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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Saudi Arabia

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, held its seventeenth session from 21 October to 1 November 2013. The review of Saudi Arabia was held at the 1st meeting on 21 October 2013. The delegation of Saudi Arabia was headed by His Excellency Dr. Bandar bin Mohammed Aleiban, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission. At its 1st meeting held on 1 November 2013, the Working Group adopted the report on Saudi Arabia

2. On 14 January 2013, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Saudi Arabia: Japan, Romania and Uganda.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Saudi Arabia:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/17/SAU/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.6/17/SAU/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/17/SAU/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, was transmitted to Saudi Arabia through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review (UPR).

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The head of the delegation of Saudi Arabia reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's commitment to respect and promote human rights and support the international mechanisms, particularly the UPR.

6. Saudi Arabia reiterated that its endeavours within the Human Rights Council constitute a continuation of its support for the human right to sustainable development in its capacity as a member of the G20 safeguarding the interests of developing countries and advocating measures to mitigate the adverse effects of the global economic and financial crises by enhancing human development programmes, especially in connection with the debt burdens of developing countries.

7. Saudi Arabia noted that it has been honoured to serve the Two Holy Mosques and provide appropriate facilities for pilgrims — to whose welfare it attaches the utmost importance — to practise their religious rites in safety, security and comfort.

8. Saudi Arabia stated that it had prepared its second UPR report in collaboration with government authorities as well as academics, civil society institutions and male and female members of the human rights community.

9. Saudi Arabia explained that the Basic Law of Governance highlights the lofty principles and values that safeguard human dignity and protect fundamental rights and freedoms by stipulating that governance in Saudi Arabia is based on justice, consultation and equality. The Law also places the State under an obligation to protect human rights in accordance with Islamic sharia.

10. Saudi Arabia said that the independence of the judicial authority is a firmly established principle for the protection of human rights, since justice protects the lives, property, freedoms and rights of citizens. The project initiated by King Abdullah to develop the judicial authority is one of the most significant reform projects, which involves the adoption of statutes for the judiciary and the Board of Grievances.

11. Saudi Arabia reaffirmed that Islamic sharia guarantees fair gender equality and the State's legislation does not differentiate between men and women. Article 8 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that governance in Saudi Arabia is based on justice and equality in accordance with Islamic sharia. Hence, women are full citizens in their own right and are endowed with independent financial and full legal capacity under which they enjoy freedom to dispose of their property and manage their affairs in a totally independent manner without seeking permission from anyone.

12. Saudi Arabia highlighted that Saudi women are contributing to national decision-making through their membership in the Consultative Council in which they are allocated a minimum of 20 per cent of seats, in addition to their right to vote and stand as candidates in municipal council elections. Women also hold senior posts in the government sector, where the number of female employees rose by about 8 per cent during the last year alone.

13. Saudi Arabia affirmed its commitment to protecting the rights of the child, not only in its capacity as a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the two Optional Protocols thereto, but also in fulfilment of its obligations derived from the provisions of Islamic sharia which seek to ensure the best interests of the child in all circumstances.

14. Saudi Arabia stated that it has taken further steps to protect women and children from violence and abuse through the adoption of numerous measures, including promulgation of the Protection from Harm Act.

15. Saudi Arabia added that it is taking all the non-discriminatory measures necessary to protect the rights of more than 9 million foreign workers. Numerous decisions have been promulgated and control mechanisms have been established to help to safeguard their rights, including:

- An electronic mechanism for the protection of workers' wages;
- Mandatory health insurance;
- Bilateral agreements between Saudi Arabia and the countries of origin of workers, particularly domestic workers.

16. Saudi Arabia ensures that workers are able to report violations and that the new Labour Law is being properly applied. Moreover, cases of forced labour constitute forms of trafficking in persons which are governed by the Suppression of Crimes of Trafficking in Persons Act.

17. Saudi Arabia underscored that its regulations prohibit any religious discrimination in employment and permit workers to perform their religious duties in accordance with articles 61 and 104 of the Labour Law.

18. Saudi Arabia highlighted that it provides general and higher education free of charge and has established an independent commission to evaluate general education with a view to improving its quality and increasing its output.

19. Saudi Arabia added that in recent years numerous governmental and non-governmental initiatives have been adopted to create employment opportunities for both genders, as illustrated by wage subsidization programmes, telecommuting, part-time employment, productive family programmes and training programmes for the national labour force aimed at increasing its productivity.

20. With regard to health care, Saudi Arabia stated that primary health-care centres, as well as medical cities and specialized teaching hospitals, have been established.

21. Saudi Arabia has shown concern for social welfare by supporting needy families and providing assistance through programmes targeting all sections of society, especially persons with disabilities.

22. Saudi Arabia stated that it is preparing other periodic reports for presentation to the treaty bodies. Special Rapporteurs and other mandate holders have already been received, and the Kingdom is eager to continue this cooperation with them.

23. Saudi Arabia highlighted that it increased its contribution in support of OHCHR from US\$ 150,000 to US\$ 1 million annually for a five-year period effective from 2012. Saudi Arabia also contributed US\$ 1 million to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

24. Saudi Arabia reiterated that a Memorandum of Understanding on technical cooperation has been signed with OHCHR to enhance the capacities of the Kingdom's officials in this field.

25. Saudi Arabia informed that, in 2011, it signed an agreement with the United Nations to establish an international counter-terrorism centre (United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre) and donated \$110 million to fund the centre's operations.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

26. During the interactive dialogue, 102 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue can be found in section II of the present report.

27. Uganda noted the consultation with civil society, the ratification of conventions and the increased enrolment of girls at all educational levels.

28. Ukraine commended accession to a number of international human rights conventions and noted progress in promoting women's advancement in labour market, access to education and political participation.

29. United Arab Emirates noted the high importance given to the protection of children's rights through activities, programmes and initiatives carried out by the National Committee on Children. It asked if the definition of children would be extended to all laws.

30. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland expressed disappointment that Saudi Arabia has not implemented recommendations from the previous UPR cycle. It regretted Saudi Arabia's failure to meet treaty body reporting deadlines and the lack of access for several Special Rapporteurs.

31. The United States of America noted the "Protection Against Abuse" legislation but expressed concern about employer abuses of foreign workers. It raised concerns about restrictions on freedoms of association, religion and expression, and the lack of due process in security-related cases.

32. Uruguay highlighted the recent accession to international instruments, the gradual legislative process and cooperation with OHCHR.

