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Summary record of the 42nd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 2 October 2023, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Crăciunecan-Tatu

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports (continued)

(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant (continued)

Initial report of Qatar (E/C.12/QAT/1; E/C.12/QAT/Q/1; E/C.12/QAT/RQ/1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Qatar joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that her Government had made vital steps towards implementing the Qatar National Vision 2030 in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant and had worked towards improving access to information and communications technology for citizens and other residents, notably for populations who required specific support, including persons with disabilities, older persons and migrant workers.
3. The proportion of women who had graduated from university in Qatar had reached 67.5 per cent, with 37 per cent of women aged 25 to 29 years and 49 per cent of women aged 30 to 34 years participating in the workforce. The first female prosecutor had been appointed in a precedent considered the first of its kind in the region.
4. In the Human Development Report 2021–2022 published by the United Nations Development Programme, Qatar had ranked among the top three Arab countries and forty-second globally. Qatar was keen to assess its progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; construction for the 2022 World Cup had been a worthwhile experiment in how to adhere to green construction standards and reduce energy and water waste.
5. In recent years, Qatar had been using a strategic approach to integrate the provisions of the Covenant into national legislation while maintaining consistency with sharia. Several human rights-focused governmental organizations had been established; Qatar was also encouraging the establishment of human rights-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
6. A joint committee representing migrant workers and their employers had been established to continue strengthening the rights and protection of such workers. Several programmes had been established to educate migrant workers on their rights and help them to integrate into Qatari society.
7. Her country's strategy to combat coronavirus disease (COVID-19) had consisted of three pillars: protecting all residents of the country without discrimination, providing adequate medical care and ensuring the continuation of key services; mitigating the economic and social consequences of the pandemic and providing financial support to the country's different economic sectors; and providing international support, which had benefited 80 countries around the world. Qatar had also supported international efforts to provide equal access to vaccines.
8. The support provided to other countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals was a voluntary act, since Qatar was not one of the industrialized developed countries required by the United Nations to do so. The adoption of the Doha Political Declaration at the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries reflected the commitment of Qatar to assist the development of those countries, despite the high cost at times.
9. The opening of United Nations House in Doha in March 2023 was an important step in the cooperation between Qatar and the United Nations and would allow the country to effectively carry out its mandate and implement its regional programmes.
10. **Mr. Nonthasoot** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee recognized the positive developments achieved by Qatar towards fulfilling the provisions of the Covenant. He wondered how the State party planned to apply the Covenant in national courts, and how it would sit alongside sharia as a source of legislation. Information would be welcome on whether the State party planned to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Covenant and to consider withdrawing its reservations to articles 3 and 8 of the Covenant.

11. He wondered whether there was a framework that required executives and staff of the National Human Rights Committee to abide by the principles of pluralism and diversity. He would like to know how effective the National Human Rights Committee had been in providing remedies for victims of human rights violations and how timely it had been in issuing recommendations for such victims.

12. He wished to know whether the State party planned to clarify the circumstances in which a civil society organization might be considered against the public interest and consequently denied approval, and whether there were plans to remove the requirement for prior approval completely. He would appreciate information about the situation of human rights defenders who had faced travel restrictions and arbitrary detention.

13. He wondered whether the State party had any regulatory framework aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent by 2030. He would like to know more about the country's waste management and recycling programmes.

14. Noting that Qatar was one of the best-scoring countries in the Middle East and North Africa region in the Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International, he wondered whether the State party planned to implement independent mechanisms to make its anti-corruption framework more robust and credible and ensure that senior officials and members of the ruling family were held publicly accountable for the allocation of state resources.

15. He would like to know whether the State party planned to implement a national action plan on business and human rights; to make human rights due diligence mandatory for businesses; and to introduce a robust and professional case management system to ensure that claims from the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund were processed effectively. He would welcome information on any enforcement mechanism that was in place to deal with non-compliant employers. He was keen to know whether the Qatar Investment Authority used human rights due diligence to guide its investment policies and whether it would consider adopting the environmental, social and governance framework of the Principles for Responsible Investment, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct.

16. Noting that the Constitution did not include a comprehensive legal framework to cover the types of discrimination prohibited under the Covenant, he said that the Committee was gravely concerned by reports of discrimination against religious minorities, notably the Baha'i community, and would welcome the delegation's comments regarding allegations that members of that community were regularly refused official documents and permits such as those that were required for employment or residency purposes. He would like to know what was being done to revise the law that required non-Muslim religious groups to register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to address violations of those groups' economic, social and cultural rights.

