



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Combined twenty-second and twenty-third reports
submitted by Qatar under article 9 of the
Convention, due in 2021^{*}, ^{**}**

[Date received: 21 September 2021]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present report may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



I. Introduction

1. The State of Qatar is honoured to be submitting the present report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, under article 9 (1) of the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and in line with the Committee's own reporting guidelines and general recommendations. Qatar, which acceded to the Convention under a ratification document dated 22 July 1976, reaffirms its adherence to the concepts and goals enshrined in the Convention, and the present report will detail the steps taken to implement the Convention.
2. The report is divided into three parts, the first of which includes information about the process whereby the text itself was drafted. The second part, which covers articles 2 to 7 in numerical order, concerns the measures taken and progress achieved in the implementation of the Convention and its application in the State of Qatar. The third part of the report focuses on the State's compliance with the concluding observations and recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination following its examination of the previous periodic report.
3. The present text is a joint national report, which was drafted by a committee established in March 2021 by decree of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The committee brings together a number of the competent governmental bodies including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs. In line with established practice and the recommendations of the treaty bodies, the report was then sent to the Qatar Foundation for Social Action and to the National Committee for Human Rights for them to express their views thereon. In submitting the present combined twenty-second and twenty-third reports, the State of Qatar affirms its full readiness to cooperate by responding to any queries or requests for clarification concerning the implementation of the Convention. The State of Qatar wishes the Committee continued success in its work to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.
4. The State considers the submission of this combined report to be a continuation of its constructive dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, being as it is a periodic report that is to be examined in the light of previous reports. The report, therefore, omits the repetition of information that the State has previously provided in earlier reports and it limits itself to indicating changes that have happened in the period of time covered by the present report.

II. Comment on the substantive provisions of the Convention: measures taken by the State to apply the Convention

5. This part of the report describes the legislative, institutional, administrative and procedural measures taken by the State in enactment of the Convention, since the submission of its previous report in 2017 and the discussion of that report before the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2018.
6. It begins with an analysis of the general legal framework prohibiting racial discrimination, as per the definition contained in article 1 (1) of the Convention. The rest of the section contains information specifically relating to articles 2 to 7 of the Convention, which are dealt with in numerical order.

Article 1

7. The national legal framework, as expressed in the State's Constitution and laws, is consistent with the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 (1) of the Convention. The general rules enshrined in the Convention regarding the principle of equality and non-discrimination are, in fact, incorporated into the legal framework as one of its main pillars.

8. The Permanent Constitution was adopted in April 2003. It was then ratified by the Amir of the State of Qatar in 2004 and came into force in June 2005. Articles 18 and 19, in chapter II of the Constitution entitled “Fundamental elements of society”, define the legal framework surrounding the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Article 18 reads: “Qatari society is founded on values of justice, benevolence, freedom, equality, moral rectitude and equality”. Thus, in accordance with article 18, equality is one of the underpinnings on which Qatari society is based. The principles articulated in article 18 are then reinforced by article 19, which stipulates: “The State is to preserve the underpinnings of society and guarantee security, stability and equal opportunities for citizens.” All State policies are therefore required to take account of and safeguard the core values of society enshrined in article 18, including the principle of equality, which in Qatar is an exalted principle that enjoys constitutional protection; and no law or statute can be enacted if it runs counter to that principle. Further protection is afforded by Act No. 12 of 2008, promulgated on 18 June 2008, under which the Supreme Constitutional Court was established to adjudicate in disputes over the constitutionality of laws and regulations.

9. The general principle of equality set out in article 18 is elaborated in detail in articles 34 and 35, which are contained in chapter III of the Constitution entitled “Public rights and duties”. Article 34 states: “Citizens are equal in rights and duties.” Chapter III (arts. 34 to 58) guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms on the basis of the principle that rights are integrated, interrelated, interlinked and indivisible, and thereby safeguards equal economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. Chapter III further guarantees human rights in Qatar by enshrining public rights and freedoms as legal provisions at the very heart of the Constitution, according them primacy over ordinary laws and making them binding.

Article 2

10. In addition to the information and comments on this article contained in paragraphs 30–33 of the previous report, the following information can be given:

- The State of Qatar has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 27 of the former and article 2 (2) of the latter both provide that, in States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities are not to be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. It should be noted that these provisions are part of the internal legal system of the State of Qatar, as per article 68 (1) of the Constitution according to which treaties have force of law once they have been ratified and published in the Official Gazette.
- The State of Qatar has enacted a number of laws containing provisions intended to combat discrimination and to establish the principle of equality and non-discrimination in all civil, criminal and administrative matters. They include:
 - Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, departure and residency of migrant workers;
 - Act No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers;
 - Act No. 15 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Human Resources Act, which affirms the principle of non-discrimination and equality among employees in respect of rights and duties;
 - Act No. 22 of 2015 amending certain provisions of the Criminal Code (Act No. 11 of 2004);
 - Act No. 1 of 2015 amending certain provisions of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004) on wage protection;
 - Civil Code (Act No. 22 of 2004), which makes no distinction between citizens and residents in respect of the civil rights for which it provides;

- Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 11 of 2004), which provides for the equality of all citizens and residents in the territory of the State in criminal proceedings, evidence-gathering, investigation, trial and enforcement of sentence, without distinction or discrimination;
- Act No. 17 of 2020 regarding a minimum wage for workers and domestic workers;
- Decree-Law No. 18 of 2020 amending certain provisions of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004);
- Decree-Law No. 19 of 2020 amending certain provisions of Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers;
- Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 26 of 2019 regarding the creation of the National Committee for Women, Children, Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities;
- Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 33 of 2020 establishing the Minimum Wage Committee, approving its internal regulations and setting levels of remuneration;
- Decree No. 21 of 2019 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs regulating conditions and procedures for electing workers' representatives to joint committees;
- Decree No. 95 of 2019 of the Minister of the Interior regarding rules and procedures for the exit of certain categories of migrants who are not subject to the Labour Code;
- Decree No. 51 of 2020 of the Minister of the Interior amending certain provisions of the implementing regulations of Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers; the implementing regulations were issued under Ministerial Decree No. 25 of 2019;
- Decree No. 25 of 2020 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs regarding a minimum wage for domestic workers;
- Decree No. 17 of 2021 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs regarding the precautions necessary to protect workers from heat stress;
- Decree No. 21 of 2021 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs amending certain provisions of Decree No. 8 of 2005 regulating the conditions and procedures for licensing bureaux that recruit works abroad on behalf of third parties.

11. The Ministry of the Interior undertakes the following actions with a view to the implementation of article 2 (2) of the Convention:

- It enforces a body of laws relevant to its own activities as a Ministry, concerning traffic, civil defence, juveniles, drugs, terrorism, cybercrime, human trafficking and the regulation of penal and correctional institutions. This has a positive impact on the safety of society and the protection of the human rights to dignity, health, life, security of life and property, privacy, prevention of slavery, protection of children and women, rights of prisoners, etc. This is done, moreover, without discrimination and while maintaining the equality of all persons before the law, in accordance with article 35 of the Constitution.
- Neither reports by national, regional or international monitoring bodies, nor the registers kept by Qatari security agencies contain any record of racially motivated violence or repression against residents in regard of matters that fall under the responsibility of the security authorities. Moreover, the aforementioned reports and registers do not contain any record of violations or crimes committed by individuals, groups or institutions involving racial hatred or incitement to racial hatred. This explains why Qatar has ranked high on the list of Middle Eastern countries in the

Global Peace Index for the years 2017 to 2020. The Index, which is published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace based in Sydney, Australia, includes criteria such as low crime rates, quality of health and education services, levels of tension and social conflicts.

12. Education is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. It is considered to be vital for the advancement of society and the State undertakes to guarantee, support and disseminate it (art. 25). Starting from this foundation, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education has developed a number of policies the purpose of which is to promote human rights principles throughout Qatari society, where such rights are to be enjoyed without distinction or discrimination. A body of laws, decrees and policies aimed at eliminating racial discrimination in education have been adopted. They include:

- Act No. 11 of 2018 concerning political asylum, under article 29 of which political refugees, their spouses and families have the right to education via enrolment in State-run educational institutions in the country. Moreover, they are exempt from fees for textbooks and transportation in State-run schools.
- Act No. 10 of 2018 concerning permanent residency, articles 6 and 7 of which allow holders of permanent residency cards to enrol in State-run educational institutions in the State of Qatar, under the conditions set forth in article 3 of Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 27 of 2019, which contains the rules and conditions whereby holders of permanent residency cards can receive medical treatment and education. Moreover, children of holders of permanent residency cards who have not reached the age of 18 enjoy the same rights to education as the holders themselves.
- A policy of acceptance and enrolment in schools, which is based on the standardization of procedures and on equality and justice.
- An educational policy which serves not only to analyse student performance but also to exalt humanitarian values, including respect for others and appreciation for their opinions and ideas while, at the same time, reprehending certain forms of behaviour such as tribal or sectarian extremism.
- The second strategic plan for education and training 2018–2022, which has been translated into the Qatar National Vision and which includes strategic educational plans that promote universal equality.

13. A body of laws, decrees and policies aimed at eliminating racial discrimination in health care have been adopted. They include the following:

- (i) Act No. 7 of 1996 regulating medical treatment and health services in Qatar;
- (ii) Act No. 7 of 2013 concerning social health insurance.

In line with article 35 of the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar:

- The Ministry of Public Health and its subagencies are required to provide health-care services to all members of society without discrimination against individuals, groups or institutions;
- The State of Qatar participated in the celebration of World Health Day the theme of which for the Eastern Mediterranean Region in 2019 was: “Primary health care: A path towards universal health coverage” under the slogan: “Health for all by all”. This regional theme thus took up the historic call for health care for all persons.
- Qatar provides medical services free of charge, also to non-Qatari residents. In fact, around 88 per cent of the population is made up of migrant workers of nearly 100 different nationalities from around the world. Most of them are from Asian countries but they are not classified in terms of their ethnicity.

Article 3

14. Reference is made to paragraphs 30–33 of the previous report, which concerned article 2 of the Convention and referenced articles 18, 34 and 35 of the Permanent Constitution. The

State of Qatar does not practise acts of racial discrimination or racial segregation against any public or private body or against any individual, irrespective of their colour, gender or religion and regardless of whether the person concerned is a citizen or a non-citizen. Moreover, Qatar did not enter any reservations when it acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Article 4

15. The country's domestic laws once contained no provisions to prohibit and criminalize the dissemination of ideas, discourses and actions that incite racial discrimination or hatred, or to prohibit and criminalize racist propaganda, or the provision of financing or assistance or the creation of organizations to that end. Now however, the country's domestic laws include provisions to prohibit and criminalize the dissemination of ideas, discourses and actions that incite racial discrimination or hatred, and to prohibit and criminalize racist propaganda, or the provision of financing or assistance or the creation of organizations to that end. Examples of this include the Cybercrime Act and the Printing and Publications Act.

Between 5 June 2017 and 5 January 2021, Qatar was the subject of unilateral coercive measures and a blockade imposed by four other regional States. Those measures targeted Qatari citizens in a discriminatory fashion on the basis of their nationality and they were expelled from or denied entry to those countries. Moreover, Qatari students who were enrolled in educational institutions in those countries were expelled and denied the right to pursue their education, while some Qataris in those countries had their property confiscated. Qatar sought to remove the discriminatory measures that its citizens were suffering by taking legal action before the competent international bodies including, inter alia, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The measures in question have recently been suspended on the basis of an agreement reached between the countries concerned and the State of Qatar.

Article 5

16. In addition to the comments on this article contained in paragraph 48 of the previous report, attention is drawn to the following information concerning the role of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of the Interior:

- According to article 2 (1) of Decree No. 26 of 2005, under which the Department was established, its role is to “receive and examine complaints submitted to the Ministry of the Interior, whether from individuals or via the National Human Rights Committee, to investigate the reasons for such complaints and to make appropriate recommendations to the Minister”;
- Most of the complaints received by the Department concern the implementation of the Act regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers and, in particular, problems in labour relations between employers – who are citizens of Qatar – and migrant workers of various nationalities. All complaints are examined and addressed in line with the law and while according equal treatment to both parties. Statistical data concerning the handling of complaints and petitions by the Human Rights Department in 2020 is given below:
 - The Department received 929 complaints and petitions between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020;
 - In 512 cases, the migrant workers changed employers, either permanently or temporarily;
 - In 181 cases, the complaints and petitions involved humanitarian issues related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.
- The Department safeguards the rights enshrined in Act No. 21 of 2015 and oversees the implementation – by the Nationality and Travel Documents Department – of the Nationality Act which governs the processes involved in issuing identity documents

(citizens' right to nationality) and the ensuing State-sponsored rights to education, health care, housing, etc., on an equal footing and without discrimination between any of the persons affected by the Act;

- The police act to protect residents' right to freedom of belief and worship from any form of violation. It is, in fact, the responsibility of law enforcement agencies to ensure that this right is duly respected, as enshrined in article 50 of the Constitution which reads: "Freedom of worship is guaranteed to all by law, subject to the need to protect public order and public morals." Article 256 of the Criminal Code (Act No. 11 of 2004) envisages a term of imprisonment of up to 7 years for anyone who commits any of the following actions:
 - Insulting a revealed religion protected by Islamic sharia;
 - Traducing or making allegations against one of the prophets whether verbally, pictorially, in writing or otherwise;
 - Damaging, vandalizing, destroying or desecrating buildings or any object found therein used in the performance of the religious rites of any of the revealed religions protected by sharia.

