

**Report of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC)
on the Situation of Human Rights in the State of Qatar and the
Committee's Activities during the Year 2014**

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Introduction:

The National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) was founded in 2002 as an official independent body. Law number 17 for the year 2010 reorganized the committee in accordance with the Paris Principles which were adopted by the UN General Assembly on regulating national human rights institutions. Law NO. (12) For the year 2015 amended some provisions of law number 17 for the year 2010 on regulating the NHRC to achieve further compliance with the Paris Principles.

The NHRC was accredited Status "A" by the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs (ICC) in Geneva.

The NHRC aims to promote and protect human rights and freedoms, through performing the following terms of reference:

- 1- Suggesting the required methods for promoting and achieving the objectives mentioned in international agreements and conventions related to human rights, to which the State of Qatar has become a party, and recommending accession of the State to other agreements and conventions.
- 2- Providing counseling and guidance to authorities regarding human rights issues.
- 3- Investigating any violations of human rights and working to address any human rights complaints or reports it receives, as well as coordinating with the competent authorities to take the necessary measures in said regard and suggesting means to address such complaints and prevent their recurrence.
- 4- Make the necessary proposals to the competent authorities on existing legislations their compliance with the provisions of international human rights conventions and treaties to which the State has become a party.
- 5- Monitoring the situation of human rights in the State of Qatar, preparing and submitting the related reports and observations to the council of ministries .
- 6- Monitoring what might be raised on the situation of human rights in the state, and coordinating with the relevant authorities to address it.

7- Taking part in the preparation of national reports to be submitted by Qatar to international human rights bodies regarding the agreements to which the state has become a party.

8- Cooperating with national, regional, and international bodies concerned with human rights and freedoms and participating in their international forums.

9- Raising awareness and education on human rights and freedoms and consolidating its principles at the levels of thought and practice.

10- Conducting field visits by the chairman and members of the NHRC to penal and correctional institutions, detention centers, labor gatherings, and healthcare and educational institutions and monitoring the human rights situation there .

11- Coordination and cooperation with the authorities concerned with human rights in the state with terms of their areas of specialization and tasks.

12- Convening and organizing conferences, seminars, courses, and discussions on topics related to human rights and freedoms, and coordinating with the competent authorities in this regard as deemed necessary.

13- Contributing to the preparation of human rights related education and research programs and participating in their implementation.

Executive Summary:

This report aims to shed light on the situation of human rights in the State of Qatar during the year 2014 and the efforts made by the NHRC within its area of specialization in adherence with the international human rights legislations and through the thorough and independent monitoring of legislation and practices in a systemic and objective manner, which resulted in positive, practical recommendations that offer to increase human rights prevalence and address challenges.

This year witnessed a quick development of economic and social rights, as Qatar was ranked 31st globally in the Human Development Report as a result of its implementation of the 2011-2016 human development strategy according to its 2030 national vision. Unemployment decreased to 0.5%, and there is currently no member of the society whose daily salary is less than 1.25\$ US dollars, which thereby means the eradication of abject poverty in the country¹. All citizens, also enjoy social security and housing aid.

The results of the application of the Health Insurance Law and the Health and Education Fund Law are reflected in citizens' enjoyment of more rights in these 2 areas. High levels of spending, reach up to 15.7 billion QR in health sector and 26.3 billion QR in education sector².

There are still some discrepancies between the national legislation and the international human rights standards mentioned in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. These discrepancies appeared in a number of laws, including the Law on the Protection of Community, the Law on the Establishment of Establishing the State Security Investigation Service, the law on combating terrorism, in addition to the Law on Associations and regulation of rallies, Nationality Law, the Law on Prints and Publications, and the Election Law, the last two laws are awaiting issuance since a period that is not short.

¹ Millennium Development Goals, the State of Qatar, 2014 – Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

² National Achievements of the State of Qatar 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of ministers

The NHRC recommended abolition of the Law on the Protection of the Community and amendment of some of the articles of the abovementioned laws to be compliant with international human rights standards and insure citizens' enjoyment of additional rights and freedoms. The NHRC also urged the State to expedite the issuance of a number of draft laws, including the Draft Law on the Regulation of Domestic Workers' Rights, and amending Law on Persons with Special Needs to be complaint with Qatar's accession to the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The NHRC also urged the government to ratify the two International Covenants and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The NHRC also recommended re-examining general reservations, especially pertaining to article (9) of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against in order to further promote human rights in the State of Qatar and in support of the organizations working in this field on the regional and international levels, especially in the light of Qatar's membership of the Human Rights council and its presidency of numerous regional and international human rights bodies and forums.

With regard to monitoring executive practices and procedures, the NHRC focused on the humanitarian situation of labor, as well as the status of some vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, women, and children.

The State of Qatar is almost free of torture, however, the committee urges the competent authorities, especially the Public Prosecution to increase their visits to detention places.

Regarding the right to work, despite the State's great efforts in this regard and the announcement of new legislative amendments soon in the law Regulating the Entry, Exit, Residence and Sponsorship of Expatriates, the domestic workers lack any legal protection. The number of labor disputes at the Ministry of Labor has reached up to 10541 for the period from 1/4/2013-31/3/2014.

Complaints of Construction Workers constitute 48% of the total number of submitted complaints³. In this report, the NHRC raises a number of recommendations to the Ministries of Interior and Labor and the Judicial Authority to improve the living conditions of labor and enabling them to access justice in more effective means.

The State of Qatar aims to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Females are offered equal changes to males in enrollment in all levels of education. The ratio of girls to boys in higher education has reached (175%) in 2013, which is considered one of the highest ratios in the world, however Qatari women's economic participation in the market remains low.⁴ Qatari women's political participation also remains low, despite women assuming advanced leading positions and the appointment of three female judges, as well as some female deputy public attorneys which is considered the first incident of its kind in the Arab Gulf Region.

Qatari women married to foreigners are underprivileged, being unable to transfer her citizenship to her children according to the Qatari Nationality Law. The NHRC submitted several recommendations related to women, including the appointment of women in the advisory Council, due to the absence of parliamentary elections in the state until now, as well as achieving equality between men and women by enabling women to grant their children the Qatari citizenship and the drafting of a law to prevent domestic violence.

The NHRC had active cooperation with numerous governmental organizations and NGOs on the national, regional, and international levels in order to spread human rights awareness on one hand, while strengthening its staff's capabilities on the other hand. The NHRC held dozens of conferences, seminars, and workshops targeting employees and employers, law enforcement officials, NHRC staff, and civil society organizations.

The NHRC cooperated with the international human rights mechanisms in 2014, most notably its cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants and the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers and its submission of a shadow report on the mechanism of the UPR.

³ National Achievements of the State of Qatar 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of ministers

⁴ The Millennium Development Goals, the State of Qatar – 2014, the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

The NHRC also attended the discussion of the State of Qatar’s report on the implementation of the International Convention Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and gave a verbal intervention during in the said discussion, it is worth mentioning that Qatar had submitted a shadow report to CEDAW in the previous year.

One the NHRC’s best practices during 2014 is its conduction of a survey to explore opinions of citizens on women’s rights. This was organized in cooperation with 4 organizations, which are now merged under the Qatari Social Service Institution. The survey witnessed the participation of 1000 citizens of both genders.

Another prominent achievement is the establishment of 4 “community offices” in the NHRC headquarters representing the Indian, Nepalese, Filipino, and Egyptian communities, and acting as focal points for cooperation and the exchange of information, as well as raising the level of coordination between the communities in the state of Qatar, the various embassies, the related government authorities, and civil society organizations, in order to further promote human rights in the State. The offices started operation in May 2015, and the NHRC has adopted the 2015-2018 plan to include more communities, including the African, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, and other local communities in the state.

Section I

Legislative Developments

In this section, the NHRC examines national legislative activity during the period covered in this report and the status of the State of Qatar in regard to joining human rights convention at the regional and international levels.

a- National Legislation:

Submitting national draft laws related to human rights to the NHRC for review during the past years has helped achieve important results, helping the government identify challenges and urging it to fulfil its self-made commitments to do its best in order to adhere to the human rights and freedoms mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and agreements to which the state is party.

Failure of The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers' to present some human rights related draft laws to the NHRC for review, including the Health Insurance Law, the Education Coupon Law, the National Service Law, and the Cyber Crimes Law, is considered a violation of article 3 of law 17 for the year 2001 regulating the NHRC, and a setback in a positive direction the General Secretariat had been taken in submitting all human rights related draft laws to the NHRC, we hope the to rectify this setback in the coming period.

We shall discuss herein the human rights related legislation issued in the State of Qatar in 2014 and the extent of its adherence to the international standards, as follows:

1- Laws and Draft Laws:

- **Law number (1) for the year 2014 on regulating nurseries, day care centers, play schools and similar facilities:**

This law was issued to regulate child-care services.

The NHRC had several observations upon reviewing this law which it has deemed important due to their relation to children's cultural rights for children whose mother tongue is Arabic. These include the importance of adding the phrase "Especially the Arabic language" to item 3 in article 2, so that it reads: "Taking care to develop the child's language, especially the Arabic language, through the provision of..." Despite this point, the

law was issued without the suggested amendments.

- **Law number (14) for the year 2014 on combatting Cybercrimes**

The NHRC's opinion was not requested during the issuance of this law, despite its connection to human rights in multiple areas.

The law aims to protect websites, the government's IT systems and users, and IT media in general from activities related to terrorism, fraud, blackmail, duplication, and identity theft. The law also provides protection of intellectual property and children protection from online pornographic exploitation. This is considered a good step by the state in which it represents a fulfillment of its commitment under the Convention on the Protection of Children and its protocols, in addition to the law's adherence to specifying the maximum age for minors as agreed in the international conventions, which is 18 years old.

On another hand, the NHRC expresses its concern regarding some of the items in articles 6 and 8, which criminalize publishing false news in order to compromise the integrity of the state, public order or internal or external security to risk, or affect negatively the principles and social value. This could lead to a wide range of punishments and banning of websites.

The NHRC had earlier some comments on the Prints and Publications Law, highlighting the complications resulting from the usage of broad terms, such as general order or general principles, recommending that phrases used should be more specific while avoiding using them in a manner affecting the freedom of expression and expression.

- **Law number (13) for the year 2014 regarding the amendment of the Education Coupon Law:**

It includes an amendment to article 3 of the above mentioned law so that the Supreme Educational Council would be the party responsible for paying the amounts of the education coupons directly to the schools. However, the amendment of article 4 of law number 7 for the year 2012, which stipulates that the Education Coupon Law does not apply to the children of government employees in government departments that grant their employees benefits relating to their children's tuition may constitute a violation of equality and a form of discrimination, this is because the law did not address the problem of the fees being granted

by the government departments that is less than the value of the education coupons. The NHRC supports the opinion that the law should stipulate that education benefits granted to any of the parents should be deducted by the employer, whomsoever they may be, from the value of the education coupons granted to their children.

3- The Council of Ministers' Decisions:

Decision number (46) for the year 2014 regarding the determination of the salaries for the groups mentioned in law number (38) for the year 1995 regarding social security:

Issuance of this law is based on the instructions of HH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, regarding the importance of the consideration of the needs of these groups and in response to repeated recommendations by the NHRC to amend the salaries of these groups to match the living conditions in the state.

With all the law's positive traits, it has yet to clearly address one of the most frequent cases witnessed by the NHRC: the case of the Qatari woman married to a non-Qatari who is unfit to work. Despite the fact that law number (38) for the year 1995 and the above mentioned decision do not include any articles preventing pension entitlements to them, if they are, eligible to the conditions mentioned, the competent department refuses to examine these cases once documents proving their marriage to non-Qataris are presented, and this is done without reliance on any legal evidence or law in this regard. The suitable remedy would be to issue legislative amendments or administrative instructions in this regard.

4- Ministerial Decisions:

- Decision of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs number (2) for the year 2014 regarding the approval of the registration and proclamation of the Qatari Nursing Association:

The Minister of Labor and Social affairs approved the proclamation of the association as a professional association. This decision supports the society's right to association and assembly as one of the civil and political rights which the NHRC is trying to promote its exercise in the state.

It is also a good opportunity to reconsider the removal of legislative obstacles hindering the formation of associations and the importance of considering the formation of professional and labor unions.

- The decision of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs number (3) for the year 2014 regarding the approval of the amendment of the statute of the Sheikh Thani Bin Abdullah Al Thani for Humanitarian services:

The NHRC praises the role of the abovementioned foundation as one of the civil society organizations that contribute to the achievement of equality in the society and the provision of relief and healthcare services in emergency situations, in addition to supporting debtors and people with poor financial conditions among breadwinners and people with critical needs, as well as supporting and developing humanitarian work and training its establishments and individuals.

- Decision of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs number (18) for the year 2014 regarding the determination of the conditions and requirements of adequate housing for workers:

The decision constitutes a new step in the protection of workers' rights in the State of Qatar, in coordination with the NHRC's recommendations in this area. The law abides by the international requirements of temporary or permanent worker accommodation.

- Decision of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs number (19) for the year 2014 regarding the establishment of a wage protection department at the Labor Inspection Department:

This decision, together with what has been announced by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs concerning approving the amendment of the Labor Law number 14 for the year 2004 by the Council of Ministers to criminalize delaying the payment of wages of workers by employers, promote worker rights in the State of Qatar.

- Decision of the Minister of education and Higher Education, and the Secretary- General of the Supreme Education Council number (26) for the year 2014 regarding the regulations and procedures of the education coupon system:

The issuance of this law promotes the right to education, since it considers the book and transportation fees included in the education coupons which the state provides for Qatari students. This enables the guardian to choose a better school without being saddled with additional expenses.

The decision also guarantees the right of the Qatari citizen who has already paid the tuitions to refund these amounts within the limits of the education coupon.

