



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### Seventieth session

14 September-2 October 2015

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

### Consideration of reports of States parties

## List of issues in relation to the second periodic report of the United Arab Emirates

### Addendum

## Replies of the United Arab Emirates to the list of issues\*

[Date received: 16 June 2015]

### Part I

**Question 1:** With reference to previous recommendations of the Committee (CRC/C/15/Add.183, paras. 6, 8 (b), 12 (a) and 14 (a)), please provide updated information on the possibility of withdrawing the State party's reservations to articles 7, 14, 17 and 21 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Please also explain the reasons for the delays in adopting the Children's Rights Bill, creating an independent national human rights institution and establishing a data collection system.

### Response concerning the establishment of a data collection system

1. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood was established as a national umbrella organization to empower children and guarantee their protection, their rights, their development and their social participation in the United Arab Emirates. The Council's objective is to enhance the care, protection, participation and empowerment of mothers and children; provide them with support and assistance, especially in educational, cultural, health, social and psychological and pedagogical fields; ensure their safety and integrity; propose development policies for their benefit; monitor and evaluate development plans to secure their ongoing welfare; encourage studies and research and the dissemination of a culture of maternal and child welfare; formulate recommendations thereon; and propose amendments to laws and legislation on matters of concern to mothers and children in order to ensure sustainable development in this regard. The Council is also mandated to concert and coordinate

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



the endeavours of other entities and institutions concerned with the welfare of mothers and children.

2. The governing body of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood includes representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the General Women's Union, the Office of the Ruler of Fujairah, the United Arab Emirates Red Crescent, the Family Development Foundation, the Islamic affairs and endowments sector and the Emirati women's associations.

3. The Council is aiming to collect reliable and statistically sound data of a high international standard with a view to monitoring numerous fields and issues that have a bearing on the lives of mothers and children in the United Arab Emirates.

4. The Council is currently working with the Gulf Area Office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on a joint cooperation programme to compile an integrated database on children disaggregated by social category, age group, educational level, wealth and geographical area. The database will be used to gauge social development in the fields of education, capacity building, health, nutrition, environmental hygiene and protection from violence and abuse and to assist in future scientific planning, thereby boosting the State's global competitiveness. The project is divided into the following two phases:

**(a) Conduct of a multiple indicators cluster survey**

5. Official approval was granted in March 2015 for the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood to conduct a multiple indicators cluster survey (MICS5) in the United Arab Emirates in collaboration with the General Women's Union, the National Bureau of Statistics and the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF. Budgetary resources have been allocated for the project and plans are being made for its implementation.

6. The multiple indicators cluster survey (MICS5) consists in a field survey of a representative sample of all sections of society which will provide statistically sound data and globally comparable estimates of the primary indicators used to assess the situation of women and children in the fields of health, education and social protection. It will help the State to monitor the extent to which its national goals and international commitments to promote the welfare of women and children, including the Millennium Development Goals, have been met.

**(b) Development of indicators on four basic rights**

7. Within the framework of its 2015/16 plan of action, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood is working in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF to compile indicators, collected and updated on a regular basis, in the fields of health and welfare from the standpoint of nutrition, environmental hygiene, education, leisure, cultural activities, participation and child protection, including family environment, alternative care, special protection criteria and standard of living. The bodies contributing to the development of these indicators are the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the statistical offices and the General Women's Union.

8. Although based on internationally recognized standard criteria for comparison and assessment of the progress achieved, the child-related indicators being compiled are adapted to take account of the State's social, economic and cultural setting. The data concerning the four basic rights will be combined and consolidated in a single database after they have been endorsed by the ministries concerned.

**Questions 1 and 2**

9. The State's legislature has endeavoured to provide children with the maximum degree of protection against all forms of abuse in a manner consistent with the child's physical, psychological and intellectual stage of development and the victim's lack of awareness or inability to resist or defend himself/herself in circumstances in which he/she cannot be defended by others. Accordingly, offenders are liable to heavier penalties in cases in which the victim is a child.

10. The Federal Penal Code (Act No. 3 of 1987), as amended, criminalizes the following forms of child abuse:

- (a) Physical abuse (arts. 336, 337, 339, 340, 341, 342 and 343);
- (b) Emotional abuse (arts. 351, 352, 372, 373 and 374);
- (c) Sexual abuse (arts. 354, 356, 358, 363 and 364);
- (d) Neglect (arts. 348, 349 and 350);

(e) The Higher Committee for the Protection of Children, as well as the Child Protection Centre, of the Ministry of the Interior participated in the drafting of the Federal Children's Rights Bill which is currently in the final stages of legislative promulgation in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. An entire chapter of the bill is devoted to child protection and mechanisms to address all forms of abuse and violence against children from the moment when they are reported and all the details and evidence have been discovered, and to provide medical, psychological and social support for the victims. The bill also specifies the rights of the child in regard to education, medical treatment, care and attention.

**Questions 4 and 7: Information concerning the applicability of the penalties of capital punishment and flogging to children**

11. With regard to imposition of the penalty of capital punishment on juveniles, the Emirati legislation currently in force defines a juvenile delinquent as a person who was under 18 years of age at the time of his commission of an act of which he stands accused or who is in a state of vagrancy. Age is established by means of an official document or medical techniques and the following measures are taken against juvenile delinquents and vagrants: (a) reprimand; (b) placement in the custody of a guardian; (c) judicial probation; (d) ban on frequenting certain places; (e) prohibition on engaging in certain types of work; (f) compulsory vocational training; (g) placement in a treatment facility or a rehabilitation or reform institution; (h) expulsion from the country if the juvenile is a foreigner.

12. A juvenile cannot be remanded in custody; he is liable only to the preventive measure of placement in a social education facility or in the custody of a parent who undertakes to present him whenever so requested. Juveniles are tried at a closed hearing in the presence of a social care worker and a report must be submitted on their social, psychological and intellectual condition. They cannot be sentenced to capital punishment, imprisonment or financial penalties. Any term of detention that may be imposed on them must not exceed half of the maximum term prescribed for the offence of which they are convicted and must be served at facilities in which social care and education are provided. Juveniles are not liable to incidental or supplementary penalties or penalties for recidivism. The State is considering amendments to the current legislation that include special provisions under which juveniles would enjoy more rights and privileges. With regard to the human rights of children on whose parents a sentence of capital punishment has been imposed or enforced, the State provides such children with health, social and educational care in

the same way as their peers and they enjoy all the rights to which other children in the State are entitled; they are paid financial allowances until they are able to work or have completed their university education and the State provides them with decent accommodation. The rule is that no one should suffer detriment as a result of an act committed by another person, even if the latter is one of his or her parents.

**Question 8: Information on the steps taken by the State party to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, particularly in the light of article 53 of the Penal Code promulgated under Federal Act No. 3 of 1987, as amended, under the provisions of which violence may be used to discipline wives and children**

13. Verbal and physical violence in schools is prohibited by Ministry of Education Order No. 454/2 of 1998 regulating students' behaviour in school premises.

14. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood is also working with the Ministry of Education, Abu Dhabi Education Council, the Ministry of Health and the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF to ensure a safe school environment for children. In this context, a programme based on the best international practices is being designed to prevent bullying in schools in the United Arab Emirates. The programme will be put into actual practice on an experimental basis during the academic year 2015/16 in a number of public and private schools in all the Emirates and its effectiveness will be assessed in collaboration with one of the State's specialized universities.

15. With regard to endeavours to prevent domestic violence, a committee chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Justice and including representatives of a number of bodies concerned was formed by decision of H.E. the Minister of Justice (Directives Nos. 346 of 2012 and 820 of 2013) to review the penalties prescribed in the Penal Code (Federal Act No. 3 of 1987), as amended. The committee formulated several recommendations, including deletion of paragraph 1 of article 53 of the Penal Code which stipulates as follows:

“An act shall not constitute a criminal offence if it is performed in good faith in the exercise of a lawful right and within the limits of such a right.

Exercise of a lawful right is exemplified by:

1. Discipline of a wife by her husband and discipline of minor children by their parents or persons of equivalent status, within the limits prescribed by the sharia or the law.
2. Surgical procedures and medical treatment, in accordance with the recognized standards applied in licensed medical professions, when they are effected with the explicit or implicit consent of the patient or his legal representative or when medical intervention is an essential requirement in emergency cases.
3. Acts of violence which occur during the practice of sports activities and within the limits prescribed for such activities, without prejudice to the principles of prudence and caution.
4. Acts of violence perpetrated against a person caught in flagrante delicto for the purpose of apprehending him, within the limits warranted by such a purpose.
5. Defamatory assertions made by adverse parties during oral or written defence pleadings before investigating and judicial authorities, within the limits required for such defence, provided that the party making the assertions acted in good faith and had a valid reason to believe in the truth of his assertions.”

**Question 9: Subsidiary units of the Ministry of the Interior concerned with childcare**

**1. The Higher Standing Committee on the Protection of Children**

16. The Committee comprises representatives of all the units concerned in the Ministry of the Interior as well as 14 members from governmental strategic partners, including the Ministry of Justice, the Emirates Identity Authority, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Abu Dhabi Education Council, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and other ministries and institutions concerned with families and children.

**2. The Child Protection Centre**

17. The Centre, which has a mandate covering all criminal matters involving children and all phenomena that encourage the exploitation of children, formulates remedial measures and initiatives to ensure their protection and, to this end, works with the governmental and private bodies and charitable associations concerned with children. It also liaises with police authorities throughout the world to ascertain the best international practices and regulatory mechanisms conducive to the achievement of its objectives.

**3. The Children and Young Persons' Department**

18. In accordance with Ministerial Decision No. 561 of 2012 concerning the restructuring of the Directorate of Social Support Centres, a subsidiary unit known as the Children and Young Persons' Department was created to address all aspects of child-related issues and a shelter was also established to provide psychological support and accommodation for female and child victims of violence.

**4. The Parental Care Unit**

19. This subordinate unit of the Directorate of Social Support Centres is responsible for the enforcement of court custody orders in which provision is made for parental visiting rights. Its functions include:

- Assignment of trained specialists to handle these cases;
- Provision of an appropriate environment for the fulfilment of its mandate in the social support centres;
- Ensuring that the persons concerned are willing to cooperate by receiving their children from, and returning them to, the social support centres.

**Endeavours of the Ministry of the Interior in the field of the protection and care of children**

20. The Directorate of Social Support Centres in the Ministry of the Interior is endeavouring, together with the police authorities, to ensure the protection of children by providing services in all child-related matters and raising public awareness of the need for such protection, as illustrated by the following:

**1. Intervention in cases involving physical or psychological violence against, or neglect of, children**

21. The statistics compiled by the social support centres show that the Ministry is making notable endeavours not only to develop and promote initiatives and programmes based on the child's right to protection from physical and psychological violence and neglect but also to rehabilitate child victims, refer their cases to the

competent authorities, monitor the outcome, and increase the effectiveness of protection programmes for the most vulnerable categories.

## **2. Formulation of a policy for the investigation of cases involving abuse of children**

22. A new policy has been formulated for the investigation of cases involving abuse or neglect of children. This policy, which covers all forms of abuse, including domestic violence, against children, makes provision for a review of the child-protection obligations of all police and civilian personnel working for the Ministry of the Interior, regardless of their fields of specialization, as well as the procedures to be followed when dealing with such cases.

## **3. Membership of the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT)**

23. The State has joined the Virtual Global Taskforce which was established for the purpose of protecting children from online pornography and enabling them to make proper use of modern technologies, and particularly the Internet, in a safe manner without being exposed to risks and dangers.

- In 2014, the Directorate General of Human Rights/Child Protection Department of the Dubai police provided support and protection for 213 children by monitoring their cases, resolving their social and family problems and ensuring their access to aftercare;
- The community police units, in collaboration with the bodies concerned, are playing a major role in the provision of protection, support and social and psychological care for child victims of domestic and school violence;
- The police commands conduct official evacuation exercises in schools in order to make students aware of the importance of the primary procedures to be followed in the event of a fire or other emergency;
- The provisions of the Entry and Residence of Foreigners Act are being applied by prohibiting the issuance of entry visas to children unaccompanied by their parents or other legally authorized persons;
- Guidelines have been issued for the questioning of special categories, including children, during the process of gathering evidence;
- Special places have been designated in forensic laboratories for the collection of biological samples from children for analysis, with the possibility of such samples being collected at their places of residence if they are unable to travel to the laboratory;
- The Child Protection Centre, in coordination with the children's emergency helpline (800700) to the Social Services Department in Sharjah, receives reports and enquiries from children themselves or from their guardians or other persons wishing to report cases of abuse or ill-treatment of children;
- A mobile phone application known as "My Protection" has been developed to enable children to enter into direct contact with the police operations room in emergency situations or if they are in need of assistance.

## **4. Manual for the investigation of cases of child abuse**

24. A manual for the investigation of cases of child abuse has been compiled within the framework of the implementation of the ADP-1/I/-8 initiative, concerning the establishment of a specialized unit to monitor cases of child abuse, and the ADP-1/I/-29 initiative, concerning the protection of children, the purpose of which is to ensure thorough investigation of cases of child abuse, establish a system for the monitoring

and surveillance of persons who pose a threat to children, compile a database on such cases and raise public awareness of the importance of child protection.

##### 5. Thorough investigation of cases of child abuse

25. In 2014, the Abu Dhabi police command launched strategic initiative ADP-1/I-29 with a view to ensuring the protection of children and the thorough investigation of cases of child abuse, establishing a system for the monitoring and surveillance of persons who pose a threat to children, and compiling a database on cases of child abuse. A special children's division has been set up to implement the policies and measures needed to establish specialized units for the investigation of cases involving children, define the role of partners in crime prevention and promote social values in the community with a view to protecting children and safeguarding their rights so that they can enjoy a happy life for their own benefit and for the benefit of the community as a whole.