33. Uzbekistan welcomed the adoption of laws to strengthen human rights and accession to the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OP-CRC-SC) and on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP-CRC-AC) and International Labour Office (ILO) Minimum Age Convention No. 138. It noted the efforts aimed at the protection of women's rights, the right to education, health care and religious tolerance.
34. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) noted the achievements in health care, primary education and literacy and housing for vulnerable groups.
35. Viet Nam noted with appreciation the achievements in the protection of cultural and social rights. It also welcomed the efforts to eliminate trafficking in persons, anti-corruption and combating discrimination, and highlighted difficulties and challenges.
36. Yemen commended the measures to ensure women's participation as candidates in elections, decision-making and access to managerial positions in employment, and noted measures to protect children from violence.
37. Afghanistan commended Saudi Arabia's accession to a number of international human rights instruments, establishment of the National Anti-Corruption Commission, the Standing Committee on Trafficking in Persons, and various efforts to enhance human rights.
38. Albania recognized Saudi Arabia's commitment to combating human trafficking and terrorism, enhancing women's rights and establishing national human rights mechanisms.
39. Algeria welcomed the laws on domestic workers and accession to OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC. It commended the measures taken on women's participation in public and political life and the protection of children.
40. Argentina commended improved child literacy rates and reduction in child mortality and legislative progress made as a result of the ratification of OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC.
41. Armenia noted the establishment of the National Human Rights Education Committee and the increased number of girls in school and women in employment.
42. Australia welcomed the reforms and the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and expressed concern at the death penalty and breaches of human rights and the rights of the child, and urged further reform to overcome discrimination against women.
43. Austria commended interreligious dialogue, but expressed concern over the lack of due process, absence of a written criminal code, use of the death penalty, corporal punishment and discrimination against women.
44. Azerbaijan commended the judicial and legislative reforms and the establishment of the National Anti-Corruption Commission and the Standing Committee on Trafficking in Persons.
45. Bahrain appreciated the adoption of several policies and initiatives to enhance human rights and requested further information on the role of monitoring bodies and civil society in drafting those regulations. It noted the regulations on domestic workers.
46. Bangladesh noted the efforts made to increase protection of the rights of migrant workers and encouraged Saudi Arabia to continue such efforts. It noted the steps taken to address the situation of the Myanmar community in Saudi Arabia and requested further information on such measures.

47. Belgium expressed concern over several subjects, particularly the situation of women and human rights defenders.
48. Benin noted the steps taken in the areas of education, health, employment, housing, culture, child protection and children's rights.
49. Bhutan noted the adoption of numerous laws and the ratification of two Optional Protocols to CRC.
50. Bosnia and Herzegovina noted with appreciation the establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It asked Saudi Arabia to elaborate on the role of the special commission monitoring the Internet.
51. Brazil welcomed the ratification of OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC. It remained concerned that Saudi Arabia maintained its restrictive reservations to core international human rights instruments, yet had not ratified the two main human rights covenants.
52. Brunei Darussalam welcomed the strengthening of child's rights and commended Saudi Arabia's initiatives in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue.
53. Cambodia welcomed the ratification of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC.
54. Canada enquired about progress with regard to measures taken on national identification documents for women, criminalization of and protection from domestic violence, minimum age for marriage, access to health-care services and freedom of movement of women.
55. Chad appreciated Saudi Arabia's accession to a significant number of international human rights instruments.
56. Chile acknowledged the efforts to advance the promotion and protection of human rights, as demonstrated by the establishment of follow-up mechanisms, and measures for institutional strengthening.
57. China commended the efforts to promote economic, social and cultural rights. It noted programmes to protect the rights of children and achieve the Millennium Development Goals as well as the economic assistance to developing countries. China welcomed efforts to promote dialogue and tolerance among religious groups.
58. Colombia noted Saudi Arabia's commitment to making progress in implementing the recommendations from the first cycle of the UPR.
59. Comoros highlighted the efforts made to promote the education of girls. It invited the authorities to continue and expand the established dialogue on the national human rights situation and OHCHR.
60. Costa Rica noted the progress made in protecting children's rights and health and promoting women's education, in particular the increase in female enrolment in higher education.
61. Saudi Arabia responded to questions and comments.
62. Saudi Arabia reiterated that the education budget for this year accounted for about 28 per cent of the State's general budget.

63. It reiterated that the Code of Criminal Procedure contained all the safeguards needed to protect the rights of accused persons, such as the right to a lawyer during the investigation and trial, the right to a fair and public trial and the right to be present when the judgement is handed down. The statutory procedures ensure that juveniles are treated in a manner consistent with their age and include admission, immediately after their arrest, to one of the juvenile centres supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs; placement in detention only if so ordered by a juvenile judge; the stipulation that the criminal investigation officers arresting juveniles must wear civilian clothes; prohibition of placing juveniles in handcuffs; conduct of the investigation and trial proceedings in specialized juvenile centres and in the presence of their guardian and a sociologist; and subjection of all prisons and detention centres to control by the judiciary.
64. Cuba highlighted the positive results achieved in education and the numerous actions and programmes to guarantee health care.
65. Cyprus commended the accession to a number of human rights treaties as well as the project to build the capacity of the judiciary.
66. Czech Republic expressed appreciation for Saudi Arabia's efforts in certain areas of human rights, but regretted that NGOs are not allowed to operate freely in the country.
67. Denmark commended the progress achieved in promoting women's rights. However, it noted with serious concern the severe discrimination against women, including the system of guardianship and domestic violence.
68. Djibouti welcomed the efforts to protect and promote human rights through international cooperation and commended Saudi Arabia on its economic aid to developing countries.
69. Ecuador noted the ratification of OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC and the advances made in women's participation in public life.
70. Kuwait commended Saudi Arabia's accession to OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC and ILO Convention No. 138 and commended its cooperation with OHCHR to develop its human rights capacities.
71. Ethiopia acknowledged Government efforts to provide basic services to its people and protect human rights.
72. Finland noted Saudi Arabia's efforts on women's rights. It welcomed the new law on domestic abuse and asked what further measures were being taken to advance the status and rights of women.
73. France welcomed Saudi Arabia's policy to modernize its society and its progress on the role of women in society.
74. Germany asked Saudi Arabia how it ensured equal access for girls to primary education and that they remained in education and what further measures would be taken to protect migrant workers.
75. Greece recognized Saudi Arabia's steps regarding women's rights. It commended the accession to OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC, and asked for more information on the implementation of those protocols at the national level.
76. Hungary appreciated the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for technical cooperation with OHCHR as well as efforts on judicial and legislative reforms. It asked whether the powers of its Human Rights Commission would be expanded.