5- Other Decisions:

- Decision of the Public Prosecutor number 24 for the year 2014 regarding granting the power of judicial arrest to some employees of the Hemaya Company for Security Solutions:

This decision constitutes a wastage of the guarantees stipulated in article 27 of the Criminal Procedures Law, which require anyone who bears such powers to be a government employee. This is inferred by the use of the word “government employee”, which refers in Qatari legislation to a public sector employee, instead of “private employee”, which refers to an employee in companies according to the stipulations of the Labor Law.

This is also in reference to the abovementioned article’s stipulations regarding the issuance of a decision to grant judicial arrest powers after consultation with the specialized minister. Authorizing these private employees with the mandate of judicial officers is only limited to the crimes which occur within their area of specialization and related to their jurisdiction.

It is certain that the squandering of these guarantees is a grave violation of the right to justice, since the judicial arrest powers are given to Public Prosecution officers and to officers of the police force, and it is granted as an exception to employees who fulfill the requirements mentioned in the abovementioned article 27 as a series of basic guarantees to individuals. Hence, the granting of these powers to employees at a private company is in breach of the NHRC’s opinion and these guarantees, and constitutes a violation of the stated right.

b- International Conventions:

The State of Qatar did not sign any new human rights related international conventions during 2014, However it has been announced in the occasion of discussing the UPR report, that Qatar considers signing the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

Section II

The situation of Human Rights in Qatar:

In this section we will examine the independent activities of the NHRC, including receiving the human rights-related complaints and cases from multiple national and international sources, in addition to conducting field visits for the purpose of fact finding.

The information in this section was gathered from all the concerned authorities and organizations, such as the state authorities and institutions, civil society organizations, individuals, groups, and employers who were interviewed to check if they enjoy their rights guaranteed to them by the state through listening to their testimonies and examining their documents.

1. Civil and Political Rights:

The State of Qatar has not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, since some national legislation has to be reviewed to conform to the legislations of the said covenant. These rights will be discussed in the following order:

- a- Right to life
- b- Right to protection against torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading punishment
- c- Right to personal liberty and security
- d- Right to freedom of movement and residence
- e- Right to a fair and just trial
- f- Right to vote and stand as a candidate in election
- g- Right to freedom of belief
- h- Right to freedom of opinion and expression
- i- Right to peaceful assembly
- j- Right to freedom of association
- k- Right to nationality

a- Right to life:

Four judgment sentences were issued during the period covered by the report.

These sentences are appealed at the Court of Appeals, noting that the State of Qatar has not carried out any executions since 1995. The Qatari Criminal Procedures Law stipulated a number of guarantees for those sentenced to execution, including that the death sentence must be issued in consensus among the judges of the court that sentenced the execution, the Public Prosecution is required by law to refer the sentence to a higher court, even if the accused has not appeal, the prevention of summary executions, the execution is suspended if the defendant asks for a reconsideration of their case or challenges the court ruling, Whenever the death penalty judgment becomes conclusive, the Public Prosecutor shall submit the papers of the action, without delay, to the Emir for approval, and the judgment shall not be executed before that time. Other stipulations include the prohibition of sentencing to death of defendants less than 18 years, the death sentence shall be suspended for a pregnant woman until she delivers her child. If she delivers it alive and the death penalty is a requital or a HAD penalty, execution of the judgment shall be postponed for two years after the child's birth. If the death penalty is for censure, then the death sentence may be replaced by life imprisonment..

b- Right to protection against torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading punishment:

The State of Qatar fulfilled its commitments as a party state to the International Convention on the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane, or Degrading Punishment by amending its national legislation and put a definition of the crime of torture that is compliant with the international convention.

The State of Qatar is almost free of torture, yet, some cases of cruel or degrading treatment in previous reports. During the period covered by this report, the NHRC received complaints of cruel and degrading punishment by security and police personnel. The NHRC addressed the cases to the specialized authority in the Ministry of Interior regarding 2 cases⁵, and it received a response that the cases are under investigation by the Public Prosecution.

⁵ - A citizen complained of an officer raising his firearm against him and his family under the claim that they are trespassing on a natural reserve

- A resident complained that her employer brought a police officer to her premises and threatened to arrest her without the presence of an arrest warrant from the Public Prosecution. The NHRC praises the Interior Ministry's measures taken in this case, as it immediately transferred the employee's sponsorship and conducted an investigation into the matter, the results of which the NHRC has yet to be updated on.

- A resident complained of being beaten at the deportation prison.

The NHRC conducted three visits during the report's duration to the Administration of the Penal and Reformatory Institutions Department at Ministry of Interior and to men's and women's prisons, in addition to the capital security department, and it issued a report on these visits. It is worth noting that the NHRC had not received any complaints or observed any cases of medical experimentation on people.

b- Right to personal liberty and security:

The Qatari constitution guarantees personal liberty and prevents any intervention in private affairs, thereby helping all residents enjoy a safe and stable environment.

The State of Qatar was ranked the first among the MENA countries for the sixth year in the Global Safety and Security Index 2014, and 26th among 126 countries worldwide included in the report.

On another front, the Community Protection Law poses a challenge to international standards, being in violation of the principle of the separation of powers stipulated in the constitution, as well as breaching the human rights principles, which demand that a regulation of judicial appeals against administrative arrest. The same can be said for the Law on the Establishment of the State Security Department and the Law on combating terrorism, which include articles that permit the authorities to detain persons for extended lengths of time without trial.

Although these articles are rarely used in practice, the NHRC considers their presence a critical challenge, especially in light of the absence of a mechanism to challenge the arrest decisions. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prohibits the consideration of discretionary arrests as being the rule and release of persons to be the exception, since the main legal argument is that a defendant is innocent until proven guilty.

On another hand, precautionary detention, which is an investigation procedure in criminal cases, is still frequently used, number of persons under precautionary detention between 1 January 2014 and 1 June 2014 reaches up to 3507 persons, 1758 of whom were released on bail, according to the Public Prosecution statistics presented to the NHRC.

The NHRC stated in previous reports that precautionary detention is considered in some cases a punishment of its own, since the Criminal Procedures Law permits the extension of precautionary detention for up to half the duration of the sentence the defendant is being tried for, despite the fact that the conviction has yet to be proven. The NHRC also witnessed an increase in the number of people detained for issuing bounced checks, which constitutes a violation of international standards, which prohibit the detention of a person due to their inability to fulfill contractual obligations.

Despite the fact that criminalization of the act of issuing a bounced check protects society from a crime which may affect the state's economy, there is expansion in the use of the “guarantee check”, which is a violation of contractual commitments. The lessee presents checks with the value of the rent upfront in a violation of the nature of the standards of rent contracts as a guarantee of his payment of rent on time. His failure to pay the rent results in the lessee presenting the checks to court or Public Prosecution, demanding that the lessee be criminally prosecuted, which ultimately sends the lessee to jail due to their inability to fulfill a contractual obligation.

During its visit to the Judgment Execution Section of the Public Prosecution, the NHRC found sentences against one citizen reaching over 47 years for bounced checks;⁶ hence there should be legislation that regulates dealings with checks and remedies this issue.

The deportation center is extremely crowded, which affects hygiene and safety standards. The NHRC was informed of a tragic incident whereby a fire started in the prison in September 2014, which results in the death of 5 prisoners. The Ministry of Interior announced the incident the following day.

The crowdedness also creates a hostile and tense atmosphere among the detainees, according to testimonies from a group of workers who were released after being detained in the prison.⁷

⁶ The case of the citizen named S.G

⁷ The NHRC's interview with the Cameroonian delegation at the NHRC headquarters.

- Forced disappearance:

An Amnesty International statement said that on 31 August 2014, the security authorities in Doha arrested human rights activists Krishna Prasad Upadhyaya and Ghimire Gundev, who both are British nationals. The two were subjected to forced disappearance for a week before authorities announced that they were held in detention and permitted to contact the British Embassy.

On 4 September, Amnesty International issued an urgent action in which it demanded the following:

- the Qatari authorities should expedite the announcement of the two men's whereabouts
- Guarantees that both men communicate with their families, their employer, a lawyer according to their choice
- Guarantees that the required medical care and diplomatic representation are provided
- Urging their release in the case as there is no internationally recognized criminal charges
- Presenting the case to the court immediately within procedures that guarantee a fair and just trial
- Guarantees that they are not subjected to torture or inhumane Treatment

The NHRC communicated with the competent authority in order to assess the legal situation of the two arrestees and guarantee their rights.

The authorities responded to the NHRC's requests and announced their location, and they were released on 9 September with no charges after they signed a pledge not to repeat the similar legal violations, since the authorities stated that they had connection to a foreign party with a suspicious agenda.

c- Freedom of movement and residence:

The sponsorship and exit permit systems violates international human rights standards regarding the freedom of movement. The Qatari Government, represented by the ministry of Interior announced the plan to abolish the sponsorship and exit permit system which is considered a positive step.

As for the deportation decisions, the law stipulates that, Notwithstanding the provisions of any other Law, the Minister may issue an order to repatriate any expatriate whose presence in the State of Qatar is a threat

to its internal or external security and safety or is otherwise detrimental to the national economy, public health or public order.

d- Right to a fair and just trial:

The judiciary, with all its levels, is one of the most important national mechanisms for the protection of human rights, that's why the delay in the activation of the Constitutional Court's powers constitutes an important challenge. This is due to the fact that said court is the one specialized in the interpretation of legal texts and guaranteeing the implementation of legal and constitutional standards.

The year 2014 did not witness any court-martials of non-military citizens, which reflects the country's respect for the judiciary and the rule of law, as well as personal rights and freedoms.

The numerous administrative decisions that are immune to the powers of the judiciary still constitute a violation of human rights standards. The administrative authorities should be a neutral opponent that seeks public interest within the framework of legal legitimacy and the rule of law, thus, it should not seek to immunize its work from Judiciary oversight.

Law number 12 for the year 2013 included the immunization of the decisions pertaining to titles, tribes, and families from Judiciary oversight, which constitutes a breach of the right to fair and just trial.

The NHRC hereby states, without any intervention in the judiciary's work, and with full appreciation of the court's right to formulate its conception of judgements, that it had previously monitored the case of three Filipinos accused of spying and attended some of their trial sessions. In this regard, the NHRC considers the prolongation of the trial period, especially in the first degree; to four years is a breach of the right to a fair and just trial, considering that the quick settlement of disputes, without infringement of the rights of the defense, constitutes one trait of such a trial.

On the other hand, some employers file abscond claims or deportation requests against their employees who file lawsuits against them, and they secure the departure of some of said employees without waiting for the results of said lawsuits, based on their right to hire lawyers, which is a violation of the right to a fair and just trial, and since the law does not obligate workers to hire an attorney in labor cases, in order to avoid burdening them with the financial expenses; thus, forcing them to hire a

lawyer is against the articles of the law.

In addition to the above, some of the lawsuits filed by expatriates are related to rights other than their labor rights, thus, the arrangement of their departure from the country would cause the loss of their rights in this regard.⁸

Some problems related to executive procedures to access the right to a fair and just trial:

1- Referring the case to an expert:

There is no doubt that there are many lawsuits that cannot be settled except after the review of technical points that require raising the case to an expert, who will present a report to court, then the court will remain the final expert entitled to adopt the expert's report in part or sum.

The NHRC noticed, with full appreciation of the court's right to formulate its conception of judgements, that there are many cases referred to experts without actual need for that. This cause delays in the settlement of these cases for six months at minimum. The most prominent example of this are labor cases, relating to claims for late wages without having any disputes on the value of the said wages. The matter only requires the employer to present a document showing the months in which the wages were paid to the worker, and then the court decides on the unpaid wages, as long as the wages are fixed.

On addition to the above, the avoidance of relaying all cases to experts will expedite the completion of expert reports in other cases that require such reports to settle.

2- The expert fees:

The expert fees which claimants have to pay are a problem which needs a solution for a large group of claimants, namely labor. This is despite the fact that the law stipulated the exemption of labor cases from such

⁸ An expatriate complained that her sponsor arranged for her departure from the country after she got into a car accident and the percentage of disability required for the issuance of compensation to her was not determined. The NHRC arranged for her stay in the country, since her departure from the country would cause the loss of her rights, thus constituting a loss to the right to justice.

fees, yet claimants still have to pay expert fees amounting to no less than 600 QR and up to 1000 QR in some cases.

The NHRC considers that a large part of this problem's solution lies, as we previously mentioned, in the avoidance of relaying all labor cases to experts and sufficing with relaying cases which contain financial disputes that require expertise to resolve.

Cases should be referred to financial experts without expert fees, or at least there should be a mechanism in place for exempting workers from expert fees according to the regulations regarding exemption from legal fees, since the Labor Ministry statistics show that the average worker's wage in Qatar is around 600 QR, which causes difficulty in paying such fees to many claimants, since many of these cases are claims for late wages, and since the fees stand between the workers and their right to resort to law, which thus defeats its purpose.

3- Experts and reports:

Despite the NHRC's admittance that the judge is the final expert in cases, and that he, alone or within the court's judging body, has the authority to assess expert reports, and that judicial verdicts do not please half the people involved in judicial disputes, since they are the losing side in their disputes, this does not stand in the NHRC's way in raising its objection to some of the expert reports and suffice not to comment further in this regard, trusting in the intelligence of the person reading this report.

The NHRC considers that much of the talk in this area is due to the experts not being public officials, but rather they work in private firms that are listed in the lists of experts, thus removing any form of oversight to their work, except the oversight of the court, whose judgment would be to refer the case to an expert since it lacks specialization in the matter to which the expert is assigned. Hence, the court's oversight is not sufficient to assess the expert's performance of his task truthfully and impartially.

4- Delays in cases:

The NHRC noticed a trend of excessive delays in cases, often for the same reasons.

Once again, the NHRC affirms that it is of the knowledge that only the court can preside over the claims and assess the decisions taken in them, yet, it is the NHRC's duty to refer to what is being circulated in the media and among international organizations in this matter. This is especially if the case being delayed for lengthy periods of time is related to one of the

human rights and receives the attention of international organizations, such as the case of poet Ibn Al-Dheeb and the Villaggio fire case, which the courts have delayed multiple times, often for the same reasons.