Right to equality

17. In line with the civil rights enshrined in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, articles 34, 35, 36, 41, 42, 44, 45 and 46 of the Constitution underscore equality before the law for all persons without distinction as to sex, language or religion.

18. In accordance with article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, article 52 of the Constitution stipulates: "Persons lawfully resident in the State shall be entitled to protection of their person and their property, as provided by law." Also according to the Constitution, public service is a national duty for all citizens, in the performance of which the public interest is to be their sole object (art. 53). In addition to this, the Constitution stipulates the inviolability of public funds and states that all persons have a duty to protect such funds. (art. 55). According to article 56, the public confiscation of property is prohibited and the penalty of confiscation of private assets may be imposed only by order of the courts and in circumstances stipulated in law.

19. The Labour Code lays emphasis on equality between men and women as regards access to job openings, wages, holidays and promotion. In fact, the rights and duties of workers envisaged in the Labour Code are applicable to men and women both of whom, without discrimination, are understood to fall under the meaning of "worker", which legislators have defined as any natural person who works in return for a wage for an employer or under the latter's control or supervision (art. 5 (1) of the Labour Code).

20. Qatar acceded to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), which it ratified in 1976. The Convention prohibits discrimination in employment on grounds of sex, race, national extraction or social origin.

21. The ILO Project Office in Qatar works jointly with the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs and the private sector to promote understanding of international standards of equality and non-discrimination in the workplace and their practical application in Qatar.

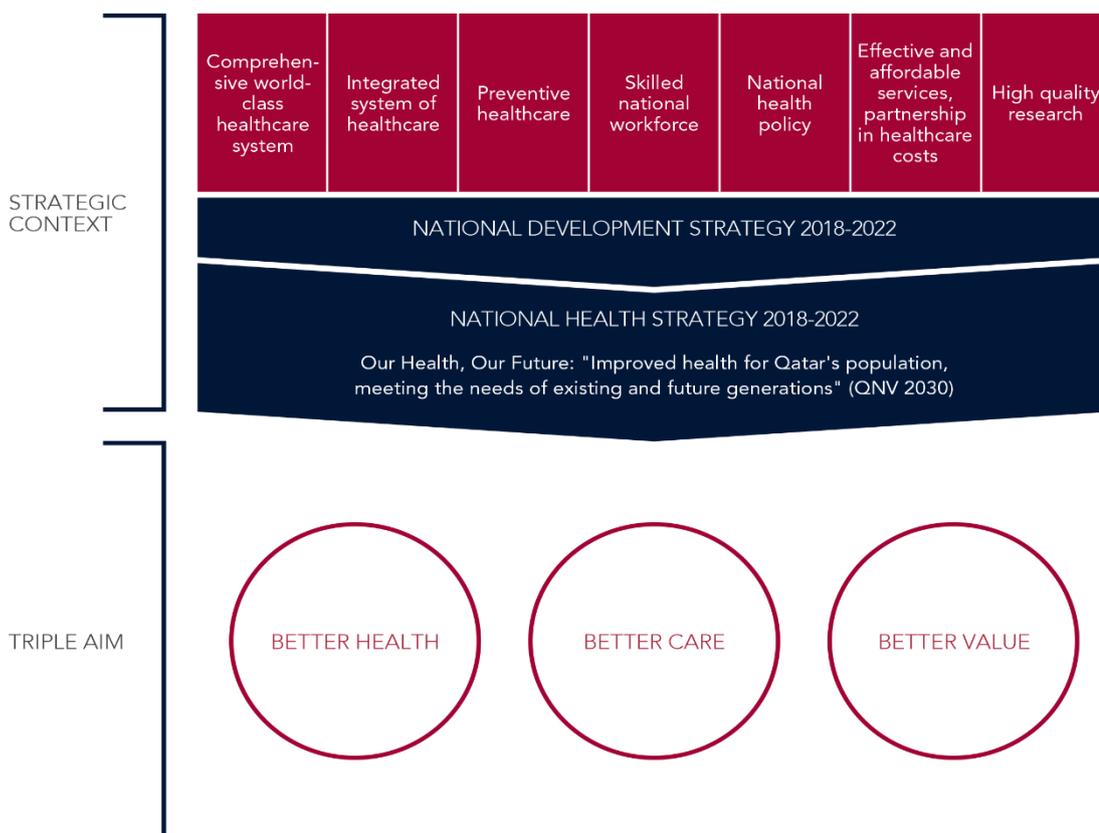
22. The prohibition on racial discrimination in the national law of the State of Qatar is fully consistent with article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Qatar, moreover, has successfully implemented the international recommendations enjoining it to continue to develop its legislative system, improve access to justice, achieve equality and protect freedom of expression and other rights.

Cooperating with and profiting from international mechanisms

23. Qatar entered into a technical cooperation agreement with ILO for the period 2018–2020, under which the ILO was to provide technical advice in vital areas such as the

improvement of the wage protection system, the inspection system and occupational health and safety; the implementation of a contractual arrangement to replace the *kafala* system; and the streamlining of procedures for the employment of workers.

24. The national health strategy 2018–2022, which is part of the Qatar National Vision 2030, defines the goals the State intends to accomplish in the health sector. These include improving community health by building and developing an integrated health-care system that provides high-quality prevention and treatment services, administered according to the best international standards, and encouraging high-level research aimed at improving the effectiveness and quality of health care. The strategy also aims to ensure that facilities are accessible to the entire population as shown below.



Legislation guaranteeing the right to health care for all persons in the country

- Act No. 7 of 1996 regulating medical treatment and health services in Qatar includes important provisions aimed at ensuring the delivery of health-care services to all citizens, residents and visitors. In particular, article 4 of the Act guarantees that no fees or charges may be levied for emergency services, hospitalization for accidents, preventive maternal and child health-care services, preventive health-care services for school students and communicable disease and immunization services.
- One of the main objectives of Act No. 7 of 2013 concerning social health insurance is to provide patients with the opportunity to choose the most suitable service provider for them, while at the same time ensuring a continuous improvement in the quality of patient services and so achieving the best health outcomes for the population as a whole. According to the Act, social health insurance is compulsory and covers the entire population – Qataris and non-Qataris – with a package of preventive, curative and rehabilitation services. Article 2 of the Act states: “Social health insurance is mandatory as a way of ensuring, in accordance with the present Act and its implementing regulations, the provision of basic health-care services to all Qatari citizens, citizens of countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), residents and visitors.”
- One of the most significant provisions of the Charter of Patients’ Rights and Duties, adopted by the Ministry of Health, is that patients have the right to obtain health care

in a manner that preserves and is respectful of their dignity, regardless of their age, sex, religion or culture.

Right to education

25. Endowment schools have been opened for children who, due to their economic conditions, are unable to enrol in education. Two such schools have been opened – one applying the British curriculum and the other the national curriculum – under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and of the Education Above All Foundation. A total of 2,187 students have enrolled in the two schools. There are also schools and centres that provide literacy classes and adult education.

26. According to statistics from 2021, non-Qataris account for 66 per cent of students enrolled in schools in the State of Qatar: 222,802 non-Qatari students as compared to 112,786 Qatari students.

27. Support provided by Qatar in this area even extends abroad thanks to the “Educate a Child” programme which reaches out to 10 million children around the globe who have been unable to enrol in school. The programme provides high-quality and innovative primary education and seeks to improve and protect the educational environment in places affected by armed conflict and insecurity. In addition to this, there are the “Fakhoora” programme and the “Reach Out to Asia” programme, which are run in cooperation and partnership with international organizations such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

28. On the margins of meetings of the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2018, Qatar pledged to provide quality education to 1 million girls by 2021.

- A number of agreements have recently been concluded between, on one side, the Qatar Fund for Development and the Education Above All Foundation and, on the other side, a number of States. The agreements concern support for education in the countries concerned, including support for Syrian refugees.

(a) The right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice

29. Article 135 of the Constitution stipulates that “the right of legal recourse is guaranteed for all persons”, while article 46 states that all individuals have the right to address themselves to the public authorities. The State is continuing its efforts to promote the right to legal recourse and to pursue means of redress for all persons equally and without discrimination, particularly migrant workers, who constitute a significant segment of the population of Qatar.

30. The State has continued to take steps to develop and improve the operation of the complaints mechanisms available to migrant workers, including domestic workers. This helps to ensure that workers have prompt and effective means at their disposal wherewith to access justice and obtain their financial rights and entitlements, thanks also to the committees to settle labour disputes established under Act No. 13 of 2017. The committees are competent to adjudicate all disputes arising from the provisions of the law or the contract of employment (or the contract of employment of domestic workers).

31. Action has been taken to consolidate the complaints mechanism of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, as explained in greater detail in paragraph 61, below.

32. In this connection, attention is drawn to information provided in the reply to the observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination regarding workers’ access to means of legal redress and to the settlement of labour-related complaints including those of domestic workers (observations 4 and 6).

Economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the following

(i) Right to work

33. Reference can be made in this connection to new legislation and new procedures that have recently been issued and that were discussed in detail in replies to the Committee's observations (the abolition of exit permits, the facilitation of worker mobility within the labour market, the adoption of a non-discriminatory minimum wage for workers and domestic workers, improvements in the wage protection system, committees to settle labour disputes, the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund, joint labour committees and policies regulating inspections and occupational health and safety).

(ii) Right to form and join trade unions

34. The Minister for Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs issued Decree No. 21 of 2019 regulating conditions and procedures for electing workers' representatives to joint committees. By forming such committees, Qatar is giving a voice to workers in a way that puts it ahead of many other countries in the region, particularly as the committees are formed through direct ballot. Up to now, a joint committee has been formed in 25 enterprises.

35. Reference is made to information contained in the paragraph about giving a voice to workers, in the replies to the observations and recommendations of the Committee (reply to recommendation 6).

(iii) Right to housing

36. National legislation includes guarantees of adequate accommodation for migrant workers, while recent amendments to the Labour Code envisage penalties for persons who violate the health and safety conditions for workers' accommodation as set forth in Ministerial Decree No. 18 of 2014. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has carried out a series of meticulous inspection campaigns to monitor compliance with those conditions. Moreover, both Act No. 17 of 2020 regarding a minimum wage and Decree No. 25 of 2020 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs set a minimum of 500 Qatari riyals (QR) for the monthly accommodation allowance in cases where employers do not provide adequate accommodation for their workers.

Reference is also made to the replies to the Committee's observations and recommendations in this regard (recommendation 9).

Article 6

37. In addition to information concerning this article provided in paragraphs 84 and 85 of the previous report, the State wishes to draw attention to the following:

- Under article 68 of the Constitution, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid have force of law after they have been ratified and published in the Official Gazette, meaning that the courts are obliged to apply the provisions of those two instruments.

Right of recourse to national courts

38. The judicial system of the State guarantees protection for victims of racial discrimination.

39. The existence and form of the judiciary are enshrined in the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar according to which the judiciary alone is responsible for the administration of justice, independently from other authorities. The judicial mandate lies exclusively with the judiciary, and it exercises that mandate for the sake of achieving justice in society and guaranteeing rights and freedoms. Governance in the country rests upon the

rule of law, and the law defines which authority is responsible for settling administrative disputes and describes the structure and operation of that authority (art. 138). The law also regulates how jurisdictional disputes and conflicting judgments are to be resolved (art. 139). All citizens and residents have the right of recourse to the courts, which have a general mandate to examine criminal, civil and commercial cases, family and inheritance disputes, administrative disputes and all other disputes with the exception of matters relating to sovereignty and nationality. The judiciary is independent and is embodied in courts of different kinds and degrees (art. 130). The law also identifies which judicial body is responsible for deciding on questions relating to the constitutionality of laws and regulations; it describes the functions of that body, its channels of appeal, the relevant procedures to be followed and the effects of a ruling of unconstitutionality (art. 140). Judges are independent. They are subject to no authority other than the law, and no one may interfere in cases or in the course of justice (art. 131). The Supreme Council of the Judiciary oversees the proper functioning of the courts and their auxiliary organs and the independence of the judiciary (art. 137).

40. The Supreme Council of the Judiciary upholds article 6 via Judicial Authority Act No. 10 of 2003, article 15 of which clearly states: “Court hearings are to be held in public unless – according to the law, by a decision of the court or at the request of one of the parties – they are held in camera, to preserve public order and public morals or to safeguard the sanctity of the family.”

Article 7

41. All Qatari legislation is free of discrimination, and the Criminal Code (Act No. 11 of 2004) as amended by Act No. 2 of 2020 criminalizes all actions that could undermine the cohesion of society. Article 2 of the Act stipulates: “The following article is to be added to the Criminal Code: ... Article 136 bis: Anyone who broadcasts, publishes or republishes false or tendentious statements or news, or seditious propaganda, at home or abroad, with the intention of damaging national interests, enflaming public opinion or harming the social order or the public order of the State is liable to a term of imprisonment of up to 5 years and/or a fine of up to QR 100,000.”

Education

(i) Legislation

The Minister of Education and Higher Education issued Decree No. 23 of 2014 to amend article 7 (on student absence) of the behavioural assessment policy for school students. The Decree came as part of efforts by the Ministry to provide opportunities for basic education to the different groups of society, both male and female, without discrimination.

- The behavioural assessment policy includes preventive and disciplinary measures to halt the spread of racial discrimination (tribal extremism) and to instil educational and religious values in students through lectures and seminars, deepening their sense of harmony, mutual respect and positive interaction.
- The purpose of the policy is to promote behavioural discipline among students, to provide them with effective learning opportunities away from any negative influences and to develop inter-student and student-teacher relations as well as relations with the school administration. The policy is applicable to all learners without discrimination on grounds of sex, race, religion, etc.