77. India commended Saudi Arabia on streamlining the labour situation, advancing the protection of children and the adoption of the Child Protection Act and the signing of two memoranda of understanding with OHCHR.
78. Indonesia expressed appreciation for the steps taken to protect migrant and domestic workers and to protect and enhance women's rights and participation in public, political and social life.
79. Iraq welcomed Saudi Arabia's accession to OP-CRC-SC, OP-CRC-AC and ILO Convention No. 138. It commended the efforts to promote and protect human rights.
80. Ireland was concerned that Saudi Arabia has not enacted a law guaranteeing the right to form civil society organizations, that independent non-governmental organizations could not register and that male guardianship has not been abolished.
81. Italy noted the encouragement to strengthen bilateral dialogue on human rights and welcomed the progress achieved regarding political empowerment of women.
82. Japan welcomed the appointment of women to the Shura Council, the progress in empowering women and increasing their educational opportunities.
83. Jordan commended Saudi Arabia's efforts to promote and protect human rights, particularly protecting children from all forms of violence. It welcomed the measures taken concerning migrant workers and the efforts being made in the legal field.
84. Egypt noted progress in the legal area to promote human rights. It welcomed the work to strengthen the role of women, particularly ensuring their participation in the Shura Council.
85. Kyrgyzstan noted with appreciation Saudi Arabia's cooperation with the OHCHR. It welcomed the adoption of legislation on migrant workers and on combating human trafficking.
86. The Lao People's Democratic Republic noted the measures to prevent human rights violations by promoting greater social awareness and improving the well-being of citizens.
87. Latvia commended Saudi Arabia's efforts to fight domestic violence and its recent adoption of legislation in that regard. It noted its accession to OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC.
88. Lebanon praised Saudi Arabia for its cooperation and positive approach to the first UPR cycle.
89. Libya congratulated Saudi Arabia on acceding to OP-CRC-SC, OP-CRC-A and ILO Convention No. 138 and continued efforts to promote and protect human rights.
90. Lithuania welcomed the accession to OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC. It was concerned that a previous recommendation "to enact and implement a law of association" has not been implemented.
91. Malaysia welcomed Saudi Arabia's progress in promoting women's and children's rights and its commitment to protecting integrity and fighting corruption. It commended Saudi Arabia for protecting the rights of visiting pilgrims.
92. Maldives commended Saudi Arabia for encouraging women to participate fully in society and for establishing mechanisms for women's advancement and protection from violence.
93. Mauritania welcomed progress towards equality, justice and socioeconomic prosperity and efforts to enable the participation of women at all levels. It noted initiatives on interreligious dialogue

94. Mexico hoped that Saudi Arabia would accept visit requests from Special Rapporteurs. It noted the adoption of the law on domestic violence and hoped that efforts to promote women's equal participation would be strengthened.

95. Morocco noted the strengthened national institutional framework and requested information about efforts being made to reduce the number of deaths during childbirth and measures to support women's rights.

96. Nepal welcomed progress made in education, health, employment, housing and social welfare and the priority given to combating discrimination, promoting freedom of expression, judicial and legislative reforms and women's and children's rights.

97. In response to comments and questions, Saudi Arabia noted as follows:

(a) The death penalty is imposed only for the most serious crimes and strict procedures are applied to safeguard human rights when the death penalty is imposed insofar as the judgements are reviewed by 13 judges at the three levels of jurisdiction, in a manner consistent with international standards. Saudi Arabia notes that international law does not prohibit capital punishment if it is imposed in accordance with international standards. It requests States to consider all aspects of this issue in view of the considerable disparity between viewpoints thereon.

(b) The mechanisms to combat violence are actively supported by civil society institutions such as the National Society for Human Rights and the National Family Security Programme. The recently promulgated Protection from Harm Act supplements the procedures applied to deal with cases of family violence and ensures that child victims enjoy all their social, educational and financial rights.

(c) The Kingdom has taken measures to combat terrorism at all local, regional and international levels by conducting security operations and addressing extremist ideology. Although the Kingdom has been a victim of terrorism, the action that it has taken to protect its security has not affected the rights of its people or the administration of justice, since all the measures taken have been consistent with the rules of Islamic sharia as well as the Kingdom's national legislation and international obligations. It has thereby ensured a balance between the requirements of security and human rights. The Kingdom applied counselling and rehabilitation programmes to fight against extremist ideology through the Muhammad Bin Nayef Counselling and Care Centre, and special care has been taken to meet the financial and material needs of the families of detainees.

(d) The situation of around 250,000 Burmese expatriates in Saudi Arabia is being remedied by giving them residency permits which enable them to benefit from social, health and educational services and employment opportunities.

98. The Netherlands expressed concern regarding the continuing lack of many rights for women, despite the appointment of 30 women to the Consultative Council.

99. New Zealand welcomed the efforts to improve the position of women, including in the electoral process. It enquired about steps taken to implement the law criminalizing domestic abuse. It expressed concern about the protection of migrant workers.

100. Nicaragua welcomed the progress made regarding human trafficking, children's rights and gender equality and changes to legislation to allow women to participate in decision-making processes.

101. Nigeria commended the inclusion of civil society in national consultations prior to preparing its second national report and the progress made to promote and protect human rights.

102. Norway welcomed the measures to ensure access to work for women and progress in their access to education. Norway expressed concern about the high number of executions and the situation of human rights defenders.
103. Oman noted the progress in the area of housing, access to health services, social services to needy people in schools, education and food. It commended the participation of women in the Shura Council
104. Pakistan welcomed the establishment of new institutions and efforts to protect and promote women's and children's rights.
105. Paraguay welcomed the establishment of national human rights institutions, the ratification of international and regional instruments and national legislation to protect children and promote women.
106. The Philippines commended efforts to combat human trafficking and improve the protection of the rights of migrant workers.
107. Switzerland recalled Saudi Arabia's acceptance of recommendations regarding freedom of expression and discrimination against women. It expressed concern at the use of corporal punishment.
108. Qatar welcomed the laws to combat trafficking and protect the rights and improve the living conditions of migrant workers. Qatar noted the greater participation of women in public life and efforts to protect their rights.
109. The Republic of Korea commended Saudi Arabia's efforts to protect women's rights, including participation in political life, and equal recognition of children of women married to non-Saudi nationals.
110. The Republic of Moldova welcomed the reforms to increase women's participation in politics and encouraged the inclusion of women in decision-making, including at the regional government level.
111. Romania noted progress in achieving the rights of women, children and migrant workers and legislation introduced to combat domestic violence.
112. The Russian Federation welcomed the progress in combating human trafficking and asked about measures undertaken to implement the new law on human trafficking. It also asked if the Government intended to extend the new definition of a child to all laws.
113. Senegal welcomed the measures to protect the rights of migrant workers and women, ensure justice for minors and promote maternal health.
114. Sierra Leone congratulated Saudi Arabia on its progress made through new legislation, institutional reforms and policies and its accession to international treaties.
115. Singapore noted the measures taken to enable women to hold political and public positions. It commended the efforts to combat corruption.
116. Slovakia welcomed Saudi Arabia's accession to OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC and ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138. It was concerned about the high number of executions and the reported use of the death penalty for minors.
117. Slovenia commended the positive changes made by Saudi Arabia with regard to human trafficking and discrimination against women, the judicial reforms and its accession to OP-CRC-SC and OP-CRC-AC.
118. Somalia welcomed the high priority given to human rights, the harmonization of sharia law and international human rights law and the advancement of women's rights.