5- Spelling errors:

By examining the judgments issued by the various courts, especially in the early legal levels, one can see the presence of major spelling errors that should never be in a legal judgment, since it could undermine the prestige and respect for the court ruling of justice issued in the name of HH the Emir, in addition to its effect on the meaning, which could affect the soundness of said decisions.

f- Right to vote and stand as a candidate in election:

Qatari nationals exercise the right to vote and stand as candidates in the Municipal Council election, the period covered in the report witnessed a decision to reorganize constituencies and open the door to run for the elections, which raised varying reactions. Some welcomed the decision; and consider it representative of the population of various constituencies, while others objected, considering that it will decrease the representation of their constituencies in the new council. Practical experience remains the true proof of the effectiveness of the new division.

The current Advisory Council also witnessed devoid of women's participation, suggesting their ineligibility or exclusion from membership in the legislative committees.

g- Right to freedom of belief:

Qatar enjoys deeply rooted religious traditions, and the constitution state that Islamic Sharia is the main source of legislation.

The residents of Qatar are free to exercise their belief. The state provides a religions community that includes churches for the various Christian denominations.

The Doha Center for Interfaith Dialogue also has a great role in spreading the culture of dialogue and accepting the other. The NHRC did not receive any complaints regarding any discrimination or harassment to followers of any other faiths or beliefs.

h- Right to freedom of opinion and expression.

The NHRC did not receive any complaints regarding this right. There is

openness from the government toward all intellectual trends and opinions.

Qatar is considered an open place for visits by international human rights organizations, and independent researchers work in total freedom in the country on human rights related studies and research.

The 2014 Amnesty International report was released in Doha, followed by the discussion of said report with government and non-government parties in an atmosphere of freedom and freedom of expression to all participants.

A research for independent experts about “Migrant Labor and Access to Justice in Modern Qatar” was also released and discussed by all the concerned parties in a ballroom of a hotel in Doha.

On another hand, the delay in the issuance of a law regulating media activities is in accordance with international standards in respecting freedom of opinion and expression, whereby some media institutions and individuals exercise self-censorship.

i- Right to peaceful assembly

The NHRC did not receive any complaints regarding this right. Despite that, some of the articles of General Assembly and Demonstration Law constitute a limitation of this right, most importantly in the prohibition of resorting to law to appeal any rejections of a demonstration or meeting.

j- Right to association

The Associations and Private Institutions Law contains a number of obstacles to the right to association regarding financial conditions, limitations to the activities of said associations, and prohibiting any appeals to law against administrative decisions on association establishment requests.

The NHRC observed the decision of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs number (2) for the year 2014 regarding the approval of the opening of the Qatari Nursing Association, but there is yet to be approval on the announcement of the Association for the Families of Disabled Persons despite the Council of Ministers’ approval to the establishment of said association since 2007.

The NHRC recommended amending this law in accordance with international human rights standards, which call for additional room for

growth in civil society.

k- Right to nationality:

The NHRC received several complaints from Qatari women married to non-Qataris regarding their deprivation of their right of granting the Qatari nationality to their children.

Despite the fact that the Qatari constitution calls for equality between men and women in rights and duties, the discrimination between them in the matter of the nationality of their children is one of the problems that Qatari society suffers from, where Qatari women face challenges to their children's access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, in comparison with the children of GCC nationals, who enjoy more rights than those children of Qatari women, and also in comparison with children of unknown parents who hold the Qatari nationality.

The NHRC had previously cooperated with the Supreme Council for Family Affairs on a draft law to address the problem of the children of Qatari women, which inspired the Council of ministers to form a special committee to review the draft. However, the work of said committee concluded without reaching any results.

The NHRC directs attention to the discrimination between the original Qatari national and naturalized Qatari citizen in terms of rights, and it submitted recommendations to the government in this regard.

The suffering of some persons whom their Qatari nationality was withdrawn due to having another citizenship continues, where some of them gave up the other nationality and returned to Qatar to demand their rights under their Qatari citizenship. Their requests have not been answered, and if their requests are rejected, there is no other party to which they can resort.

On another hand, the period of validity of the travel documents for Qatari citizens has been changed to 2 years instead of one. This group suffers problems in renewing their documents, and with the effects of this renewal in terms of healthcare, education, work, and freedom of movement, which requires a quick solution.

2- Economic, social, and cultural rights

The State of Qatar has yet to sign the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, despite the fact that most

residents in the country enjoy these rights. We shall discuss them as follows:

- a- Right to work
- b- Right to an adequate standard of living
- c- Right to healthcare
- d- Right to housing
- e- Right to education

a- Right to work

1- Work in government institutions and public associations and institutions:

The right to work is regulated by the Human Resources Law for civilian employees at ministries and the other government departments, as well as public associations and institutions. The law respects the right to employment and public employment through articles that provide an atmosphere for a fair and just work environment. It guarantees the regulation of work rights for men and women in an equal manner, and its articles on wages, raises, compensations, and leave generally benefit both genders equally on set terms.

The number of hires in the government sector during the period 2013-2014 reached 1678 individuals, including 831 females and 847 males. The total number of registrants in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs for job searches until 31/3/2014 reached 2668 applications classified by type and qualifications, among whom were 744 males and 1924 females.⁹

⁹ The Shafallah Center terminated the services of 13 employees, including 2 Qatari citizens, who spent 14 years in tenure, with the excuse that this group did not complete some legal requirements. The head of the center cancelled the decision to terminate these employees, on condition that they rectify their professional and legal conditions in order for them to retain their positions. This created a problem for the employees due to their loss of their previous posts and the creation of an imbalance in the work environment.

The NHRC also witnessed the continuous difficulties faced by some citizens in finding job opportunities that suit their qualifications.

2- Work in the private sector:

The NHRC witnessed the continued efforts exerted by the State of Qatar to provide suitable employment opportunities to all civilians in the private sector. The Workforce Development Department at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs presented 150 positions in 22 5 star hotels. This came as a part of the department's efforts to change the people's perception of this sector and encourage them to work and gain experience in it, seeing as it is one of the vital sectors that pose great economic benefit.

As for work in private institutions and the public-private sector, labor law number 14 for the year 2004 applies, wherein the rights of the employee are favored, seeing as they are the more vulnerable party. The law came in accordance with the international standards on wages, bonuses, leaves, work hours, minimum age of employment, and holidays. The labor law also has clear articles preventing hiring firms from receiving any monetary amounts from employees as payment or expenses for hiring.

Considering requirements for standards of adequate living conditions and worker safety during the performance of their duties, there were 15 ministerial decisions issued that included 197 legal articles which regulated all facets of construction work, from determining the size of the rooms the workers live and their number in each room to setting safety requirements, especially determining working hours during summer in exposed areas. This is in addition to a decision by the Minister of Labor issued in 2014 regarding the requirements and conditions of suitable worker accommodations.

Despite the above, the implementation of the labor law and the abovementioned ministerial decisions faces difficulty. The NHRC examined samples of the complaint filed to the Labor administration headed by wage claims, late wages, flight tickets issued due to worker complaints, overtime, end of service, leave allowance, then other reasons at varying frequencies. The NHRC also witnessed violations in work sites, especially in small contracting firms.

One of the most prominent violations, due to which measures were taken against the offending companies, were their hiring of workers without work permits, as well as violations related to the monthly and organized

payment of wages, as well as endangering the workers due to the companies' failure to adhere to the health and safety measures described in the labor law and its accompanying executive decisions.

The NHRC's recommendations on the protection of worker wages resulted in the ministry's drafting of an amendment to the Labor Law that obligates the employer to open a bank account for the worker and prescribed a punishment of a prison sentence and a fine reached up to 6000 QR for each delayed worker's wage. The Council of Ministers has approved the draft, and it is now undergoing legislative procedures for release.

While international standards stress the right of the forming of unions as an effective means of worker protection that enables them to demand their rights as stipulated by law, one can criticize the Labor Law on the legislative level, despite there being an article that permits the right to the formation of unions by law, that the legislator placed strict conditions that prevent the possibility of practicing the right to union formation. The law requires the hiring of 100 Qatari employees in the facility in order to form a committee known as the "employee committee".

On another hand, the Labor Law permits the formation of "joint committees" for each facility with 30 workers or more that includes representatives of the employers and workers, without a requirement for Qatari employees, on condition that half the committee represents the employer, and the other half the employees. The joint committees handle the study and discussion of matters related to work organization and development, organizing training programs for the employees, developing their abilities, and settling individual and group disputes and trying to settle them amicably. They submit their recommendations to the employer for consideration.

The indifference of firms to the application of the Labor Law regarding the formation of joint committees to settle and resolve disputes before they exacerbate led to the creation of great pressure on the Ministry of Labor, labor courts, and other specialized authorities, such as the NHRC and Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Interior. This requires a special clause by the Labor Ministry to obligate companies to create joint committees that perform their duties as stipulated in the Labor Law.

B- Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

The high incomes gained by Qatari and non-Qatari families has made Qatar a desirable work destination for thousands for families from all over the world. The average Qatari family's income has reached (88,200) QR per month and the non-Qatari family (24,400) QR per month in the year 2013.¹⁰ Despite the above, the continuing inflation in the prices of some goods and services has affected the livelihood of limited income nationals and residents.

The NHRC lauds the Council of Ministers' decision number 46 for the year 2014 regarding the determination of the salary for the groups mentioned in law number 38 for the year 1995 on social security for the following groups:

- 1- Widows
- 2- Divorcees
- 3- Needy families
- 4- Persons with special needs
- 5- Orphans
- 6- Children of unknown fathers or mothers younger than 17 years old
- 7- Children of unknown fathers or mothers older than 17 years old
- 8- People unfit to work
- 9- The elderly
- 10- Families of prisoners
- 11- Abandoned wives
- 12- Families of missing persons

The salaries of the above groups are based on the legal principles and stipulations mentioned in the aforementioned law number 38 for the year 1995.

The disabled person, the elderly, and the person deemed unfit to work are provided a domestic worker stipend of (1500) one thousand five hundred Qatari Riyals a month based on a medical report from the medical authority specified by the government authority specialized in public health matters.

The NHRC received complaints from some citizens whose social security payments were halted due to their travel outside the country, with the

¹⁰ Millenium Development Goals, the State of Qatar – The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

excuse that they are “not residing” in the country. This happens while the families of those citizens reside inside the country and suffer harsh living conditions because of the stoppage of social security payments, which served as a rental payment of one family’s house.

Table (1) Beneficiaries receiving social aid during the year 2014 according to case, gender, and number

No	Case type	Female	Male	Total
1	Domestic Help Allowance	3639	1732	5371
2	Elderly	1825	377	2202
3	Wife of missing person	1	0	1
4	Divorcee	1113	0	1113
5	Physical disability	327	329	656
6	Disability	2421	596	3017
7	Needy family	96	554	650
8	Mental and physical disability	164	189	353
9	Mental disability	120	194	314
10	Widow	369	0	369
11	Orphans	183	106	289
12	Spinster	69	0	69
13	Unknown parents	44	33	77
14	Children in needy family	26	34	60
15	Unknown father	14	6	20
16	Family of prisoner	7	17	24
17	Children of prisoner	1	12	13
18	Deceased parents	5	1	6
19	Widow and children of deceased parent	3	0	3
20	Family of missing person	1	0	1
21	Abandoned wife	1	0	1
22	Children of missing person	0	1	1
23	Wife of prisoner	1	0	1
24	Metal illness	634	737	1371
Total		11064	4918	15982

c- Right to healthcare:

Healthcare allocations reached 15.7 billion QR, at an increase of 12.5% of the healthcare allocations in last year’s budget. This increase serves to

implement a number of strategic programs to raise the level of healthcare and achieve prominent levels of care in the sector.

In light of the increasing population, the Supreme Council for Health, the Primary Healthcare Corporation, and Hamad Medical Corporation have continued work to prepare conditions to provide medical services and care for everyone in case of sickness. Work is continuing since 2013 to establish 56 new health centers and 9 support facilities, in addition to the providing of 3,481 new beds. These facilities contain 5 Medical Commission units, 24 health centers, 10 hospitals, and 17 specialized health facilities. There is also ongoing renovation work of current healthcare facilities, amounting to 21 facilities. The number of workers in healthcare facilities has also increased by 8% since 2012.

In 2013, the Supreme Council for Health launched the first national health insurance program and founded the National Health Insurance Company. It was also agreed that the Qatari ID is the national document required for eligibility for insurance.¹¹

Residents are provided a healthcare card that enables them to use the government healthcare facilities free of charge, but some residents also enjoy private health insurance through their hiring companies.

Mother mortality rates decreased, as well as mortality rates for children under 5, which decreased to 0.7% according to the latest joint report from UNESCO, World Bank, and the UN Population Unit of the UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs on child mortality rates in 2011. This shows the availability of medical care, good nutrition, medical vaccination, clean drinking water, good healthcare facilities, and other factors.

Qatari women also have free healthcare coverage for pregnancy and maternity care in 7-12 hospitals.

There has also been an expansion of childcare programs for children from 9-30 months old in order to help the child achieve healthy growth. Premarital tests have also become part of marital guidance services, as a routine part of healthcare.¹²

¹¹ Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

¹² Millennium Development Goals- The State of Qatar 2014 – Ministry of Development Planning and Statistic

Hamad Medical Corporation also provides organ donation and implanting facilities by means of the Doha Organ Donation Declaration. The Qatari model is considered a unique model in terms of standards, whereby it grants support to donors and their families, is based on sound moral principles, and aims to reach self-sufficiency and provide optimum healthcare for donors and recipients. Due to the awareness campaigns, organ donor numbers increased by 261% in 2013, whereby files contained 20,000 registrants from 88 different nationalities.¹³

The NHRC referred in previous reports to the insufficiency and inadequacy of provided psychological care. Hamad Medical Corporation announced since 2005 that it plans to establish a psychological care hospital that includes all specializations, including a comprehensive rehabilitation unit for drug and alcohol addicts. But the hospital has yet to see the light of day, although the psychological healthcare facilities at Rumailah Hospital have been renovated.