(ii) Measures to promote human rights and prevent discrimination of all forms in the field of education

(a) The education system is continuously being updated and extended to cover the educational needs of new generations, both Qataris and residents, male and female. This takes place thanks to an expansion in the construction of State-run schools and support for private schools, as well as support for community schools which provide education to persons

resident in the State of Qatar using the curriculum, language, culture and educational programmes of their own country.

(b) Practical human rights guides have been drafted, including a guide to ethics education, a guide to human rights education at different levels of schooling and a teacher's guide to human rights education.

(c) A general framework has been developed for education in family culture and ethics; it aims to promote the self-development and social development of students and to enable them to develop their skills, attitudes, values and personality traits and prepare them to face the challenges and responsibilities that will arise in their relationships with others.

(d) A set of mechanisms is being developed to strengthen relations within the educational environment, such as policies related to advisory councils for students, teachers, administrators and parents, the intention being to prioritize their role in spreading a culture of human rights.

(e) The involvement of civil society groups in human rights education is being expanded thanks to joint committees, memorandums of understanding, training workshops, lectures, student associations and open days.

(f) A memorandum of cooperation between the National Human Rights Committee and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education was signed in 2019. The memorandum, which comes in the context of the National Human Rights Committee's mandate to propagate and promote human rights culture in theory and in practice, is an expression of the commitment of both sides to disseminating human rights principles by making them part of educational curricula. The memorandum envisages field studies and evaluations of needs with a view to integrating human rights values and principles into all stages of the educational process. It also includes provision for training courses and workshops for education officials, teaching staff and personnel responsible for drafting the curriculum.

III. Follow-up on the observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Recommendation 1

(i) Enjoyment of economic rights

Right to work

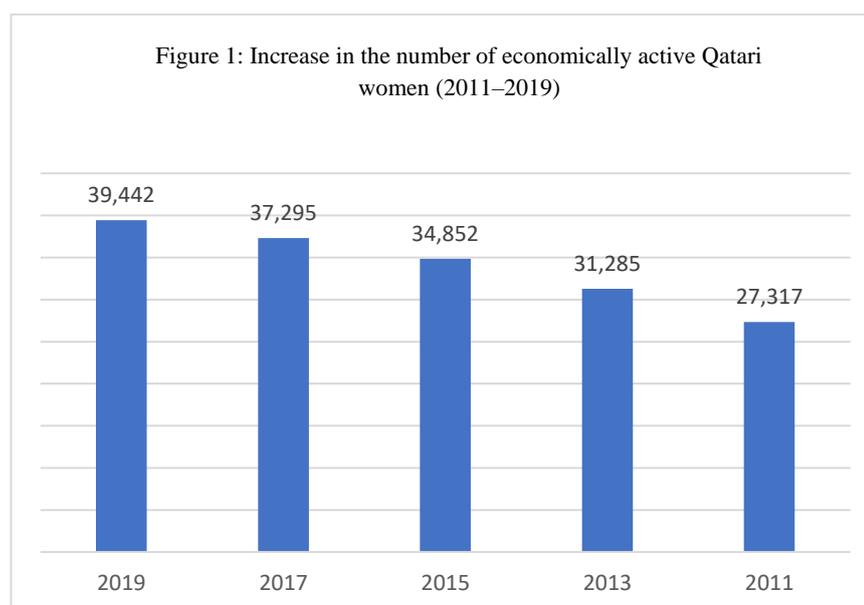
42. Policies affecting the Qatari labour market have undergone tangible developments over the past five years. These include the issuance of Act No. 15 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Human Resources Act, and its implementing regulations, and Act No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers. In addition, amendments have been made to the Labour Code and regulatory measures introduced to the labour market, one of the most significant outcomes being the replacement of the *kafala* system with a work contract that envisages certain rights for workers, including the freedom to leave the country and to move from one job to another. The latest changes also envisage a non-discriminatory minimum wage for workers, including domestic employees, backed by a wage protection system. Another significant development has been the provision of a greater degree of protection to workers thanks to vocational health and safety measures, the establishment of committees to settle labour disputes and the creation of the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund. The aims of the technical cooperation agreement between Qatar and ILO for the period 2018–2020 included: (1) Improving national mechanisms for dealing with workers' complaints; (2) Securing ILO support for workers submitting complaints through national mechanisms thanks to follow-up to ensure fair and prompt handling and non-retaliation; (3) Establishing joint labour committees; (4) Making migrant workers aware of their rights and obligations, particularly vis-à-vis the submission of complaints, the required documentation and related procedural matters; (5) Improving legislation and the performance of worker's committees; (6) Running a national awareness-

raising campaign on labour rights to build capacity among workers, employers and government officials.

43. The latest employment statistics point to an availability of decent and productive work for everyone and an absence of involuntary unemployment and structural unemployment. The overall unemployment rate in the period 2016–2019 was 0.1 per cent; in other words, the labour market in Qatar is approaching a condition of full employment. In fact, the country's unemployment rate is the lowest in the world, compared to a global average of 5.4 per cent and a European Union average of 6.5 per cent, in 2020. The unemployment rate among males remained at 0.1 per cent in 2016 and in 2019, while the unemployment rate among females fell significantly over the same period, from 0.7 per cent in 2016 to 0.4 per cent in 2019. Although the female unemployment rate surpasses the male unemployment rate, the gap between them is lower than in the rest of the world where unemployed women typically number 15 per cent more than unemployed men. As for unemployment by age group, it is noticeably higher among the young (15 to 24 years) then decreases with age. Nonetheless, youth unemployment also underwent a significant decline from 0.5 per cent in 2016 to 0.3 per cent in 2019. This is one of the lowest unemployment rates, compared to 17.6 per cent in countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 27.4 per cent in the United States of America and 11.4 per cent in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Chart 1

Increase in the number of economically active Qatari women (2011–2019)



Source: Planning and Statistics Authority, annual sample survey of the labour force.

Table 1

Unemployment rate among persons aged 15 and over according to sex, age group and educational attainments (2016–2019)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2018
Men	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Women	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.4
Total	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
15 to 24 years	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3
25 to 34 years	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
35 to 44 years	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
45 to 54 years	0	0	0	0

Category	2016	2017	2018	2018
55 to 64 years	0	0	0	0
65 years and above	0	0	0	0

44. According to the Qatar 2020 Population Report, the number of economically active Qatari women stood at 39,442 in 2019, up from 27,317 in 2011. This represents an overall increase of 12,125 over eight years or an additional 1,516 women per year. The result of this has been an expansion in the involvement of Qatari women in the labour force, where they came to represent 37 per cent of the total in 2019, up from 34 per cent in 2011.

45. Qatar is moving towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The economic growth witnessed by the country and the requirements for sustaining that growth have had a positive effect on the economic participation rate of the population over recent years. Table 1 shows that the economic participation rate in 2019 reached 88.2 per cent of the population as a whole (persons aged 15 and over). Qatar has also witnessed an increase in the female economic participation rate in recent years, and over half of women aged 15 years and over were involved in the labour market in 2019. The male economic participation reached 96.3 per cent of all males aged 15 and over in 2019. In recent years, an economic participation gender gap has persisted, and the female economic participation rate stood at 60.6 per cent of the male participation rate. The persistence of the gender gap can be attributed to the high proportion of males in the total population, which is related to a large influx of mostly male migrant workers to keep pace with the demands of rapid development and the implementation of large-scale development projects. As for Qatari nationals, the economic participation rate is higher for males than for females, and Qatari male and female participation rates stood at 67.9 per cent and 37.6 per cent, respectively, in 2019; although Qatar has witnessed a reduction in the economic participation gender gap, that gap has persisted, and the female participation rate stood at 55.4 per cent of the male participation rate. The gap can be attributed to the fact that a large proportion of economically inactive Qatari women are housewives.

Table 2

Economic participation rates (persons aged 15 and above) disaggregated by sex and nationality

Year	Qataris				Foreigners			
	Female	Male	Total	Gender equality indicator	Female	Male	Total	Gender equality indicator
2016	36.9	68.5	52.4	53.9	59.4	96.4	89.1	61.6
2017	36.7	68.2	52.2	53.7	58.5	96.1	88.4	60.9
2018	37.1	68.1	52.2	54.5	58.5	96.0	88.3	60.9
2019	37.6	67.9	52.4	55.4	58.2	96.0	88.2	60.6

Source: Planning and Statistics Authority, male/female statistics in Qatar.

46. National legislation enacted in recent years has focused on measures to promote women's rights, eliminate discrimination between women and men, and lay the foundations for gender equality in all spheres. In prescribing rights and determining obligations, domestic laws employ generic terms and make no distinction between men and women. This also applies to women's legal capacity to enter into contracts and to administer their own assets and property (arts. 49 and 50 of the Civil Code promulgated by Act No. 22 of 2004). Legislators have also acted to ensure that a husband cannot interfere with his wife's private assets (art. 57 of the Family Code promulgated by Act No. 22 of 2006). Gender equality is also upheld in all legislation relating to commercial and economic activities (art. 17 of the Commercial Code promulgated by Act No. 27 of 2006) and in the Companies Act No. 11 of 2015. In addition to this, banks grant loans to their customers without discrimination, according to directives issued by Qatar Central Bank.

Right to form and join trade unions

47. Section XII of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004), which deals with “Labour organizations”, and section XIII, entitled “Joint committees, collective bargaining and joint agreements”, describe the mechanisms, conditions and regulations for freedom of association and collective bargaining. Moreover, during the 331st session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, held in Geneva, Qatar and ILO signed a technical cooperation agreement for 2018–2020 which envisaged a number of ways in which workers could be given a voice and, in fact, a number of achievements have been made in that connection:

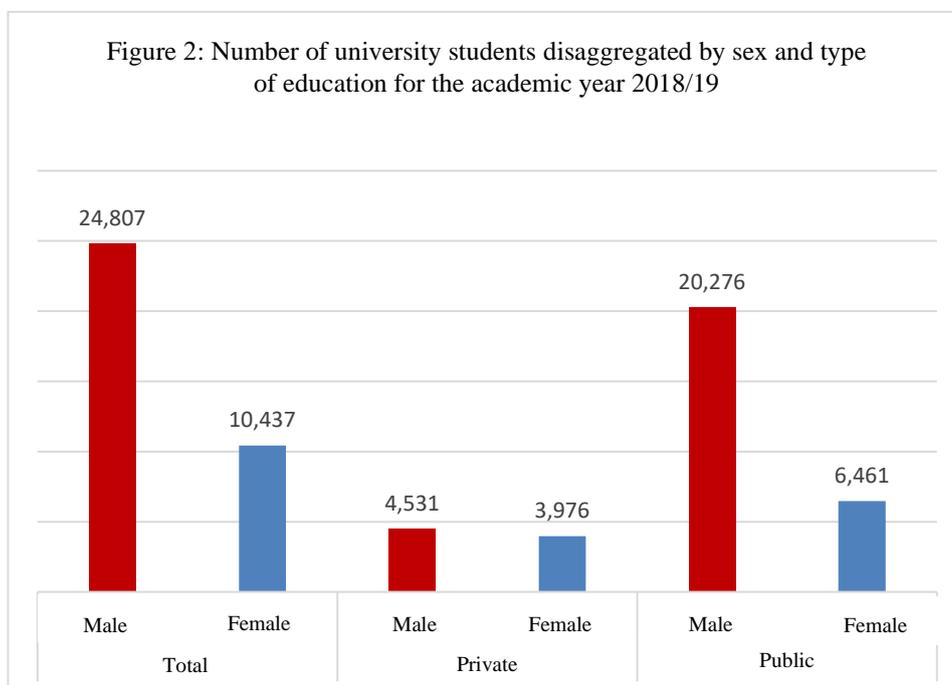
- Improving national mechanisms for dealing with workers’ complaints;
- Securing ILO support for workers submitting complaints through the national mechanism thanks to follow-up to ensure fair and prompt handling and non-retaliation;
- Establishing joint labour committees;
- Making migrant workers aware of their rights and obligations, particularly vis-à-vis the submission of complaints, the required documentation and related procedural matters;
- Improving legislation and the performance of worker’s committees;
- Running a national awareness-raising campaign on labour rights to build capacity among workers, employers and government officials.

(ii) Enjoyment of social rights

Right to education and training

Chart 2

Number of university students disaggregated by sex and type of education for the academic year 2018/19



48. The chart shows that Qatar has been able to make significant progress towards bridging the qualitative gap between males and females in the field of education, and that the national system of education has effectively provided equal opportunities to males and females, without discrimination.

Right to health services

49. All segments of the population in Qatar are able to benefit from health-care services. Basic health services are available to the entire population, with an accessibility indicator of 100 per cent. This is due to the fact that the State has expanded its building of primary health-care centres throughout the country and is constructing specialized hospitals that provide services and facilities to all citizens and residents, without discrimination. In addition to this, everyone in Qatar – citizens and residents alike – can obtain basic medicines at affordable prices, thanks also to a large degree of State subsidization for non-Qataris. Vaccines are available for all persons, delivered free of charge by the State via its own health centres.

50. The Government has rolled out two strategies for the development of the health sector that are part, respectively, of the first national development strategy 2011–2016 and the second national development strategy 2018–2022. The purpose of the strategies is to build an integrated health-care system that delivers high-quality services via public and private health-care institutions under an overarching national health policy that covers all aspects of preventive and curative care and that takes account of both physical and mental health, as described in paragraph 25 above.