119. South Sudan noted the legal and judicial system reforms, particularly in order to increase the participation of women, and welcomed the positive efforts to regulate the situation of domestic workers.
120. Spain regretted that Saudi Arabia had not been able to comply with commitments relating to the rights of persons sentenced to capital punishment, particularly children. It welcomed measures adopted to combat domestic violence.
121. Sri Lanka noted that accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was under consideration. It welcomed the efforts to promote women's participation in public life and the rights of domestic workers.
122. The State of Palestine noted efforts to protect and promote human rights, praised the accession to several instruments and welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with OHCHR.
123. The Sudan noted that Saudi Arabia has attracted migrant workers, and commended the adoption of human trafficking legislation.
124. Sweden was concerned that the number of executions appear to have increased and asked whether corporal punishment might be abolished.
125. Poland noted the progress in various areas, including attempts to improve the situation of women. It was concerned about the practice of legal male guardianship over women and about sex segregation in the workplace.
126. The Syrian Arab Republic made recommendations.
127. Tajikistan commended the work of Saudi Arabia in improving its judicial system, implementing human rights measures and strengthening the education of women.
128. Thailand commended the adoption of legislation on human trafficking and progress made in women's rights, domestic violence and interfaith and intercultural dialogue.
129. Togo welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding between Saudi Arabia and OHCHR, legislation on human trafficking and domestic workers, and measures aimed at women and children.
130. Tunisia commended the efforts in ratifying a number of international conventions, and the legal and judicial reforms. It encouraged Saudi Arabia to continue its efforts in combating discrimination against women and migrants in areas of health, education and employment.
131. Turkey commended the increased women's empowerment and requested information on measures to promote freedom of expression. It considered the mechanisms to register and monitor migrant workers as positive.
132. Turkmenistan praised the measures adopted with regard to human rights, including new laws and institutions.
133. On the rights of migrant workers, Saudi Arabia highlighted its ratification of the relevant ILO conventions. It stated that many of the issues raised concerning practices affecting the situation of women in the Kingdom are attributable to misconceptions, inaccurate information or erroneous practices that are contrary to the provisions of Islamic sharia and national laws. In order to remedy such modes of behaviour, the State is intensifying its endeavours to promote human rights education as an effective tool to raise social awareness of women's rights and tackle these erroneous practices at their roots.
134. Saudi Arabia noted that the Ministry of Health is implementing a Decennial Strategy for the period 2010–2020 to provide health care. The Kingdom is implementing a national

plan to disseminate a human rights culture in keeping with its treaty obligations. Human rights concepts such as equality, tolerance and justice are being taught at all stages of education.

135. With regard to the right to freedom of expression, Saudi Arabia stated that Islam is the supreme religious and social authority in the Kingdom. Islamic sharia forbids hate speech, vilification of religion, or “religious insult”, and it cannot be said that Kingdom’s refusal to permit what is contrary to Islam constitutes, from the legal standpoint, a violation of freedom of opinion and expression under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 29, paragraph 2, of the Declaration sets limitations on individual rights and freedoms subjecting them to morality, public order or general welfare. This provision is in harmony with article 39 of the Kingdom’s Basic Law of Governance which stipulates that “... all vehicles of expression shall abide by the principles of courtesy and the State’s legislation ... shall help to enlighten the Nation, bolster its unity and prohibit anything that is conducive to sedition or disunity, detrimental to the security of the State and its public relations or prejudicial to human rights and dignity”. Freedom of expression is relative and may be subject to restrictions as required by law; by virtue of its awareness of the interests of its people, the State is in the best position to determine the need for any restrictions on freedom of expression.

136. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia rejected fully all false accusations in the statement made by one delegation as it considered them an attempt to conceal the truth about the violations of human rights that have been committed against the Syrian people. The head of delegation emphasized that the Kingdom kept and will keep its doors open to all pilgrims from all countries, without politicizing any requests for hajj; by this he rejected these accusations, such as denying the Syrian pilgrims who have already performed their hajj and are either still in the country or have finished their rituals and are on their way back to their country. The head of delegation also stressed that the Kingdom fulfills its international obligations.

137. Saudi Arabia concluded by emphasizing the importance given to the UPR process and the Kingdom’s commitments in adhering to its international human rights obligations by studying all the comments and recommendations, by responding to them in due time.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

138. The following recommendations will be examined by Saudi Arabia which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the twenty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council in March 2014:

- 138.1. Invite Saudi Arabia to accede to other international human rights instruments (Benin);**
- 138.2. Ratify the main human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party (Togo);**
- 138.3. Continue the study of and the necessary measures to create an adequate climate so as to accede to international human rights instruments to which the country is not yet State party (Cuba);**
- 138.4. Accede to ICCPR (Sweden);**
- 138.5. Accelerate its accession to the ICCPR and ICESCR (Tunisia);¹**

** The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited.

- 138.6. **Consider ratifying OP-CAT (Tunisia);²**
- 138.7. **Make further advances through the accession to ICCPR; ICESCR, OP-CAT and OP-CEDAW (Czech Republic);**
- 138.8. **Ratify the ICCPR, ICESCR, OP-CAT and OP-CEDAW, and sign the third Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure (Albania);**
- 138.9. **Continue exploring possibilities to extend its international commitments, in particular to consider ratification of ICCPR and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Latvia);**
- 138.10. **Put forward its utmost efforts to become a party to core international human rights treaties, such as ICESCR, ICCPR and OP-CEDAW (Republic of Korea);**
- 138.11. **Continue efforts aimed at acceding to other international conventions, especially ICCPR and ICESCR (Iraq);**
- 138.12. **Continue the consideration of ratification of the main international instruments on human rights, notably the ICESCR and ICCPR (Romania);³**
- 138.13. **Consider ratifying without reservations the ICCPR and the ICESCR and to review and lift all reservations to several human rights conventions that are contrary to the objectives and purposes of the treaties (Slovenia);**
- 138.14. **Expedite ratification of the ICCPR and ICESCR as was accepted by the Government at the first UPR (Maldives);**
- 138.15. **Expedite the considerations to become a party to the ICCPR and ICESCR (Thailand);**
- 138.16. **Ratify the ICCPR and ICESCR (France) (Lithuania);**
- 138.17. **Consider early ratification of the ICCPR and ICESCR (Japan);⁴**
- 138.18. **Consider ratifying the ICCPR and the ICESCR (Spain);⁵**
- 138.19. **Consider ratifying ICCPR, ICESCR as well as the ICRMW (Paraguay);⁶**
- 138.20. **Consider ratifying more core human rights conventions, including the ICRMW (Philippines);**
- 138.21. **Consider ratifying or accede to the Rome Statute of the ICC, to implement it fully at the national level, and accede to the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities (Slovakia);⁷**

¹ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Accelerate its accession to the ICCPR, ICESCR, OP-CAT, and the Rome Statute”.

² The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Accelerate its accession to the ICCPR, ICESCR, OP-CAT, and the Rome Statute”.

³ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Continue the ratification the main international instruments on human rights, notably the ICESCR and ICCPR”.

⁴ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Ratify the ICCPR and the ICESCR”.

⁵ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Ratify the ICCPR and the ICESCR”.

⁶ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Ratify ICCPR, ICESCR as well as the ICRMW”.