##### Community awareness-raising

26. The endeavours made in this regard are illustrated by the following:

##### 1. Lectures

- The Directorate of Social Support Centres has prepared and delivered the following awareness-raising lectures in schools, universities and youth associations:

<i>Lectures</i>	<i>Date</i>
1. Working together to protect our children	20/11/2012
	21/11/2012
2. The best ways to resolve school problems	18/3/2013
	26/3/2013
3. How to protect our children from delinquency	11/3/2013
4. How to protect our children from delinquency	20/5/2013
	15/5/2013
	9/5/2013
5. School violence among children	28/4/2013
6. The role of the family in child upbringing	30/1/2013
	5/2/2013

- On 25 November 2014, the Directorate of Social Support Centres held a celebration in the Abu Dhabi Police Officers' Club on the occasion of International Children's Day;
- The Directorate of Social Support Centres is making every endeavour to minimize the harm that children suffer as a result of custody disputes by finding common ground on which the parents can reach agreement in regard to their respective childcare roles and visiting rights. The Directorate is also delivering an increasing number of instructive lectures which are helping to raise the level

of parental awareness and thereby avert arguments and disputes that have an adverse psychological effect on their children;

- In November 2014, the Directorate of Social Support Centres of the Abu Dhabi police participated in a series of lectures on sustainable family development organized by the Abu Dhabi Family Development Foundation to make the public more familiar with the measures needed to prevent crime and ensure family security and safety in the Emirate. The lectures covered topics such as the role of the social support centres in child protection and in the investigation of cases of child abuse;
- In 2014, the Directorate General of Human Rights/Child Protection Department of the Dubai police prepared and delivered the following lectures on family protection in general, and child protection in particular, which were attended by a large number of parents:
  - Working together to protect our children;
  - We are taking care of you;
  - Children's rights are a community responsibility;
  - The children's folder;
  - Children's rights;
  - School violence;
  - Lectures on traffic safety delivered by specialized officers.

## **2. Conferences and symposiums**

(a) The Directorate of Social Support Centres in the Abu Dhabi police command has organized the following conferences and symposiums on children's rights:

- A conference on institutional visions of child protection, which was attended by 300 participants;
- A conference on childhood innocence in the face of contemporary challenges, which was attended by 300 participants;
- A conference on family protection, which was attended by 500 participants;

(b) In 2014, the Directorate General of Human Rights in the Dubai police command participated in the following conferences and symposiums:

- A conference on the sexual harassment of children, which was organized by the Dubai Women's Association on 19 March 2014;
- A symposium on children deprived of social care, which was held in Sharjah in May 2014;
- A forum entitled "My family torn between open-minded awareness and attachment to values", which was held in Ajman in May 2014;
- International conferences and exhibitions, including the Forum of Young Global Leaders, the Early Years Education Forum 2013/14, the Child Mental and Behavioural Health Conference and the Conference of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), at which the Directorate General gave presentations;



- Campaigns were organized to raise the awareness of more than 1,000 students from various schools and workshops were held for 200 parents and guardians on the topic of “My child and modern technologies”;
- An annual campaign entitled “Working together to prevent child abuse” was launched in April 2014 to raise the awareness of all sections of society on the subject of the abuse of children and ways to protect them;
- A campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of violence and sexual harassment was launched in November 2013 in collaboration with the Directorate General of Community Service for the purpose of protecting children against such dangers;
- A campaign entitled “Children free from harassment” was held in November 2014 in collaboration with the Ajman Education District;
- A campaign entitled “Their safety is of concern to us” was organized in November 2014 for female students at schools in the Ajman Education District;
- A campaign entitled “Their safety is of concern to us” was organized in November 2014 for 400 female school students;
- A campaign entitled “Let’s protect them” was launched in February 2013 to raise public awareness of the need to protect children from the danger of falling from high places.

### 3. Publications

- Numerous pamphlets, brochures and folders with titles such as “How to handle an unruly child”, “How to protect our children from bad company” and “How to treat your child” were distributed in 2013/14 on various topics relating to children’s rights and ways in which children should be treated and brought up.

#### **Question 10: Why do a high percentage of girls marry before reaching the age of 18 and how are such marriages concluded?**

27. Article 30 of the Federal Personal Status Act No. 28 of 2005 stipulates as follows:

“1. Eligibility for marriage is determined by soundness of mind and maturity. The age of maturity is set at 18 years for persons who have not attained legal maturity at an earlier age.

2. A person under 18 years of age who has attained maturity may marry only with the permission of a judge and after it has been established that the marriage would be in the said person’s interests.”

It is evident from the text of the above-mentioned article that the legal age of marriage is 18 years. This is the norm and persons under that age may marry only in exceptional circumstances after the judge has ascertained that marriage would be in their interests.

#### **Question 11: Please indicate the measures taken to ensure that the legal prohibition of the recruitment of children as domestic workers is enforced effectively. In particular, please provide detailed information on the inspections conducted and their outcome.**

28. The Ministry of the Interior, in collaboration with national institutions and civil society organizations, is helping to fulfil the State’s international obligations under the

human rights instruments that it has ratified, including preparation of the periodic reports to be submitted to various United Nations bodies concerning the extent to which the legal guarantees concerning protection of the category of domestic workers and persons of equivalent status are being respected. The State has acceded to numerous human rights instruments relating to this category and no violations thereof are permitted. These instruments include:

(a) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

(b) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(c) The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

(d) The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

(e) The International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions concerning basic human rights which the State has ratified.

29. A bill of law has been drawn up to regulate the employment of domestic workers and persons of equivalent status in the United Arab Emirates in a manner consistent with international standards and, in particular, the ILO Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (No. 189). The Council of Ministers has approved the bill and the constitutional procedures for its promulgation are currently being completed. Its implementing regulations have also been drafted. The Ministry of the Interior participated in the drafting of the bill, which regulates a number of aspects not addressed by the Entry and Residence of Foreigners Act and guarantees respect for the contractual rights of such workers under the following provisions:

Licensing of labour recruitment agencies and regulation of their activities through the imposition of obligations such as:

- The workers must be informed, in their home countries, of the nature and type of the work and the gross wage therefor;
- No worker may be required, before or after commencing his/her work, to pay any commission or costs in respect of his/her recruitment;
- The workers' physical fitness must be ascertained by subjecting them to the requisite medical examinations within a period of 30 days prior to their entry into the State;
- The circumstances in which the agency would be required to meet the costs of a worker's repatriation and replacement, or reimburse all the amounts paid by the employer, must be specified;
- The workers must be made aware of the State's customs and traditions;
- The workers must be provided with decent temporary accommodation equipped with all the appropriate requisites until they are passed on to their employers, and they must be well treated;
- The workers must be informed of the authorities competent to hear their complaints concerning any violation of their rights and freedoms.