17. In the light of reports that members of the stateless Ghufran clan and non-Qatari citizens were denied a range of rights and government benefits afforded to Qatari nationals, the Committee wished to encourage the State party to become a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. He would welcome the delegation's comments on the existence of a quasi-caste system based on national origin, notably resulting in discrimination in the areas of employment and housing.

18. He wondered whether the delegation could provide a clear response on any concrete plans to withdraw the reservation to article 3 of the Covenant and to systematically revise the legal framework to align with the principles of the Covenant, notably with regard to the criminalization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

19. **A representative of Qatar** said that a national committee had been established to ensure the implementation of the Covenant within national legislation. His country's Government had no plans to accede to the Optional Protocol because it had confidence in the effectiveness of its domestic redress system; neither were there any plans to withdraw the reservation to article 3 of the Covenant. The National Human Rights Committee dealt

effectively with all claims brought before it; no one was barred from filing a complaint, and at times that Committee helped individuals to present their claims before the courts.

20. There was no discrimination against any religious minority; Baha'i enjoyed the same rights as other Qatari citizens. There were more than 120 different sects within Qatari society and there was no legal recognition of the right to belong to those sects since everyone was free to practise their religion. Deportations were not carried out on the basis of religion but rather in cases where residency regulations had been violated; most deportations affected Sunni Arabs, who were the majority demographic group. Individuals were not prosecuted on the basis of their sexual orientation but were required to respect the cultural norms of Qatari society.

21. **A representative of Qatar** said that there was no consensus among other States parties regarding the balance between the application of the Covenant and of sharia, and that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations referred to a respect for the circumstances and legislation within each State party. Qatar adhered to the provisions of the Covenant where those provisions were compliant with sharia, which was the main source for national legislation and the Constitution.

22. **A representative of Qatar** said that there were 22 civil society organizations in the country and 8 more that were in the process of being established. National legislation had given such organizations more flexibility and independence; allowed them to operate within the education sector for the first time; ensured that the Government did not interfere in elections for their boards of directors; and permitted them to carry out their activities simply by notifying the relevant ministry and without requiring a government licence. Several charitable organizations were also active in the country; their existence and operation were regulated by national legislation.

23. **A representative of Qatar** said that members of the ruling family were not above the law, and the delegation would happily respond to any questions concerning the allocation of State resources. Several pieces of legislation had been adopted in recent years to combat money-laundering and terrorism. Furthermore, in 2020, separate definitions of a foreign public official and an official of a public international organization had been adopted in order to bring Qatari regulations into line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The Administrative Control and Transparency Authority had been established under Amiri Decree No. 75 of 2011 to strengthen oversight, ensure transparency and the integrity of public officials and combat corruption. Lastly, Qatar had made a commitment to building a training and research centre on judicial integrity in Doha in 2021, at a high-level meeting of the Global Judicial Integrity Network jointly organized by the Supreme Council of the Judiciary and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

24. **A representative of Qatar** said that the State had confiscated a total of nearly 160 million Qatari riyals (QR) in proceeds of corruption. In a report published in 2023, the Financial Action Task Force had praised Qatar for its understanding of money-laundering and terrorism financing risks and for its efforts to address them, as well as for its effective oversight of the financial sector. The Task Force had also underlined that the State was effectively confiscating large sums of money, including proceeds of crime, and the report served to illustrate the commitment of Qatar to combating illicit financing domestically and contributing to international efforts in that regard. Legislation had also been passed in 2022 to ensure that victims of money-laundering, human trafficking or terrorism offences were provided with redress.

25. **A representative of Qatar** said that the Institute of Legal and Judicial Studies provided lawyers with training on various international instruments, including the Covenant.

26. **A representative of Qatar** said that her country's approach to development and the promotion of human rights was enshrined in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which had been drawn up following consultations with representatives of the public and private sectors and civil society. The commitment of Qatar to supporting global development was reflected in the funds that it distributed to poorer countries, including in times of economic crisis, through the Qatar Fund for Development. Expenditure on international aid had reached approximately US\$ 847 million in 2022.