This was followed by the announcement of the national psychological healthcare strategy in Qatar in December 2013, which aims to establish a high-quality psychological healthcare system and change and current perception of psychological illness.

Despite the above, the delay in establishing facilities is a source of concern toward the level of interest in psychological patients.

Hamad Medical Corporation is one of the most crowded facilities, where it received 86% of emergency cases in the country in 2012. Emergency calls also increased by 19% and the use of ambulance helicopters increased by 78% compared to 2012.¹⁴

The NHRC received a complaint regarding the lengthy waiting times at the Hamad Medical Corporation outpatient clinics, whereby a new system was created in which patients register their appointment requests to receive an appointment at the closes time possible according to priority based on urgent or critical cases. Still, some patients stated that they waited for long months, while others did not receive any phone call or message containing an appointment despite having over a year lapse since

¹³ Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

¹⁴ Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

the time of the application.¹⁵ This indicates a lack of medical services in comparison to population figures.

As for the improvement of environmental and industrial health, the NHRC witnessed the launch of the “Kulluna” campaign by the Supreme Council of Health to enhance health awareness and promote the “protection from the fall” awareness programs. The NHRC prepared the human rights guidebook, which it distributed in hospitals, healthcare clinics, and healthcare institutions.

On another hand, a class of low paid workers or unskilled labor suffer from the negligence of their employers of their healthcare needs and their refusal to issue healthcare cards for them, thus preventing them from availing emergency healthcare services.

Absconding labor also poses a healthcare challenge, since these workers stay in the country illegally and suffer indecent living conditions, in addition to the negative effects they can pose to the society’s health and security.

d- Right to accommodation:

The NHRC witnessed the continued efforts by the State of Qatar to provide adequate housing for all residents of all social classes, but there are also some challenges to housing, including:

- The complaints by some citizens of the slow procedures for the zoning and delivery of lands, as well as long waiting lists, despite their fulfillment of eligibility criteria
- The allocation of lands without access to utilities or facilities to some citizens, which forces them to delay building orders and the financial burden on citizens, including renting other houses, until the facilities and utilities are delivered to their allocated land.
- Complaints regarding the difficulty of land allocation procedures for widows and divorcees

¹⁵ A resident complained that she requested an appointment from the Hamad Medical Corporation Hearing and Balance Unit, and she was not granted an appointment, despite the request being made since over a year ago

e- Right to education

Education expenditures reached up to 26.3 billion QR, at an increase of 7.3% in comparison to the previous year's budget, this serves to increase spending on education development programs under the sector's strategic plan.

New schools were founded in Doha and various areas across the country within a plan to build 85 schools, including 29 currently under construction, including additional attention to the establishment of more kindergartens within a plan aiming to build 21, including 15 currently under construction.¹⁶

1- Developments in basic education:

The Compulsory Education Law stipulates that “education is free of charge and compulsory from the beginning of the primary stage to the end of the secondary stage, or until the child reaches the age of 18, whichever of the two comes first.

It also stipulates that “The guardian of a child who fails to enlist the child in the compulsory education level without an acceptable excuse shall be fined no less than 5000 QR and no more than 10,000 QR, and in case of repeat offense, the fine's minimum and maximum amounts are doubled.”

There are equal opportunities for boys and girls to join schooling at all levels, whereby the percentage of females to males in elementary education has increased from 95% in 2006 to 96% in 2013. The same applies to males to females in preparatory and high school education.¹⁷

The Supreme Education Council settles the amounts of education coupons for schools chosen by the council for Qataris registered in these schools based on the approval of the Council of Ministers on the Minister of Education's decision. There are also effective guidelines and regulations for the implementation of the education coupon system. This does not apply to government authorities which grant their employees tuition benefits for their children's schooling.

¹⁶ Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

¹⁷ 2014 Millennium Development Goals – State of Qatar – Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

The graduate levels of independent schools are still unsatisfactory compared to the goals and standards set by the Supreme Education Council. Dr. Hamda Al-Sulaiti, director of the evaluation department at the SEC said in a statement published in the Al-Raya newspaper on 26/2/2014 that the results of the “international tests” are weak, and that more efforts are required to coordinate and set a plan with the education board to improve and develop student performance. She also said in her interview with Al-Raya that the national report and school reports showed that the students suffer low levels in mathematics and sciences, as well as reading. She said that a new executive plan was set for the coming phase to raise academic acumen of students in international studies through raising student levels in mathematics, sciences, and the Arabic and English languages.

In the board’s meeting with the parents of some students, there was a reference to some problems, such as the inadequate number of teaching and guidance professionals, in addition to the leaking of tests in some schools and the poor response of some categories of students to the education process.

The education excellence awards being offered for the 7th year in a row under the patronage of HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, is one of the supportive and encouraging prizes. The number of schools participating in the contest this year reached 14, where 2 were announced the winners, one independent and one private.

2- Higher education developments:

The expansion of Qatar Foundation’s facilities and Qatar University is still ongoing. The percentage of females to males in higher education reached 175% in 2013. This is one of the highest ratios worldwide, due to the change of society’s perception of women’s economic, social and cultural role.¹⁸

The number of students in Qatar University also increased from 8,706 in 2009-2010 to 16,499 in 2013-2014. The number of graduates this year reached 1261: 988 females and 273 males, among whom are 649 Qataris and 612 non-Qataris.

¹⁸ Qatar’s internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

The Student Fund (the Financial Aid Department) offered many services, such as monthly financial assistance, tuition assistance, transportation assistance, housing assistance, work assistance, and the provision of computer systems, with the total amount of this aid reaching 10,929,470 QR, 43% of it to Qataris and 57% to non-Qataris.

Qatar University received the largest amount of research grants issued by the Qatar National Research Fund. The Research Department at Qatar University was also chosen as the best such department in the country for the year 2014.

As for higher education grants and scholarship programs, there is a program to send the most brilliant Qatari students abroad to receive higher education, especially Qatari students. The program was established by Qatar University and Hamad Bin Khalifa University. The guidebook for scholarships was also issued and distributed to students and parents to help them identify education opportunities. There are around 50 students on scholarships in prominent international universities.¹⁹

As for the conformance of curriculums with human rights and tolerance values, the NHRC, in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunisia, conducted a study regarding the assessment of education in Qatar on various levels, most importantly the effect of curriculums, books, and teaching methods on awareness levels of the rights of females and people with disabilities, as well as the relation between child creativity and the curriculum, as well as other values of tolerance and equality and respect for the environment.

The cooperation between the NHRC and the Arab Institute for Human Rights yielded great results, manifest in the preparation of the Human Rights Education Guidebook for the elementary, preparatory, and high school levels, and then forwarding the report to the specialized authority at the Ministry of Education and Guidance, but the NHRC did not receive the required support at the ministry.

¹⁹ Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

Section III

The Rights of Marginalized Groups

- a- Workers' rights
- b- Women's rights
- c- Children's rights
- d- Rights of persons with disabilities
- e- Rights of the elderly

a- Workers' rights

During this year, the NHRC received 1609 complaints, most of which were from workers, 1271 were from males and 338 from females. Most complaints were sponsorship transfer requests, followed by requests for the payment of salaries and requests for permission to leave the country. The NHRC also received in the period covered by this report 11 labor cases presented to it by the UN Rapporteur on Immigration and Amnesty International relating to the withholding of wages and the lack of legal protection.

In previous reports published on its website in the Arabic and English languages, the NHRC stated that there are “certain groups of expatriate workers, especially laborers with low wages, who are subjected to harsh conditions due to their companies' violation of labor laws and their related ministerial laws, especially the delay in the payment of wages, the withholding of passports, and the provision of inadequate living conditions.” Other reports stated that these violations led to punishments, especially when they are combined with harsh work conditions in high summer temperatures and humidity.

In order to avoid repeating the above, the NHRC wishes to direct attention to some of the challenges facing labor mentioned the complaints it receives, as follows:

1- Travel ban and the prevention from work:

The NHRC monitored cases for workers and employees who suffered from harsh living conditions after they lost their jobs and were unable to find other work or leave the country due to debt to banks or individuals, because they did not receive approvals to seek other work from their sponsors, because the specialized parties in the Ministry of Labor refused to give

them approvals to seek other employment, and because they have legal claims against them preventing them from travelling. This leads them to stay in the state illegally and seek work, thus being exploited by the employers, who pay them trivial amounts or withhold their payments, knowing that the workers cannot complain to the specialized authorities.

In this area, the NHRC considers that there should be clear and decisive mechanisms to address these cases, such as the taking of a decision to allow debtors to seek temporary employment with other parties while obligating the new employer to transfer a quarter of the workers' salaries to the creditors to pay off their debts. Another recommendation is to enhance the solutions so as to permit the issuance of a decision to deport the resident and enable the creditors to pursue the collection of their debt in the debtors' home countries.

2- Closure of the company's commercial register and the inability to complete sponsorship transfer procedures:

The NHRC also observed some cases of workers and employees who suffered harsh living conditions due to their inability to settle their legal affairs to live and work due to the expiry of their companies' commercial register in the Ministry of Interior's database. This prevents the completion of administrative procedures related to sponsorship transfer to a new company despite their having received their sponsors' approval. In some cases, the companies are blacklisted as the workers arrive in the country on a work visa, which forces some to seek illegal employment in order to avoid their departure from the country after they spent the effort and money to come to Qatar, especially after paying fees for "work visa" to agents in their home countries.

These workers are subjected to the exploitation that comes with working illegally, where they are offered trivial payments, and in some cases they are promised payment, only to be deprived of said payment. This calls for the creation of clear and fast mechanisms to address these cases and in order to prevent crimes and the negative effects that can result from such conditions.

Some of the workers who were brought under work visas and couldn't complete their residency procedures due to the blacklisting of their hiring firm have expressed hesitation in referring to the specialized authorities to

settle their matters due to their fear of being deported.²⁰ This calls for the creation of safe and effective ways to reach to workers, such as the establishment of a labor office at Hamad International Airport that receives workers and monitors their conditions.

3- Absence of the provision of health insurance services or ID cards by the employers:

The NHRC witnessed that some companies do not issue residency and healthcare cards for their workers and employers, which makes them prone to arrest by police.²¹ This causes an arbitrary arrest and a violation of personal security.

Thus, there has to be a swift mechanism to identify the reason for the workers' lack of an ID and not to arrest them in case of negligence by the company.

4- 2014 data and statistics:

The number of labor disputes at the Ministry of Labor reached 10541 from 1/4/2013 until 31/3/2014. Construction workers constituted 48% of the total complainants. The Labor Inspection Department conducted 47090 field visits during the year 2013-2014. As for the facilities targeted by the searches, work inspectors conducted 34650 inspections, while health and safety inspectors made 12440 visits, 7% of which were to facilities, 16.7% to labor accommodations, and 69.8% to work sites.

The number of labor claims in courts for the year 2013-2014 reached 8537 claims, and the court claims amounted to 3977 claims.

The Ministry of Interior also received 854 petitions for sponsorship transfer in 2013, all of which were settled according to the national achievements book issued by the ministry's general secretariat, however, the book does not show the number of requests that were approved.

The claims for violations of the Expatriate Entry and Exit Law reached 7896 for the year 2013-2014, 100% of which were settled by the Search and Follow-up Department.²²

²⁰ NHRC interview with a group of Cameroonian workers

²¹ Several files the NHRC received from Amnesty International and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants

²² Qatar's internal achievements 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

5- Domestic help:

NHRC observed some ways in which this group is treated harshly, starting from the long daily working hours ending with not receiving sufficient rest during the week. They may also be subjected to physical and sexual abuse, which compels them to abscond. This is what the NHRC witnessed upon its visit to the deportation prison (Department of Search and Follow-up – Ministry of Interior) which drives them to work in prostitution upon failing to receive a decent job or transfer sponsorship. They are also deprived of complaining to the Labor Administration, because they are not covered by the Labor Law number 14 for the year 2004. There should be a mechanism to provide access to this group to file complaints and to provide them with additional protection from mistreatment and abuse.

6- Recruitment offices:

The NHRC received complaints from citizens and residents regarding the high price for the procuring of a house helper, which has reached 15,000-18,000 QR.

Some stated that, after the domestic maid spends 3 months in the house, which is the period of time during which the sponsor is allowed to refund their money, the helper absconds to work freelance or on an hourly basis with the supervision of an individual or a group of individuals.

The recruitment offices in Qatar do not take any fees from domestic helpers for procurement, according to Labor Law number 14 for the year 2004, while that was standard practice before the law was issued. The domestic workers are not treated well by those in charge of these offices, with the NHRC receiving several complaints of imprisonment, abuse, and harassment.

7- Combating human trafficking:

The law discusses the definition of human trafficking and determined the punishments in case of its commitment.

The law also included some rights that must be provided to human trafficking victims, in order to protect these victims, as a duty of the state. Still, some human trafficking cases emerge in some private sector companies, the problems start at the originating countries when the recruitment offices make promises of golden employment opportunities in Qatar to prospective workers, and the workers then take loans to pay for the visa and travel expenses. After arriving in the country, the workers are surprised that their recruitment company is fake or provides no real paid work, and the official may even bring them as free loose labour in return

for a monthly amount.²³

It is worth mentioning that some managers or office boys in some small construction firms receive set amounts from the workers in exchange for granting them permission to work with other parties (sponsorship transfer) although the law punishes that with prison and fines.

In a research conducted by the NHRC in 2010 titled “Conditions of Unskilled Workers in the Construction Sector in Qatar”, the research sample included 1114 workers, of whom no less than 43.4% declared that they had paid money to intermediaries to raise their chances of finding work, while 25% of the workers paid funds to recruitment firms, and there are a minority of 9.2% who aid to both.

