



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**  
**114th session**

**Summary record of the 3114th meeting**

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 28 November 2024, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Balcerzak

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*Combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of Saudi Arabia (continued)*

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

**Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention** *(continued)*

*Combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of Saudi Arabia (continued)*  
([CERD/C/SAU/10-11](#); [CERD/C/SAU/Q/10-11](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Saudi Arabia joined the meeting.*
2. **Mr. Guissé** (Country Rapporteur) said that, according to the information at the Committee's disposal, the State party's legislative framework did not meet all the standards enshrined in the Convention and in other international instruments. Stateless migrants, migrants in irregular situations and people whose work permits had expired faced particular legal challenges, and in practice, people in vulnerable groups lived in abusive conditions. The Committee had received reports of deportations that had violated the principle of non-refoulement, and other reports of inhuman conditions of detention. Some 650 Rohingya migrants had been detained in 2019, and a number of Tigrayan refugees from Ethiopia had been arbitrarily detained and deported to Ethiopia in 2020 and 2021. The Committee had also received reports of the use in 2022 and 2023 of firearms and explosives against people on the border with Yemen, resulting in hundreds of deaths among migrants and asylum-seekers from Ethiopia.
3. The Committee would like to know whether the Government intended to bring the country's national legislation into line with international standards, for example by establishing a framework for the protection of asylum-seekers and refugees that would respect the principle of non-refoulement and by ending the detention of asylum-seekers. It would appreciate it if the delegation could provide updated information on efforts to protect stateless persons and to prevent statelessness. He had seen reports that the children of Kenyan women were the subject of discrimination and were unable to receive Saudi Arabian birth certificates even if they were born in the country, resulting in numerous legal and administrative problems. It would thus be helpful to the Committee if the delegation could provide information and statistics on the issuance of documentation for such vulnerable persons.
4. In its preceding concluding observations, the Committee had recommended that the State party should end the sponsorship system and ensure that the employment of migrant workers was regulated by the country's labour law. He would like to hear about the steps taken to ensure that migrant domestic workers received the same labour protection as other workers and that migrant workers benefited from the same freedom of association and protection against exploitation and abuse as others. Were measures in place to facilitate the lodging of complaints by victims of such practices, and was the delegation able to provide information on complaints that had been filed, and on how such cases were handled? The Committee would appreciate it if the delegation could provide information on the penalties applied or compensation granted in such cases.
5. He noted that, notwithstanding the adoption in 2020 of a royal decree strengthening the protection of workers from vulnerable groups, including migrants, in 2021 and 2022 workers at Amazon distribution centres had been subjected to exploitation and mistreatment and employed in abysmal conditions. The delegation was invited to elaborate on the applicability of measures to protect workers in such situations. In June 2024, the Building and Wood Workers' International had filed a complaint with the International Labour Organization (ILO) alleging widespread human rights abuses of some 21,000 migrant workers in Saudi Arabia. The Committee would like to receive clarification on that case. Did the Government have any plans to conduct investigations into the allegations?
6. The State party's periodic report mentioned the legal protection of the rights of persons infected with HIV/AIDS. The Committee had received information that migrant workers were regularly subjected to HIV/AIDS tests when applying for work visas and that the applications of those who tested positive were often denied, leading to their deportation. What measures were in place to ensure that HIV/AIDS screening and health surveillance activities were not discriminatory? How many visas had been denied and deportations carried out for reasons related to applicants' health?

7. The Committee would like to receive detailed information on the steps taken by the State party to combat human trafficking, including through the prosecution of traffickers, and on the measures adopted to combat statelessness and protect stateless persons. In its previous concluding observations, the Committee had called for the State party to amend its nationality law to eliminate discrimination against foreign-nationality spouses of Saudi women and the children of Saudi and foreign nationals, and to allow Saudi women to transmit their nationality to their foreign spouses and to their children from birth. Did the Government have plans to amend its nationality legislation?

8. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the legislation stipulated that the State must offer asylum when it was in the public interest to do so and that only victims of political persecution were eligible. Saudi Arabia had concluded agreements with a number of countries, stipulating that applicants were protected by the principle of non-refoulement when their cases were of a political nature.

9. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that assistance was extended to refugees and asylum-seekers on the basis of Islamic beliefs and that a large number of refugees, for example from the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, had received such assistance, including in health and education services, and benefited from the same rights as citizens. In order to ensure the safe return of refugees, a committee reviewed their cases prior to repatriation, and refugees were never sent to countries where there was armed conflict, a threat of harassment or persecution or other threats to their lives. Under the law of the State party, it was illegal to subject anyone, including a refugee, to ill-treatment.

10. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the State party had adopted laws to ensure the safety of its citizens and to defend its borders, in accordance with international standards. Border guards and law enforcement services thus worked to prevent trafficking in persons, weapons and drugs while observing the standards of international humanitarian law. Traffickers and migrants were treated with dignity and respect from their entry into the country until their departure. The Government had established appropriate shelters and facilities to house persons who entered the country illegally, and border guards and other officials who had contact with them received specific training. There was no tolerance for any violation of their rights.

11. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that human trafficking was considered a serious cross-border crime. Saudi Arabia had acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. It had also established a national referral mechanism to ensure the practical implementation of legislation in that field and to allow for a high level of cooperation among the relevant agencies, thus providing for complementarity and for services and support to be given to victims. In the Saudi Human Rights Commission and in the courts and the prosecution service, dedicated services addressed the problem of human trafficking, and a support fund for victims of human trafficking had been established in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to make possible the safe return and reintegration of victims. A memorandum of understanding had been signed between IOM and the Saudi Human Rights Commission. Cooperation was carried out with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the problem of human trafficking to ensure that the State party's efforts were consistent with international standards and best practices. The national referral mechanism had an independent secretariat, and it defined the responsibilities of the various stakeholders, ensured the delivery of services for victims and assisted in the prosecution of traffickers.

12. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that persons with irregular status in Saudi Arabia were provided with health and other humanitarian services and that their children were allowed to take part in public education. They were issued with marriage and birth certificates and had the opportunity to regularize their documentation. Persons with disabilities who had irregular status had the same access to services as anyone else with disabilities.

13. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Rights and Responsibilities of HIV/AIDS Sufferers Act guaranteed that persons living with HIV/AIDS received medical care until their departure from the country.

14. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that, because of the country's historical context, the Government did not classify people's ethnic origin by colour, national origin or certain other factors. It was considered that such classifications could lead to a nefarious type of generalization, so different determinants were used in demographic classification. However, the rules given to various agencies for the collection of specific and disaggregated statistics were evolving and currently took into account various human rights dimensions.

15. **Mr. Guissé** said that it would be helpful if the delegation could provide information on the complaints that he had mentioned relating to the labour rights of thousands of migrants and could describe in greater detail the training activities organized for judges.

16. **Mr. Amir** said that he wished to thank the State party for its positive efforts in addressing questions of discrimination that had arisen during his tenure as Chair of the Committee, when certain issues had arisen between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on the one hand and Qatar on the other. He noted that there were currently no such issues between those countries and praised the State party for its approach in improving the situation.

17. **Ms. Stavrinaki** (Country Rapporteur) said that she wished to know how many people had been granted asylum and how the authorities implemented the legal provision establishing that asylum was granted on the basis of the public interest. It was still not clear whether any investigations had been conducted into reports that migrants had been attacked on the border with Yemen, or whether any of the perpetrators had been brought to justice. The Committee had not yet received a response to its question about the detention and deportation of Rohingya and Ethiopian migrants.

18. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that he would welcome further information on the treatment afforded to foreign nationals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. In particular, he wished to know whether such persons were required to return to their countries of origin or whether they were allowed to keep their jobs and remain in Saudi Arabia.

19. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know the conditions under which a Saudi woman could transmit her nationality to her child if the child's father was stateless. Was it possible for a Saudi father to transmit his nationality to his children if the mother was not a Saudi national?

20. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the duties and responsibilities of migrant workers and their employers were set out in their contracts. Workers whose contracts had terminated could either return to their home countries or enter into a contract with other employers in Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development had launched a programme to help jobseekers, including foreigners, to find employment. Under the programme, migrants' living standards were enhanced and socioeconomic development was promoted. All categories of migrant were entitled to participate in the programme and participants were granted access to social services.

21. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the question of whether migrant workers living with HIV/AIDS would be required to leave the country depended on the nature of the contract that they had concluded with their employer.

22. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the abuse of female domestic workers was an offence under the law and that any such workers who had been abused were treated as victims. Under national law, abusers were prosecuted and female domestic workers, whistle-blowers and witnesses were protected. Female domestic workers subjected to any form of abuse were afforded redress rather than being punished.

23. When a female domestic worker had been abused, her contract with her employer was interpreted in a manner favourable to her and she retained the right to establish a new contract with another employer. Shelters supervised by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development and the Saudi Human Rights Commission provided welfare services, psychosocial support and legal aid to female domestic workers across the country.

24. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development monitored all workplaces to ensure that they were in compliance with the relevant regulations. Penalties were imposed on any person or organization that violated

those regulations. Aggravating circumstances were considered to apply when the same violation was repeated. Penalties were imposed automatically through a platform established for that purpose. A large number of inspections had been undertaken between the first quarter of 2023 and the third quarter of 2024, and some 274,000 violations had been registered and the necessary corrective actions had been taken.

25. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that, in 2002, the *kafala* system had been eliminated and the term “sponsor” had been replaced with the term “employer”. Employers were prohibited from retaining the passports of employees or their family members. The relationship between employees and employers was contractual and based on the relevant laws and regulations. Employees were permitted to transfer their services to another employer when their contract terminated. Over 1 million workers had used the services established for migrant workers.

26. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the delegation was unable to comment on the complaint filed by the Building and Wood Workers’ International, as it was currently under consideration. In connection with the country’s application to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup, an independent assessor had visited the country and had issued views on aspects of human rights in Saudi Arabia. An independent report published on the FIFA website included numerous recommendations relating to human rights. The Government had drawn up a human rights strategy relating to the organization of the 2034 FIFA World Cup that addressed diversity, the protection of workers and other aspects of human rights and that set out initiatives for improving the mechanisms currently in place to protect workers and to combat discrimination. It also addressed matters relating to refugees.

27. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre supported a broad range of humanitarian sectors without discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, ethnicity or disability. The Centre provided relief and developmental aid and services to dozens of countries through projects, with a total budget of over \$700 billion. The projects provided beneficiaries with clothes, legal aid and access to empowerment programmes and education in camps. Specific projects provided support to refugees and displaced persons in various countries. Shelter in the form of tents and caravans had been provided to a significant number of persons.

28. Efforts were made to promote the social reintegration of persons with disabilities, guidelines on dealing with children with disabilities were issued to parents and teachers, school facilities were adapted to meet the needs of children with disabilities, and training, empowerment and capacity-building sessions had been conducted for the staff of government agencies dealing with disability issues.

29. The Government had implemented almost 1,000 humanitarian projects to support persons in 48 countries in Africa and had also provided a significant level of development support to a number of African countries. Saudi Arabia had recently hosted a donor conference to support displaced persons and refugees in the Sahel and in the Lake Chad region. One of the objectives of the conference had been to mobilize resources for humanitarian and development initiatives specifically benefiting internally displaced persons and refugees. A total of 10 donor countries and organizations had pledged over \$1 billion to support humanitarian response efforts in the Sahel and the Lake Chad region.

30. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that Saudi Arabia had become a very attractive destination for migrant workers from all over the world. Migrant workers in Saudi Arabia promoted the economies of their countries by transferring remittances. Over \$176 billion had been transferred by migrant workers between 2018 and 2022.