27. **Ms. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that her country's ambitious pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent by 2030 had been made as part of its National Climate Change Action Plan. The Plan set out more than 35 initiatives designed to reduce carbon emissions among a total of more than 300 measures aimed at helping the country adapt to the impact of climate change, preserve biodiversity, ensure food security, improve health care and increase the flexibility of infrastructure and the economy.

28. A sustainability strategy had been implemented for the organization of the 2022 World Cup. Every effort had been made to achieve carbon neutrality, and the target had been set to recycle 80 per cent of all the waste generated during the tournament. Organizers had been supported in their efforts to offset carbon emissions by the Global Carbon Council, a regional mechanism that Qatar had helped to establish.

29. **A representative of Qatar** said that the activities of all private and public enterprises were regulated by labour laws compelling them to respect the human rights of their employees. The Ministry of Labour provided multiple channels to facilitate the submission of complaints by workers, including migrant workers. Complaints were sent to the Ministry's dispute resolution committees and, where necessary, could be referred to the courts. Mechanisms had been put in place to ensure that businesses provided redress for any harm they were found to have caused to their employees. In 2022, the Ministry of Labour had received approximately 31,000 complaints, 80 per cent of which had been settled. The Ministry had also set up the wage protection system, which was an integrated electronic system designed to administer and document the payment of workers' wages. Approximately 1.8 million workers and 70,000 companies were currently registered with the system and, under an amendment to the Labour Code in 2023, harsher penalties had been introduced for employers who contravened the rules. In 2023, more than 1,000 employment facilities and companies had been shut down for violating their workers' rights under the Labour Code, and the Ministry of Labour had referred a further 2,535 cases to the courts.

30. **A representative of Qatar** said that the drafting of a national human rights plan had been interrupted because of a cabinet reshuffle. The Government was in the process of forming a new committee to oversee preparation of the plan, and it was hoped that drafting would resume without delay.

31. There was nothing in national legislation that discriminated against women with respect to their access to the labour market, and women did not need to obtain authorization from a male guardian as a prerequisite for employment. The Government continued to take measures to increase women's employment in the public and private sector, support women in setting up small businesses and help female artisans to find a market for their products. At the same time, considerable progress had been made with respect to gender equality in education; the proportion of Qatari women who had completed higher education currently stood at approximately 71 per cent.

32. **Ms. Saran** said that she would like to know what measures had been taken to meet the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of gross national income to official development assistance and what progress the State party had made towards achieving that goal.

33. **Mr. Windfuhr** said that he would welcome further information on the work of the National Committee for Women, Children, Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities, which had been established in 2019 to support the enactment of human rights legislation and the review of other laws to bring them into line with international treaties. He would be interested to know whether, in its efforts to fulfil that mandate, the National Committee had identified any particularly significant gaps in legislation. The delegation might provide more details regarding the reservation to article 3 of the Covenant.

34. He would welcome further information about the nature of the issues reported to officials by migrant workers and their families at the six Qatari visa centres that had been opened in other countries. He would appreciate clarification of whether the figures that the State party had provided on the average incomes of the richest and poorest demographic groups referred to the total population or only to Qatari nationals. Lastly, he wished to know what measures were being taken to ensure that migrant workers enjoyed access to basic services such as health and education on an equal footing with Qatari nationals.

35. **Mr. Amarti** said that he would appreciate an explanation as to why the State party had not yet acceded to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Moreover, the delegation had said that the Government did not intend to sign the Optional Protocol because sufficient domestic remedies were already available in the State party. He wondered whether it really considered that to be a compelling argument against accession. To his mind, the availability of robust domestic remedies should never preclude the accession by a country to regional and international mechanisms for the protection and advancement of human rights.

36. **Mr. Fiorio Vaesken** said that the Committee would like to know whether the State party intended to take measures to ensure that stateless persons had access to public services. He also wished to know whether the State party had set up mechanisms for preparing periodic reports to the human rights treaty bodies and for monitoring implementation of the recommendations made by those bodies, as well as those of special procedure mandate holders and the universal periodic review mechanism.

37. **Ms. Rossi** said that, given the high percentage of women in the labour market, she would like to learn more about the care policies in place for children, older persons and persons with disabilities. It would be particularly interesting to learn whether there were policies for the equal distribution of care for family members between men and women. The delegation was invited to outline the regulations on maternity and paternity leave. She would like further information on the programmes to support persons with disabilities and older persons in leading an independent life.

