8. To declare a moratorium on executions in line with the General Assembly resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
 9. To commute all death sentences and declare a moratorium on executions (Norway);
 10. To consider abolishing the death penalty and corporal punishment, in particular against children (Brazil);
 11. To establish a moratorium on capital punishment, commuting such crimes to sentences of deprivation of liberty; if not, to find a way to harmonize criminal and penal norms and laws with international human rights law (Spain);
 12. To abolish stoning and flogging from its legislation, as mentioned by the Committee against Torture (Chile).
87. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Qatar was headed by H.E. Mr. Ahmad Bin Abdullah AL-MAHMOUD Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Member of the Council of Ministers and composed of 28 members:

- H.E. Mr. Saif Muqaddam AL-BOUAINAIN; Foreign Minister's Assistant; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- H.E. Mr. Abdulla Falah Abdulla AL-DOSARI; Ambassador, Permanent Representative; Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the UN Office, Geneva;
- H.E. Sheikh Khaled Bin Jassim AL-THANI; Director, Bureau of Human Rights; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Faisal Abdulla AL-HENZAB; Counselor; Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the UN Office, Geneva;
- Mr. Khalid Fahad AL-HAJRI; First Secretary; Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the UN Office, Geneva;
- Mr. Mansoor Abdulla AL-SULAITIN; Second Secretary; Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the UN Office, Geneva;
- Dr. El Fatih El Rashid A. EL NOUR; Legal Expert, Legal Affairs Department; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Dr. Mohamed Saeed ELTAYEB; Legal Expert, Bureau of Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mrs. Hanadi Nedham A.J. AL SHAFAI; Political Researcher, Bureau of Human Rights; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Sheikha Sumaya Mubarak Bin Saif AL-THANI; Researcher, Bureau of Human Rights; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Sultan Mubarak AL-DOSARI; International Relations Researcher, Bureau of Human Rights; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- H.E. Mr. Mohammed Khalid A.G. AL-MAADEED; Member of the Advisory Council; The Advisory Council;
- Dr. Mohd Ebrahim SHAHBECK; Legal Expert; The Advisory Council;
- Sheikh Mohamed Abdulrahman Mubarak A. AL-THANI; Assistant Director of Legal Opinion and Contracts Department; Ministry of Justice;
- Mrs. Maryam Yousuf M. A. ARAB; Legal Expert; Ministry of Justice;
- Lieutenant Colonel Abdulla Saqr AL-MOHANNADI ; Director of Human Rights Department; Ministry of Interior;
- Mr. Mohammed Hassan M.H. ALOBAILDI; Director of Legal Affairs Department; Ministry of Labor;
- Mr. Abdulla Ahmad S.A. ALMOHANNADI; Director of Labor Department; Ministry of Labor;

- Mr. Khalid Ahmad Sulaiman AL HAYDER; Senior Expert, International Relations; Ministry of Labor;
 - Mrs. Wafaa Anbar M.F. MUBARAK; Senior Legal Researcher; Ministry of Health;
 - Mr. Ahmad Ali A.A. BUHENDI; Legal Expert; Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage;
 - Dr. Hamda Hassan A. ALSULAITI; Assistant Director of Evaluation Institute; Supreme Education Council;
 - Mr. Misfer Faisal M.A. AL-SHAHWANI; Acting Director Social Education Department; Supreme Education Council;
 - Ms. Manal Yousuf ALMAHMOUD; International Relations Specialist; Supreme Council for Family Affairs;
 - Mrs. Maryam Ibrahim Y.M. ALMALKI; Director General; Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking;
 - Ms. Amani Ali R.A. ALTAMIMI; Acting Director Planning and Programmes Management Department; Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking;
 - Mrs. Fareeda Abdullah M. AL-OBAIDLAY; Director General; Qatar Foundation for Child and Woman Protection;
 - Dr. Watheba Dawood Abdulateef AL-SAADI; Legal Advisor; Qatar Foundation for Child and Woman Protection.
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