*The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 11.20 a.m.*

31. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she would be interested to hear about any measures taken to identify disadvantaged groups, address the root causes of their situation and promote their equal enjoyment of human rights. She would welcome information on any measures taken to design culturally acceptable gender-sensitive and context-responsive health facilities, goods and services.

32. It would be interesting to know the State party’s definition of a citizen and to find out whether members of minority ethnic groups, including members of black Arab communities,

were considered to be citizens on an equal footing with the rest of the population. The Committee would welcome information on the fate of the black Saudi rapper who had been arrested following a social media campaign condemning one of her songs. It would like to know whether any redress had been afforded to her and whether her treatment was representative of broader discriminatory attitudes.

33. She wondered whether any measures would be taken to address the digital divide and ensure that women living in remote and rural areas who did not have access to digital technology would be able to benefit from the strategies set out in Saudi Vision 2030. The Committee would appreciate information on any measures taken to mitigate the disproportionate impact of climate change on the health and living conditions of rural women. Had rural women participated in the development of the Government's response to climate change or been consulted about it?

34. The Committee would welcome information on any steps taken to establish a specific human rights-based legislative framework for domestic workers and any special measures implemented to protect women migrant domestic workers, including by granting them access to social security, the minimum wage and compulsory health insurance schemes. Did the State party intend to refrain from subjecting migrant women to mandatory HIV/AIDS testing?

35. She would be interested to hear about steps taken to ensure that all female foreign workers, and specifically domestic workers, had effective access to culturally sensitive and gender-responsive healthcare. It would be useful to know whether existing laws and regulations provided explicitly for leave to visit healthcare providers and whether the State party provided female foreign domestic workers and other foreign workers with access to mental health services.

36. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that, pursuant to the Basic Law of Governance and the Health Act, the Government provided comprehensive and integrated healthcare to all members of the population in an equitable manner. Both citizens and non-citizen residents of the country benefited without discrimination from such services – which were free of charge – and from health insurance coverage. As part of Saudi Vision 2030, a digital hospital had been launched with a view to facilitating remote access to health services in various regions. The hospital was linked with hundreds of medical and health facilities and could provide services to almost 500,000 patients every year. More than 28 million persons benefited from modern healthcare services. The National Platform for Health and Insurance Exchange Services, which had been created for the confidential exchange of medical information as part of efforts to upgrade the Saudi healthcare system, contained health records for more than 30 million people.

37. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the Government had taken a series of steps to protect all workers from mistreatment and exploitation. Under article 61 of the Labour Code, employers were prohibited from using forced labour and from employing persons without a contract, and they were obligated to respect workers' dignity. Any person who participated in trafficking in persons could be punished with a prison sentence of up to 15 years, a fine of 1 million Saudi Arabian riyals, or both; trafficking of a woman was an aggravating circumstance. Employers were also prohibited by law from attempting by any means of communication to induce employees to enter into an illegal relationship. The measures to be taken in the event of such violations or harassment were provided for by law, and any such violations were investigated by labour inspectorates.

38. Under a digital documentation programme launched by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in 2022, more than 9 million employment contracts had been authenticated on the Qiwa online platform, which had been created to ensure compliance by both employers and employees, including both Saudis and foreigners. Under another programme, the Government ensured that workers in the private sector enjoyed a proper working environment. It monitored all payroll systems to ensure that companies disbursed wages punctually and in compliance with contracts. As at the third quarter of 2024, companies' rate of compliance in that regard had reached almost 90 per cent, well above the established target of 77 per cent. Standards had been introduced for protecting and preserving dignity in the workplace for both Saudi nationals and foreigners, without discrimination.

39. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that harassment in all its forms was criminalized under Saudi law, including under the Anti-Harassment Act, which was intended to protect the dignity and personal inviolability of victims. Such protections covered both Saudi nationals and other residents of Saudi Arabia, including foreign domestic workers. The commission of harassment in the workplace, in a shelter or in a situation in which the perpetrator was in a position of direct or indirect authority or influence over the victim was an aggravating factor. Persons convicted of that offence could be punished with a prison sentence of up to 5 years, a fine of SR1 300,000, or both.

40. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that implementation of the non-discriminatory provisions of laws such as the Basic Law of Governance, the Civil Service Act, the Labour Code and the Health Act was supervised inter alia by the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority and the Saudi Human Rights Commission. Remedy and redress could be sought inter alia before the judicial and administrative courts, which imposed penalties against persons who violated those provisions.

41. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the level of the minimum wage paid to nationals and non-nationals was subject to assessment. Housing, transport and health benefits were not included in the wage but were provided by employers or by the Government.

42. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that a programme had been launched as part of Saudi Vision 2030 to ensure compliance with the highest international standards of occupational health and safety for the protection of foreign resident workers. The programme called for reviewing and revising laws and regulations in that area, in coordination with relevant departments. The level of compliance with such standards had continued to improve in 2024 and had reached more than 70 per cent. In March 2024, the country had become a party to the ILO Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187). Under the Saudi Labour Code, employers were responsible for providing universal health coverage for all workers and for protecting them against the heat in the summer.

43. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that article 61 of the Labour Code had been supplemented with provisions under which discrimination on any grounds when recruiting or terminating employees was prohibited. Employers were obligated to provide workers with adequate housing and transportation from their homes to the workplace or to pay them appropriate allowances in lieu of those benefits. In 2024, the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and Housing had published technical specifications concerning group housing for workers. The conditions in such housing were monitored inter alia by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. Approximately 250 violations in relation to such housing had been identified and were being addressed through legal action.

44. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that, while cases of racial discrimination might have occurred in Saudi Arabia, no specific group had suffered systemic discrimination that would necessitate the use of special measures.

45. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that a number of initiatives had been carried out to increase the capacities of farmers and domesticate jobs such as animal herding. The Sustainable Agricultural Rural Development Programme for the period 2019–2024, which had been launched to provide support to small-scale farmers in specific areas, offered equal opportunities to men and women. The proportion of the Programme's female beneficiaries since its launch had risen to 70 per cent in 2023. Nearly 150 women had received empowerment training in 2024 as part of a leadership initiative, and some 20 women in the north of the country had applied to the Programme to receive assistance with animal husbandry techniques.

46. The right of all persons to have access to food and drinking water was safeguarded by law. The Food Act of 2014 provided for the protection of food safety and improvements to its quality and the protection of public health through the dissemination of safe nutritional practices. Additional regulations on food security had been adopted in 2023. In 2018, the Government had launched a food security strategy in the context of Saudi Vision 2030, with a view to providing all persons with safe and nutritious food and addressing nutrition hazards. Under the Water Act of 2016, all persons were to have access to sufficient high-quality

drinking water to meet their needs, and the agricultural sector was to be provided with sufficient water to achieve sustainability.

47. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that under the Saudi Arabian Nationality Act of 1954, entitlement to Saudi nationality was based on objective criteria such as place of birth and place of residence rather than on factors such as ethnicity or lineage.

48. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that a woman had reportedly recently been arrested after portraying her Afro-Saudi identity in a song. She wished to hear more about narratives regarding Saudi identity – especially with respect to Afrodescendent Saudi women – and to learn how inclusiveness was promoted in practice. The Committee would be interested to know whether a special legal regime was applied to domestic workers, or whether such workers were covered by the Labour Code, and whether the Code covered agricultural workers and chauffeurs or drivers. She would welcome more information on the offences for which perpetrators of abuse and harassment – especially against foreign women domestic workers – could be charged and the penalties that could be applied for such offences. Given that there were reportedly many more migrants in the country than there were registered contracts for the employment of such persons, she wondered whether any measures were in place for monitoring informal employment and identifying migrants engaged in such work, who were the most vulnerable and in need of protection. Noting that all countries had groups that were historically disadvantaged and in need of special measures, she said that she would welcome more information on the existence of such groups in Saudi Arabia.