38. **Mr. Nonthasoot** said that, in the light of the conflicting numbers provided to the Committee, he would appreciate some clarification regarding the size of the Baha'i community in the State party. He would welcome more information regarding the deportation risk faced by followers of religions other than Islam. He also wished to know whether same-sex relationships were criminalized in the State party.

39. While the action taken on corruption by various ministries was welcome, the Committee would like to know whether there was a single mechanism to hold senior officials accountable. He would like to hear more about the targets set out in the National Climate Change Action Plan. Information on the process of developing a national action plan on business and human rights would be appreciated, as well as an indication of when such a plan would be approved. With regard to the 3,100 complaints that had led to 1,150 businesses being shut down, he would like to know more about the nature of the complaints and which agency had shut the businesses down.

40. **A representative of Qatar** said that the National Committee for Women, Children, Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities was operational and worked to fulfil the requirements under the international conventions ratified by his country. It analysed current and proposed legislation that affected women and children. Monitoring of the rights of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities was conducted in collaboration with civil society organizations. The National Committee also contributed to the drafting of reports for submission to treaty bodies, including the initial report submitted under the Covenant. The membership of the National Committee included persons from the groups it sought to protect.

41. **Ms. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that with regard to corruption, there was no discrimination in the application of the law, which applied to all public officials regardless of seniority.

42. Her country had allocated 0.46 per cent of its gross national income to official development assistance. The Government considered it a moral obligation to make such contributions.

43. There were six employment centres in the country working to defend workers' rights. Under the Constitution, all residents, including stateless persons and the Bidoon population, had equal access to health care, education services and social benefits.

44. The Family Act, which drew inspiration from sharia, stipulated that household tasks should be shared equally between men and women, including childcare.

45. Followers of the Baha'i religion were fully fledged members of Qatari society and were not discriminated against. Religious diversity was encouraged in her country through the media and various religious centres.

46. **A representative of Qatar** said that sharia stipulated that daughters would inherit 50 per cent of the amount inherited by sons from their fathers. Wives and mothers were entitled to a larger proportion of the inheritance than sons.

47. His Government did not consider the ratification of the Optional Protocol to be necessary at the current time, but future ratification had not been ruled out. An interministerial committee had been established to examine the compatibility of Qatari legislation with the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which his country intended to accede. Accession to other human rights treaties would be considered following the ratification of that Convention.

48. Work had been undertaken with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to develop a methodology for drafting reports to the treaty bodies through a single national mechanism. The authorities were considering the establishment of such a mechanism.

49. **A representative of Qatar** said that the right to worship was protected under the Constitution. Deportation measures were in no way related to religion; they simply regulated the entry and exit of migrant workers. If migrant workers endangered public order, health or morality, they were deported.

50. Under the legislation on citizenship, children with Qatari mothers were not automatically granted citizenship, unlike children with Qatari fathers. However, they were given priority in obtaining citizenship. The authorities took into account geographic and demographic balance and public order when granting citizenship.

51. Legislative measures had been taken to combat statelessness, and data was collected on that population. Those who had been granted residency could gain access to health and education services on an equal footing with Qataris. Act No. 10 of 2018 concerning permanent residency gave priority to stateless persons. His country had supported OHCHR actions to reduce statelessness and had made progress at the national level.

52. There were no laws preventing women from travelling abroad without the permission of a male guardian. However, the Minister of the Interior or the judiciary could prohibit individuals from leaving the country if it was in the public interest.

53. **A representative of Qatar** said that there were no laws directly criminalizing the LGBT community. Certain sexual acts were criminalized under legislation that applied to everyone, not just that community.

54. **Mr. Adilov** (Country Task Force) said that he would like to know more about the rules and procedures related to labour mobility. The delegation was invited to explain why, despite the labour reform, the *kafalah* system was still in place.

55. He would welcome information on legal developments aimed at protecting the labour rights of migrant workers, particularly regarding labour exploitation, wage withholding, contract manipulation, poor living conditions and long working hours; and on mechanisms to facilitate migrant workers' access to grievance procedures without fear of intimidation by their employers. He would like to know how the State party protected the human rights of undocumented migrants. According to information received by the Committee, the labour courts moved slowly; he wished to understand why. It would be useful to know how the State party was improving the collection and analysis of data on work-related injuries and whether there were any training programmes for labour inspectors and awareness-raising measures for workers and employers on that topic. Information would be welcome on legislative measures aimed at protecting the rights of domestic workers.