Employment contracts:

The relationship between the worker and the employer is governed by the standard employment contract, specifying the respective rights and obligations of the sponsoring and sponsored parties, which is concluded between them prior to the issuance of a residence permit to the worker. The contract, which must be endorsed by the competent Directorate General of Residence and Foreigners' Affairs in accordance with the prescribed procedures, is drawn up in three copies in the Arabic and English languages and signed by both parties, each of which retains one copy, the third copy being deposited with the above-mentioned Directorate General. The State has recently introduced a new employment contract for domestic workers and persons of equivalent status the provisions of which are governed by Federal Act No. 6 of 1973 concerning the entry and residence of foreigners, as amended, and the implementing regulations thereof in the event of any dispute arising between the parties. The new contract contains the following provisions:

- (a) Obligations of the sponsor/rights of the worker:
  - (i) The worker cannot be required to engage in work that is hazardous or incompatible with public order;
  - (ii) Care must be taken to help the worker to transfer his/her wages in accordance with the State's banking regulations;
  - (iii) The wage due must be paid not later than seven days after the end of each month; a receipt in respect thereof must be signed by the worker and all the latter's entitlements must be received before his/her residence permit is cancelled;
  - (iv) Decent accommodation, appropriate working clothes and food and drink must be provided;
  - (v) The worker must be well treated in a manner conducive to the preservation of his/her dignity, integrity and privacy;
  - (vi) The worker must be allowed to communicate with his/her family and the confidentiality of his/her correspondence must be respected;
  - (vii) Medical treatment and care must be provided in accordance with the State's health system;
  - (viii) In the event of the worker's death, his/her body and personal effects must be transported to his/her home country as soon as possible and his/her entitlements must be paid to his/her beneficiary;
  - (ix) The worker must be granted sufficient rest periods;
  - (x) The worker must be granted paid leave during the term of his/her contract or financial compensation in respect thereof;
  - (xi) The worker is entitled to a travel ticket for his/her period of leave and at the end of his/her contract;
  - (xii) The worker must be granted a weekly day of rest or financial compensation in respect thereof.
- (b) Obligations of the worker/rights of the sponsor (employer):
  - (i) To work only for the employer and members of the latter's family; perform his/her occupational duties in a proper and loyal manner; respect

the confidentiality and privacy of the employer and the latter's family; and show regard for the values, customs and traditions observed in the State;

- (ii) Signature of a receipt in acknowledgement of payment of wages;
- (iii) Payment of appropriate compensation in respect of any culpable damage, loss or destruction of property belonging to the employer up to a maximum limit equivalent to the worker's wage for five working days;
- (iv) The offices for the settlement of disputes in the competent Directorate General of Residence and Foreigners' Affairs have jurisdiction to settle disputes.

In the event of a settlement not being reached within two weeks, the dispute is referred to the competent courts for adjudication.

Leave entitlements:

Under the contract, the worker is entitled to three types of leave:

- (a) Weekly leave;
- (b) Annual leave;
- (c) Sick leave;
- (d) A separation-from-service indemnity.

#### **Institutional framework of the Ministry of the Interior for the protection of domestic workers and persons of equivalent status**

30. The Ministry of the Interior has taken care to establish the following subsidiary departments and units to safeguard human rights and protect the victims of any violations thereof:

- **The Department of Human Rights:** This Department was established in 2009 to safeguard the freedoms, rights and dignity of all members of society which are guaranteed by the State's Constitution, laws and legislation derived from our values and the teachings of our Islamic religion. Its functions include: enhancement of the standard of police work through application of the best humanitarian practices in dealing with all social categories without discrimination; constant verification of the extent to which police commands and departments are complying with the rules and regulations laid down to safeguard human rights; dissemination of a human rights culture; monitoring the protection of the public rights and freedoms of all members of society in accordance with the Constitution, the laws in force in the State and international human rights instruments; provision of legal advice; coordination with governmental and diplomatic bodies and civil society organizations concerned with human rights; and monitoring the situation of social categories in need of special care, such as women and children, in order to ensure that their rights are being respected;
- **The Social Support Centres:** These centres provide protection and care for victims of various types of crime and offer psychological and social support and shelter for victims of domestic violence, particularly women and children;
- **The Office to Promote Respect for the Culture of Law:** This Office, which is responsible for the dissemination of a culture of law among all social sectors, including the labour sector and particularly domestic workers and persons of similar status, has implemented a number of initiatives to make the latter more aware of their rights and obligations, improve their cultural level and encourage

their participation in the ongoing development process in which the State is engaged;

- **The Office of the Inspector General:** The functions of this Office consist in the administrative control and inspection, in the field and by computer, of all the police and security agencies in order to ensure the correctness and legality of their procedures and decisions. Its organizational structure includes an investigation department which has open channels of communication with the public to receive complaints concerning faults that might be committed by members of the police and security agencies so that it can take the necessary action thereon and protect the rights of victims. It also plays a role in overseeing the nationality, residence and foreigners sector insofar as its mandate extends to domestic workers and persons of equivalent status;
- **Police departments in the various police commands:** Police departments conduct enquiries in connection with crimes reported by members of the public, including domestic workers and persons of equivalent status, before forwarding the reports to the Department of Public Prosecutions for investigation and referral to the competent court;
- **Offices for the settlement of disputes in the nationality and residence sector:** These offices, located in the Directorates General of Residence and Foreigners' Affairs throughout the territory of the State, receive complaints from domestic workers and persons of equivalent status and look into disputes arising between the parties to a contractual relationship. They also study cases brought to their attention through a permanent open communication channel for the receipt of such complaints, provide assistance and care for victims of violence or abuse, transmit crime reports to local police departments for further enquiries and, if an act of aggression is deemed to constitute a legally punishable offence, forward the case to the Department of Public Prosecutions for investigation and referral to the competent court;
- **Division to Monitor the Situation of Temporary Workers:** The Dubai police command has established a division to monitor the situation of temporary workers which reports to the Directorate General of Human Rights. Its function is to combat the exploitation of labour by receiving and following up on complaints from workers concerning wages, ill-treatment, lack of decent accommodation or a company's failure to comply with the provisions regulating the labour market as laid down in the Emirati Labour Law. The division has launched a series of initiatives which have been directly instrumental in promoting the shift from labour demonstrations to telephone calls or complaints on the toll-free number (8005005) assigned to workers.

**Toll-free telephone numbers and hotlines to the Ministry of the Interior for the receipt of complaints and reports from domestic workers and persons of equivalent status**

31. The Ministry of the Interior receives complaints and reports through various channels such as the following toll-free telephone numbers and hotlines and the emergency SMS text messaging service:

- Toll-free number 999 through which complaints, reports and calls for help from anywhere in the State are automatically transferred to the local police command;
- Toll-free number 600525555 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Abu Dhabi police command;
- Security switchboard 8002626, 5086888 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Abu Dhabi police command;

- Toll-free number 800404040 for the submission of general complaints to the Dubai police command;
- Security service number 8004888 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Dubai police command;
- Toll-free number 80080 to report any violation or infringement of the rights of sponsored workers to the nationality, residence and border authorities;
- The workers' hotline 8005005 operating under the programme to monitor and address abuses against workers:
- The website of the Ministry and the above-mentioned units which handle cases falling within their respective fields of jurisdiction.