49. **Ms. McDougall** said that she wondered whether all persons who entered Saudi Arabia in order to work were allowed to be joined by their family members and, if so, whether they all enjoyed that permission on an equal footing. She wished to know what laws applied to those family members and whether they received healthcare coverage and sufficient benefits to support a decent standard of living.

50. **Ms. Tlakula** (Follow-up Coordinator) said that in its follow-up report ([CERD/C/SAU/CO/4-9/Add.1](#)), the State party had provided some information on implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee in paragraph 20 (a) of its concluding observations ([CERD/C/SAU/CO/4-9](#)) with respect to measures taken to protect foreign domestic workers from abuse and exploitation. However, it had not commented on whether those measures had been effective. She wished to hear more about the impact of those measures.

51. **Mr. Tlemçani** said that he would be interested to hear about the relationship between the organization of the 2034 FIFA World Cup and the human rights strategy that the Government had adopted and would apply during that event.

52. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know how many people were estimated to be stateless in Saudi Arabia. As 2024 marked the end of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, under which States were encouraged to implement national action plans to combat statelessness, he wondered whether Saudi Arabia had already adopted such a plan. If not, what other mechanism was planned to address the situation of stateless persons in the country?

53. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that all foreign nationals who entered Saudi Arabia for work did so in accordance with the rules regulating their relationship with their employer, as set out in their employment contracts. Legally, there was nothing to prevent migrant workers from being accompanied by their families. That possibility depended on the type of contract concluded with the employer and whether it provided for the family to accompany the worker.

54. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development provided assistance to workers of all kinds, including domestic workers, through various channels, including by phone, using a dedicated telephone number, and in person at its headquarters or one of its branches. The Ministry had introduced an online service for the amicable settlement of labour disputes. Workers were thus able to assert their rights, or if attempts to reach a settlement were unsuccessful they could pursue litigation. An employment counselling centre had also been established for workers. The Saudi Human Rights Commission provided legal assistance to all workers, including migrant workers, in



connection with human rights matters. Leaflets had been distributed in five languages to inform domestic workers of their rights and the procedures for redress if any of those rights were violated. Numerous workshops had been held in countries of origin of migrant workers and at recruitment offices in those countries to familiarize workers with their rights.

55. Under article 61 of the Labour Code, employers must not withhold their workers' wages or any part thereof. They must treat them with due respect and refrain from saying or doing anything that offended their dignity or religion. As mentioned in the report, a large number of labour tribunals had been set up throughout the country.

56. Complaints filed by domestic workers were handled in accordance with standard legal procedure. Those that constituted criminal offences were referred to the Public Prosecution Service, while labour violations were dealt with in accordance with the Regulations Governing Domestic Workers. A total of 296 complaints had been received by the Domestic Workers Department at the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development between 2023 and the second quarter of 2024. Between 2020 and 2023, the Public Prosecution Service had received 2,014 complaints filed by or otherwise involving domestic workers.

57. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the Government understood that the mere existence of legislation was not sufficient to ensure the protection of all groups. Accordingly, a series of mechanisms was in place to ensure enforcement of the law. Government agencies and the Saudi Human Rights Commission all had branches in the country's 13 administrative regions. The statistics and indicators presented to the Committee spoke for themselves. The number of arrivals and the satisfaction rating among migrant workers were used to measure the attractiveness of Saudi Arabia as a destination for workers from all over the world.

58. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a pivotal role in facilitating family reunification for migrant workers residing in the country. It oversaw the issuance of family visit visas for first-degree relatives of residents, such as parents, spouses and children. Visa applications could also be submitted through the e-services platform. The Ministry coordinated with the relevant authorities, such as the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, on matters related to domestic workers. Saudi embassies abroad liaised with the competent authorities to facilitate recruitment procedures and family reunification. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also provided logistical support to other ministries and the recruitment sector to conduct meetings with officials in foreign workers' countries of origin. It had launched e-services to facilitate recruitment procedures and reduce reliance on traditional agencies. The Ministry contributed to accelerating the process of family reunification for foreign workers, thus enhancing their social and psychological well-being.

59. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that work was under way to develop statistical databases to produce national human rights indicators. Efforts were also being made to address the situation of those residing in the country irregularly by ensuring that a balance was struck between the application of the relevant legislation and the protection of human rights, and that such persons were not subjected to any racial discrimination.

60. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that Saudi Vision 2030 comprised 96 strategic objectives spread across 11 programmes, of which about 15 per cent were dedicated to ensuring equality and achieving a high quality of life and sustainable lifestyle for all, without discrimination. It thus reflected the country's commitment to building an inclusive and multicultural society. For example, the National Transformation Programme aimed to promote social justice and improve public services. One of its goals was to improve working conditions for migrant workers, and the relevant targets had already been exceeded between 2020 and 2023. The rate of compliance with the migrant workers' wage protection system had also increased significantly during that period.

61. The Human Capability Development Programme, which focused on preparing individuals for the labour market, sought to foster the values of moderation and tolerance among all segments of society. For its part, the Quality of Life Programme was aimed at improving living conditions for migrant workers by facilitating their residence in the country with their families, enabling them to own property, providing appropriate educational opportunities, supporting their integration into the local community and conducting awareness campaigns on other cultures through audiovisual media.

62. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council were taken into account when the Government reviewed national human rights strategies, including those developed for major sporting events.

63. It was a source of pride for Saudi Arabia that all of the people working on the human rights team at the Permanent Mission in Geneva were women. They played an important role in the negotiation of draft resolutions on human rights in the Council and at other organizations in Geneva. With regard to the State's position in respect of the situation of persons of African descent and the impact of climate change, at the international level, Saudi Arabia advocated on those questions. It was committed to defending the interests of developing countries and to ensuring that their perspectives were always taken into consideration in negotiations and decision-making processes at the United Nations and specialized agencies in Geneva.

64. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that the Committee was grateful for the constructive dialogue and looked forward to receiving the report on follow-up to its concluding observations. Saudi Arabia had opened a window to the world, but, for now, it was the ruling classes – predominantly men – who were standing in front of that window. The Committee hoped that the State party would use its concluding observations to enlarge the window and ensure a safe space for all sectors of the population – Saudi citizens and non-nationals, members of ethnic and religious minorities, Saudis of African descent, migrants, women, men, and children.

65. **Mr. Guissé** said that the dialogue had highlighted the opportunities and challenges faced by Saudi Arabia in hosting such large numbers of migrant workers from all over the world. The Committee had noted with interest the genuine efforts made to open up a more inclusive society. In that connection, it hoped that Saudi Vision 2030 would apparently be a driving force for further progress.

66. **Mr. Amir** said that he welcomed the continued positive efforts made in Saudi Arabia, including its contributions in the service of peace in the region.

67. **A representative of Saudi Arabia** said that her delegation was grateful for the Committee's constructive remarks during the dialogue. Saudi Arabia had not only opened a window to the world, but had opened its doors to everyone. The Convention formed part of the domestic legal order and was taken into consideration in all legislative reviews and in the development of plans, policies and operational implementation measures. The provisions of the Convention were also invoked before the courts. The delegation looked forward to receiving the Committee's concluding observations, which it hoped would be actionable and would take into account the clarifications provided during the dialogue. The Standing Committee for Reporting, operating under the Saudi Human Rights Commission, in which all relevant stakeholders were represented, would study the recommendations and take all necessary measures, in coordination with the relevant authorities, to ensure the implementation of those that fell within the scope of the country's obligations under the Convention. Many of the Committee's previous recommendations had already been translated into legislative measures or policies.

68. **The Chair** said that the Committee was grateful to the delegation for the constructive dialogue. It wished the State party every success with the implementation of Vision Saudi 2030 and hoped that human rights would be at the heart of those efforts. The Committee hoped that the State party also shared its vision of a world free of racial discrimination.

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*