56. Details would be appreciated regarding the activities of the various committees of the General Union of Workers of Qatar. He wondered why there were restrictions on the trade union rights of non-Qatari workers. The delegation was invited to provide information on the regulations governing collective bargaining and the existing restrictions on the right to strike. He would like to know when the State party intended to ratify the International Labour

Organization (ILO) Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). Were any measures in place to ensure pension income for foreign workers?

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.

57. **A representative of Qatar** said that Act No. 15 of 2016 promulgating the Civil Service Human Resources Act granted a number of benefits to employees, including five years of paid leave to care for children with disabilities or illnesses. There were also benefits and allowances for married employees. By decision of the Council of Ministers, women, and especially mothers, were allowed to take leave from jobs in the Government.

58. **A representative of Qatar** said that domestic work was regulated under the law and wage protections were in place. Progress had been made in relation to the right to decent work, and a technical cooperation agreement had been signed with ILO in 2017, leading to a range of reforms. Domestic legislation had been aligned with ILO standards. The Ministry of Labour had been restructured in 2020 to meet the requirements of the labour market and employers' expectations.

59. The gradual dismantling of the *kafalah* system had been ongoing since 2015, and the requirement for exit permits had been abolished. As a result, there had been a twofold increase in the number of migrant workers changing employer in recent years. An online platform was in place to educate workers on their rights and enable them to request assistance. The average period for processing a job application had dropped from 21 days to 6 days since 2021. Employers could no longer lodge a complaint if one of their employees changed employer.

60. The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking had developed an action plan. Several government institutions had established units on human trafficking, a national coordinator had been appointed to work on the issue, and shelters had been opened for victims. Between 2020 and 2022 there had been 57 inspection campaigns to encourage victims to file complaints and raise awareness of the safeguards and legal protections available. Fines and prison sentences had been handed down in cases of forced labour. His country had engaged with ILO and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for technical support in combating human trafficking.

61. A minimum wage for workers in all sectors and of all nationalities had been introduced in 2021; some 300,000 workers had since seen their pay increase. The law establishing the minimum wage had been adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating that the Government was committed to pursuing labour reforms despite the difficult circumstances. The law provided for the improvement of wage protection mechanisms and the creation of a monitoring system to ensure that employers complied with the minimum wage. Employers that failed to do so could be taken to court. A study launched in 2022 had found that 98 per cent of workers had received at least the minimum wage and had been paid on time.

62. Legal and judicial remedies were in place to address late or non-payment of wages. An electronic platform had been established to centralize complaints filed by domestic workers. Workers were able to lodge complaints with the department of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs responsible for handling labour disputes. In the event that the department failed to identify an amicable solution to the dispute within seven days, the complaint was escalated. The Workers' Support and Insurance Fund provided financial resources to workers who had been deemed eligible for compensation but whose employer was insolvent. According to statistics from the Ministry, 80 per cent of the disputes handled up to August 2021 had been settled amicably.

63. The Government was committed to ensuring safe working conditions for all. In 2020, it had launched a strategy to improve health and safety in the workplace, as part of which the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Public Health had compiled relevant data and efforts had been made to increase the number of inspections conducted in workplaces or workers' accommodation. Those inspections had found more than 4,000 health and safety violations. The Government had taken specific measures to tackle workplace accidents by training inspectors in handling such accidents and

running awareness-raising campaigns to prevent them from occurring. The number of fatal injuries sustained in the workplace had been declining since 2018.

64. The Government had recently run a campaign, in conjunction with the World Meteorological Organization and other international organizations, to protect workers from heat-related illnesses. Workplace inspections had resulted in the closure of sites that had failed to take steps to protect workers from the heat. Thanks to those efforts, there had been a fall over the past two years in the number of complaints received regarding heat-related illnesses.

65. A range of legal measures were in place to protect domestic workers. Such workers were represented in trade unions and were able to elect representatives from among their peers. Around 570 representatives had been elected to represent some 30,000 workers. Trade union committees had been set up within 72 companies.

66. **A representative of Qatar** said that judges and magistrates had been trained in dispute resolution. Steps had been taken to ensure that they were able to hand down decisions in employment disputes as quickly as possible. A law authorizing online hearings had been adopted in 2023, which meant that the workers concerned could follow the proceedings from abroad. A legal aid committee provided lawyers to workers who were unable to appoint one themselves, with the aim of helping migrant workers to file complaints.