The research’s results showed that most of the workers who paid funds to find work had to borrow money, which is a high percentage of 53% of the total sample, while 4.8% mortgaged their family home, 12% used their savings, and 9.5% used the aid of family or relatives. These results show the extent of the pressure this group of people lives under on one hand, and its readiness to risk all for the dream of reaching Qatar on another in order to receive wages that satisfy their families’ need back home. Said wages may be suitable considering the living standards in their home countries, but they are very low at times if one takes into consideration the amount of sacrifice and physical and mental risk the workers bear, away from home and family.

Table (3) from the Qatari Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation shows the number of human trafficking complaints during the year 2014 by gender and type

Total	Gender		Classification	No
	Female	Male		
293	2	291	Human trafficking victims	1

²³ The head of the Search and Follow-up Department at the Interior Ministry announced in the Al-Raya newspaper in its 11793th edition that 50 companies were referred to the Public Prosecution and 84 lawsuits were registered for visa trade during the previous year. Jail sentences ranging between 1-3 years were issued against 40 expatriates and citizens for visa trade during the same year.

- The total amount of fines in this area reached 4.270 million QR for violations by companies and individuals of law 4 for the year 2009 on the regulation of the entry, exit, residence, and sponsorship of expatriates.

b- Women's rights

In 2004, the Qatari Constitution stressed equality between all citizens in rights and duties, regardless of gender.

Despite the fact that women activism is only a recent concept in Qatar, Qatari women enjoy encouragement from the political leadership. This approach started when women participated in the Municipal Council elections in March 1999 as voters and candidates, with said elections being the first elections in Qatar's history. The first Qatari woman was voted for membership in the council in 2003, and in 2011 102 candidates, including 4 women applied, in which 1 was elected.

Qatari women also reached leadership positions, with the appointment of women as education, health, and telecommunications ministers. In the new cabinet formation, there is one female minister (the Minister of Telecommunications).

The first female judge was appointed in 2010, followed by 2 additional judges in 2013 and 2014.

Female enrollment in schools in the elementary level also increased, reaching 95% in 2006 and 96% in 2013, and the ratio of females to males in higher education reached 175% in 2013, which is considered one of the highest in the world.²⁴

It is certain that the provision of more higher education opportunities for women creates additional employment opportunities in new fields.

According to the summary of Labor Force Sample Survey Q2 (Apr - Jun 2013) conducted by the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, the number of working Qatari individuals amounts to 86,000, 66% of whom are male and 33% are female.

The government also encouraged Qatari women to enter all professional fields of work, yet, more than 50% of working women are focused in the education sector. Qatari women also have an effective participation in a number of social associations that generally work in serving families. Qatari press is also registering an increasing female presence, which affect's women's strong presence in the coming years, and the number of

²⁴ 2014 Millennium Development Goals – State of Qatar – Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

female applications for the Media Faculty in Qatar University has also increased.

On another hand, there has been a continuation of some forms of discrimination, as follows:

1- On the legislative level:

The State of Qatar signed the International Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, but with a number of reservations.

Discrimination against women is manifest in the refusal to grant the Qatari nationality to the non-Qatari husband married to a Qatari woman, and the same applies to her children from him according to the Nationality Law number 38 for the year 2005. In addition to the abovementioned facts in the section on civil and political rights, we can also say from a social and economic rights perspective that depriving women of this right is connected to the stereotype, due to which laws were created to deprive her of the right to the recognition of her maternal role in upbringing and deciding the best interests of her children. This applies also to custody, guardianship, and childcare rights, which set the father as the responsible party for the children and assigns to the woman the task of childcare.

The abovementioned allocation of lands and housing loans also fails to achieve gender equality, since it requires women to be unmarried and over 35 years of age, or to be divorced or widowed, with having 5 years elapsed since the husband's demise or divorce. Actual practice during the time of the report prove the stopping the allocation of land to women, even those meeting the abovementioned criteria.

2- Violence against women:

The 2011-2016 national strategy mentioned the “Qatar has adopted a system for full protection against domestic violence” and criminalizing violence. It also stressed that the definition of domestic violence is not only limited to relatives sharing a place of residence, but also to all places in said residence, hence it also provides protection for domestic workers.

A committee headed by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs has been formed in January 2013 to review legislation related to domestic violence. The committee completed its work and forwarded its recommendations to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers in July 2013. The committee did not submit any recommendation for a law criminalizing domestic violence, but it recommended the formation of a national committee to

coordinate with the specialized authorities to follow up claims and suggest mechanisms to prevent the spread of domestic violence.

The Qatari Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation provides protection and rehabilitation services to abused women.

Table (4) from the Qatari Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation shows women complaints during 2014 according to nationality, type, and number

No	Problem	Nationality		Total
		Qatari	Non-Qatari	
1	Abuse and violence (physical, psychological, sexual)	238	194	432
2	Human trafficking	2	107	109
3	Poor living conditions	3	3	6
4	Educational problems	8	1	9
5	Other (addiction, crime, misc.)	8	14	22
6	Consultations	55	242	297
Total		314	561	875

c- Children's rights:

Qatar signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, but the State has not amend its legislation in accordance with the convention on determining the age of minors, especially in civil and criminal legislation.

1- Juveniles' rights:

Juveniles' rights are regulated by the Juvenile Persons Law for the year 1994, the Penal Code for the year 2004, and the Criminal Procedures Law for the year 2004. Sharia rules also apply when the accused or the victim is Muslim.

The minimum age for criminal responsibility is set at 7 years, and the Juvenile Persons Law identifies a juvenile as someone who is over 7 years of age but under 16 at the time of the commitment of the crime, and the stipulations of the Juvenile Persons Law apply to them.

Persons under 18 years of age at the time of their commitment of a crime cannot be sentenced to death.

The number of crimes committed by juveniles reaches to 417 crimes in the year 2013-2014, and the number of settled cases has reached 167.²⁵

2- Protection of children against physical punishment:

The student behavior assessment system and guidelines explicitly prohibit any type of physical punishment against children in any form. Despite the above, the NHRC witnessed that some teachers do not adhere to these guidelines, and there are some cases filed by parents that have reached courts.

3- Children's right to education

The law stipulates that education is compulsory and free from the elementary to the high school level, or until the child reaches 18 years of age, yet the NHRC monitored cases of dozens of children each year who are not enrolled in either independent nor private schools due to the population growth that exceeds the number of available schools.

In Section II of this research, the NHRC presented detailed information on the right to education in the State of Qatar.

4- Children's right to healthcare:

In regard to children health in the State of Qatar, mortality rates declined for children up to 5 years of age to 0.7% in the latest joint report by the UNICEF, World Bank, and the UN Population Unit of the UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs on child mortality rates in 2011. This shows the availability of medical care, good nutrition, medical

²⁵ Internal accomplishments of the State of Qatar for 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

Immunization, clean drinking water, good healthcare facilities, and other factors.

Also in the year 2013, schools' share of nursing services increased by 7% for 83.7% of the total number of schools, and the Primary Healthcare Corporation also increased dental care services and health consultations for schools registered with it.

The new 2011-2016 national healthcare strategy focuses on primary healthcare as a solid base, as well as mother and child health and the founding of a food safety department.²⁶

5- Protection of children against sexual abuse:

The Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation specializes in developing programs that ensure the protection of children from sexual abuse, guaranteeing the avoidance of criminalizing children, and provide for a free complaint system that considers the feelings of the abused child.

Dozens of training courses are held each year targeting children and their guardians and raise their awareness regarding sexual abuse and how to address it. The foundation receives complaints through its hotline, as well as its office at Hamad Medical Corporation.

6- Legislative developments pertaining to children's rights:

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs created a draft law for child protection to the Council of Ministers. The draft includes articles prohibiting any manner of physical punishment against children, their protection against sexual abuse, and prevention, guidance, and treatment programs. The law also includes articles on the establishment of an independent court for juveniles and raising the age of criminal responsibility. Other articles including the establishment of a special "child protection police" force, a special "child protection prosecution department", a special "child protection court" and a "child protection court of first instance", whose decisions can be appealed at the Appeal Court's Child Protection Department.

²⁶ Internal accomplishments of the State of Qatar for 2013-2014 – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

Table 5 from the Qatari Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation shows complains related to children 10 years old and younger in 2014 according to the type of issue and number

No	Issue	Age group 10 years or less
1	Abuse and violence (physical, psychological, sexual)	156
2	Educational problems	16
3	Legal consultation	43
Total		215

d- Rights of persons with disabilities:

The rights of persons with disabilities come from the principle of respecting their dignity, their equality, and their effective participation in society, in addition to teaching society to respect differences and accept disabled persons as a part of the human and natural diversity. This requires the respect of their abilities and allowing them to enjoy equal opportunities and access, in addition to other human rights mentioned herein by the NHRC on two levels:

1- The legislative level:

The Special Needs Persons Law number 2 for the year 2004 came to reflect the indication to the beginning of the emergence of a national political will at the national level towards promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. It is notable that said law faced a number of obstacles since its issuance, in terms of not applying its provisions due to the absence of regulations and administrative instruction to aid its application in practice. Emiri decree number 15 for the year 2014 included an order to liquidate the Supreme Council for Family Affairs without determining the party to which the duties of said council would be granted, which crated an executive vacuum by not determining the specialized executive authorities in the aforementioned law.

The State of Qatar has signed the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, and it has pledged by manner of the convention to develop and activate all human rights for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any type. The country is thus required to take all legislative and administrative measures to preserve the rights prescribed in the convention.

Based on the above, a committee from several specialized authorities under the supervision of the former Supreme Council for Family Affairs was formed in 2012-2013 to draft a law to amend some articles of law number 2 for the year 2004 regarding persons with special needs, in order to harmonize national legislation with the international convention. The committee also worked on drafting a special law for the rights of persons with special needs containing 7 articles on education, healthcare, employment, living standards, right to access to public and private facilities, and cultural and sports facilities. The two draft laws and the decision have been presented to the Council of Ministers since February 2013.

The delay in the completion of the legislative procedures to issue the 2 draft laws and the decision raises the NHRC's concern regarding the possibility of a lack of required care regarding the rights of persons with disabilities. This is especially true in light of the failure to implement article 34 of the convention, pertaining to the establishment of a committee for the rights of said category, despite said committee's importance in working to guarantee the country's full commitment to the convention, in addition to its being a focal point for disabled persons and their families in making them a key element in decision-making processes regarding policies and programs related to this group.

2- The executive level:

The number of persons with disabilities registered at the specialized centers in Qatar according to the latest statistics by the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics Qataris: Male 6856, female 4863 Non-Qatari: Male 5540, female: 3393

1- Institutions and centers concerned with persons with disabilities:

The international convention stipulates the importance of respecting the right of persons with disabilities in all policies and programs, and avoiding any action or practice that violates this convention, as well as guaranteeing the presence of authorities and public institutions that handle all actions done in accordance to said convention.

The NHRC located 7 centers that offer services to psychologically or sensory disabled persons, and examined the services they offer.²⁷

The NHRC noticed that, despite the services being offered, these institutions face real challenges related to the experience of some of their

officials in dealing with persons with disabilities, the failure of some of these institutions to principles of the formation of boards of directors, and the failure of some others to publish transparent periodical reports on their activities.

Some centers which offer free services also lack the capacity, some have a waiting list of over 900 cases, in which priority is given to Qatari citizens, which makes the offered options poor, making disabled persons and their families prone to exploitation by some private clinics.²⁸

The actual numbers of disabled persons are not available, since some families are ashamed to admit they have a disabled member, which is called “social shame”.

The NHRC also wishes to highlight the lack of information or reports regarding the implementation of any oversight by the Special Needs Department at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs or the Supreme Council for Health on the activities of these centers.

2- Integration:

Integration means taking the necessary measures to guarantee the full participation of persons with disabilities in society in all political, civil, economic, social, and cultural areas.

To assess the success of the integration of people with disabilities into society, the NHRC observed the following:

a- In Education:

The integration of people with disabilities in schools needs the qualification of the school staff and curriculum based on the nature of the disability.

The Supreme Education Council has assumed the responsibility of integrating special needs children in independent schools. The NHRC has been informed of programs and budgets designed specifically for this

²⁷ The NHRC study on human rights and conditions of persons with disabilities, and study on “Cochlear implants” in children

²⁸ Interviews with families of disabled persons

purpose, yet there is no accurate information regarding the progress in said programs.

b- Right to Access:

To enable people with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all facets of life, the state, as a party in the related international convention, must take the appropriate measures to guarantee the access of people with disabilities to their tangible surroundings, transportation, and communications, including IT, information systems, and communications systems at the lowest cost. This also guarantees their access to public facilities and other services available to the public in cities and rural areas, including the determination of obstacles and challenges to this accessibility and their removal.

The NHRC realizes that personal disability is a still evolving concept, and despite the previous cooperation between the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning to set standards and conduct training among the specialized authorities regarding the right of access, most of the completed facilities were incomplete or devoid of any of the accessibility aids mentioned in the convention.²⁹

The NHRC deliberated with a number of disabled individuals and their families and conducted field visits to public and private facilities, and it observed an absence of facilities for persons with sensory disabilities in the public buildings and facilities, as well as the lack of human assistance and sign language experts. Most of the preparations for wheelchair use, such as rails between stairs and most car parking spaces lack the proper safety measurements for use. This all leads to an urgent need for the implementation of article (34) of the agreement on the establishment of a committee to monitor the rights of persons with disabilities and follow up the solving of these problems.

3- Healthcare and social care:

Hamad Hospital offers competent home medical care. The NHRC witnessed that more and more disabled persons and their families have benefited from this service. On another hand, some have complained of the lack of medical care for some mental disabilities in areas such as

²⁹ Interview with experts on disability affairs

dental care and have demanded the establishment of a specialized clinic in every medical facility that can cater to the examination and treatment of people with mental disabilities.

The State of Qatar does not have specialized associations for certain types of mental disabilities, such as autism, mental paralysis, Down syndrome, and others, unlike the neighboring countries, which have such associations. The families of the disabled stressed that the presence of such associations does not contradict the issue of integration, and demanded their establishment.