**Question 12: Please provide information on the implementation of Federal Act No. 29 of 2006 concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, as amended by Federal Act No. 14 of 2009, especially as regards the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Please clarify whether schools can refuse to enrol children with disabilities. In particular, please provide precise figures on specialized teachers and learning support programmes available in the State party.**

**Reply concerning the integration of children with disabilities in schools**

32. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in association with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF and the General Women's Union, is drawing up a priority-based plan of action to ensure that children with disabilities enjoy all their rights, including integration in society and in mainstream schools, and to improve the existing systems in the light of the best available international practices. The project is being implemented in collaboration with the ministries and bodies concerned with children with disabilities in the United Arab Emirates (see the annexed documents illustrating the implementation of Federal Act No. 29 of 2006, as amended by Federal Act No. 14 of 2009, concerning the rights of children with disabilities).

**Question 14: The right to free education for all children living in the territory of the State**

33. In conformity with article 17 of the Constitution of the United Arab Emirates, all Emirati children have the right to free education.

**Possibility for non-citizen resident children to enrol free of charge in public schools**

34. Under the terms of Council of Ministers Decision No. 36 of 2006, non-citizen students may be enrolled in public schools on a fee-paying basis.

**Steps taken to make secondary education compulsory**

35. The following steps have been taken in this regard:
- On 19 March 2014, a memorandum containing the Ministry's views on the bill of law was sent to the Council of Ministers (see annex);
  - A study conducted by the A.T. Kearney Company was completed on 18 March 2014.

**Measures to address the situation of children who are still not enrolled in education at any level**

36. The following measures have been taken:

- Article 2 of Ministerial Decision No. 2843/2 of 1996, concerning enrolment and admission to adult education centres, stipulated that: “Any person within the categories referred to in article 1 above who is over the maximum age for admission to general education schools shall be admitted to adult education centres” (see annex);
- The age for admission is specified in the circular concerning the enrolment of students for adult education and the home study scheme (see annex).

**Question 15: Please indicate whether Federal Act No. 51 of 2006 on combating human trafficking offences has been amended to include protection measures for child victims of trafficking**

37. Article 13 of Federal Act No. 1 of 2015, amending various provisions of Federal Act No. 51 of 2006, defined the functions of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, including measures to protect victims of such trafficking insofar as paragraph 2 of the said article called for “study and specification of the legislation and regulations concerning human trafficking-related matters in order to ensure the necessary protection for victims and witnesses in accordance with international requirements”.

**Question 16: Please provide comprehensive information on the implementation of Federal Act No. 15 of 2005 banning the use of children as camel jockeys**

**Federal Act No. 15 of 2005**

38. Under the provisions of the said Federal Act regulating camel racing, children under 18 years of age were prohibited from participating in camel races and a penalty of up to three years’ detention and/or a fine of not less than 50,000 dirhams was prescribed for any infringement of those provisions, the penalty being doubled in the event of recidivism. The State subsequently took a series of measures which can be summarized as follows:

**1. Identification and assembly of child jockeys in shelters**

39. It is noteworthy that all these children were identified and assembled in specially prepared shelters equipped with all the facilities needed for their medical, psychological and recreational welfare, after which they were repatriated to their home countries under the supervision of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). There are no longer any child jockeys in the State since they have been replaced by robotic jockeys and, consequently, there is no need for them.

**2. Implementation of Federal Act No. 15 of 2005 by the Ministry of the Interior**

40. As soon as the Act was promulgated, H.H. Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, issued numerous orders and directives that helped the special committee, which was formed under the terms of Ministerial Decisions Nos. 364 and 652 of 2007, to monitor the implementation of the State’s programme to compensate and rehabilitate former child jockeys and ensure their social reintegration.

**3. Measures taken by the State to prevent children under 18 years of age from participating in camel racing**

41. The United Arab Emirates has taken great care to ensure that children under 18 years of age are not employed as camel jockeys. The provisions and penalties contained in Federal Act No. 15 of 2005 constitute the legislative framework for the activities of the executive agencies addressing this issue.

**4. Measures taken by the bodies assigned to implement Federal Act No. 15 of 2005**

42. In order to resolve the issue of child camel jockeys, the State established an executive control and monitoring mechanism consisting in the special committee, formed under the terms of Ministerial Decision No. 41 of 2005, which included representatives of all the bodies concerned. A field operations unit based in the Ministry of the Interior was also established under the terms of Ministerial Decision No. 251 of 2005 to perform the following functions:

(a) Specification of the conditions for the issuance of entry permits to jockeys in conformity with the relevant provisions of federal law;

(b) Surveillance and monitoring of all camel racetracks in coordination with the national Camel-Racing Federation;

(c) Coordination with the Ministry of Health and other relevant bodies in order to determine the real age of camel jockeys as compared with the age entered on their passports;

(d) Implementation of an awareness-raising campaign to encourage the use of robotic jockeys by all camel owners in view of the penalties prescribed for infringements of Federal Act No. 15 of 2005.

**5. Steps taken to implement the agreement with UNICEF and memorandums of understanding with the States concerned**

43. Pursuant to the two-phase agreement concluded between the United Arab Emirates and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) covering the periods 2005-2007 and 2007-2009 and any future extensions, H.H. Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, ordered the formation of a special committee to monitor the implementation of the agreement, as well as the compensation procedures and rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes for former child jockeys.

44. The local committees that the special committee established in the States concerned considered all the claims that were submitted to them in accordance with the memorandums of understanding that the Ministry of the Interior of the United Arab Emirates signed with the Governments of those States. The special committee is currently monitoring the implementation of the rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes for those children in coordination with UNICEF and other partners.

**6. Consideration of claims**

45. Claims were accepted or rejected following close scrutiny and careful consideration by the local committees, consisting of two members from the State concerned and one member from the special committee, which established medical subcommittees and consulted other advisors to assist them in their work.

46. The subcommittees were fully empowered to conduct investigations and enquiries and assess the amounts of compensation in accordance with the protocol drawn up by Mr. Bart Schwartz, the special committee's consultant. In some cases,



children were awarded US\$ 30,000 in compensation. The total amount of compensation paid to children now living with their families in their home countries (the Sudan, Mauritania, Pakistan and Bangladesh) amounted to 40, 696, 031 dirhams. The number of children compensated in those countries was as follows:

Pakistan	1 303
Sudan	2 079
Bangladesh	879
Mauritania	467

#### **7. Rehabilitation and social reintegration endeavours**

47. The United Arab Emirates allocated 30 million dirhams in financial support for these child rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes and this amount was transferred in full to UNICEF for implementation of the programmes that had been approved in agreement with the authorities of each country.

#### **8. Publicization of the programmes**

48. The United Arab Emirates provided sufficient funding to cover the subcommittees' administrative expenses, as well as the costs of the media and medical committees, their advisors and other support staff and the intensive advertising campaigns that the subcommittees ran on television and radio and in the press to publicize the programmes in the children's home countries. The total cost in the four countries amounted to 5,817,064 dirhams.

#### **9. Receipt of compensation by children**

49. All the children received the amounts awarded to them by the subcommittees in the four countries concerned and the conclusion of the compensation programme was announced when this process had been completed. The money was paid to the children in the presence of officials from their countries and the United Arab Emirates received acknowledgements from those countries confirming that the programmes agreed upon were being implemented and the children had received their compensation.