Right to social security

51. One of the purposes of the second national development strategy of Qatar 2018–2022 is to finalize “an effective system of social protection for all Qataris, one that upholds their civil rights, prizes their effective participation in the development of society and ensures that they have sufficient income to maintain their health and dignity”. The State of Qatar has managed to establish a robust system of social protection, with the active participation of civil society organizations and the private sector. The system covers social security, pensions, social insurance and housing. Table 3 below shows how the total number of beneficiaries of social security programmes – from different social strata and of both sexes – increased by 43 per cent between 2016 and 2020. It is noteworthy that the number of female beneficiaries of social protection programmes more than doubled with respect to males over the period in question. Beneficiary groups include widows, divorced women, older persons, persons with disabilities, persons incapable of working, families in need, orphans and other vulnerable groups in society.

Table 3
Beneficiaries of social security disaggregated by type of assistance and gender, 2015–2018

Year & sex Type of assistance	2016		2017		2018*		2019*		2020*	
	Males	Females								
Widows	-	445	-	405	0	266	0	263	0	253
Divorced women	-	1 192	-	1 294	0	1 124	0	1 109	0	1 133
Needy families	860	55	872	39	860	28	830	41	822	44
Persons with disabilities	639	502	731	613	1 087	857	1 174	887	1 200	900
Orphans	752	889	786	1 004	852	1 054	833	1 032	799	990
Persons incapable of working	480	2 855	610	3 151	750	3 131	786	3 203	814	1 975
Older persons	305	1 553	354	1 828	451	2 984	461	3 030	464	3 042
Families of prison inmates	23	20	24	53	23	43	28	49	27	40
Abandoned women	-	4	-	3	0	3	0	3	0	4
Families of missing persons	0	2	0	1	3	2	4	3	1	1
Home help	1 734	3 072	2 141	3 854	2 586	5 048	2 659	5 125	2 421	4 720

Year & sex	2016		2017		2018*		2019*		2020*	
	Males	Females								
Persons born to unknown parents	42	51	38	43	39	42	46	49	39	39
Total	4 835	10 640	5 556	12 288	6 651	14 582	6 822	14 799	6 587	13 141

Right to housing

52. The State of Qatar has issued a body of legislation and decrees to ensure that all citizens and residents can exercise their right to adequate housing, which is a fundamental and universal human right. One relevant piece of legislation in that regard is the Constitution, which upholds the right to property. In chapter II of the Constitution – which focuses on the fundamental components of society – article 27 states that private property is to be protected that and no one may be deprived of their property except in accordance with the law. The human right to privacy in one’s own home is enshrined in article 37 of the Constitution while, for its part, article 28 stipulates that the State is to achieve prosperity for citizens and to raise their standard of living. To that end, the Government has enacted a body of legislation and decrees aimed at supporting citizens in the enjoyment of their right to adequate housing.

53. The State addresses housing-related matters via legislation, policies, national development strategies and comprehensive urban planning. To this end, it first issued Act No. 1 of 1964 regarding the system of social housing, then Decree No. 78 of 1977 regarding accommodation for senior State functionaries. This was followed by successive amendments to other pieces of legislation. In its turn, Housing Act No. 2 of 2007 was issued with the aim of contributing to the provision of adequate housing for citizens. Under it, beneficiaries are given a cash sum with which to buy a plot of land to build a house, or the plot of land is allocated to them, or they are provided with a housing loan on favourable terms repayable over 30 years. The Act also envisages the possibility of purchasing or renting a housing unit directly. Persons benefiting from this system can continue to receive the housing bonus disbursed to State officials. Beneficiaries of the housing system include Qatari women married to non-Qatari men, divorced women, widows and unmarried Qatari citizens, as well as persons belonging to categories in particular need of social assistance such as persons with disabilities, orphans and persons incapable of work. The national framework of the Qatar National Master Plan 2032 includes goals to promote the effective attainment of adequate housing for all persons. It also envisages model buildings and ideal population densities with a view to creating a broad range of housing types, including low-cost and universally affordable housing, and the establishment of distinct residential neighbourhoods that are in harmony with the cultural identity and preferred lifestyle of Qataris.

54. As concerns efforts to promote the right to housing of workers who are subject to the Labour Code, Act No. 17 of 2020 regarding a minimum wage for workers and domestic workers also envisages the right of workers to adequate housing. Ministerial Decree No. 25 of 2020 sets a minimum of QR 500 for the monthly accommodation allowance in cases where employers do not provide adequate accommodation for their workers, while the conditions for what constitutes adequate housing for migrant workers are set forth in Ministerial Decree No. 18 of 2014.

55. Qatar has been actively engaged in building a number of integrated residential complexes and special workers’ cities to ensure that migrant workers are able to live in a suitable environment where all their needs are met and where full health, social and recreational services are available. These include Asian Town, Barwa City and Asmakh City. In addition, a “workers’ city” has recently been opened, the largest housing area for workers in Qatar or the Arab Gulf region. It meets the most modern global specifications and standards and is part of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

(iii) Enjoyment of cultural rights

56. The Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to make Qatar a luminous and radiant cultural hub by capitalizing on the cultural diversity of its inhabitants. Public spaces dedicated to

cultural and sporting activities are accessible to all, without discrimination. As concerns the cultural sector, the first national development strategy of Qatar 2011–2017 sought “to encourage intercultural understanding, to safeguard and develop Qatari cultural heritage while preserving national identity, to disseminate cultural knowledge among the young, to attract and nurture high-quality talent so as to enrich and stimulate the culture sector, to arouse greater interest in culture as a whole and to promote the image of Qatar as a vital cultural destination” (cultural strategy 2011–2016). Alongside these initiatives, institutions have been created to help society interact with incoming cultures while preserving its own identity and culture as a pole of civilization that seeks to preserve, disseminate and consolidate civilized community values while also studying and researching those values and developing programmes to uphold them in society.

57. The second national development strategy of Qatar 2018–2022 envisions programmes and projects for the cultural sector that aim to promote community involvement in cultural and sporting events while also motivating young people to participate in public life. This is being achieved via a package of awareness-raising and educational initiatives that seek to encourage the public at large to take part in cultural and sporting activities. The objective of the strategy is, by the end of 2022, to have developed a plan to consolidate public knowledge of and interaction with incoming cultures.

Recommendation 2

58. Article 1 of the Convention uses the term “people” in an absolute sense to mean that the principle of non-discrimination is applicable to all components of society, without distinction between citizens and residents or between males and females. And in fact, article 18 of the Constitution makes it plain that equality is one of the bulwarks of society, while equality of opportunity is enshrined in article 19. These constitutional principles are reflected in the national laws that regulate civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. If any of those laws envisage exceptions, restrictions or distinctions between citizens and non-citizens those differences are linked to nationality, which is an objective standard and does not amount to racial discrimination, as set forth in article 1 (3) of the Convention, which states that nothing in the Convention may be interpreted as affecting in any way the legal provisions of States parties concerning nationality, citizenship or naturalization.

Recommendation 3

59. The budget of the National Human Rights Committee improved in 2019 with respect to the previous two years, although it was then reduced during 2020 and 2021 due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The following table shows the rate of reduction of the budget of the National Human Rights Committee over five years; the reduction affected specialized human resources requirements as well as a number of the National Committee’s activities.

<i>Consequences of budget reductions</i>	<i>Percentage reduction with respect to required budget</i>	
Inability to meet effective needs for specialized human resources and cancellation of certain activities, notably training courses for law enforcement personnel; also,	12.08%	2016
delay in rolling out other activities linked to memorandums of understanding the National Committee	24.60%	2017
had signed with local civil society organizations and with regional and international human rights bodies.	17.12%	2018
	16.53%	2019
	32.35%	2020
	39.48%	2021

Recommendation 4

Raising awareness about values of tolerance, respect for others and combating racial discrimination is an important part of the Human Rights Department’s operational framework (vis-à-vis the dissemination of a human rights culture). It is also part of the efforts made by the Ministry of the Interior to reach out to different communities, which is done by police

officers who exercise their functions to maintain public security and order in a multi-ethnic and multicultural community environment.

See recommendation 4 in the annexes which gives details about the efforts made by the Ministry of the Interior and the National Human Rights Committee.

(i) Disseminating a human rights culture

- The Ministry of the Interior ran awareness-raising activities via the media and its own website for National Human Rights Day, on 11 November 2020, and for Arab Human Rights Day, on 16 March 2021.
- As part of training programmes at the Police Academy and of training for personnel of the Passport Department, 45 public lectures were delivered by staff of the Human Rights Department on the subject of human rights in security work.

Academic forums

- A workshop on the Arab Charter on Human Rights was held by the National Human Rights Committee to mark Arab Human Rights Day in March 2019, and the Ministry of the Interior participated with a working paper on “Government engagement with the Arab Charter on Human Rights”. The event took place in the presence of some 25 officers from the Ministry of the Interior, members of the Committee and representatives from governmental and non-governmental bodies. The workshop examined the State’s response to the provisions of the Charter and considered the recommendation of the Charter monitoring committee to implement the principle of non-discrimination and promote values of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity.
- In cooperation with the National Human Rights Committee, the Ministry of the Interior organized a workshop on national human rights protection mechanisms to coincide with National Human Rights Day on 11 November 2019. The event took place in the presence of 29 officers from the Ministry and a wide range of other persons including members of the Committee and representatives from the relevant State authorities. The workshop touched on the subject of universal equality (of citizens and residents) in the enjoyment of security, legal protection and the right of recourse to independent, non-governmental judicial redress mechanisms, without discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion or any other factor.
- For the occasion of Arab Human Rights Day and International Women’s Day in March 2021, the Ministry of the Interior held a virtual forum for women concerning their role in national preventive efforts against the COVID-19 pandemic. The workshop, attended by 106 participants, considered the outcomes of the previous workshop as well as the gender-related psychosocial and familial challenges arising from the pandemic.
- The Ministry of the Interior took part in a virtual workshop held by the National Human Rights Committee on 24 December 2020 with a working paper on “The role of law enforcement officials in monitoring preventive measures and respecting human rights”. The workshop served to explain how the State acted to:
 - Ensure that all inhabitants of the State of Qatar (citizens and residents) have access to preventive and curative health services during the COVID-19 pandemic, without discrimination;
 - Restrict the movement and gathering of persons and ensure that they abide by all protection-related directives, lockdowns, etc. in order to tackle the pandemic while respecting human rights.

(ii) Communication and contact with communities

- The Human Rights Department of the Ministry of the Interior has met with representatives of the Indian community to identify their requirements vis-à-vis their interaction with the Ministry and its departments and to find ways to improve communication with the community.

- A meeting with a delegation from the Indian Embassy took place to discuss the needs of Indian workers.
- A briefing has been held with the Indian Cultural Centre to discuss the prospects of cooperation and to find ways to maintain communication between the two sides.
- There has been outreach and communication with communities within the framework of a community awareness programme that is being run by the Public Relations Department in cooperation with the Human Rights Department, the Passport Department, the Traffic Department, Civil Defence, etc.
- The programme is part of efforts to achieve the objectives of the Community Outreach Office, which is part of the structure of the Ministry of the Interior. Those objectives consist in:
 - Establishing community partnership to maintain security, wherein communities and migrants in general contribute to preventing crime by assisting law enforcement and the criminal justice mechanism to detect and control crime;
 - Making communities aware of the provisions of law and legislation relevant to the work of the Ministry of the Interior, and their rights and obligations thereunder;
 - Respecting the cultural specificity of communities and their freedom of religion and belief while requiring them to take into account the specificity of the Qatari social environment and its value system;
 - Reaffirming the presence of communities in public life and their role in development, thereby helping to establish a pluralistic and secure community environment free from tensions, manifestations of hatred, extremism or racial discrimination and in conformity with the values and principles of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

* The annex includes an exposition of the most important events in which the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of the Interior participated as part of the community awareness programme.

60. Labour dispute-resolution committees: Act No. 13 of 2017 includes provision for the creation of one or more labour dispute-resolution committees to rule, within a time limit of three weeks, on disputes arising from the provisions of the Labour Code, contracts of employment or domestic workers' contracts of employment. If mediation by the competent department in the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs does not lead to an amicable settlement, disputes are referred by that department to the dispute-resolution committee, and the committee's decisions have the power of a writ of enforcement, in line with the following measures:

- The complaint is to be submitted directly by the worker or domestic worker, or by their embassy, to the competent department of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs using the special form for that purpose. The worker is to fill in the form with the required information, to sign it, then to deliver it to the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs. The complaint is then registered electronically and representatives of the companies concerned are summoned by email, with an official copy of the summons also being consigned to the migrant worker who filed the complaint;
- Using the services of a ministerial interpreter, the official responsible for seeking a settlement provides legal advice to the worker or the domestic worker concerned, to which end, the Ministry is required to have a number of interpreters sufficient to cover all the languages spoken by migrant workers. Interpreters are also on hand in dispute resolution committees. No fees are to be associated with this operation, and government offices are to remain open to workers and to committees of workers during afternoons;

- If they so desire, the worker or the domestic worker may – at any stage of the complaint – seek a legal opinion from a legal expert of the Public Relations Department, during official opening hours and without having to book an appointment in advance;
- Workers' complaints can also be submitted via electronic devices, and the Department continues to distribute such devices and to train workers in how to use them. The devices are available in 11 languages. In addition to this, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs is seeking to enable workers and domestic workers to submit and monitor their complaints online via the Ministry's own website, using the "Amerni" app. This helps workers and domestic workers who cannot come to the Ministry in person to make their complaints while, at the same time, ensuring full confidentiality.

61. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has created a section to receive and settle complaints from domestic workers. The Ministry has also set up a new section to review complaints that are referred to the courts, in order to ensure that all pending cases are duly addressed. In addition to this, an office for the enforcement of rulings handed down by the labour dispute-resolution committees has been opened at the headquarters of the Ministry. Its purpose is to facilitate and streamline workers' interactions with the committees and ensure that rulings are promptly enforced, including rulings to seize property and assets of companies against whom rulings have been issued. These decisions are accessible online or via the websites of the relevant government offices. In order to facilitate workers' exercise of their rights and to speed up judicial proceedings, the Ministry is currently seeking to increase the number of labour dispute-resolution committees in order to be able to deal with an increase in the number of cases. In addition, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs is constantly assessing and evaluating labour complaint mechanisms, settlement processes and labour dispute-resolution committees.

62. Workers and domestic workers can also file complaints directly with the National Human Rights Committee.

63. The National Human Rights Committee runs activities and campaigns to raise awareness about the rights enshrined in the Convention. It also receives complaints related to racial discrimination, which it seeks to settle in cooperation with the competent authorities. For example, the Committee received a complaint regarding a refusal to enrol non-Qatari children with hearing disabilities in the kindergarten and preschool stages of the Audio Education Complex (boys and girls), as well as a complaint concerning a refusal to enrol non-Qatari children with disabilities in kindergartens for children with disabilities (Circular No. 5 of 2018 concerning the registration of new students in need of additional educational support in State-run schools in the academic year 2018/19).

64. In the academic year 2018/19, the National Human Rights Committee received nine complaints concerning the suspension of certain basic services for non-Qatari students with disabilities in integrated schools run by the Ministry, notably the lack of transportation, which was a fully paid service that the Ministry had provided in previous years. This situation was deemed to discriminate against non-Qatari students with disabilities and to be inconsistent with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both of which have been ratified by the State of Qatar, including article 3 of the latter Convention on general principles, article 7 on children with disabilities, article 9 on accessibility and article 24 on education. The National Human Rights Committee drew these violations to the attention of the competent authorities on 24 December 2018. To date, no reply has been received.

Recommendation 5

65. Reference was made to this matter in paragraph 15 above, which concerns article 4.

Procedural and institutional measures relevant to the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination:

(a) The Family Affairs Department at the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has been reorganized and the Qatar Foundation for Social Action has been restructured as a private institution that serves the public interest. The Foundation runs a number of affiliated bodies, notably the Social Rehabilitation Centre, the Family Counselling Centre, the Orphan Welfare Centre, the Centre for Empowerment and Care of Older Persons, the Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities, the Social Development Centre and the “Best Buddies” Foundation for Persons with Disabilities. In addition to these, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking has been established and has developed a national anti-trafficking strategy.

66. Freedom of thought, belief and religion is enshrined in article 50 of the Constitution. Moreover, freedom of worship is guaranteed to all by law, subject to the need to protect public order and public morals.

67. Inhabitants of Qatar are able to exercise their religious freedom, and churches exist for the different Christian denominations. The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue plays an important role in disseminating a culture of dialogue, peaceful coexistence and acceptance of others.

68. Article 256 of the Criminal Code (Act No. 11 of 2004) criminalizes insults against the revealed religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. This extends to include insults against the Divine Being or the Prophets as well as acts of vandalism or desecration of places of religious worship.

Recommendation 6

69. Over recent years, Qatar has made comprehensive amendments to its legislation with a view to creating a modern and dynamic labour market, with fair recruitment policies and decent work for all. Its efforts in that connection are part of a framework that is intended to develop legislative structures via measures that are in accordance with the treaties Qatar has ratified and that respond to the pledges the State made to develop its laws and bring them into line with international labour standards. In fact, Qatar has made important progress in this field over a short period of time. On 30 August 2020, Qatar introduced a number of fundamental changes intended to grant migrant workers mobility within the labour market, notably by eliminating the requirement of a “no objection” to a change of employment on the part of a migrant worker’s employer. Another change was that of fixing a non-discriminatory minimum wage for workers and domestic workers, which covers all categories of workers in all sectors. It should be noted that, by abolishing the exit permit, Qatar had already recognized the right of migrant workers of all categories to leave the country temporarily or definitively. It follows from this that the *kafala* system has been permanently dismantled and abolished, chiefly as a consequence of the measures detailed below.

(i) Facilitating the movement of workers to another employer

- The implementing regulations of Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers were amended under Decree No. 51 of 2020 of the Minister of the Interior, dated 14 September 2020. Article 65 of the amended regulations stipulates: “A change of employer on the part of a migrant worker is to take place in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.”
- The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has adopted a new model employment contract for domestic workers. The new contract includes clear provisions regarding termination of employment under which domestic workers are able to terminate a contract of employment at any time, providing they respect the period of notice. This enables domestic workers to move around on the local labour market just like any other worker, under the aforementioned legislative amendments. It should be noted, moreover, that the Government provides full support to domestic workers who wish to change employment in cases of abuse or discrimination by an employer, in line with the Convention.

(ii) Non-discriminatory minimum wage for domestic workers

- Qatar has introduced a non-discriminatory minimum wage under Act No. 17 of 2020 regarding a minimum wage for workers and domestic workers. The Act is applicable to all categories of workers without discrimination, irrespective of their nationality or the sector in which they work, including domestic workers. The Act includes provision for the formation of a minimum-wage committee, which was brought into being under Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 33 of 2020, and which has the task of reviewing the minimum wage.
- The Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs issued Decree No. 25 of 2020, which set the minimum monthly wage for workers and domestic workers at QR 1,000. Moreover, in cases where employers do not provide adequate accommodation or food for their workers, the Decree envisages a minimum monthly accommodation allowance of QR 500 and a minimum monthly food allowance of QR 300. The minimum wage came into effect in March 2021.

(iii) Abolition of exit permits

- Act No. 13 of 2018 abolished exit permits for migrant workers who are subject to the provisions of the Labour Code. For its part, Decree No. 95 of 2019 of the Minister of the Interior removed the need for workers in the following areas to acquire authorization before leaving the country: ministries and other government bodies, public entities and institutions, oil and gas and related industries, shipping, agriculture, animal husbandry and private offices. Those categories of persons can, then, leave the country temporarily or definitively during the period of validity of their contract of employment. However, employers can submit a motivated prior request to the Ministry of the Interior containing the names of persons who, due to the nature of their work, require prior approval before departing the country, provided that the number does not exceed 5 per cent of an employer's workers. This is applicable only to highly skilled workers such as chief executive officers, financial officers, managers who oversee a company's day-to-day activities, and information and communication technology managers.
- Exit permits for domestic workers were also abolished under Ministerial Decree No. 95 of 2019.

(iv) Workers' Support and Insurance Fund

- The Workers' Support and Insurance Fund was established under Act No. 17 of 2018 for the purpose of providing sustainable financial resources to support workers and to disburse their entitlements under decisions handed down by the labour dispute-resolution committees, if the employer concerned is insolvent or otherwise unable to pay. The sums disbursed are to be subsequently collected from the employers. Since it was established, the Fund has disbursed financial entitlements to 5,744 workers for a total value of QR 14 million (equivalent to \$3.85 million).

(v) Giving a voice to workers and establishing joint labour committees

- In enactment of article 125 of the Labour Code, Decree No. 21 of 2019 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs regulates conditions and procedures for electing workers' representatives to joint committees. This constitutes a significant step on the road to reform and is part of the efforts the State has been making to promote worker's voices, improve conditions for the migrant labour force and protect workers' rights, in line with human rights principles and international labour standards. The joint committees act as a platform for dialogue between workers and employers in which the interests of both sides can be achieved. The committees examine and discuss all labour-related issues in a particular establishment, including the organization of work, ways to increase productivity, training programmes for workers, risk prevention, improving compliance with occupational health and safety rules and developing workers' general culture.

(vi) Labour inspection and occupational health and safety policies

- A labour inspection policy and an occupational health and safety policy have been adopted with a view to ensuring more strategic, coordinated and data-driven approaches; improving the collection and analysis of data on work-related injuries; and elucidating training strategies, information campaigns, inspections and investigations into workplace accidents. The annual report of the Labour Inspection Department for 2019 aimed to improve transparency and accountability in inspection services, in line with the ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81). The report also contained a comprehensive training plan for the period 2019–2021 and envisaged training for labour inspectors on a number of different topics, including labour inspection skills, the Labour Code, forced labour and trafficking.
- New amendments to the Labour Code introduced by Decree-Law No. 18 of 2020 include tightening precautions to protect workers against workplace injuries and occupational diseases; imposing penalties on persons who violate the conditions regulating decent accommodation for workers; and strengthening the powers of labour inspectors in order to make inspections more effective and to ensure the prompt rectification of any violations.
- In order to protect workers from the risks of heat stress, the Labour Inspection Department organized an inspection campaign to ensure that companies comply with the Ministerial Decree that sets the number of hours that can be spent working in exposed areas during summer. The campaign – conducted by ministerial inspectors at workplaces in different parts of the country from 15 June to 31 August 2020 – resulted in the closure of 263 sites run by companies in violation of the Decree.
- Decree No. 17 of 2021 of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs regarding the precautions necessary to protect workers from heat stress was issued on 24 May 2021. It specifies the hours that workers can spend under the sun, in exposed areas or in shaded and ventilated areas between 1 June and 15 September each year, and it states that no work is to take place between 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. The Decree also requires the employer to display a timetable of daily working hours in a place where all workers are able to see it and where it can be consulted by labour inspectors in the course of their visits.

(vii) Combating human trafficking

70. Under Decree No. 10 of 2009, Qatar acceded to both the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Furthermore, Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 15 of 2011 was enacted and subsequently amended by Act No. 5 of 2020. For its part, Decree No. 15 of 2017 of the Council of Ministers envisaged the creation of the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking which plays a coordinating role with the relevant authorities at the national level to monitor, prevent and combat trafficking in human beings.

71. A special prosecutor's office to deal with matters involving human trafficking has been set up as part of the office of the prosecutor for issues involving residency within the Public Prosecution Service, and a human trafficking department with a mandate to conduct criminal investigations has been created within the Ministry of the Interior.

72. As part of its efforts to combat human trafficking, the State is intensifying its awareness-raising campaigns and consolidating its international cooperation, exchanging information and conducting joint initiatives with governmental and non-governmental bodies. In partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), ILO, the Embassy of the United Kingdom and the Embassy of the United States, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking has held a number of training courses and discussion forums with a view to enhancing the skills of the agencies and individuals involved in the fight against trafficking.

73. Suitable premises have been made available to shelter victims of human trafficking. These include the "Comprehensive Safety Home", which is affiliated to the "Aman" Social

Protection and Rehabilitation Centre one of the bodies that operates under the aegis of the Qatar Foundation for Social Action. The Home acts as safe haven offering an inclusive social and health environment in which protection and rehabilitation services can be delivered to the target groups, including victims of human trafficking, particularly female domestic workers. In addition to this, a humanitarian care shelter was recently inaugurated thanks to cooperation between the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and the Qatar Red Crescent. The purpose of the new shelter is to provide protection and social care to workers in need, especially legal assistance and protection for victims of human trafficking. The shelter also seeks to rehabilitate such persons and reintegrate them into society, and it offers temporary accommodation and care for workers until they are able to leave the country. The structure has a capacity for around 200 persons.

74. The State acts to ensure that all measures to protect migrant workers are fully enforced and violators punished, and to provide information on the implementation of such measures.

75. The following cases were referred to the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking between 2019 and 2020.

<i>No. of cases</i>	<i>No. of accused persons</i>	<i>Penalties</i>
11	6	Fines averaging between QR 5,000 and QR 20 million

76. The criminal court of first instance recently handed down a prison sentence of 10 years with hard labour and a fine of QR 200,000 against two persons convicted in relation to human trafficking offences. The court found the two accused guilty of the crime of human trafficking against two domestic workers, under the aforementioned Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 15 of 2011. In its ruling, the court also stipulated that the accused were liable to pay each civil plaintiff the sum of QR 1 million by way of compensation. The case was investigated by the competent authorities; i.e., the police, the Public Prosecution Service and the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking, and all measures were duly taken to provide the victims with care and protection before, during and after the investigation. Having received the health care they required, the two victims were accommodated in the Aman Social Protection and Rehabilitation Centre.

Protect migrant workers from abuse and exploitation, and ensure the timely payment of their wages

77. Paragraph 70 above describes the new laws and practical measures by which the *kafala* system was terminated and workers protected against abuse and exploitation. The efforts made to combat human trafficking and protect and assist victims were also described above.

78. The State works to protect workers' wages and financial entitlements and to ensure that they are paid regularly and on time, in which regard a wage protection system has been in operation since 2015. Act No. 1 of 2015 amending certain provisions of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004), Ministerial Decree No. 4 of 2015 and the wage protection system together constitute the legal framework under which employers are obliged to transfer wages to the worker's bank account within seven days of the date they are due. This method is traceable and can be monitored by electronic auditing mechanisms thereby ensuring that offenders can be apprehended and penalized with imprisonment or fines. Moreover, all their dealings with the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs are suspended and the offending party cannot obtain new work permits. The wage protection system has helped to ensure that wages are paid on time and has contributed to the resolution of wage-related disputes in a more transparent manner. More than 1,660,000 of 1,710,00 workers (i.e., 96 per cent) have been registered in the wage protection system.

79. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs is determined to track down transgressors and to see that these penalties are effectively imposed. To that end, it ceases to deal with employers in certain enterprises and prevents them from employing other workers, if they fail to respect the wage protection system. A record of the violation is drawn up and referred to the security agencies who then pass it on to the Public

Prosecution Service for legal steps to be taken against the offending employer. There is coordination with the Ministry of the Interior to ensure that workers are transferred from the company that is violating the wage protection system to another employer and there is coordination with the Public Prosecution Service to ensure that employers who violate the wage protection system are not shown undue leniency. The wage protection system has contributed to the resolution of wage-related disputes in a more transparent manner. The unit responsible for the wage protection system has accelerated its procedures for imposing bans on companies that violate the system and preventing them from accessing the services of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs. In January 2020, the unit imposed bans on 588 companies. Later the same year, with the closures and restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, more companies were monitored for violating the wage protection system and, in June 2020, bans were imposed on 8,756 companies. An increased number of offences have been referred to the police, and communication with the Ministry of the Interior has intensified to ensure that prompt action is taken in relation to priority cases.

80. A body of laws has been enacted to increase the penalties for persons who violate the wage protection system. They include Decree-Law No. 18 of 2020 amending articles 144, 145 and 145 bis of the Labour Code.

81. Steps have been taken to update the wage protection system and to improve transparency in the calculation of workers' wages. In that connection, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has collaborated with the ILO Project Office in Doha on an evaluation of the system. The evaluation was carried out by an independent expert who identified shortcomings and made recommendations with a view to improving the system and increasing its transparency and effectiveness. The wage protection system, in fact, is the key to ensuring a non-discriminatory minimum wage. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, ILO, Qatar Central Bank and other institutions are working on the recommendations produced by the aforementioned independent expert. Salary information files provided each month by employers have been updated. The files contain information about the wages of each worker and the system is thus able to monitor transfers that fall below the minimum wage. The files also have special entries for food and housing allowances and for overtime, thereby ensuring the highest possible degree of clarity and transparency about how workers' wages are calculated. In this regard, efforts are being made to ensure that workers can, on request, obtain receipts that give them a detailed picture of how their wages are calculated. A request was made for a review of international best practices vis-à-vis the issuance of payslips, the results of which are currently being examined. Various models will be examined so that payslips can be issued that will enable workers to see, clearly and transparently, how their wages are calculated.

Ensure that passports are not confiscated and that employers who violate this provision are punished

82. According to article 8 (3) of Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers, as amended, it is prohibited for an employer to withhold a worker's passport without the latter's consent. Under the law, employers are required to deliver the passport into the worker's possession.

83. Legislators have envisaged severe penalties for anyone violating the aforementioned provisions, and article 39 of Act No. 21 of 2015 stipulates: "Anyone who violates the provisions of article 8 (3) of the present Act is liable to a fine of up to QR 25,000."

84. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Prosecution Service act in unison to ensure that workers' passports are not withheld. Complaints regarding sequestered passports are referred to the Public Prosecution Service and, in most cases, are investigated with the offending employers being required to return the passports before being referred to the competent court.

85. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs provides several facilities for workers and domestic workers to submit complaints, using modern and accessible means such as a 24-hour complaints hotline, smartphone apps including the "Amerni" app and the unified complaints and reporting platform.

Ensure that, for equal work, there are no wage differentials among migrant workers depending on their country of origin

86. National legislation does not discriminate between migrant workers according to their country of origin. Qatari legislators have used general wording to define the rights and duties of persons who are subject to particular laws, making no distinction on grounds of ethnic or national origin or any other discriminatory factor. Likewise, the bilateral agreements concerning the recruitment of workers from abroad, which Qatar has entered into with the workers' home countries, contain no discriminatory provisions on the basis of national origin. Moreover, no distinction is made between one country and another vis-à-vis the rights or wages of migrant workers, particularly since the adoption of a unified model for all bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding relating to the recruitment of workers of different nationalities. In fact, such instruments have uniform clauses which are applicable to all States, without discrimination between one State and another with regard to the rights of migrant workers. For its part, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has adopted a unified contract of employment that is applicable to all workers of all nationalities, without discrimination on the basis of ethnic, national or religious origin. Legislators have also acted to ensure equality of wages between men and women, in which regard article 93 of the Labour Code stipulates: "A working woman shall receive the same wages as a man for doing the same work, and shall be granted the same opportunities for training and promotion."

Guarantee the right of migrant workers to family reunification

87. Qatar respects the right of migrant workers to family life and remains committed to promoting their social integration. To this end, the State – believing as it does in the importance of family and its effect on the mental well-being of workers – guarantees workers' right to family reunification by bringing in their spouses and children. The State acts in this way on the basis of its obligation to eliminate all forms of discrimination, in accordance with principles enshrined in international human rights law.

88. To this end, Act No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers envisages the issuance of residence permits to spouses of persons lawfully resident in the country, to any male children who have not completed their university studies and are under the age of 25 and to any unmarried daughters.

Reduce the length of time employees must wait before changing employers when this is not specified in their contracts

89. Under new amendments to the Labour Code, referenced above under recommendation 6, migrant workers can terminate their contract of employment and change employer at any time, without giving reasons.

Ensure migrant workers have full access to complaint mechanisms and appropriate remedies for violations of their rights, and provide information on the resolution of complaints in its next periodic report

90. Complaints mechanisms and the procedures whereby workers can obtain judicial redress are set forth in paragraph 17, above.

Labour-related complaints submitted to the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs between 1 January 2020 and 31 March 2021

<i>Outcome of complaint</i>	<i>No. of workers filing complaints</i>
Settled	16 488
Under examination	3
Referred to the labour dispute-resolution committees	6 303
Total	22 794

- Paragraph (b);

- As explained in comments on article 2 of the Convention, the security of migrant workers is protected by the police;
- Paragraph (c).

91. The abuse and exploitation of migrant workers takes two significant forms, which the competent departments and agencies of the Ministry of the Interior seek to address. They are:

- *Trafficking a migrant workforce*: This takes place through the trade in visas, something that is prohibited under article 4 of Act No. 21 of 2015 and for which the law envisages deterrent penalties in the form of a term of imprisonment of up to 3 years and a fine of up to QR 50,000. The Investigation and Follow-up Department of the Ministry of the Interior takes strict action against offenders, who are referred to the office of the prosecutor for issues involving residency and then to the competent court, which hands down the sentence. Details regarding action taken in this area during the course of 2020 are given in the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of cases involving the trade in visas</i>	<i>Judgements handed down</i>
2020	136	39

- *Sequestration of passports*: Details regarding action taken in this area during the course of 2020 are given in the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of cases involving sequestration of passports</i>	<i>Judgements handed down</i>
2020	37	8

- On a related note, attention is also drawn to:
 1. The work of the 14 Qatar visa centres, which are located in 8 Asian countries and which undertake procedures for the recruitment of migrant workers from those States. To that end, they record the workers' personal data, conduct medical examinations and provide electronic copies of employment contracts in the countries of origin. This simplifies procedures and blocks the way to the trafficking of migrant labour.
 2. The work done by the competent bodies within the Ministry of the Interior to complete the procedures that have enabled 2,904 migrant workers to change job and move to a new employer, despite the opposition of the original employer.

Recommendation 7

92. Legislators in Qatar have established principles and rules to protect vulnerable groups. The Constitution envisages a relationship between workers of all categories and their employers that is rooted in social justice, that aims to achieve equality and equal opportunity and that provides the means and necessities to live a life of dignity and to exercise the human rights enshrined in divine law, international treaties and the legislation of States. Contractual relations between workers and employers are regulated by domestic laws, as per article 30 of the Constitution, which stipulates: "The relationship between workers and employers is to be based on social justice and regulated by law." One of the most important principles is that of striking a balance between the two sides in order to create a solid contractual relationship that benefits not only the parties involved but society as a whole. The Constitution and domestic legislation have set legal norms that aim to achieve that balance and to address any irregularities that might arise when a contract of employment comes into force or during the course of its validity. Legislators, moreover, have been at pains to protect domestic workers, to which end they enacted Act No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers, which regulates the relationship between such workers and their employers in a manner consistent with the latest global developments and the provisions of international treaties. The Act, in fact, sets the standards for employment in domestic service and regulates the nature, characteristics and norms of the employment contract, how such a contract is to be concluded, its concomitant rights and obligations, how it is to expire or be terminated and the penalties for breach of

contract by either party. One characteristic of the Act on domestic workers is that it has a bearing on public order. As a consequence, its provisions have a direct and immediate effect on contracts that were signed under previous laws. All provisions at variance with the Act are automatically rescinded even if they predate the coming into effect of the Act, and financial and other rights are calculated according to the provisions of the new Act. The provisions of chapter XI bis of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004) are applicable to disputes between employers and workers, in accordance with article 18 of the Act on domestic workers, which states: “Disputes arising between an employer and a worker that are related to the application of the present Act or the contract of employment are to be subject to the provisions of chapter XI bis of the Labour Code.”

93. Legislators have decreed that the settlement of disputes should be take place by stages, beginning with an amicable settlement and ending with recourse to the courts. They also made provision for the creation – as part of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs – of a labour dispute-resolution committee with rules of procedure that are set forth in article 115 bis (1)–(7) of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004) as amended by Act No. 13 of 2017. Under those provisions, legislators conferred judicial status on the committee and granted it overarching powers that enable it to rule on disputes that arise between workers and employers, in the shortest possible time and while taking account of the interests of the parties.

94. Act No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers contains many of the norms and principles included in the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and in its supplementary ILO Domestic Workers Recommendation, 2011 (No. 201). The Act on domestic workers is notable for the criminal penalties it envisages and for the mandatory nature of certain of its clauses. This means that the Act plays an important role in the fight against human trafficking and in preventing all forms of abuse, violence and sexual harassment that domestic workers might face.

95. Act No. 15 of 2017 envisions several forms of protection for domestic workers, as follows:

(a) The Act sets a maximum of 10 working hours each day. However, the new model employment contract adopted by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs sets the limit at 8 hours per day of regular work, with the possibility of an additional 2 hours per day of overtime. Thus, in practice, the 10 daily working hours envisaged under the Act include overtime hours for which the worker is duly compensated. This is in line with the Labour Code, which is applicable to all workers. In addition, workers are entitled to a weekly paid holiday of no less than 24 consecutive hours.

(b) Employers are required to provide domestic workers with adequate food and accommodation as well as with adequate health care, medicines and medical supplies should workers fall ill or suffer an injury during the performance of their duties or by cause thereof. This must not comport any financial disbursement on the part of the worker. Furthermore, employers must treat their workers well, safeguard their dignity and physical integrity and not endanger their life or health or cause them physical or mental harm by abusing them in any way. Workers must not be made to work during periods of sick leave or during their daily rest periods or weekly holidays, unless there is an agreement between the two parties to do so.

(c) Employers are required to pay the agreed monthly salary in Qatari currency at the end of each month of the Gregorian calendar, and in any case no later than the third day of the following month. Thought is currently being given to the adoption of a mechanism for domestic workers akin to the wage protection system.

(d) Annual leave and end-of-service indemnities are regulated in such a way that, for each calendar year of service, workers are entitled to paid annual leave of three weeks and to a return ticket to their place of origin for the duration of the leave. In addition, legislators have made it incumbent upon employers to pay their workers an end-of-service indemnity over and above any other sums to which they may be entitled. The end-of-service indemnity is to be equivalent to three weeks’ salary for each year of service.

(e) The Act designates the cases in which workers can terminate their contract of employment before its expiry.

(f) The Act envisages compensation for workers who suffer workplace injuries, in accordance with the Labour Code.

(g) The Act envisages penalties of up to QR 10,000 for persons who violate its provisions.

96. The Act allows domestic workers to terminate their contracts early while retaining their entitlement to an end-of-service bonus in the following instances: when employers fail to fulfil their obligations under the employment contract or the Act; when employers or their representatives have acted fraudulently when setting the terms and conditions of employment; when employers or members of their family assault workers in such a way as to cause physical harm or endanger life; when employers or persons residing with them are aware of a grave danger threatening workers' health or safety and fail to take action to eliminate that danger.

97. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs is constantly seeking to improve domestic workers' knowledge of their basic rights and to draw employers' attention to the importance of the work their employees do and the need to protect them and defend their rights. In that regard, an online event was organized to coincide with International Domestic Workers' Day in June 2020, and an information booklet for employers of domestic workers was translated into English and Arabic in partnership with the ILO and a non-governmental organization. The booklet is being widely distributed via the media, social media, government offices and the International Federation of Domestic Workers. For its part, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs is running a campaign to raise awareness among the public at large about decent work for domestic workers.

98. During the time in which commercial activities were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Central Bank and the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs issued instructions to banks to lift restrictions on domestic workers bank accounts, so that they could continue to receive their wages and send remittances to their home countries.

Ensure the protection of women migrant domestic workers from rape and sexual abuse

99. These offences are fully addressed in the chapter of the Criminal Code dedicated to physical assault. The chapter covers assaults against the person and assaults against honour, as well as rape which can even attract the death penalty. These provisions constitute an important deterrent to violence against women.