⁷ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Ratify or accede to the Rome Statute of the ICC, to implement it fully at the national level, and accede to the Agreement on Privileges and

- 138.22. **Accede to the Rome Statute as well as the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court (APIC) (Uruguay);**
- 138.23. **Ratify ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87); ILO Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98);, and ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) (Uruguay);**
- 138.24. **Make further advances through withdrawing its reservations to CEDAW, CRC and CERD (Czech Republic);**
- 138.25. **Withdraw the reservations to CEDAW (France); withdraw the general reservations to CEDAW (Spain); lift the general reservation to CEDAW and amend national legislation accordingly (Austria); continue implementing the 2008 recommendations by the Committee on CEDAW on remaining issues, in particular the withdraw of the general reservations to CEDAW (Finland);**
- 138.26. **Consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (Spain);⁸**
- 138.27. **Continue to work to harmonize its legal framework with the international instruments to which it is a State party (Nicaragua);**
- 138.28. **Continue its ongoing review of national laws to ensure that they are in line with its international human rights law obligations (Turkmenistan);**
- 138.29. **Continue reforms with a view to ensuring the promotion and the enjoyment of human rights for the Saudi people (Benin);**
- 138.30. **Enact and strengthen laws providing the right to education, and take effective measures to protect the rights of the child (Maldives);**
- 138.31. **Continue to strengthen domestic legislation to promote and protect the rights of women, children, domestic workers and the migrant workers (Bhutan);**
- 138.32. **Continue its efforts towards aligning its national legislation to international human rights law and, in this regard, lift the general reservation to CEDAW and reconsider policies which limit the rights of women to act as autonomous and equal members of the Saudi society (Brazil);**
- 138.33. **Criminalize femicide in accordance with international standards and comply in general with CEDAW general recommendation No. 19 (Ecuador);**
- 138.34. **Abolish, modify or introduce legislation, measures and practices to ensure the effective elimination of all forms of legal discrimination against women and to allow for their full participation in society, including in decision-making and political processes, on an equal basis with men (Canada);**
- 138.35. **Introduce and implement a law prohibiting all child, early and forced marriages, including the introduction of a legal minimum age of majority for marriage, and other measures to safeguard and enforce women's rights relating to marriage, choices and free and full consent (Canada);**

Immunities”.

⁸ The recommendation as read in the interactive dialogue “Ratify its Optional Protocol”.

- 138.36. Introduce a minimum marriage age of 18 years for both men and women (Germany);
- 138.37. Codify its criminal law to bring it into line with international law and standards, and ensure it is applied effectively by an independent and impartial judiciary (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 138.38. Adopt a penal code, consistent with international human rights standards (Slovenia);
- 138.39. Promulgate a criminal code and amend the law of criminal procedure to comply with international human rights law (Austria);
- 138.40. Promulgation of a penal code that clearly defines criminal offences and the establishment of a moratorium on executions of persons having committed crimes under the age of 18 (Brazil);
- 138.41. Consider, within the context of continuing its judicial and legislative reforms, elaborating and adopting a Criminal Code that ensures equal and objective judgement of crimes (Hungary);
- 138.42. Adopt a criminal code which clearly defines a number of criminal offences that affect women and girls, and which includes clear guidelines on enforcement mechanisms, monitoring and coordination bodies, and sanctions for perpetrators (Chile);
- 138.43. Take steps to bring the criminal and criminal procedure systems in line with international standards, including through the adoption of a penal code that clearly defines the relevant offences and corresponding penalties (Costa Rica);
- 138.44. Continue efforts regarding the rights of the child especially in relation to combating child trafficking (Greece);
- 138.45. Draft and implement a penal code and amend the Law of Criminal Procedure to comply with all its obligations under international law, including prohibitions on judicially sanctioned corporal punishment and the execution of juvenile offenders (Canada);
- 138.46. Enhance legislative reforms amongst others by taking measures to ensure in the short term, as well as legally and in practice, the registration of fully independent human rights NGOs (Netherlands);
- 138.47. Adopt laws to protect freedoms of association, expression and religion, and give all individuals a legal basis to form NGOs without interference (United States of America);
- 138.48. Accelerate the issuance of civil society regulations to activate civil work in the areas of protecting and promoting human rights and develop the capacities of the workers in the area of human rights and guarantee their work in freedom and independence (State of Palestine);
- 138.49. Adopt an NGO law which should take into account the views of civil society stakeholders and provide an enabling framework for the development of civil society in Saudi Arabia (Germany);
- 138.50. Set a time frame for the enactment and implementation of a law on associations which respects international human rights standards (Ireland);
- 138.51. Intensify its efforts to pass a law on associations (Lithuania);

- 138.52. **Revise the 2011 law in order to guarantee freedom of opinion and expression, as well as freedom of association and peaceful assembly (France);**
- 138.53. **Bring its domestic legislation in line with the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, and to enact and implement a law of association enabling all NGOs to operate legally, without harassment and undue government interference (Czech Republic);**
- 138.54. **Take measures to foster an enabling environment for civil society, including through enacting and implementing before the next UPR a law on associations to allow for the legal creation and registration of independent civil society associations and organisations (Canada);**
- 138.55. **Consider legislating a special personal status law that would contribute to the strengthening of women's rights (Morocco);**
- 138.56. **Adopt legal measures to criminalize violence against women (Spain);**
- 138.57. **Continue work towards the improvement of women's rights. In particular, incorporate in law the principle of equality between men and women and ban child marriage (Sierra Leone);**
- 138.58. **Further consider incorporating in relevant laws the principles of equality between women and men and where such principle exists, to campaign for greater understanding and awareness among the general public and officials for the effective implementation of such laws (Thailand);**
- 138.59. **Establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);**
- 138.60. **Continue efforts to strengthen institutional and legal basis for the protection of human rights (Uzbekistan);**
- 138.61. **Develop the culture of human rights on the basis of awareness-raising work and educational program (Uzbekistan);**
- 138.62. **Continue positive efforts to increase a culture of human rights principles (Cuba);**
- 138.63. **Strengthen the state of law and good governance in harmony with the traditional culture of the country, especially on the legal enforcement and capacity-building for national agencies on human rights (Viet Nam);**
- 138.64. **Continue to adopt legal and political measures, along with widespread awareness-raising and sensitization campaigns aimed at continuing to make progress towards gender equality, in particular in the areas of the family, labour, politics and education (Paraguay);**
- 138.65. **Continue efforts towards promotion of human rights education and awareness-raising in the country, inter alia, through inclusion of human rights and international humanitarian law in the syllabi of schools and universities (Armenia);**
- 138.66. **Continue to promote education in the area of human rights by including it in the school curriculum (Djibouti);**
- 138.67. **Strengthen human rights education and training in school curricula (Senegal);**
- 138.68. **Continue taking measures and setting awareness programs aimed at enhancing women's rights in different spheres including programmes that aim**

at clearing the misconception between Islamic sharia and negative cultural norms (Egypt);

138.69. Establish training programmes for judges focusing on Saudi Arabia's international human rights obligations (Sierra Leone);

138.70. Ensure the victims of domestic abuse immediate access to mechanisms of protection and redress, inter alia, by providing the victims with shelters, by ensuring investigation of abuses, and by training law enforcement officials (Finland);

138.71. Further promote equal treatment between women and men by increasing national awareness campaigns on gender equality, especially on women's rights (Cambodia);

138.72. Further its endeavours with regard to the smooth and productive activities of the National Anti-Corruption Commission and the Standing Committee on Trafficking in Persons (Azerbaijan);