50. We wish to emphasize that the United Arab Emirates respects human rights principles and abides by all the conventions, treaties and protocols that it has ratified, including the Palermo Protocol. The file concerning former camel jockeys was definitively closed in the presence of officials from the four countries concerned during a public conference held at the Rocco Forte Hotel in Abu Dhabi on 5 June 2012 which was attended by representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, UNICEF, the four countries concerned, their embassies in the United Arab Emirates, the relevant international organizations and governmental and non-governmental bodies and institutions. We have official documents to this effect and we can confirm that, contrary to the reported allegations, no children are being held in slavery-like conditions in the United Arab Emirates.

51. A documented study on the special committee's work was distributed to the conference participants and it is noteworthy that discharges certified by UNICEF and the four countries concerned can be found on pages 286, 313-314, 331, 358-360 and 366 of that study, a copy of which is annexed hereto.

**Question 17**

52. The competent authorities and bodies concerned are collaborating to ensure protection and support for victims of human trafficking through, inter alia, the care and rehabilitation programme to facilitate their social reintegration.

**Please indicate whether the State party has adopted a legal framework to deal with refugees, and especially children**

53. No federal legislation has been promulgated in this regard.

**Question 18: With reference to paragraph 59 of the State party's report, please provide updated information on the Juvenile Justice Bill. In particular, please inform the Committee of any initiatives taken to raise the age of criminal responsibility to conform with internationally acceptable standards. Please also indicate whether there has been any initiative to remove stigmatizing language, such as "delinquents" and "offenders", from juvenile justice legislation. With reference to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, please clarify the situations where children over 16 years of age are referred to the civil courts and the cases where they are referred to sharia courts.**

**Reply concerning the protection of children**

54. The Federal Juvenile Justice Bill is designed to ensure the protection and care of juveniles by providing, inter alia, legal protection to safeguard their interests in all court proceedings, legislative and administrative procedures and measures taken by juvenile reform and correctional institutions with a view to rectifying their behaviour and facilitating their effective social rehabilitation and reintegration.

55. In this connection, the bill of law makes provision for the following:

(a) Establishment of a juvenile care facility to provide protection, as well as social, psychological, health and other forms of care, and educational and cultural services for juveniles exposed to delinquency;

(b) Establishment of an observation facility to monitor the social, health, psychological and moral circumstances of juvenile delinquents awaiting trial and judgement;

(c) Establishment of a reform and correctional facility to rehabilitate convicted juvenile delinquents in preparation for their social reintegration;

(d) Establishment of a department in the Ministry to oversee juvenile affairs, prepare social, psychological and medical reports and monitor released juveniles in order to ensure their stability and good conduct;

(e) Establishment of a committee to supervise juvenile facilities.

56. The bill also makes provision for measures to preserve the fundamental role of the family in the social reintegration of juvenile delinquents or potential delinquents and ensure that the following principles are respected:

(a) The right of juvenile delinquents or potential delinquents to enjoy the requisite protection and care, in a manner consistent with their age, sex, personality and capacities, when placed in juvenile facilities;

(b) The need to assign separate sections of juvenile facilities for the various categories of inmates based on their sex, age and physical constitution and the type of offence that they have committed.

57. Other provisions include the stipulation that, when a juvenile delinquent under 10 years of age is arrested for the commission of a legally punishable act, the juvenile court must order the prescribed reformatory and remedial measures, as appropriate.

58. In addition, the bill prescribes penalties for the following offences:

- A penalty for anyone whose remissness in supervising a juvenile placed in his custody leads to the juvenile's relapse into a state of exposure to delinquency;
- A fine for anyone who, having been assigned custody of a juvenile, fails to present the juvenile to the competent authority when so requested;
- A penalty of detention, together with a fine, for anyone who harbours, aids or abets a fugitive convicted juvenile delinquent;
- A penalty of detention, together with a fine, for anyone who invades, or attempts to invade, the privacy of a juvenile by publicizing or circulating reports concerning the proceedings of juvenile hearings through books, newspapers, the radio, television or cinema or any other social media or by publicizing or circulating texts or photographs likely to publicly disclose the identity of a juvenile defendant or victim;
- A penalty of detention, together with a fine, for anyone who prevents sociologists or other members of the Department for the Protection and Care of Juveniles from performing their duties, or obstructs them therein, without legal authorization;
- A fine for anyone who, being responsible for the care of a juvenile delinquent, refuses to attend the awareness-raising programmes organized for families of juvenile delinquents in juvenile reform and correctional facilities.

59. The Juvenile Justice Bill also contains other provisions designed to further the diligent endeavours that the Ministry of the Interior is making to ensure the welfare of children, and particularly the rehabilitation and social reintegration of juvenile delinquents in keeping with the concept of reform which the criminal justice system is applying with due consideration for the interests of families and society as a whole.

60. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, conducted a survey to assess the child protection system in the United Arab Emirates in 2012/13. The shortcomings found in the protection-related policies, legislation and services and the needs, priorities and challenges that were identified in this regard are helping decision makers to enhance and strengthen national capacities to develop child protection services.

61. In January 2015, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, held a workshop on child protection procedures during which ways and means to improve mechanisms for cooperation, coordination and referral among the national bodies and institutions concerned were discussed with a view to ensuring more effective protection for children. The workshop identified the following priorities for future action to improve protection services:

- (a) Formulation of basic standards for child welfare institutions;
- (b) Awareness-raising and community participation in child protection;
- (c) Development of the capacities of protection providers;
- (d) Familiarization with exemplary international experiences and practices;

- (e) Exchange and analysis of information and data concerning protection services;
- (f) Studies and research on child protection.

62. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood is applying the six above-mentioned priorities, primarily by organizing a training course in the fourth quarter of 2015 to develop the capacities of sociologists in or outside welfare facilities working with children in difficult situations, such as child victims of violence and abuse, children of unknown parentage or deprived of family care, child victims of human trafficking and children in conflict with the law (juvenile delinquents), with a view to improving all aspects of the protection of such children.

63. The training will cover a number of topics, including: the integrated child protection system from prevention to intervention; the limited scope of the role played by social institutions, and their relationship with the community; the sociologist's role, functions, qualifications and interaction with other fields of specialization; child interviewing methods and skills (case diagnosis); ways to formulate intervention plans to protect children: definition of roles, implementation and follow-up; how to work with children and families outside institutions; documentation, review and analysis of information and the sociologist's role in research.

64. In addition, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in collaboration with the National Media Council of the United Arab Emirates, the Arab Council for Childhood and Development and the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, is organizing a workshop on 9-10 June 2015 in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi under the slogan "Child-Friendly Media" to train media professionals to disseminate a children's rights culture. The purpose of the training is to provide media professionals with basic information on children's rights and endow them with the skills needed to enable the media to play an effective role in protecting those rights and promoting the welfare of children, with emphasis on the rights of children in the United Arab Emirates.

#### **With regard to the Juvenile Justice Bill and persons working with juveniles**

65. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, is preparing a scholarly forum to review some of the best Arab and international practices in the treatment of juvenile offenders, and especially extrajudicial measures and alternatives to detention. The purpose of the forum is to highlight the importance of replacing penalties of imprisonment with social (non-custodial) measures designed to ensure the social reintegration of children in conflict with the law, taking their best interests into consideration in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Minimum Standards and Norms on Juvenile Justice. It has been agreed to hold this forum in the fourth quarter of 2015 and a budgetary allocation has been made therefor.