100. A package of measures has been rolled out to address violence against women, notably that of establishing the Aman Social Protection and Rehabilitation Centre in 2013. The Centre concerns itself with protecting and rehabilitating women and child victims of violence by:

- Opening external offices throughout the country in various health-care, judicial, security and community institutions, in order to facilitate access to the Centre for the target categories and to expedite legal and judicial proceedings;
- Launching apps such as the "Help Me" app through which girls are provided with assistance and protection to empower them to report any ill-treatment or violence they might face. Another app is "Consult Aman" via which legal, psychological and social counselling is delivered by a specialized team, in cooperation with the competent State bodies;
- Taking the target categories into the Centre where a specialized team provides psychological, social and legal services, examining and assessing each case and dealing with it according to need; guidance is also available and cases are referred to the competent authorities to help the women resolve their problems and access the services they require;

- Providing legal counselling and support to female victims of violence; the Centre has recently signed a protocol of cooperation with the Qatar Lawyers' Association under which persons in the target categories who are unable to afford a lawyer of their own will be given a lawyer who volunteers to bring and pursue proceedings of all kinds and degrees;
- Documenting information on the cases the Centre receives (either directly or through referral) from women involving violence or family rifts, while maintaining strict confidentiality and privacy. The Centre is thus able to examine data and produce statistics which can then be used in studies and plans of action; it also helps to identify shortcomings and problems and to work to rectify them and to optimize services;
- Providing social care to the target groups through various forms of rehabilitation services (psychological, social, legal and occupational). These are made available to female victims of violence in the form of a package of rehabilitative procedures delivered in accordance with plans tailored to the needs of each beneficiary. Once the rehabilitation plans have run their course, beneficiaries also receive integration and aftercare services to ensure their ongoing stability and to obviate the risk of a relapse. Economic, social and educational empowerment services are also made available as well as shelters and residential care. In this regard, the "Comprehensive Safety Home" has been inaugurated to provide a safe haven offering an inclusive social and health environment in which protection and rehabilitation services can be delivered to the target groups, including victims of human trafficking, particularly female domestic workers.

Ratify ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)

Act No. 15 of 2017 is in line with international labour standards and with ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), particularly following the adoption of the new model employment contract for domestic workers, which aligns their rights with those of all other workers subject to the Labour Code, as was explained earlier.

Provide detailed information in its next periodic report on the implementation of laws to protect migrant domestic workers from exploitative labour practices, including data on the numbers, types and outcomes of the complaints filed by migrant domestic workers

101. The efforts made to improve the implementation of Act No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers were set forth in earlier paragraphs. In particular, mention was made of the following: the new model employment contract for domestic workers adopted by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, which aligns domestic workers' rights with those of all other workers subject to the Labour Code; efforts to improve workers' knowledge about their rights; the hotline via which to raise questions and file complaints; and the redress mechanisms that workers can use to access justice. In addition to this are the measures taken to protect domestic workers from exploitation and from falling victim to human trafficking thanks to facilities such as the Aman Centre and the humanitarian care shelter, which offer protection to victims, particularly female domestic workers.

* Complaints submitted by domestic workers, disaggregated by outcome, for the period between 1 January 2020 and 31 March 2021

<i>No.</i>	<i>Outcome of complaint</i>	<i>No. of complaints</i>
1	Settled	328
2	Under examination	146
3	Referred to the courts	90
Total		564

- Paragraphs (b), (c) and (d)

The provisions mentioned above, in comments on article 2 of the Convention, regarding the fact that all residents, including migrant workers, are protected by security and legal measures satisfy the requirements set forth in that article, in which regard mention should also be made of progress achieved in the course of 2020.

<i>Type of case</i>	<i>No. of reports</i>	<i>No. of reports referred to prosecutors</i>	<i>No. of convictions</i>	<i>Average fine</i>	<i>Average detention</i>
Violence against domestic workers	13	13	3	QR 7 000	Three and a half months
Rape of domestic workers	5	5	0	0	0
Ill-treatment of domestic workers	6	6	0	0	0

Recommendation 8

102. The Qatar National Vision 2030 includes a number of goals regarding family cohesion and women's empowerment, notably that of building the capacities of women and empowering them to participate in economic life. The first national development strategy 2011–2016 and the second national development strategy 2018–2022 also sought to promote the rights of women. These frames of reference provide a supportive and stable environment for the advancement of women's rights, as advocated by international treaties and conventions.

103. The State has been at pains to develop its legislative system to bring it into line with international standards for the protection of workers, and it has taken steps to provide decent work for workers of all categories and of both sexes, without discrimination. The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs acts to protect the rights of domestic workers, especially women, who represent a significant proportion of such workers, as explained above.

104. Recent amendments to the Labour Code envisage penalties for persons who violate the health and safety conditions for workers' accommodation as set forth in Ministerial Decree No. 18 of 2014, and the Ministry has carried out a series of meticulous inspection campaigns to monitor compliance with those conditions, as explained above under recommendation 6, paragraph 6.

105. The Qatar Foundation for Social Action provides cross-sectoral support to its target groups, including women. In this connection, certain instances of the support provided by the Foundation and by its affiliated centres to women in areas such as employment, education and health care will be given below.

Centres affiliated to the Foundation (see annexes)

- Centre for Empowerment and Care of Older Persons
- Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities
- Wifaq Family Counselling Centre
- Nur Centre for the Blind
- Aman Social Protection and Rehabilitation Centre
- Dreama Care Centre for Orphans
- Nama Social Development Centre

106. Qatar attracts workers from more than 160 countries who participate in various infrastructure projects for specific periods. Work in Qatar does not depend upon a migrant belonging to a particular minority, and all persons are considered and treated equally in the light of article 35 of the Constitution, which states: "Persons are equal before the law without discrimination on grounds of sex, origin, language or religion."

107. All issues relating to human rights in Qatar, including minority rights, are monitored by the National Human Rights Committee, which has not received any complaints concerning women from minority migrant communities.

Recommendation 9

108. Reference is made to the recommendation not to discriminate between citizens and non-citizens in the purchase and sale of property. The principle whereby property ownership is restricted to Qataris is based on the small size of the State of Qatar and the consequent concern that landownership could end up on the hands of non-nationals. However, the domestic legal system does admit the possession and usufruct of real estate property by non-Qataris, under certain rules and conditions, and it defines the areas in which such possession and usufruct can be exercised and the procedures that need to be followed, as per Act No. 16 of 2018 regulating the ownership and usufruct of real estate by non-Qataris and the relevant decrees of the Council of Ministers, including Decree No. 28 of 2020 designating the areas in which non-Qataris can possess and make use of real estate property and the relevant rules and procedures. There are now 9 designated areas where non-Qataris can own real estate property and 16 areas where they can utilize property, making a total of 25 areas in all. Under the same Decree, Qataris can now own a single detached unit within a residential complex and one or more detached units, such as offices or shops, in commercial complexes and malls, in places other than those defined in previous paragraph, provided that no modification or change in the nature, form or external appearance of the unit is made. In this way, the Government is seeking to support plans to diversify the economy and to establish an integrated legislative system to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030 in its various social and economic aspects.

Eliminating barriers faced by non-Qatari inhabitants and equality of work and access to employment

109. Migrant (i.e., non-Qatari) workers constitute the majority of the inhabitants of the State of Qatar. They are recruited to work in Qatar via recruitment bureaux and under contracts of employment, and their residency in the country ends with the expiry of their contract. Thus, most non-national migrants are economically active and enjoy their right to work and employment within the State of Qatar. A survey of the workforce conducted in the second quarter of 2020 showed that 98 per cent of non-Qatari males and 64 per cent of non-Qatari females are economically active.

110. Under the law, residence permits can be granted to the spouse and children of a migrant worker. Moreover, foreign females (whether wives or daughters) who reside with a migrant worker who is head of their household can also enter the Qatari labour market to work in the public or private sectors, in accordance with Act No. 21 of 2015.

111. Workers' workplace equality has been enhanced by eliminating the barriers that prevented them for changing employment. This came about thanks to recent legislative amendments in the form of Decree-Law No. 19 of 2020 amending certain provisions of the Act regulating the entry, exit and residency of migrant workers, and Decree-Law No. 18 of 2020 which was issued on 30 August 2020 and which amends certain provisions of the Labour Code.

112. By enabling workers to seek better job opportunities, these laws have served to enhance the dynamism of the labour market in Qatar. It should be noted that a large number of workers have benefited from this legislation. In fact, from the time the Act came into force in September 2020 until the end of May 2021, a total of 157,645 workers changed their employer.

Recommendation 10

113. The basis for the conferral of nationality is *jus sanguinis*; in other words, children take the nationality of their parents. This is also a way of avoiding dual nationality and conflicts of loyalty. Article 2 of Nationality Act No. 38 of 2005 gives the children of Qatari women married to foreigners priority in matters related to the acquisition of nationality. Such children

also enjoy certain services and privileges in relation to education, health care and other basic needs that are considered as fundamental for living a humane and decent life.

114. In addition to this, article 2 (1) of Act No. 10 of 2018 concerning permanent residency stipulates: “Permanent residency may be granted to non-Qataris of the following categories: (1) Children of Qatari women married to non-Qataris.” The State of Qatar has given this issue the attention it deserves while seeking, on the one hand, to strike a balance with the public interest and the specific nature of Qatari society and, on the other, to keep pace with international standards concerning the human rights of women.

115. It should be pointed out that Qatar has taken note of this issue, which also figured in the recommendations made following the interactive dialogue on the country’s national human rights report submitted during the last cycle of the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council. In addition, it is anticipated that the same topic will be given due attention by the committee set up to harmonize national legislation with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

116. As concerns the right of a mother to transmit her nationality to her offspring, nationality is a personal right that pertains to the newborn and not to the mother. This is reaffirmed in article 24 (3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states: “Every child has the right to acquire a nationality.” Under Nationality Act No. 38 of 2005, male and female infants have an equal right to nationality. The Act states that the newborn acquires nationality from the father and that children of a Qatari mother are to be granted priority in matters related to the acquisition of nationality.

Recommendation 11

117. As regards this issue and the measures the State has taken in that regard, attention is drawn to the following:

- The phenomenon of statelessness has long existed in Qatar due to several economic, geographical, social and legal factors;
- Decree No. 1 of 1984 of the Minister of the Interior regulates temporary permits for stateless persons;
- Persons found to be stateless persons under the Decree have been counted and their details entered into an electronic database. It should be noted that the temporary residence permits they are given entitle them to enjoy the privileges and rights enjoyed by other non-Qataris migrants;
- The State has taken a number of steps that have led to the regularization of the position of stateless persons and thus to the reduction of their numbers. In addition to the aforementioned Ministerial Decree, those steps include the following:
 3. The status of some stateless persons has changed because they managed to obtain their nationalities of origin and, on the basis of their documentation, were granted legal residency permits;
 4. Others (both males and females) have managed to obtain Qatari nationality;
 5. A number of women gained Qatari nationality after marrying Qatari men.
- The reduction of cases of statelessness in the period between 2017 and 2020 is illustrated in the following table:

<i>No.</i>	<i>Procedure</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
1	Regularization	-	1	0	0
2	Acquisition of Qatari nationality by naturalization	97	285	29	0
3	Acquisition of Qatari nationality by marriage	266	132	7	1

- Qatar participates in the global campaign to end statelessness.

118. The Ministry of the Interior welcomed the letter from Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in which he invited countries, including the State of Qatar, to mobilize in support of UNHCR at the halfway point of its 10-year campaign to end statelessness.

119. The Ministry of the Interior has opened new horizons for cooperation with UNHCR in the following areas:

6. Technical and legal assistance and advice to the Nationality and Travel Document Department regarding ways to reduce statelessness;

7. Awareness-raising for staff of the Nationality and Travel Document Department regarding international legal standards for the reduction of statelessness, and the relevant international instruments and practices.

It is important nonetheless, to bear in mind the fact that issues pertaining to nationality remain at the State's discretion as they have a bearing on sovereignty and are linked to the constitutional character of the Nationality Act. In fact, article 41 of the Constitution stipulates: "Qatari nationality and the provisions relating thereto are to be determined by law. Such provisions have constitutional force."

120. National legislation contains no provisions that would cause statelessness. In that regard, attention is drawn to the final paragraph of article 2 of Nationality Act No. 38 of 2005: "Persons born in Qatar to unknown parents have the status of naturalized persons. Foundlings are considered to have been born in Qatar in the absence of evidence to the contrary." The same Act also contains an exhaustive list of the conditions under which Qatari nationality can be revoked or withdrawn, always in such a way as not to give rise to instances of statelessness. Furthermore, as stated earlier, issues pertaining to nationality have constitutional character, and article 41 of the Constitution States: "Qatari nationality and the provisions relating thereto are to be determined by law. Such provisions have constitutional force."

Recommendation 12

121. Article 1 (3) of the Convention stipulates that nothing therein may be interpreted as affecting in any way the legal provisions of States parties concerning nationality, citizenship or naturalization, provided that such provisions do not discriminate against any particular nationality. It should be noted that questions of nationality and citizenship are constitutional issues on which each State is free to set its own conditions. In Qatar too, this matter has constitutional character, as explained above. The distinction between nationals and naturalized persons vis-à-vis certain rights – which is based on objective factors that are unrelated to colour, descent, origin or race – is likewise legitimate and exists in other comparable legal systems. For example, the requirement that a certain period of time elapse before the acquisition of nationality serves to verify the degree of loyalty a naturalized person has to the State before that person can exercise certain rights, particularly political rights, on an equal footing with citizens.

122. The contents of this section have a bearing on public policies and the concerns of the legislative authorities of the State. There exists, moreover, a customary norm regarding nationality in comparable Arab and regional law. According to that norm, the enjoyment of certain sovereign rights and, more specifically, political rights such as the right to vote and to stand for election, is not automatically acquired by naturalized persons as soon as they obtain nationality, but only after the lapse of a certain amount of time, typically five years or more.