4- Right to protection from torture or inhumane, cruel, or degrading treatment:

According to the related international agreement, each member state should take all the necessary measures to protect disabled persons from all manner of exploitation, violence, and harassment, both inside and outside their homes. This should be done through providing information and teaching them how to avoid cases of violence or exploitation and reporting them. The countries should provide protection services in institutions according to the type of disability and gender. The agreement further states that women and girls with disabilities are more prone to violence, neglect, or inappropriate or cruel treatment.

The agreement also stipulates that the country must guarantee that specialized authorities monitor all facilities and programs aimed at serving disabled persons in an effective manner to prevent any forms of exploitation, violence, or harassment, and present rehabilitation services should they be subjected to such.

The Department for Persons with Special Needs at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is specialized in monitoring and inspections to protect disabled persons from violence. Yet, the NHRC has not received any reports in this regard, which raises concern regarding the presence of sufficient care for this group.

5- Right to work:

The NHRC examined the results of the job fair to hire persons with disabilities, where it was mentioned that the number of Qatari hires in government departments and authorities reached 14, with 3 at the Interior Ministry, 1 in the Ministry of Islamic Sites and Affairs, 5 in the Ministry

of Municipal Affairs and Urban Planning, 2 in the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, 1 in the Supreme Council for Health, 1 in the NHRC, and 1 in Al-Ijarah. There are also valued efforts by the Volunteer Committee, which succeeded in training 15 Qatari and non-Qatari disabled persons in various government departments.

The NHRC praises the Emiri grant of HH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, to persons with disabilities and those under social security by granting 750 free shares of the Mesaieed Holding Company.

c- Rights of the elderly:

The Qatari Institution for Elderly Persons' Care (Ihsan) a training course to qualify 18 social specialists to train staff and grant them the experience and knowledge needed to serve the elderly.

The Interior Ministry provided a special section at the Department of Passports and Expatriate Affairs to serve the elderly, as well as exempting them from all fees.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs also launched the "Amurni" service to facilitate serving the elderly who cannot reach the ministry to complete their applications.

Table (6) shows the number of elderly registered in the Qatari Institution for Elderly Persons' Care in 2014 by gender and nationality as reported to the NHRC

Nationality	Qatari		Non-Qatari	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number	3	9	2	8
Total	12		10	
	22			

Table (7) shows the type of services offered by the Qatari Institution for Elderly Persons' Care to its registrants in 2014 according to gender, nationality, and type

Type of Service	Natural Therapy				
	Inside the Institution		Number of sessions	Outside the Institution	
Location of service	Qatari	Non-Qatari		Qatari	Non-Qatari
Nationality					

Gender	Male	3	5	153	17	24	351
	Female	3	1	19	45	38	402
Total		6	6	172	62	62	753
Type of service		Psychological Counseling					
Location of service		Inside the Institution		Number of sessions	Outside the Institution		Number of sessions
Nationality		Qatari	Non-Qatari		Qatari	Non-Qatari	
Gender	Male	3	2	10	6	2	8
	Female	9	8	27	2	3	6
Total		12	10	37	8	5	14
Type of service		Physical aid (chairs, beds, medical equipment...)					
Location of service		Inside the institution		Number of equipment	Outside the institution		Number of equipment
Nationality		Qatari	Non-Qatari		Qatari	Non-Qatari	
Gender	Male	8	8	27	8	9	24
	Female	3	2	19	16	1	21
Total		11	10	35	24	10	45
Type of service		Home care					
Nationality		Qatari	Non-Qatari	Number of visits			
Gender	Male	48	20	68			
	Female	128	20	148			
Total		176	40	216			

Table of Complaints submitted to the NHRC

Since its inception, the NHRC worked to found a permanent and organized mechanism for the receipt of complaints from citizens and residents and coordinate with the competent authorities to find solutions. The committee has always strived to develop this mechanism, whether through diversifying the sources of receiving complaints, whether through personally by the petitioners or any one on their behalf, or through the free hotline, the NHRC website. About measures taken to investigate reports, The NHRC investigates and study all complaints and petitions received and conducts the related fact-finding activities; the NHRC tries its best to settle them amicably, as well as communicate the competent authorities to consider them and take the necessary legal actions, or by referring the cases to the competent authorities and addressing the means of remedies.

These complaints represent an important diagnosis of the situation of human rights in Qatar, and it is a diagnosis that should be taken in consideration when adopting the state's human rights strategy, especially since the examination of these complaints reveals that residents' complaints constitute the majority of the complaints received by the NHRC.

The NHRC's achievement in regard to these complaints depends on the responsiveness of the authorities and the competent parties in the state. The NHRC calls upon the state institutions and ministries, with full respect to their powers, to increase their cooperation with the NHRC in this regard and draw more attention in investigating these complaints, in order to rectify violations and restore rights to their rightful persons.

Table 8 shows the human rights complaints received by the NHRC in 2014 according to type

N o	Issue	Numb er	N o	Issue	Numb er	N o	Issue	Numb er
1	Birth certificate issue	2	14	Accommodation request	14	27	Financial dues + abuse	7
2	Restoration of nationality	17	15	Cancellation of deportation order	21	28	Departure from country	25
3	Return	6	1	Request of	5	2	Departure	16

	to work		6	changing visit to residency visa		9	e from country + financial dues	
4	Residence renewal	10	17	Visit extension request	1	30	Misc	9
5	Rights	911	18	Payment of financial dues	88	31	Sponsorship transfer + financial dues	54
6	Abuse by sponsor	15	19	Treatment abroad	4	32	Certificate of good standing	1
7	Removal from entry ban list	3	20	Exit permit	13	33	Request for explanation of reason for arrest	1
8	Request for relocation	1	21	Financial assistance	15	34	Education requests	2
9	Residency request	7	22	Sponsorship transfer	329	35	Housing allowance requests	4
10	Family residency request	5	23	Request for employment	9	36	Medical error	1
11	Request for attorney	2	24	Request for pardon	2	37	Removal from travel ban list	1
12	Prisoner release for health reasons	1	25	Work related	3	38	Land allocation requests	1

13	Social security request	2	26	Request for addition to social security record	1			
Total 1609								

Table 9 shows the human rights complaints received by the NHRC in 2014 according to gender

No	Gender	Number
1	Male	1271
2	Female	338
		1609

Table 10 shows the human rights complaints received by the NHRC in 2014 according to nationality

N	Nationality	Number	N	Nationality	Number	N	Nationality	N
1	Egypt	284	25	Palestine	17	49	Belgium	1
2	Philippines	251	26	Algeria	10	50	Thailand	1
3	India	128	27	Canada	6	51	Turkey	5
4	Qatar	104	28	Jordan	23	52	South Africa	3
5	Syria	61	29	Netherlands	1	53	Denmark	1
6	Sri Lanka	55	30	Kenya	31	54	Romania	3
7	Morocco	53	31	Ethiopia	14	55	Zambia	2
8	Nepal	61	32	Ghana	37	56	Sweden	1
9	Bangladesh	35	33	Australia	4	57	Sierra Leone	1
10	Pakistan	28	34	Yemen	6	58	Serbia	2
11	Tunisia	48	35	Eritrea	5	59	China	2
12	Lebanon	28	36	USA	12	60	Sultanate of Oman	2
13	Nigeria	126	37	KSA	4	61	France	5
14	Sudan	21	38	Spain	3	62	Venezuela	1
15	Somalia	2	39	Indonesia	2	63	Cyprus	1
16	UK	12	40	Ukraine	2	64	Cameroon	67
17	Guatemala	1	41	Niger	7	65	Korea	2

	a							
18	Libya	1	42	Iran	1	66	UAE	2
19	Germany	1	43	Greece	1	67	Uganda	2
20	Italy	2	44	Bahrain	2	68	Bulgaria	1
21	Portugal	2	45	Bosnia	2	69	Tanzania	1
22	Thailand	1	46	Gambia	1	70	Guatemal a	1
23	Iraq	2	47	Cyprus	1	71	Croatia	3
24	Malawi	2	48	Mauritania	1			
Total 1609								

**Section
IV**

NHRC Activities During the Year 2014

1- Participation in committees and internal meetings to enforce and improve human rights:

During the year 2014, the NHRC participated in various human rights related committees, as follows:

- 1- The committee formed by the Council of Ministers to study the joint recommendation from the NHRC and the Supreme Council for Family Affairs regarding the children of Qatari women.
- 2- The NHRC's participation in the committee within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to study the problems and situation of widows and divorcees with regard to housing.
- 3- Cooperation with the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, which organizes the 2022 World Cup.
- 4- Cooperation with the Ministry of telecommunications in a program aimed at providing labor with access to information technology.
- 5- Meetings with a number of ambassadors to Qatar to discuss human rights issues.
- 6- Meetings with a number of delegations and government officials during their visits to Qatar.
- 7- Meetings with a number of human rights researchers and activists during their visits to Qatar.

2- Internal programs to spread human rights culture:

- An educational program targeting male and female high school students in cooperation with Qatar Foundation for education science and community development
 - The “UNESCO Ambassadors programme – A Cultural Meeting Point” program in cooperation with the National Committee for Education, Culture, and Science.
- The “Health in the Workplace” program
- The NHRC joined the National Human Rights Day celebrations at Amna Bint Wahab Independent Preparatory School For Girls.
- The (Game for Fun and Rights) program in the following schools:
 - a- Al-Huda Independent Elementary School for Girls
 - b- Al-Riffaa Independent Elementary School for Girl
 - c- Al-Wakra Independent Elementary School for Girls
 - d- The Tunisian School

- e- The Sudanese School
- f- Al-Falah Elementary School
- g- Al-Jazeera Academy for Boys
- h- Al-Jazeera Academy for Girls

- The NHRC welcomed in its headquarters during the year 2014 a number of students of some elementary and preparatory schools for girls and boys in order to introduce the committee and address its work, as follows:

- a- The student council of the Salah al-Din Independent Preparatory School for Boys
- b- Atika Independent Elementary School for Girls
- c- The student council of the Al-Iman Independent Preparatory School for Girls
- d- The student council of the Abdulrahman Bin Jassim Independent Preparatory School for Boys
- e- The Student Rights Committee of the Abi Ubayda Independent Preparatory School for Boys.

3- Conferences, training courses, and workshops inside Doha:

- The NHRC organized the international conference on “Security Challenges and Human Rights in the Arab World”, on the sidelines of the conference the following meetings have been conducted with:
 - The president of the African Court for Human and People’s Rights.
 - The chairman of the Azerbaijan Foundation of Democracy Development and Human Rights Protection.
 - Representatives of the UN Development Program.
 - The chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.
 - Vice president of the Mexican National institute.
- The second regional forum on human rights in the Arab World “the challenges of reality and prospects for the future”
- Organizing the Martyr Ali Hasan al-Jaber award contest
 - Participating in a workshop to release a report on the “Domestic Effects of International Human Rights Treaty Ratification in the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)”
- Regional workshop in Doha about the “Legal prospects of Asylum”
- Seminar regarding the elderly in cooperation with the “Ihsan” Foundation

- A training course on international protection mechanisms and human promotion of rights mechanisms
- - A training course on the “Human Rights System”
- A training course on human rights mechanisms and principles

4- National campaigns and publications:

The NHRC organized the following campaigns and released the following publications during 2014:

- Issue 17 of the National Human Rights Committee magazine "Al Saheefa"
- Issue 18 of the National Human Rights Committee magazine
- NHRC introductory booklet
- guidelines for education and healthcare centers in co-operation with the Supreme Education Council and Supreme Council of Health, in order to promote and protect human rights in these places
- Media campaign in cooperation with the Qatar Red Crescent Society titled “The story of Humanitarian Work”
- Communicating with the competent international authorities regarding the Qatari detainees in the United Arab Emirates.

5- Cooperation with human rights protection mechanisms:

1- Cooperation with the United Nations network:

During 2014, the NHRC met with two UN Special Rapporteurs and responded to a series of surveys, most notably:

- Survey by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants
- Survey by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers
- Survey of the Human Rights Council on “the right to education for People with Disabilities”

Attending the session on adopting of “UPR Report” of the State of Qatar at the Human Rights Council headquarter in Geneva.

Participation in the session of the Committee for the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) session in Geneva.

2- Cooperation with similar national organizations:

- a- Cooperation with the Bahraini National Institute for Human Rights

- b- Meeting with the delegate of the Indian Human Rights Association (AIHRA) to discuss the various means of cooperation on the sidelines of the APF conference in New Delhi.
- c- Meeting with the Mexican National Human Rights Commission.

3- Memoranda of understanding

An MOU was signed between the NHRC and the Asia Pacific Forum for National Human Rights Institutions. A preliminary study is currently in place for opening of a regional office of the Asia Pacific Forum in Doha.

4- Workshops and foreign forums:

- International workshop on regional arrangements for the protection of human rights organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The Second International Human Rights Forum in Marrakech.

5- Major meetings outside Qatar

- The 27th meeting of the International Coordination Committee in Geneva
- The Accreditation Committee of the International Coordination Committee in Geneva
- The 19th annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum in New Delhi, India
- The Asia Pacific Forum meeting in Geneva
- Meeting between the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions and the Qatar's permanent delegation to New York regarding the participation of national human rights committees
- Meetings of the organizing committees and work teams of the International Conference on Security and Human Rights
- Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Security and Human Rights conference in Geneva
- Meeting with the delegation of the UN Population Fund (general assembly)
- The first meeting between the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and national human rights committees in Geneva.

6- Cooperation with civil society”

The NHRC cooperates with Amnesty International and Human Rights watch through receiving a number of cases, most of which are related to labor. The committee also coordinates the two committees’ visits to Qatar by seeking the release of the required visas and arranging meetings with the specialized government authorities.

7- Cooperation with foreign government authorities:

- The NHRC discussed with the Norwegian ambassador some means of cooperation in the human rights field. There is also ongoing coordination to prepare a visit by the committee to Norway to exchange information and expertise.

- The NHRC is considering cooperation with the Swiss Government, represented by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in migration, development, and human rights issues. Work is also underway to prepare an MOU between the NHRC and the agency.