138.73. Educate domestic workers on regulations regarding domestic workers by making it available in all languages and take all necessary measures to implement the regulations in practice (Bahrain);

138.74. Enact procedural mechanisms for application of the Child Protection Act and to continue delivering awareness programs on combating domestic violence (Slovenia);

138.75. Explore the possibility of elaborating and adopting a national policy for gender equality in accordance with the international instruments in this area to which Saudi Arabia is a party (Colombia);

138.76. Continue to put into practice the recommendations accepted in the Universal Periodic Review of 2009 (Spain);

138.77. Put in place mechanisms to follow up on UPR recommendations and that make it possible to verify the implementation and impact of norms and measures adopted to promote equality of rights (Colombia);

138.78. Continue the cooperation with the United Nations and its mechanisms in areas of technical training related to human rights (Kuwait);

138.79. Inform the Council on the relevant mechanisms on the Kingdom's progress in the field of dissemination of human rights culture and human rights education (Romania);

138.80. Set up programs and plans to enhance training and raise awareness among the workers in the area of combating human trafficking (Qatar);

138.81. Continue its mutually beneficial cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanism (China);

138.82. Reduce the backlog of the submission of reports to treaty bodies (Chad);

138.83. Provide all outstanding reports to the treaty bodies and respond to the long-standing requests for visits by special procedures (Sierra Leone);

138.84. Extend the standing invitation to all thematic special procedures (Bosnia and Herzegovina);

138.85. Respond positively to the special procedures requesting a visit to the country (Czech Republic);

- 138.86. Invite the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery to assess the situation of domestic migrant workers (Chile);
- 138.87. Enhance cooperation with the human rights special procedures (Albania);
- 138.88. Continue to strengthen its cooperation with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council by responding positively to the pending visit requests and eventually consider extending a standing invitation to all the special procedures mandate holders (Latvia);
- 138.89. Extend an invitation to visit to the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice to visit (Mexico);
- 138.90. Continue constructive cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to build national capacities in order to protect and promote human rights within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between them in 2012 (Qatar);
- 138.91. Continue the cooperation with OHCHR in order to improve the capacity of the national institutions of human rights (Romania);
- 138.92. Put an end to all forms of discrimination against women, both in law and in practice (Belgium);
- 138.93. Continue to provide more concern on discrimination against gender, and also continue its efforts in combating discrimination against women (South Sudan);
- 138.94. Protect human rights of all individuals without any discrimination based on gender, origin, religion or customs (France);
- 138.95. Give full legal identity to all women residing in the Kingdom (Norway);
- 138.96. Continue its efforts with a view to ensuring equality of all before the law and to guaranteeing equal citizenship rights to women and men (Togo);
- 138.97. Launch additional awareness programmes that aim at enhancing the degree of awareness of women's rights and address the misconception between sharia law and negative cultural patterns (Oman);
- 138.98. Take further measures to protect and promote women's rights, particularly in the fields of female employment, education, health and legal capacity (Turkmenistan);
- 138.99. Continue the measures aimed at achieving the elimination of existing patriarchal and gender stereotypes, with respect to the roles and responsibilities of men and women in the family and society (Argentina);
- 138.100. Take urgent steps to abolish the system of guardianship (Denmark);
- 138.101. Continue to make efforts to abolish the practice of male guardianship over women (Republic of Korea);
- 138.102. Dismantle the system of male guardianship and allow women to freely travel, work, study, marry and access health care and other public services (Australia);

- 138.103. Continue the progress underway and introduce further steps to achieve gender equality, in particular the abolishment of the system of male guardianship (New Zealand);
- 138.104. Put an end, by royal decree, to the system of guardianship of adult women (Switzerland);
- 138.105. Take steps to remove the guardianship system, when it results in a limitation of the full exercise and enjoyment of the rights and freedom of women (Costa Rica);
- 138.106. Proceed with the promulgation of the necessary laws in order to abolish the male guardianship system while, in parallel, the stereotypes affecting women's enjoyment of their rights, including their personal status law, should be remedied (Greece);
- 138.107. Repeal the legal guardianship system for adult women (Italy);
- 138.108. As a step to advance the situation of women, abolish the principle of guardianship over women (Sweden);
- 138.109. Take measures to end the practice of guardianship and abolish existing legal provisions that require a guardian's authorization (Senegal);
- 138.110. Intensify efforts to put an end to the male guardianship system over women, modify negative stereotypes and cultural practices that discriminate against women and carry out the necessary legislative changes, including to make it possible for women to drive vehicles (Uruguay);
- 138.111. Allow women to participate fully and equally in society by abolishing the guardianship system, appointing more women to positions of authority, and increasing freedom of movement (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 138.112. Prohibit Government employees from requesting guardians' permission to allow women to conduct official business, particularly in situations such as filing complaints for domestic violence (Ireland);
- 138.113. Continue efforts to promote gender equality and strengthen the role of women in society (Ukraine);
- 138.114. Continue efforts to promote the empowerment of women and the protection of their rights (Sri Lanka);
- 138.115. Continue its on-going efforts to safeguard the rights of women and children (Brunei Darussalam);
- 138.116. Adopt appropriate and concrete measures to address the issue of discrimination and exploitation of migrant workers (Uganda);
- 138.117. Taking into account the section in the national report relative to the fight against discrimination and the promotion of freedom of opinion and expression, strengthen action to ensure the effective implementation of legislation against discrimination and religious violence (Argentina);
- 138.118. Abolish the death penalty (Paraguay);
- 138.119. Declare a moratorium on the death penalty (Slovenia); introduce a moratorium on the death penalty (Sweden); observe a de facto moratorium on executions, in line with the international trend (Italy); adhere to the global

trend against the capital punishment by establishing a moratorium on its use (Poland);

138.120. Consider as a first step to establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its abolition (Slovakia); adopt a moratorium on executions as a first step to the abolition of the death penalty (Spain);

138.121. Announce a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its eventual abolition. Pending this, take appropriate steps to reduce the application of the death penalty, observing due process of law in all judicial proceedings (Germany);

138.122. Declare a moratorium on the death penalty and accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR (Australia);

138.123. Carry out further efforts to increase the transparency and openness of legal proceedings contemplating death sentences (Italy);

138.124. Establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to abolition, and in the meantime, immediately stop imposing the death penalty on anyone under the age of 18; bring the law and judicial practices in line with international fair trial guarantees and reduce the number of crimes which carry the death penalty as sanction (Lithuania);

138.125. Establish alternative punishments to the death penalty and suspend the application of the death penalty for less serious offences and for people who were minors at the time of the crimes, in the perspective of a moratorium on executions (France);

138.126. Abolish the death penalty for all individuals considered as minors under international law (Switzerland); ensure that capital punishment is not imposed for offences committed by persons under 18 years of age (Austria);

138.127. Refrain from imposing the death penalty, corporal punishment and life imprisonment for crimes committed by persons under the age of 18 (Czech Republic);

138.128. Abolish juvenile death penalty and corporal punishment (Albania);

138.129. Abolish completely the penalty of corporal punishment (Switzerland); abolish corporal punishments such as lashes and amputation (Sweden);