Recommendation 13

123. In order to clarify the position of Qatar on this issue and the measures it has taken to address it, note should be taken of the following legislation regulating the rights of asylum seekers:

- The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar, and in particular article 58 which stipulates: "The extradition of political refugees is prohibited. The conditions for granting political asylum are to be regulated by law";

- Under the Act regulating the settlement of administrative disputes, no appeal may be filed before the competent administrative department against decrees relating to Act No. 11 of 2018 concerning political asylum; the relevant provisions are set forth in article 3 of Act No. 7 of 2007 concerning the settlement of administrative disputes, as amended;
- Decree No. 13 of 2019 of the Council of Ministers specifying norms and conditions that regulate the rights and privileges enjoyed by political refugees;
- Act No. 11 of 2018 concerning political asylum and the decrees whereby it is implemented envisage a body of rights, which are set forth in article 9 of the Act: “Political refugees are to enjoy the protection of the State. Moreover, they are to enjoy, in a manner that does not conflict with their refugee status, the following privileges and rights:
 1. To obtain a travel document, unless there are opposing reasons related to national security or public order;
 2. To access job opportunities, except in functions related to national security;
 3. To receive a monthly subsidy, until a job opportunity becomes available;
 4. To receive health care;
 5. To receive education;
 6. To receive accommodation;
 7. To be free to worship and practise religious rites;
 8. To freedom of movement and of travel;
 9. To have recourse to the courts.”

124. Political refugees may be allowed to bring in their spouse and other family members of the first degree.

125. At the proposal of the Minister, the Council of Ministers is to issue a decree setting forth the norms and conditions that regulate these rights and privileges. That decree was duly issued as Decree No. 13 of 2019 of the Council of Ministers, subsequently amended by Decree No. 36 of 2020 of the Council of Ministers.

126. It should be noted that the Act is currently in its first experimental phase of implementation. Overcoming stages, the results and data emerging from that implementation will determine to what extent it needs to be amended or improved. Nonetheless, the rights accorded to political refugees under the Act constitute a solid core of human and refugee rights that are consistent with international standards and notably the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Recommendation 14

127. The right to form associations is guaranteed under article 45 of the Constitution, which reads: “Freedom of association is guaranteed in accordance with the conditions prescribed by law.” Qatari workers’ right to form labour federations is enshrined in article 116 of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004), as amended, which states: “Workers in an establishment employing a minimum of 100 Qatari workers are entitled to form a committee to be known as the labour committee. Not more than one committee may be formed in each establishment. Labour committees in establishments operating in trades or industries that are the same, similar or interrelated are entitled to form a general committee to be known as the general committee of workers in that trade or industry. The various general committees of trades and industries shall form a general federation to be known as the Qatar General Federation of Workers. The membership of the aforementioned committees and of the Qatar General Federation of Workers is restricted to Qataris. The Minister determines the conditions and procedures for the formation and membership of the aforementioned labour organizations, their respective rules of procedure, and the trades and industries to be categorized as similar or interrelated.”

- Decree-Law No. 12 of 2004 regulating private associations and foundations governs the right of natural and legal persons to establish an association with the aim of engaging in humanitarian, social, cultural, scientific, professional or charitable activities, provided that its purposes are not for profit and non-political. The Act states that, in order to establish an association, a minimum of 20 Qataris over 18 years of age must submit an application to the administrative authority. The condition concerning the nationality and number of founders may be waived by decree of the Council of Ministers where necessary and as required in the public interest, at the proposal of the Minister.
- A number of private associations operating in the public interest exist in Qatar where they seek to further the advancement of human rights. They include the following:
 - The National Committee for Human Rights, which was established in 2002 as an independent national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights;
 - The Silatech Foundation, which was established in 2008 and seeks to provide job opportunities for Arab youth;
 - The Education above All Foundation, established in 2008, which aims to provide education to children in areas of poverty and armed conflict;
 - The Doha International Family Institute, which was established in 2006 with the aim of promoting family-related policies and programmes;
 - The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue, created in 2010 with the aim of fostering a culture of interreligious dialogue and peaceful coexistence among believers;
 - The Mada Centre, which was established in 2010 with the aim of consolidating digital inclusion and building an accessible technological community for persons with disabilities and older persons;
 - The Katara Cultural Village, which was established in 2005 and aims to encourage cultural dynamism with festivals, exhibitions, seminars, concerts and all forms of artistic expression. It has a number of centres and associations, including a shooting club, a children's cultural centre, Brooq Magazine, the Poetry Council, the Bedaya Centre, the Katara Arts Centre, the Siwar Choir, the Arab Stamp Museum, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, the Voice of the Gulf Radio, the Qatar Society for Figurative Arts, the Qatar Society for Photography, the Visual Arts Centre, the Doha Film Foundation, the Qatar Museums Authority and the Qatar Society of Engineers.

128. Numerous other civil society institutions and associations undertake humanitarian and social activities. These include, by way of example, the Gulf Heart Association and the Qatari Nursing Society. In addition to this are 27 civil society organizations registered at the Qatar Financial Centre that have been formed by non-Qataris and that have a variety of sports, professional, educational, social and cultural purposes. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs registers of non-Muslim places of worship, which currently number 20 and which have the status of religious civil society organizations.

Recommendation 15

- The replies given under recommendation 4 are equally applicable to recommendation 15.

129. The annual programmes run by the Supreme Council of the Judiciary include capacity-building modules for judges vis-a-vis human rights and combating racial discrimination. In partnership with other judicial organizations, institutions and authorities at home and abroad, the Council has included a standing allocation in its annual budget to fund that module, which Qatar believes to be vital in order to fulfil its obligations under the Convention,

* **Education (see annexes)**

(i) School curricula and textbooks

130. The General Framework for National Education seeks to promote a culture of coexistence, tolerance and dialogue and to combat hatred and racial discrimination in education. It also aims to enhance interaction with people from different parts of the world and peaceful coexistence (pp. 7 and 8). Other basic objectives include building self-confidence and self-esteem, encouraging respect for others and making students global citizens in an increasingly interconnected and inter-reliant world (p. 16). The Framework also promotes core values, with a particular emphasis on respect, empathy and openness to other world cultures (p. 15).

131. This approach has been reflected in the standard educational texts; in particular, as regards topics that have a bearing on identity, such as Arabic language, Islamic education and social studies. The texts, each in their various fields, focus on the principles of coexistence and on the common denominators shared by all people such as tolerance, peace, love and non-hatred. The courses have the following general aims:

- Providing students with knowledge that contributes to the formation of sound attitudes, values, and ideas, that guides their behaviour and that helps them to form a balanced personality;
- Developing understanding, critical thinking and the ability to analyse, interpret, and evaluate;
- Raising awareness about values of human cooperation, world peace and coexistence, the rejection of extremism in all its forms and the consolidation of bonds of friendship, solidarity and dialogue among peoples;
- Drawing attention to contemporary issues and global problems at all levels, and evaluating the role people themselves play in the forging of history and of historical events.

132. These aims are then taken up in the various lessons, subjects and activities that take place in schools, in order to encourage students to promote tolerance and dialogue, and to combat hatred.

133. Activities in schools lay emphasis on dialogue between and acceptance of different cultures. In that context, the UNESCO “Dialogue of Cultures” programme has been rolled out in Qatari schools. The programme has the purpose of building bridges for communication between students from different cultures and religious backgrounds by highlighting the folklore, costumes and heritage of peoples, and encouraging mutual respect. It also seeks to promote interaction between the students and the local and global communities, with their own different cultures. In addition, international cultural days are celebrated by museums in Qatar, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and private schools.

134. The Alliance of Civilizations programme, which was launched in 2018, includes a number of activities and subprogrammes that cover the four thematic areas of the Alliance; i.e., education, youth, migration and the media. One of the subprogrammes includes the awarding of prizes to incentivize researchers, students and institutions. The overall purpose is to:

- Encourage students to submit optimal research projects in areas that fall within the remit of the Alliance of Civilizations;
- Encourage schools to submit best practices and initiatives that promote the values and concepts behind the Alliance of Civilizations;
- Develop students’ academic research skills in the areas covered by the Alliance of Civilizations;
- Launch two versions of the Alliance of Civilizations prize for secondary school students on the subjects covered by the Alliance;

- Celebrate international days dedicated to human rights, such as Arab Human Rights Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, World Health Day, World Press Freedom Day, World Peace Day, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, International Day to Protect Education from Attack and International Day of Education.

135. A national campaign on the right to education was launched in 2018 with the participation of the competent authorities; i.e., the National Committee for Education, Culture and Science; the Ministry of Education and Higher Education; the National Human Rights Committee; the Education Above All Foundation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

136. As part of the cultural festival programme run by Katara Cultural Village, a number of folklore events are held in State-run and private schools in which the cultures and folklore of around 20 countries are showcased each year. The initiative involves exhibitions in State-run schools in the presence of groups from the schools of the communities concerned.

137. The Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, in cooperation with Qatari youth hostels, has organized three editions of the *Sufra Ghir* initiative with a view to increasing mutual understanding, exchanging knowledge and learning about the cultures and customs of different peoples, as well as encouraging young Qataris to become familiar with other cultures and to visit and discover the world. In its first edition, the initiative brought together young people from Qatar and Spain; in its second edition, Qatari female students met with female students from Brazil; and in the third edition Qatari female students had a chance to experience Indian culture.

138. The National Human Rights Committee runs training courses on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as part of its annual programmes for the following groups:

- Law enforcement officials;
- Preachers and imams in mosques;
- Students, teachers and officials charged with drafting the curriculum;
- Members of civil society groups.

139. The Diplomatic Institute, which is part of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has offered the following training courses on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination:

No.	Activity	Year	Outline of objectives	Target groups	Areas
1	Seminar on the Act concerning political asylum organized by the Diplomatic Institute in cooperation with the Faculty of Law at Qatar University	2018	Clarifying the purpose of the Act and the humanitarian role Qatar plays to defend persons who seek greater respect for human rights and freedoms by taking refuge in other States	Heads of department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomats	Human rights
2	Seminar on human security in all its aspects: Cooperation between Qatar and Austria, presented by His Excellency Willy Kempel, ambassador of Austria	2018	Discussing human rights violations and the importance of mobilizing the international community to protect such rights in any country where they are threatened	Heads of department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomats	Human rights
3	Book entitled "Readings in human rights"	2018	The book includes articles on various human rights-related topics from both a theoretical and a practical perspective, and the	Directors of human rights groups in Qatar, academics and ambassadors	Human rights

<i>No.</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Outline of objectives</i>	<i>Target groups</i>	<i>Areas</i>
			human rights model of the State of Qatar		
4	Seminar on challenges faced by international humanitarian law	2019	Defining international humanitarian law and armed conflict; the principles of international humanitarian law and humanitarian work in Islam; the experience of charitable work in the humanitarian field in Qatar; the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross in armed conflicts	Officials of the Legal Affairs Department	Human rights
5	Training course on multiculturalism and the dialogue of civilizations	2019	Defining dialogue, conflict and alliance between civilizations; the future of human civilizations; elements and conditions for dialogue between civilizations; the role of Qatar and of international organizations in the dialogue of civilizations	Diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ethnic and cultural diversity
6	Seminar held in collaboration with the Human Rights Department on the consequences of the ratification by Gulf States of international human rights treaties: the State of Qatar as a model	2020	Clarifying the national processes leading to the ratification of international human rights treaties on the part of GCC States; reservations; and the political, judicial and societal effects of ratification	Heads of department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomats	Human rights
7	Participation in consultations on the proposed strategic goals for the national action plan for human rights	2020	Engaging in consultation with all stakeholders and actors involved in promoting and protecting human rights	Members of various State agencies led by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Human rights
8	Remote training course on the role of diplomats in identifying cases of human trafficking, organized in cooperation with the Diplomatic Institute and the International Organization for Migration	2021	Building capacity of the diplomatic corps, both inside the country and at embassies abroad, as well as of officials who deal with issues of residency, embassy attaches and officials responsible for issuing visas in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Diplomats from embassies and from the Ministry	Fight against racial discrimination

Current activities

<i>No.</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Outline of objectives</i>	<i>Target groups</i>	<i>Areas</i>
9	Training course on international humanitarian law and cybercrime, in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)	2021	Defining international humanitarian law	Diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Human rights
10	Training course on intercultural negotiations	2021		Diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ethnic and cultural diversity
11	Training course on international humanitarian law	2021		Diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Human rights
12	Training course on the diplomacy of humanitarian work	2021		Diplomats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Human rights

Recommendation 16

140. The National Human Rights Committee takes due account of the goals of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action launched at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which was held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. Those goals include human rights education, awareness-raising activities, information campaigns and the development of school curricula.

141. In line with the Durban Declaration, Qatar uses its Doha Centre for Interfaith Dialogue to promote its conviction that building nations begins with building human beings, which in turn is to be accomplished via cooperation and human fellowship, for the purpose of erecting a society founded on mutual respect and harmonious coexistence, regardless of religion, culture or ethnicity. The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue is the leading institution in Qatar involved in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and in capacity-building for dialogue and a culture of peace.

142. One of the main issues facing the Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue is that of combating intolerance, discrimination and incitement to violence on grounds of religion or belief. It was in that area that the Centre – being the leading institution in Qatar involved in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and in capacity-building for dialogue and a culture of peace – focused its energies between 2020 and 2021. In fact, the Centre has expended considerable efforts to fulfil its mandate, ever since it was first opened in 2007.

143. The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue strives constantly to consolidate a culture of dialogue and coexistence, just as it continues to pursue international and United Nations recommendations to combat intolerance and eliminate all forms of racial discrimination (see annexes).