Section
V

The NHRC's Recommendations

- 1- **Recommendations for the development of civil and political rights:**
 - Review and ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
 - Reconsideration of a number of legislations in this area, such as the Community Protection Law, the Counterterrorism Law, the Law on the Establishment of the State Security Directorate, in addition to amending the Nationality Law, the Law on the Establishment of Charitable Organizations, and the Public Demonstrations Law in accordance with international human rights standards, in addition to expediting the release of the Election Law, and the Law on the Regulation of Media Activities.
 - Ratification of the optional protocol of the Convention on the Prevention of Torture.

- 2- **Recommendations for the development of economic and social rights:**
 - Considering the ratification of the International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.
 - Reconsidering some legislations related to this area, such as the Housing Law, the Expatriate Entry and Residency Law, and the Kafala Law, through amending the Kafala and Exit Permit systems in adherence to international standards.
 - Ratification of the optional protocol of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

- 3- **Recommendations for the development of legislation pertaining to marginalized groups:**

Amending of the Law for Persons with Disabilities, issuing decisions related to said law, issuing child protection laws, reconsidering some articles of the Family Protection Law, issuing legislation to protect the elderly and legislation to protect against domestic violence, in addition to expediting

the release of a law regulating the rights of domestic workers.

4- Recommendations to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and the Shura Council:

- Giving priority to the examination of human rights related draft laws, especially the draft election law, the draft law on the regulation of media activities, the draft law on the regulation of domestic workers, the draft law on children, the draft law on the amendment of the Law on Persons with Disabilities, and any draft laws in this category.
- Continuing to present the human rights related draft laws to the NHRC before their ratification and inviting the committee to attend the draft legislation discussion sessions.
- Considering the possibility of the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, the optional protocol of the International Convention Against Torture, and the optional protocol for the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The committee also recommends the revision of all general reservations, including reservation against article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The NHRC's recommendations are aimed at enhancing the human rights situation in the State of Qatar and support the organizations working in this field on the regional and international levels, especially given Qatar's membership in the Human Rights Council and its presidency of many international human rights bodies and associations.

5- Recommendations to the Supreme Judiciary Council:

Recommendations regarding procedures to improve the status of the right to a fair and just trial:

- 1- Increasing the number of translators
- 2- Establishing a department or committee of the Supreme Judiciary Council or the Ministry of Justice that includes experts in all specializations to settle all disputes.
- 3- The adherence of the honorable judges to appoint experts only for cases which the court cannot handle due to its requirement of a

technical or professional expert.

4- Activating exemptions from payment expert fees in worker cases, especially in cases of workers of limited wages

5- The necessity of the application of legal texts that prevent the delay of cases for the same reason more than once in order to guarantee their speedy settlement, and utilizing the successive session system for cases that affect society or the country.

6- The creation of a department that includes Arabic language and legal experts who can review decisions after issuance to check they are free of spelling mistakes and typos before the heads of courts sign them.

7- Utilizing new affecting the mechanisms of dispute resolution as stipulated in the various legislations. The NHRC considers that the creation of new mechanisms and the activation of the existing mechanisms for dispute resolution in an amicable manner or with minimum procedures may improve the practice of the right to a fair and just trial, at least by raising the burden of the review of simple cases, thus helping the judicial officials review the cases that require study and examination.

The most important of these mechanisms would be:

a- Activating the arbitration and conciliation system mentioned in Labor law number 14 for the year 2004, since there is no doubt that the abundance of labor cases can mostly be solved by the arbitration and conciliation committees, especially since most are related to stable issues, such as salaries and wages.

Emiri decree number 57 for the year 2012 supports to a great extent this activation, which ordered the establishment of the Qatari Labor Committee, thus facilitating the appointment of labor representatives in both these committees.

b- Activating orders on payment system mentioned in articles 147-154 of the Civil and Commercial procedure Law, which would ease the judiciary's burden of cases with stable claims and settle debtors' claims regarding the settlement of their debts.

c- Coordinating with the Public Prosecution to the Criminal Orders System mentioned in article 274-255 of the Criminal Procedures Law.

d- Expediting the issuance of the Civil and Commercial Arbitration and conciliation Law, in which its draft has adopted by the Legislative Committee and reviewed by various authorities, especially since articles of this law and the mechanisms it includes for the settlement of these disputes, either through reconciliation, arbitration, or mediation, and subjecting all this to judicial oversight, shall settle many of these disputes without referring them the judicial authorities. These mechanisms also aid the speedy settlement of disputes, which increases investment opportunities for foreign firms in the country.

6- Recommendations to the Public Prosecution:

- Establishing the NHRC office at the public prosecution to receive complaints
- Intensifying inspection in detention areas and issuing an annual report regarding the number and places of visits
- Decreasing the precautionary detention decisions and replacing them with discretionary measures
- The introduction of intensive courses for Public Prosecution staff to train on applying the Human Trafficking Law through identifying human trafficking victims, the means to address these crimes, and the method for dealing with victims and presenting care.

7- Recommendations to the Interior Ministry:

- Setting a list of the standards by which a sponsorship transfer can be given, on condition that they cover all cases, especially those who are banned from work and travel due to financial debts, as well as persons whose companies were blacklisted by the authorities, as well as victims of visa trade.
- Expanding the deportation detention center and developing health and safety systems in it.
- developing a program for the rectification of the legal status of free loose labor.
- Avoiding detaining workers who do not have ID if their companies are proven to have failed in issuing them. Also conducting inspection on companies to insure that they are issuing ID and healthcare cards and fining violators, as well as considering this violation a reason to permit the workers' transfer to a different sponsor.
- Introducing intensive courses for police officers on human trafficking and means to address these crimes, and the method for dealing with victims and presenting care.
- Establishing an office affiliated to the ministry's Human Rights Administration at Hamad International Airport to examine any complications the workers face upon arrival and monitor their situation.

8- Recommendations to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs:

- Providing information and signage to all departemnts in multiple languages
- Providing translation into all languages.
- Developing access to workers mechanisms, especially "hotlines".
- Enforcing the formation of "joint committees" in companies,

as stipulated in the Labor Law.

- Activating the monitoring role of the “Special Needs Support Department” and allowing it to monitor related centers and institutions.
- Increasing the number of inspectors
- Attention to professional labor inspection training for all Labor Inspection Department staff, including the female inspectors.
- Conducting special courses for inspectors on human trafficking and the means to address these crimes.
- Establishing a special Labor Ministry office at Hamad International Airport to examine any complications the workers face upon arrival and monitor their situation.

9- Recommendations to the Ministry of Education and the Supreme Education Council:

- Focus on benefiting from the guidelines for education presented by the NHRC to the ministry in 2012 in the elementary, preparatory, and high school level.
- Drawing attention to the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 12 March of each year, and spreading human rights culture in general.
- Issuing a detailed report on the education of children with disabilities in private schools.

10- Recommendations to the NHRC:

- Establishing a special office of the committee at Hamad International Airport in order to spread awareness among arrivals to Qatar of all labor and residency laws.
- Establishing a special office of the committee in the Industrial Area in order to improve the worker access mechanisms.
- Improving hotline performance and developing the system for complaints.
- Increasing the number of legal officials and legal experts at the department of legal affairs and continuing to develop their capabilities.
- Increasing the number of human trafficking related training courses.
- Increasing field visits to detention centers.
- Increasing the number of field visits to labor sites and accommodations. Improving communications with the managing directors of small construction enterprises and establishing an office in the committee representing employers.
- Improving communication with the families of persons with disabilities and the disabled persons themselves.
- Improving communication with the families of persons with mental

disabilities and the disabled persons themselves.

**Section
VI**

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations submitted to the State of Qatar in the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2014

The State of Qatar submitted its national human rights report to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism on February 18, 2014 and received 84 recommendations from the Human Rights Council. On August 15, 2014 the final recommendations accepted by the State of Qatar were announced.

The National Human Right Committee will monitor the implementation of these recommendations by the state throughout 2015.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

1. Recommendations formulated during the dialogue or listed below have been approved by the state of Qatar.

It was recommended that Qatar:

122.1 Continue its ongoing review of national laws to ensure that they are in line with its international human rights law obligations (Turkmenistan);

122.2 Continue efforts in the field of legislative and institutional developments (Islamic Republic of Iran);

122.3 Strengthen its national human rights institutions (Somalia);

122.4 Continue to strengthen national human rights mechanisms (Nepal);

122.5 Enhance efforts to promote human rights (Sudan);

122.6 Continue further improvement of the protection and promotion of human rights in the country (Azerbaijan);

122.7 Continue its efforts to strengthen the normative and institutional framework for

the protection and promotion of human rights (Azerbaijan);

122.8 Continue the implementation of the National Development Strategy 2011-2016 in order to realize the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030 (Somalia);

122.9 Continue actions for the implementation of the objectives/targets of the Qatar National Vision 2030, which plans the evolution, in practice, of the economic, social, cultural, human and environmental development of the State during the next few years (Cuba);

122.10 Continue to conduct outreach activities to raise public awareness of human rights (Afghanistan);

122.11 Continue to spread human rights awareness throughout the country (Pakistan);

122.12 Continue and further expand human rights awareness-raising programmes (Armenia);

122.13 Continue to train law enforcement officials and human rights teachers and to raise awareness of the need for tolerance and harmony among races and ethnic groups and for intercultural relations (State of Palestine);

122.14 Organize more human rights education activities for staff of public services, particularly law enforcement officers (Viet Nam);

122.15 Continue efforts to amend national laws and legislation in order to ensure that they are in conformity with the recommendations made by treaty bodies (Lebanon);

122.16 Continue and strengthen relations with OHCHR (Kuwait);

122.17 Continue efforts to promote and protect the rights of vulnerable groups, particularly women and children (Brunei Darussalam);

122.18 Continue endeavours to promote and protect the rights of children and women (Iran (Islamic Republic of));

122.19 Further strengthen the promotion of the rights of women and girls (Maldives);

122.20 Continue to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination against women and girls in accordance with its obligations under the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Singapore);

122.21 Improve legislation in order to better implement the provisions of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Russian Federation);

122.22 Continue making efforts to improve the normative framework for the protection of women in Qatar (Nicaragua);

122.23 Continue efforts to improve gender equality and strengthen women's status in society (Turkey);

122.24 Follow up government action to empower women and combat female stereotypes (Lebanon);

122.25 Continue efforts towards female empowerment and achieve gender equality (Eritrea);

122.26 Denounce gender discrimination (Nigeria);

122.27 Continue measures aimed at improving the status of women in society and protect them from all forms of discrimination (Algeria);

122.28 Further promote gender equality so that women play a greater role in economic and social development (China);

122.29 Continue its efforts to enhance women's role in society and their effective involvement in the development process, as well as enabling their participation in economic, political and business activities in the country (Romania);

122.30 Continue to take necessary measures to enable women to be equal partners in development and decision-making (India);

122.31 Continue efforts to improve the status of women in society and promote gender equality at all levels, thereby enhancing the contribution of women to the development process (Sri Lanka);

122.32 Continue its commendable efforts to empower women in social, political, economic and public life, including by continuing its positive campaigning to raise awareness of women's rights (Malaysia);

122.33 Continue efforts to ensure the representation of women at all levels of the political process and their participation in public life (Chile);

122.34 Address the issue of the election of women to parliament (the Shura Council) (Ghana);

122.35 Take concrete steps to enhance women's awareness of their rights and guarantee and increase women's public and political participation (Czech Republic);

122.36 Strengthen measures to ensure gender equality, particularly in the transmission of nationality to the children of women married to non-citizens (Argentina);

122.37 Continue its efforts to end discrimination against women by taking all necessary measures to eliminate obstacles to their access to all fields of society, including the justice system (Sweden);

122.38 Facilitate women's access to justice and mainstream a gender-based approach to justice and employment (Sierra Leone);

122.39 Continue improving women's empowerment programmes and address issues of discrimination and domestic violence by intensifying awareness-raising campaigns and providing better access to remedies for all victims of domestic violence, including migrant workers irrespective of their legal status (Philippines);

122.40 Follow up efforts made to protect children from violence (Jordan);

122.41 Take measures to combat intrafamily violence (Côte d'Ivoire);

122.42 Strengthen efforts to combat violence against women (Ecuador);

122.43 Strengthen efforts to prevent violence against women (Rwanda);

122.44 Strengthen efforts to prevent violence against women and ensure the accountability of all perpetrators while ensuring victims are provided with adequate redress, reparations and access to full rehabilitation (Slovenia);

122.45 Set up an awareness campaign to prevent violence against women (Jordan);

122.46 Work to encourage both Qatari and expatriate women to report incidents of sexual violence, such as rape, to the authorities and increase the awareness of police, prosecutors and judges about the seriousness of the issue (Canada);

122.47 Continue with efforts to fight against human trafficking (Pakistan);

122.48 Continue to strengthen measures to combat human trafficking and child labour (Sri Lanka);

122.49 Continue to improve on efforts to combat human trafficking (Nigeria);

122.50 Continue to provide protection to victims of trafficking in human beings and to ensure systematic procedures for the identification of victims (Republic of Moldova);

122.51 Continue to make efforts to combat trafficking in persons, including through expanding and strengthening international, regional and bilateral cooperation (Uzbekistan);

122.52 Ensure the implementation of the existing anti-trafficking legislation (Albania);

122.53 Ensure the effective implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons (Côte d'Ivoire);

122.54 Continue to implement the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons (Turkey);

122.55 Continue to strengthen the family and family values (Malaysia);

122.56 Continue to protect the family as the basic social unit (Eritrea);

122.57 Continue to pursue the adoption and implementation of legislative or administrative measures aimed at the promotion and protection of the rights of the child (Chile);

122.58 Provide all the requirements needed to implement the national Family Cohesion

and Empowerment of Women Strategy (State of Palestine);

122.59 Encourage freedom of expression of opinion and strengthen cooperation and coordination with civil society and non-governmental organizations (Norway);