#### **Question 19: Please indicate whether the provisions of the Federal Counter-Terrorism Act No. 7 of 2014 can be applied to children**

66. Article 6 of Federal Act No. 9 of 1976 concerning juvenile delinquents and vagrants stipulates that: "Criminal proceedings shall not be instituted against a juvenile delinquent under 7 years of age". Article 7 thereof stipulates that: "If a juvenile over 7 but under 16 years of age commits an offence punishable under the Penal Code or any other enactment, the judge shall order the measures that he deems appropriate". Consequently, the provisions of Federal Act No. 7 of 2014 are not applicable to children under 16 years of age.

67. Federal Act No. 9 of 1976 further stipulates that: "If a juvenile over 16 years of age commits an offence punishable under the Penal Code or any other enactment, the

judge may order the measures provided for herein, as he deems appropriate, instead of the prescribed penalties” (art. 8); “A juvenile shall not be sentenced to capital punishment, imprisonment or financial penalties” (art. 9); Article 10 contains the following provisions: “1. In cases in which the criminal penalty prescribed for an offence committed by a juvenile is capital punishment or imprisonment, the penalty shall be replaced by a term of not more than 10 years’ detention; 2. If a juvenile commits an offence punishable by detention, the term of detention to which he is sentenced shall not exceed half the maximum term prescribed for the said offence; 3. Sentences of detention imposed on juveniles pursuant to this article shall be served in special institutions in which social care and education facilities are available.” Hence, the provisions of Federal Act No. 7 of 2014 are applied to children over 16 years of age in accordance with the stipulations contained in the above-mentioned provisions of Federal Act No. 9 of 1976.

## **Part II**

### **(a) New bills and laws, and their respective regulations**

68. The following new bills concerning children’s rights have been tabled:

1. A federal bill of law on children’s rights, drafted in collaboration with the Higher Committee on the Protection of Children and the Child Protection Centre at the Ministry of the Interior, is currently in the final stages of legislative promulgation in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. An entire chapter of the bill is devoted to child protection, mechanisms to address all forms of abuse and violence against children from the moment when they are reported or discovered, the collection of information and evidence, and the provision of medical, psychological and social support for child victims.
2. A federal bill of law on juvenile delinquents (the Juvenile Justice Bill), which is designed to ensure the protection and welfare of juveniles by providing, inter alia, legal protection to safeguard their interests in all court proceedings, legislative and administrative procedures and measures taken by juvenile reform and correctional institutions with a view to rectifying their behaviour and facilitating their effective social rehabilitation and reintegration.
3. A bill of law on the compilation of a register of sex offenders.

### **(b) New institutions and their mandates and institutional reforms**

69. The Ministry of the Interior has taken care to establish the following units to safeguard human rights and protect the victims of any violations thereof:

#### **1. The Ministry’s human rights-related units:**

- The Department of Human Rights;
- The Directorate General of Human Rights of the Dubai police;
- The petitions department in the secretariat of the Office of H.H. the Minister;
- The Directorate of Social Support Centres;
- The Office to Promote Respect for the Culture of Law;
- Offices for the settlement of disputes involving the nationality, residence and border authorities;
- The Office of the Inspector General;

- The Petitions Department;
  - The Police Disciplinary Board;
  - The Federal Community Police Directorate;
  - The Child Protection Centre;
  - The Centre for the Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities;
  - The Office for Victims' Affairs in the Abu Dhabi police command;
  - The Complaints and Proposals Department of the Directorate General of Strategy and Performance Development;
  - The police command units to combat human trafficking offences;
  - The police command departments;
  - Units, such as the tourist police, dealing with foreigners' affairs.
- 2. The Ministry's human rights-related committees:**
- The Human Rights Committee;
  - The Committee to Combat Human Trafficking Offences;
  - The Higher Committee on the Protection of Children;
  - The Women's Police Committee;
  - The Committee to Inspect Penal and Reform Institutions;
  - The Disciplinary Boards.
- 3. The Ministry's mechanisms for the receipt of complaints and reports:**

Since the judiciary forms the basis of social justice in the community, under the Constitution and the law all persons living in the State have a guaranteed and non-discriminatory right to lodge complaints and seek legal redress. All parties to a complaint are protected against physical or mental abuse. Anyone can apply to the judicial or police authorities, without hindrance, at any time and other non-traditional mechanisms have also been established to address grievances and complaints. Court judgements are subject to appeal and the right to legal counsel is guaranteed at all levels of judicial proceedings and before boards of enquiry and investigating authorities. Legal aid is also provided for persons in need thereof.

The Ministry of the Interior receives complaints and reports through its police command units and central bodies referred to in section 1 above and also through the following toll-free telephone numbers, hotlines and website:

- Toll-free number 999 through which complaints, reports and calls for help from anywhere in the State are automatically transferred to the local police command;
- Toll-free number 600525555 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Abu Dhabi police command;
- Security switchboard 8002626, 5086888 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Abu Dhabi police command;
- Toll-free number 800404040 for the submission of general complaints to the Dubai police command;
- Security service number 8004888 for the submission of complaints and proposals to the Dubai police command;

- Toll-free number 80080 to report any violation or infringement of the rights of sponsored workers to the nationality, residence and border authorities;
- Hotline 8005354 to submit complaints of domestic violence to the social support centres;
- The workers' hotline 8005005 operating under the programme to monitor and address abuses against workers;
- The emergency SMS text messaging service 5999 through which persons with special needs can communicate with the Abu Dhabi police command;
- The website of the Ministry of the Interior and its subsidiary units (<http://www.moi.gov.ae>) which constitutes a direct means of communication through which members of the public can submit complaints, reports and proposals in the Arabic and English languages for consideration by the competent unit.

**(c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing**

70. In the years 2011 and 2012, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, endeavoured to combat obesity in children by raising their health awareness of the need to reduce their level of obesity through proper nutrition and more physical activity. During a health education campaign that was conducted in schools for the benefit of students, parents/guardians and teaching staff, physical exercise sessions were held and the teaching and administrative staff were trained by a female psychologist to identify students suffering from psychological problems.

71. Within the framework of a new action plan being implemented in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood is preparing a comprehensive awareness-raising and parental education programme on protection from violence, accidents and injuries; nutrition and health care; perceptual and cognitive development; safe interaction and relationships; development of self-reliance and a sense of responsibility and discretion; development of self-confidence; early detection of disabilities and ways to treat children with disabilities, etc.

72. The action plan also makes provision for programmes to raise the awareness of children and adolescents concerning their rights, develop their capacities and promote their participation in the community by endowing them with the personal life skills needed to acclimatize, adapt, reflect, take decisions and communicate and interact with others.