138.130. End the practice of executing children and bring the law and judicial practices into line with fair trial guarantees in international standards (Norway);

138.131. Continue its measures in combating human trafficking through the effective implementation of its Trafficking in Persons (Offences) Act (Cambodia);

138.132. Ensure protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, in particular children, by providing assistance and social reintegration services, and by advancing cooperation with countries of origin and transit (Republic of Moldova);

138.133. Look into the issue of trafficking in children who are exploited and used for the purpose of begging, in cooperation with countries of origin (United Arab Emirates);

- 138.134. Continue efforts to combat violence against most vulnerable groups, especially women (Lebanon);
- 138.135. Take further measures to fully and effectively implement the law that detail enforcement and redress mechanisms for women and children facing domestic violence (Lithuania);
- 138.136. Enforce legislation that criminalizes all forms of violence against women, including the Protection from Harm Act, and establish a system of regular data collection on such crimes (Republic of Moldova);
- 138.137. Reiterate its recommendations to guarantee the right to freedom of expression and conscience of all representatives of civil society, including religious minorities, and to revise the judgments against the prisoners who were convicted for having freely expressed their opinion (Switzerland);
- 138.138. Redouble its efforts to tackle the practice of forced and early marriage (Italy);
- 138.139. Continue to protect and promote the rights of imprisoned persons so as to make conditions and places of detention more humane (Djibouti);
- 138.140. Genuine and full commitment to its commitments pursuant to the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, as these activities have destructive impacts on human rights (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 138.141. Continue with its efforts to reform the judicial system and its practices and further examine ways by which certain legal provisions are aligned with international human rights standards (Cyprus);
- 138.142. Continue its activities in the field of the judicial and legislative reforms for speeding up the pace of litigation and judgement enforcement (Azerbaijan);
- 138.143. Take further steps to ensure the full implementation of the protection from abuse system law. This would call for a clear definition of abuses and harms under the law, so that it can provide an effective mechanism and guarantee for the protection of victims (Denmark);
- 138.144. Provide maximum judicial transparency, for example by allowing officials of third countries to attend public trials at criminal and security courts (Netherlands);
- 138.145. Further promote access to remedy for victims of human rights violations (Japan);
- 138.146. Continue efforts to build and develop judicial capacities through training for judges and intensify efforts to strengthen the role of the judiciary (Nigeria);
- 138.147. Ensure that all individuals are afforded due process of law, informed of charges brought against them, and given a timely and transparent trial (United States of America);
- 138.148. Maintain the practice whereby the Ministry of Justice pays the fees of counsel for accused persons who are unable to pay, as well as the presence of the media and persons interested in human rights during trial hearings (Nigeria);

- 138.149. Continue enhancing the principle of public trials, and monitoring them in a way that does not contradict the independence of the judiciary and fair trials, including allowing [the public] to attend court hearings (Jordan);
- 138.150. Continue to take into account the judicial principles as a complimentary measure to international standards and documenting these measures (Jordan);
- 138.151. Guarantee due process, prohibit in law the use of torture and other forms of cruel treatments, in accordance with the Convention against Torture (France);
- 138.152. Implement legal reforms recognizing a legally-defined age of minority that prevents early and forced marriage, detention of minors as adults and exposure of minors to the death penalty (Australia);
- 138.153. Implement legal reforms to promulgate a criminal code, ensure transparent and fair criminal trials, and prevent arbitrary, secret and indefinite detention and torture in custody (Australia);
- 138.154. Ensure that the judicial and law enforcement system is not abused to harass individuals for expressing their political or religious views (Czech Republic);
- 138.155. Speed up the process of an alternative penal system and ensure that this system includes treatment of juvenile delinquency in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the comments of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (United Arab Emirates).
- 138.156. Ensure implementation in practice of laws and regulations to which juvenile offenders are subject, including the prompt access of juveniles to legal counsels, their separate detention and the enrolment of juveniles in appropriate school and training programmes while in custody (Cyprus);
- 138.157. Take all the necessary measures to effectively implement the law against domestic violence (Belgium);
- 138.158. Provide a fair judicial process for female domestic workers who commit crimes punishable under the Saudi law (Pakistan);
- 138.159. Continue with its efforts to combat corruption (Singapore);
- 138.160. Intensify efforts to promote the principle of transparency in their endeavour to combat corruption (Malaysia);
- 138.161. Work with positive interaction with regard to the requests to recover stolen assets, and extradite those involved in the violations of human rights and corruption cases (Tunisia);
- 138.162. Grant equal citizenship rights to women and men (France);
- 138.163. Guarantee birth registration for all boys and girls without discrimination of any kind (Mexico);
- 138.164. Remove all obstacles to freedom of expression and movement against human rights defenders, including all travel bans (Norway);
- 138.165. Protect freedom of religion or belief of all people living in the country (Romania);
- 138.166. Continue its tremendous efforts to improve the level of protection and services provided for pilgrims (Malaysia);

- 138.167. We appreciate the Kingdom's role in facilitating hajj and omra, and we commend the efforts the kingdom is taking and recommend they continue those efforts (Sudan);
- 138.168. Take necessary measures to ensure the effective enjoyment and protection of the right to freedom of religious belief, with a view to promoting the equality of all peoples and respect for all faiths (Canada);
- 138.169. Continue enhancing the legal protection of freedom of religion and belief, aiming at gradually allowing the public practice of all faiths and beliefs (Italy);
- 138.170. Respect freedom of expression and association, and restrict to the extent strictly necessary the use of criminal prosecutions against people who make use of such rights (Belgium);
- 138.171. Guarantee freedom of opinion, expression and belief and refrain from preventing Syrian pilgrims from practicing their religious duties as it constitutes a flagrant violation of freedom of belief and religion as one of the basic freedoms (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 138.172. Allow the registration of NGOs that are active in the human rights area, both at the legal and practical level (Belgium);
- 138.173. Strengthen human rights training for NGOs and help them to carry out their work professionally and objectively (China);
- 138.174. Refrain from exercising oppression and vengeance against legal activists and those demanding political reforms, the release of all detainees who are held without due cause, and guarantee the rights of prisoners and detainees through fair and just trials (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 138.175. Adopt appropriate measures to disseminate widely and ensure full observance of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (Norway);
- 138.176. Redouble efforts to achieve a greater participation of women in remunerated employment, which goes beyond the area of teaching or the education sector, and that includes leadership positions in both the public and private spheres (Ecuador);
- 138.177. Carry out properly follow-up measures to guarantee meaningful progress in the area of women's public and political participation (Indonesia);
- 138.178. Continue to expand the opportunities for women's political and public participation, employment and education (Nigeria);
- 138.179. Exert more effort to enable women's participation in the political and the public life, and eliminating the barriers that prevent women from enjoying their rights, whether cultural or societal (Oman);
- 138.180. Continue actions in ensuring the participation of women in political and public life in order to eliminate existing barriers in the way of guaranteeing, promoting and protecting the rights of women in line with the international standards (Russian Federation);
- 138.181. Continue to implement appropriate measures to promote further participation of women in various sectors of society and women's employment both within Government and in the private sector (Japan);