122.60 Continue to improve the social security system so as to provide better safeguards for the elderly, persons with disabilities and migrants (China);

122.61 Take necessary measures and steps to improve legislation on the right to health and ensure access for all persons to health services without discrimination (Pakistan);

122.62 Strengthen its cooperation with civil society organizations for the promotion and protection of human rights in the area of health services (Angola);

122.63 Continue measures to improve the education system and ensure universal access to quality education (Uzbekistan);

122.64 Continue to strengthen the cooperation of the State with civil and social organizations working for the promotion and protection of human rights in the area of education (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));

122.65 Continue to step up its efforts to integrate the human rights approach in the study plans and programmes of the national education system (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));

122.66 Prioritize the education of the girl child (Nigeria);

122.67 Continue efforts to provide education for persons with disabilities people and integrate them into society (Oman);

122.68 Continue to undertake measures to support and protect the rights of persons with disabilities (Singapore);

122.69 Pay particular attention to children belonging to vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and from minority communities (India);

122.70 Implement necessary measures to ensure adequate labour conditions and to combat human trafficking (Japan);

122.71 Continue the ongoing work on labour sector reform (Benin);

122.72 Strengthen measures to protect and promote the rights of foreign workers (Côte d'Ivoire);

122.73 Take further measures to protect the rights of migrant workers (Portugal);

122.74 Expand efforts to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers (Somalia);

122.75 Take the necessary measures to improve the situation of foreign workers (Algeria);

122.76 Take the necessary measures to eliminate the discrimination suffered by immigrants, particularly migrant workers (Argentina);

122.77 Step up efforts to provide protection to migrant workers, guaranteeing them full access to justice (Chile);

122.78 Continue to improve the working conditions of low-paid migrant labourers, especially those working as domestic help and on infrastructure projects (Canada);

122.79 Continue with actions aimed at the protection of migrant workers, especially domestic workers, from mistreatment and abuse (Ecuador);

122.80 Step up its efforts to strengthen compliance with the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2014) and take action to strengthen the effective protection of migrant workers (Spain);

122.81 Continue its efforts to provide development and humanitarian aid to least developed countries (Yemen);

122.82 Strengthen its international cooperation for the sustainable development of the countries of the South (Somalia);

122.83 Continue its humanitarian role and its role in development (Kuwait);

122.84 Continue to play an effective and positive role at the regional and international levels (Sudan).

2. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Qatar, which considers them to be already implemented or in the process of implementation:

123.1 Strengthen the independence of the National Human Rights Committee by limiting the role of government appointees (Ghana);

123.2 Strengthen the capacity of the National Human Rights Committee in the area of impartial monitoring, investigation, and reception of allegations of torture or ill-treatment (Mexico);

123.3 Significantly improve the implementation of protective measures contained in labour laws, in particular by increasing the number of labour inspectors (Belgium);

123.4 Make adequate labour conditions and decent work an important criterion for granting building contracts and permits and actively improve the enforcement of labour

laws, including by applying penalties to and blacklisting contractors who violate the relevant laws and decrees (Netherlands);

123.5 Adopt the necessary measures to guarantee the access of migrant workers to justice in civil, criminal and labour courts, as well as to assistance and consular protection (Mexico);

123.6 Step up its efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers and fight against exploitation, ill-treatment and abuse by their employers (Slovenia);

123.7 Ensure that the hotline established to respond to migrant workers' complaints provides appropriate interpretation, to the extent possible (Thailand);

123.8 Harmonize the work of charitable organizations with the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (Syrian Arab Republic).

3. The following recommendations will be examined by Qatar, which will provide responses in due course, but no later than the twenty-seventh session of the Human Rights Council in September 2014:

124.1 Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Rome Statute, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (France);

124.2 Consider ratifying those international human rights instruments to which the State is not yet a party (Nicaragua);

124.3 Consider acceding to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Turkmenistan);

124.4 Consider acceding to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and adopt a new media law that respects freedom of expression (United States of America);

124.5 Consider ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols thereto (Rwanda);

124.6 Consider ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as recommended during the first cycle (Slovenia);

124.7 Consider early ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Japan);

124.8 Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Montenegro);

124.9 Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Tunisia);

124.10 Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as fundamental documents in the area of human rights (Russian Federation);

124.11 Accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural (Germany);

124.12 Accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Australia);

124.13 Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols thereto (Portugal);

124.14 Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Austria);

124.15 Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Maldives);

124.16 Consider ratifying the following international instruments: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the second Optional Protocol thereto; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, implementing the national preventive mechanism (Uruguay);

124.17 Ratify the human rights treaties listed in section I A of the compilation of OHCHR, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, as well as the Optional Protocols to the

Convention against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Ghana);

124.18 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Costa Rica);

124.19 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, as also recommended by the Qatari National Human Rights Committee (Denmark);

124.20 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Tunisia);

124.21 Consider ratifying the Migrant Workers Convention (Albania);

124.22 Consider ratifying the Migrant Workers Convention (Indonesia);

124.23 Consider ratifying the Migrant Workers Convention (Rwanda);

124.24 Ratify the Migrant Workers Convention with a view to better harmonizing national legislation with international norms (Senegal);

124.25 Accede to core human rights instruments to which the State is not yet a party, including the Migrant Workers Convention (Philippines);

124.26 Implement measures to strengthen women's capacities and empower them to participate in political and economic life, and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Portugal);

124.27 Ratify the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Montenegro);

124.28 Ratify the core ILO conventions, including the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), and reform the law on sponsorship, removing the requirement for foreign nationals to obtain the permission of their current employer before changing jobs or leaving the country (Austria);

124.29 Ratify the three remaining core ILO conventions and enforce ratified conventions and the relevant labour laws effectively, with a special focus on the elimination of forced labour (ILO Convention No. 29), while continuing to work in close and active cooperation with ILO and other international organizations (Netherlands);

124.30 Ratify the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) and ILO Convention No. 189 (Sierra Leone);

124.31 Accede to ILO Convention No. 189 (Philippines);

124.32 Accede to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Armenia);

124.33 Equip the government committee established to consider accession to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with adequate power and resources to accelerate the process and reach a practical outcome (Viet Nam);

124.34 Integrate the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence in the national legislation regulating the media and religious institutions, and ensure the actual

implementation of the Plan (Syrian Arab Republic);

124.35 Continue to strengthen protective measures and legal rights for women, and give full citizenship rights to the children of Qatari mothers and non-Qatari fathers (Norway);

124.36 Consider granting Qatari nationality to the children of Qatari women married to foreign nationals (Greece);

124.37 Achieve real progress with regard to women's rights by reforming the Nationality Act, to ensure gender equality and to give Qatari women the right to transmit their nationality to their children, and by withdrawing reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto (France);

124.38 Amend the legislation to eliminate discrimination against women with respect to the transmission of nationality to their children and the registration of civil acts (Mexico);

124.39 Amend Act No. 22 of 2006 on family and personal status matters to eliminate provisions that lead to discrimination against women, for example the failure of the law to criminalize marital rape (Spain);

124.40 Take the necessary measures to amend national laws that allow discrimination against women so that those laws are in line with international human rights standards, and criminalize domestic violence (Switzerland);

124.41 Take effective actions to ensure that women are fully protected from discrimination and violence, including by criminalizing domestic violence against

women, adopt legal measures to guarantee full gender equality, and consider withdrawing reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Germany);

124.42 Adopt specific legislation to criminalize all forms of violence against women (Czech Republic);

124.43 Criminalize domestic violence and ensure that a broad definition of the crime is applied so as to ensure the protection of all persons concerned, including domestic workers (Belgium);

124.44 Continue to build the capacity of an independent judiciary that would process court cases more effectively and independently (Canada);

124.45 Strengthen the judicial framework, including due process, freedom of expression and freedom of association (Australia);

124.46 Guarantee the exercise of freedom of religion or reach an agreement authorizing the opening of places of worship for people who are neither Muslims nor Christians (France);

124.47 Respect the right to freedom of opinion and expression, as accepted during the previous UPR cycle, and refrain from imposing any undue restriction on this right, including with regard to the new draft media law (Germany);

124.48 Implement fully legal guarantees for freedom of expression as stipulated in the Constitution, thus allowing Qatari citizens to exercise their freedom of expression and opinion and enabling independent media in the country (Slovenia);

124.49 Guarantee freedom of expression by

protecting journalists, bloggers and media professionals from arbitrary arrest and detention and from censorship, including by amending those provisions in the Criminal Code and the draft media law that are inconsistent with international standards of freedom of expression (France);

124.50 Decriminalize defamation as recommended by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Ghana);

124.51 Refrain from adopting any laws providing for censorship or undue control over the content of the media (Czech Republic);

124.52 Amend those articles of the draft media law and the draft cybercrime law that are inconsistent with international standards of freedom of expression (Austria);

124.53 Take immediate measures to ensure that the national regulations pertaining to the Internet guarantee freedom of expression (Sweden);

124.54 Ensure that the judicial and law enforcement system is not abused to harass individuals for expressing their political or religious views, including on the Internet (Czech Republic);

124.55 Amend the relevant national legislation, including the Law on Associations and Institutions, to reduce restrictions on procedures for establishing associations (Ireland);

124.56 Revise Law No. 18 of 2004 in order to remove restricting conditions for acquiring permission for a public demonstration, and take other steps to guarantee the full enjoyment of the right to freedom of assembly and the right of association (Czech Republic);

124.57 Continue efforts to achieve full universal health coverage, including for non-nationals, as part of the National Health Strategy (Thailand);

124.58 Extend the benefits of its health insurance, currently limited to Qataris and citizens of Gulf Cooperation Council countries, to any citizen residing in its territory (Comoros);

124.59 Reform the Labour Code so that it ensures the protection of the labour rights of all workers, including domestic and construction workers, and put in place mechanisms to improve enforcement of the law (Denmark);

214.60 Revise the labour law to protect the rights of all workers without discrimination and ensure their effective access to justice, in cooperation with ILO (Belgium);

124.61 Adopt a new Labour Code or amend the existing Code soon, so as to improve the conditions and rights of migrant and foreign workers (Italy);

124.62 Take active steps to reform its labour laws in order to improve working conditions for foreign workers, to give female domestic workers the necessary legal protection and to address the recent ruling by ILO on forced labour and freedom of association and collective bargaining (Norway);

124.63 Continue efforts to ensure the safety, security and dignity of migrant workers and to protect their interests through taking the requisite institutional and legislative measures (Nepal);

124.64 Take measures to ensure the access of migrants and non-citizens, especially children, to justice, employment, education,

housing and health services (Czech Republic);

124.65 Continue efforts to promote and protect the rights of migrants, particularly those of female domestic workers (Indonesia);

124.66 Adopt all necessary measures, including legislative measures, in order to apply a policy on migrants with a human rights perspective, in particular with regard to the detention of migrants, especially women and children (Uruguay);

124.67 Guarantee respect for the rights of migrant workers, in particular by strengthening the capacity of the labour inspectorate, reform the kafala system and ratify ILO Convention No. 189 (France);

124.68 Consider abolishing the kafala system for all migrant workers and eliminating the exit permit system (Costa Rica);

124.69 Review the kafala system in order to comply with international standards (Sweden);

124.70 Establish a timetable for reform of the system of sponsorship-based employment (Brazil);

124.71 Abolish or reform the restrictive law on sponsorship, which drives potential labour exploitation and human trafficking, strengthen enforcement of the labour law, continue to increase awareness of human rights of migrant workers, and expand legal protections (United States of America);

124.72 Reform the sponsorship system, removing the requirement for foreign workers to obtain permission before leaving Qatar or moving jobs (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

124.73 Abolish the exit visa system for foreign workers (Brazil);

124.74 Abolish the exit visa system for migrant workers (Ireland);

124.75 Remove the requirement in the law on sponsorship for foreign nationals to obtain the permission of their current employer before moving jobs or leaving the country, and ensure that the rights of migrant workers are protected (Australia);

124.76 Improve the legal protection of migrant workers, apply the provisions of the labour laws that prohibit the retention of passports of migrant workers, strengthen institutional controls for the protection of migrant workers, and remove or amend the requirement for foreign nationals to obtain their sponsor's consent in order to obtain exit visas (Switzerland);

124.77 Take further urgent steps to address the concerns raised during the session about the recruitment and treatment of foreign workers (Ghana);

124.78 Abolish the laws on sponsorship and include domestic workers in laws that protect workers (Spain);

124.79 Ensure that the draft law on domestic workers, which it is hoped will be adopted very soon, is in line with ILO Convention No. 189 (Uruguay);

124.80 Develop a specific strategy to ensure that domestic workers can file complaints in cases of violence and abuse, without fear of reprisal or harassment (Belgium);

124.81 Reform labour laws to ensure that domestic workers are legally protected and improve the enforcement of those laws, in order to ensure that the rights of foreign workers in Qatar are guaranteed (United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

124.82 Adopt legal provisions that guarantee migrant workers the right to join trade unions (Spain);

124.83 Hold regular meetings of agreed institutional mechanisms to address issues pertaining to migrant workers and ensure dialogue under such arrangements (India);

124.84 Maintain its commitment to dedicating 0.7 per cent of gross national income to overseas development assistance in order to support economic and social rights in poor countries (Sierra Leone).

4. The following recommendations did not enjoy the support of Qatar:

125.1 Examine the possibility of introducing a formal moratorium on the death penalty (Switzerland);

125.2 Establish a formal moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to ratifying the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Australia);

125.3 Consider the possibility of adopting a de jure moratorium on executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty (Italy);

125.4 Commute all death sentences, declare a moratorium on executions and move towards abolition of the death penalty (Norway);

125.5 Abolish the death penalty (Portugal);

125.6 Initiate a public debate with a view to abolishing the death penalty de jure, after more than 10 years of de facto moratorium on executions (France);

125.7 Release all prisoners of conscience, including the poet Mohammed Al-`Ajami, and respect the rights of all individuals to freedom of expression (United States of America).

5. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as having been endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.