### **Part III: Data, statistics and other information, if available**

**Paragraph 8:** The State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

73. With regard to priorities, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood and the General Women's Union, in collaboration with the Gulf Area Office of UNICEF, has formulated a national strategy for motherhood and childhood during the period 2015-2021 as a basic reference for decision makers concerned with children in the United Arab Emirates. Around 45 national bodies, together with international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Save the Children Fund, the World Bank and

international experts on early childhood development and child protection, participated in the drafting process. This strategy was based on the recommendations of an analytical study conducted in 2010 on the situation of children in the United Arab Emirates which, in turn, reflected the views and fears expressed by children when they were consulted concerning the challenges that they faced in a number of areas, such as health, education, protection and participation. The following priorities were identified in the strategy:

- Compilation of a consolidated database containing updated information and data on child and adolescent health, education, protection and participation disaggregated by age, social category, geographical distribution and other factors such as vulnerability in the case of children with disabilities;
- Assessment and correction of shortcomings in child protection services, policies and legislation in order to strengthen national child protection systems and ensure access thereto at the local level throughout the State;
- Provision of comprehensive and equitable education opportunities for all children by integrating children with disabilities in mainstream schools, ensuring the availability of specialized services therein for children with disabilities, making schools more accessible to such children and establishing disability-friendly comprehensive classrooms;
- Introduction of comprehensive and category-specific programmes and services to promote the early childhood development of all children, and formulation of an early childhood development policy for children in the “from birth to 8 years” age group;
- Formulation of parental care programmes in the field of early childhood development for parents (including parents providing alternative care), nursemaids, the staff of childcare facilities and men and women expecting to become future fathers and mothers;
- Preparation of training programmes to make children and adolescents more aware of their rights and responsibilities, endow them with life skills and acquaint them with protection mechanisms.



## Annexes

### Documents

#### Annex 1

##### Documents illustrating the implementation of Federal Act No. 29 of 2006, as amended by Federal Act No. 14 of 2009, concerning the rights of persons with disabilities

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*Documents*

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Article 12:

The State shall ensure equal education opportunities for persons with disabilities to study in regular or special classes in all mainstream education, vocational training, adult education and further education institutions

- Vision, mission and values of the Ministry of Education;
- 2010-2020 strategic goals (standardization and provision of education opportunities for students with special needs in order to achieve a high level of equality of opportunity);
- Strategic indices for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014;
- Ministerial Decision No. 397/1 of 2007 concerning teacher quotas;
- Administrative Decision No. 383 of 2009 regulating integrated schools;
- Ministerial Decision No. 211 of 2010 concerning the admission and enrolment of Emirati students with special needs;
- Administrative Circular No. MW/288 concerning examinations for students with special needs;
- Administrative Decision No. 58 of 2010 concerning applications for the enrolment of new students with special needs in public schools;
- Administrative Decision No. 609 of 2010 concerning examinations for students with special needs;
- Ministerial Decision No. 166 of 2010 concerning application of the general rules for special-education programmes in public and private schools in the State;
- Ministerial Decision No. 389 of 2011 concerning specialized training centres for teachers in integrated schools;
- Ministerial Decision No. 401 of 2011 regulating the admission of students with disabilities to programmes for their

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*Documents*


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integration in public schools;

- Administrative Circular No. 9 of 2011 setting the second academic term examination dates for students in all types of education which had been postponed in the academic year 2010/11;
- Administrative Decision No. 189 of 2011 concerning the formation of support teams for special categories in the education districts;
- Ministerial Decision No. 98 of 2012 concerning the individual education plan for students with disabilities;
- Administrative Decision No. 240 of 2012 concerning specialized training centres for teachers in integrated schools;
- Administrative Decision No. 236 of 2012 concerning introduction of the integration programme training package in kindergartens;
- Administrative Decision No. 407 of 2013 concerning the monitoring of students included in integration programmes in public schools from 2009 to 2013;
- Administrative Decision No. 436 of 2013 concerning the individual education plan for students with disabilities;
- Administrative Decision No. 91 of 2014 designating the schools approved for participation in the initiative for the care of special categories in educational institutions;
- Letter No. 274/13/8 of 2012 requesting the printing press to print the curriculum in Braille for blind students;
- Letter No. 2018/13/8 of 2013 requesting the printing press to print the curriculum in Braille for blind students;
- Circular No. 302 of 2014 concerning distribution of the curricula on compact discs for blind and visually impaired students;
- A press report published in 2009 concerning the celebration of White Cane Day and the distribution of equipment to blind student;

Making the academic curriculum available in sign language, Braille or any other format, as required

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*Documents*


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Article 13:  
Provision of educational  
diagnosis and academic  
curricula

- Ministerial Decision No. 247 of 2010 concerning the initiative for the development of assessment, testing, evaluation and monitoring systems in the field of special education;
- Ministerial Decision No. 91 of 2012 establishing special- education support centres;
- Ministerial Decision No. 171 of 2012 concerning the workshop on the training package for the diagnosis of learning difficulties;
- Circular No. 1043 of 2013 concerning distribution of the diagnostic testing kit for learning difficulties;
- Ministerial Decision No. 180 of 2012 concerning the training of psychologists to use the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence;
- Ministerial Decision No. 682 of 2013 concerning the dispatch of personnel to attend a training programme on the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale;
- Administrative Decision No. 123 of 2013 concerning participation in the training workshop on the use of the Gilliam Autism Rating Scale (GARS);
- Circular No. 858 of 2013 concerning distribution of the GARS testing kit to the special-education support centres;
- Circular No. 75/3 2013 concerning distribution of the Leiter testing kit to the special-education support centres;
- Administrative Decision No. 118 of 2013 concerning the training workshop on the use of the Leiter test to measure and evaluate the performance of students with special needs;
- Ministerial Decision No. 188 of 2013 establishing special- education support centres;
- Folder on the special-education support centres;

Supply of teaching aids and  
assistive technological devices

- Various teaching aids and technological devices have been supplied to students with disabilities and learning difficulties and to special-education class and resource rooms;

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*Documents*


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Article 14:  
Organization of in-service  
training programmes to provide  
staff with the latest expertise  
and know-how

- Circular No. 767 of 2012 concerning the supply of assistive technological devices for use by students at integrated schools in the education districts;
  - Circular No. 721 of 2012 concerning the supply of computers to students with cerebral palsy;
  - Circular No. 832 of 2013 concerning the supply of assistive technological devices to integrated schools;
  - Circular No. 368 of 2014 concerning the plan to supply teaching aids and assistive technological devices to special-education support centres and schools participating in the initiative for the care of special categories in the academic year 2014/15;
  - Devices supplied in previous years;
  - Administrative Decision No. 527 of 2010 establishing centres to train teachers in ways to integrate students with special needs in mainstream schools;
  - Administrative Decision No. 389 of 2011 concerning specialized training centres for teachers working in integrated schools;
  - Administrative Decision No. 240 of 2012 concerning specialized training centres for teachers working in integrated schools;
  - Administrative Decision No. 236 of 2012 concerning introduction of the integration programme training package in kindergartens;
  - Ministerial Decision No. 607 of 2013 concerning introduction of the integration programme training package in kindergartens;
  - Ministerial Decision No. 537 of 2013 concerning specialized training centres for teachers working in integrated schools;
  - Administrative Decision No. 105 of 2014 concerning the dispatch of students to attend a training programme on the development of integrated schools and classrooms.
-