67. **A representative of Qatar** said that, pursuant to Act No. 18 of 2004, peaceful assembly was authorized subject to compliance with certain conditions. Such assemblies had to respect religious and moral values and could be held only for the purposes for which authorization had been obtained. Penalties would be handed down for infringements of those conditions. Police officers intervened in demonstrations only when required to do so to protect demonstrators and deal with any criminal acts.

68. **A representative of Qatar** said that older persons and persons with disabilities received a monthly pension, which could be paid to their carer if necessary. They were also entitled to health, education and housing benefits. The Government had passed laws and continued to work with civil society organizations to strengthen the rights of those groups.

69. **Ms. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that 25 per cent of recipients of social security benefits were persons with disabilities.

70. **Mr. Windfuhr**, noting the State party's reservation to article 8 of the Covenant, said that he would like to know how the State party's interpretation of the term "trade union" differed from that contained in the Covenant. Further information on the functioning of the joint labour committees would be welcome. He would be interested to hear how the labour reforms had been received within the State party.

71. **Ms. Rossi** said that she would like to know whether the dispute settlement mechanism managed by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs dealt solely with wage disputes or handled all violations of labour laws.

72. It had been reported that more than 6,000 workers had lost their lives building the infrastructure required for the 2022 World Cup. She wished to know whether the State party had taken steps to determine the exact number of deaths, handed down punishments to the individuals responsible for those deaths and provided reparations to the families of the victims.

73. **Mr. Nonthasoot** said that he would appreciate information on the number of labour inspectors in the State party, whether inspections were carried out nationwide and in all sectors and whether the inspectors were empowered to provide remedies to workers.

74. He would welcome further details of the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund and wished to know whether it covered domestic and migrant workers.

75. **Ms. Ravenberg** (Country Task Force) said that she would be grateful for information on the prosecution and trial of individuals suspected of engaging in extramarital sexual relations and on any penalties imposed on them. She would like to know whether the State party could provide data on those individuals, disaggregated by age, gender and religion.

76. The Committee would welcome an update on the progress made following the implementation of the comprehensive system for protection against domestic violence and the early warning system for cases of ill-treatment and neglect of children. She wished to know whether those systems had been implemented throughout the State party, whether they had been evaluated and whether any changes had been made to them.

77. She would be grateful for data, disaggregated by region and migration status, on the victims of domestic and sexual violence. It would be helpful to know whether there were regulations or standards governing the treatment of cases of domestic violence and whether prosecutors and judges had been trained in handling such cases. She would welcome disaggregated data on gender-based violence against women and girls, including data on the number of complaints, prosecutions and convictions. Additional information on the sanctions handed down and any remedies provided to victims would be appreciated. Had awareness-raising campaigns been organized to tackle violence against women?

78. She wondered whether information was available regarding the number of complaints of violence or sexual assault within the family, how those complaints were handled by judges and how many cases had resulted in punishment or acquittal. She wished to know whether the vulnerability of women and girls was taken into account when handling cases and whether steps had been taken to promote awareness of such violence.

79. It would be useful to know whether the measures described in paragraph 20 of the State party's replies to the list of issues ([E/C.12/QAT/RQ/1](#)), aimed at improving working and housing conditions for migrant workers, had been evaluated. The delegation might comment on whether steps were being taken to address the housing problems affecting migrants in the industrial area of Doha, who reportedly lived in overcrowded and inadequate accommodation.

80. She would like to know why low-income workers faced such long waiting times to receive medical treatment and what steps the State party had taken to address the issue. Were human rights awareness-raising activities organized for medical practitioners? It would be useful to learn what measures the State party had taken to ensure that stateless individuals and undocumented migrants had access to essential health-care services.

81. She wished to hear about the barriers preventing access to health-care services for migrant workers in prison and the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 in prisons. The Committee would appreciate information on prisoners' access to basic personal hygiene products such as soap, water, hand sanitizer and face masks. It would be helpful to learn whether the State party had a body responsible for monitoring compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).

82. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** said that the information provided by the State party in its initial report and its replies to the list of issues was of a very high quality. The Committee would follow with interest the State party's progress towards achieving the full realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.