- 138.182. **Take additional measures that aim at implementing labour laws that the Kingdom has ratified, especially those regarding ending all sorts of discrimination at work and equal remuneration (Egypt);**
- 138.183. **Ensure women's equal access to employment (Poland);**
- 138.184. **Take additional measures aimed at protecting and promoting women's rights in education, health and work sectors, as well as the legal capacity for women (Morocco);**
- 138.185. **Continue taking measures to promote social and cultural rights (Uzbekistan);**
- 138.186. **Continue promoting its social programmes for the greater good of its people (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));**
- 138.187. **Continue promoting the right to health of its citizens, particularly maternal and child health services (Brunei Darussalam);**
- 138.188. **Continue efforts in providing full access to health services for the general population (Turkey);**
- 138.189. **Make progress in the implementation of legislative measures to ensure the prohibition of discrimination in education, in order to protect minority groups and promote gender equality (Chile);**
- 138.190. **Continue to take necessary measures to combat discrimination in the area of education (State of Palestine);**
- 138.191. **Continue to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women especially through access to quality education (Singapore);**
- 138.192. **Further increase the attendance of girls in secondary and higher education and the participation of women in the professional sphere (Turkey);**
- 138.193. **Pass legislation guaranteeing the right of religious minorities to build and maintain places of worship (Austria);**
- 138.194. **Give due attention to the issue of the practice of sponsorship for foreigners, considering that this practice can give rise to serious human rights violations of foreign workers (Republic of Korea);**
- 138.195. **Expand the scope of the Labour Code to include all migrant workers (New Zealand);**
- 138.196. **Continue the efforts in ensuring the rights of the migrant workers, including in terms of access to all social and health services (Republic of Moldova);**
- 138.197. **Continue to take measures for the increased protection of the rights of migrant workers (Nigeria);**
- 138.198. **Step up efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers (Sierra Leone);**
- 138.199. **Continue policies for protecting the rights of migrants (Tajikistan);**
- 138.200. **Continue the efforts in favour of migrant workers (Senegal);**
- 138.201. **Strengthen efforts to ensure the rights of migrants (Somalia);**
- 138.202. **Strengthen measures with a view to ensuring the rights of migrant domestic workers (Sri Lanka);**

- 138.203. **Reform the status of migrant workers in order to ensure the protection of their rights against all forms of discrimination (France);**
- 138.204. **Intensify the ongoing awareness-raising measures with the aim of protecting and promoting the rights of migrant workers (Indonesia);**
- 138.205. **Further the work on various ministerial decisions and the implementation of monitoring mechanisms on protection of migrant workers from human rights violation (Ethiopia);**
- 138.206. **Establish an accessible complaint mechanism, such as a free phone service, to which migrant workers can confidentially report instances of abuse and exploitation, as well as seek assistance (New Zealand);**
- 138.207. **Take every possible measure to protect the legal and financial rights of expatriate workers in the Kingdom (Ethiopia);**
- 138.208. **Take all possible measures to protect the rights of expatriate workers, particularly the means for legal redresses (Pakistan);**
- 138.209. **Take all necessary measures to protect rights of migrant workers, especially those regarding means of remedies (Egypt);**
- 138.210. **Implement effectively the regulation on domestic workers and persons with similar status and provide the migrant workers with adequate protection from abuse in the part of employers (Kyrgyzstan);**
- 138.211. **Protect all workers from abuse by prosecuting perpetrators of labour abuses, adopting laws to protect victims, and better apprising foreign workers of their legal rights and remedies (United States of America);**
- 138.212. **Take all necessary measures to protect the rights of all migrant workers especially the means for redress (Bahrain);**
- 138.213. **Continue efforts to enhance the welfare of migrant workers, including the domestic workers, and further strengthen the mechanism to prevent their possible exploitation (Nepal);**
- 138.214. **Build on the positive measures in protecting the rights of the household service workers and continue to step up efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers and their families (Philippines);**
- 138.215. **Continue its priority and initiatives in the 9th National Development Plan, with more focus on equality, non-discrimination, rights to health, education, to just and favourable conditions of work for vulnerable groups of women, children, migrants, foreign workers, refugees and persons with difficulties (Viet Nam);**
- 138.216. **Ensure that legislation and administrative measures adopted to combat terrorism are fair and have review mechanisms (Mexico);**
- 138.217. **Update the council periodically about its efforts in combating terrorism (Lebanon);**
- 138.218. **Cooperate with other States in order to tackle the main root causes that attract the youngsters to the so-called jihadism, namely the provision of their socioeconomic and cultural rights (Somalia);**
- 138.219. **Genuine and full commitment to treaties combating terrorism and relative international resolutions to combat terrorism, its financing and support in all aspects (Syrian Arab Republic);**

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- 138.220. Exchange with other States its successful experience in the field of rehabilitation of surrenders, suspected and/or imprisoned persons for terrorism (Somalia);
- 138.221. Share its good practice in ensuring dignified housing to the most vulnerable groups (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));
- 138.222. Share the methodology used in the elaboration of the national report as a good practice of the UPR (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));
- 138.223. Engage in a structural human rights dialogue with the European Union at the political and technical level (Netherlands);
- 138.224. Activate the items listed in the Declaration of the Islamic Summit to promote Islamic solidarity and make it a reality where there is peace and coexistence (Sudan);
- 138.225. Commit to the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States as it is related to the achievement of social, economic, cultural and political development of all States (Syrian Arab Republic).
139. 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

[English only]

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was headed by H.E. Dr. Bandar bin Mohammed Aleiban, President of the Human Rights Commission, Head of Delegation and composed of the following members:

- H.E. Ambassador Faisal H. Trad, Acting Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations;
- H.E. Dr. Zeid bun Abdul Muhsin Al Hussein, Vice-President of the Human Rights Commission;
- H.E. Sheikh Saleh bin Ibrahim Al Al-Sheikh, Ministry of Justice;
- H.E. Mohammed bin Suleiman bin Al-Ajaji, Vice President of the Cabinet's Expert Commission;
- Dr. Hadi bin Ali bin Mohammed Al-Yami, Human Rights Commission;
- Dr. Nasser bin Rajeh Al-Shahrani, Shura Council;
- Dr. Wafa bint Mahmoud Taibah, Shura Council;
- Sheikh. Abdulrahman bin Saleh Al Meghim, Ministry of Justice;
- Dr. Abdullah bin Fakhri al-Ansari, Ministry of Interior;
- Mr. Mohammed bin Abdulhadi Al Matrafi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ms. Samha bint Said Al Ghamidi, Ministry of Social Affairs;
- Dr. Munirah bint Hamdan Al-Usaimi, Ministry of Health;
- Mr. Zuhair Bin Mohammed Al Zoman, Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution;
- Mr. Khaled Mohammed K. Al Manzlawiy, First Secretary, Assistant for the Permanent Representative on Human Rights of the Saudi Arabia Permanent Mission to the United Nations.