

**Asamblea General**

Distr. general
16 de febrero de 2024
Español
Original: inglés

Septuagésimo noveno período de sesiones
Tema 115 c) de la lista preliminar*
Elecciones para llenar vacantes en órganos
subsidiarios y otras elecciones: elección de
miembros del Consejo de Derechos Humanos

Carta de fecha 10 de octubre de 2023 dirigida al Presidente
de la Asamblea General por la Representante Permanente de
Qatar ante las Naciones Unidas

Tengo el placer de recordar que el Gobierno del Estado de Qatar ha presentado su candidatura para la elección como miembro del Consejo de Derechos Humanos para el período 2025-2027, en las elecciones que se celebrarán durante el septuagésimo noveno período de sesiones de la Asamblea General, en 2024.

De conformidad con la resolución [60/251](#) de la Asamblea General, el Estado de Qatar se complace en transmitir sus compromisos voluntarios con la promoción y la protección de los derechos humanos en los planos nacional e internacional (véase el anexo)**.

Le agradecería que la presente carta y su anexo se distribuyeran como documento de la Asamblea General, en relación con el tema 115 c) de la lista preliminar.

(Firmado) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Embajadora y
Representante Permanente

* [A/79/50](#).

** Se distribuye únicamente en el idioma en que fue presentado.



**Anexo de la carta de fecha 10 de octubre de 2023 dirigida al
Presidente de la Asamblea General por la Representante
Permanente de Qatar ante las Naciones Unidas**

Candidature of Qatar to the Human Rights Council, 2025–2027

**Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution
60/251**

Introduction

Respect, promotion, and protection of human rights are among the policy pillars of the State of Qatar, which recognizes that human rights, along with sustainable development and peace and security, are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

The primacy of such priority is embodied in a constitutional and legislative system that consolidates the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms and ensures their respect and protection for all. It is also reflected in an institutional framework that includes numerous human rights institutions and agencies that contribute effectively to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Respecting, promoting, and protecting human rights is a strategic choice upon which the State relies in the comprehensive reform process it is pursuing. In fact, the overarching vision for development known as Qatar National Vision 2030 revolves around important themes related to the major issues of human rights in the areas of education, health, environment, labor rights, women's empowerment, and children's rights, as well as in the National Development Strategy. The government of the State of Qatar also considers the promotion and protection of human rights a fundamental and central pillar of its foreign policy.

From this perspective, the State of Qatar has pursued an advanced policy to consolidate the concepts and culture of human rights by following an approach based on the rule of law, transparency, justice, and human dignity. It has also taken a wide range of specific, concrete, and pioneering measures over the past years with a view to mainstreaming and strengthening human rights at the domestic and international levels.

Guided by that policy and out of its belief in the crucial role of the Human Rights Council as the primary body of the United Nations responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations, the State of Qatar has sought to become a member of the Council since its inception. It also looks forward to continuing to play the active, positive, and constructive role that has characterized its previous and current membership in the Council by presenting its candidature for the Council for the period 2025–2027.

**Efforts and achievements of the State of Qatar during its previous term as a
member of the Human Rights Council**

Throughout its previous membership in the Human Rights Council, the State of Qatar has been keen to actively participate and constructively cooperate with other member states to enable the Council to carry out its mandate in the best possible way and achieve the lofty purposes for which it was established.

Out of its belief in the need to continue working in this important international forum, the government of the State of Qatar decided to submit its candidacy for membership in the Council for 2025–2027. Having fulfilled its national and international obligations and continuing to work towards meeting the pledges it made upon its

election to the Council during the years 2015–2020 and 2022–2024, the State of Qatar was further encouraged to make that decision.

By implementing Qatar National Vision 2030 and sectoral strategies, the government has made significant progress towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and remained a regional leader in terms of achieving a number of targets and key indicators in areas such as education, peace, development, security, health, and women's participation in the workforce. Qatar's first-ever general elections were held in October 2021, with a turnout exceeding 60 percent.

In line with Emiri Decision No. 4 of 2021, new ministries were established to oversee issues related to labor, social development, family, the environment, climate change, and cyberspace. The mandate of the Ministry of Education has been expanded, public servants' awareness of human rights standards has continued to be raised, and national human rights institutions have continued to be strengthened. Qatar was ranked first among the countries of the Middle East in the provision of health services. It was ranked fifteenth out of 154 countries by Der Spiegel magazine based on how successful countries were in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic, and all government agencies worked together to contain the spread of the pandemic and ensure the health of all residents, be they citizens or not. A response plan was prepared in collaboration with the World Health Organization and was in line with international best practices. While the government imposed some temporary restrictions during the pandemic, at no time did it violate the right to freedom of movement.

In this regard, we would like to highlight the following most significant steps taken by the government during the past period in all areas and at all levels:

International obligations

Respecting and securing human rights is one of the major goals of the State of Qatar. The State of Qatar has therefore acceded to seven of the nine major human rights conventions, in addition to its accession to many protocols attached thereto, including:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, by virtue of Decree No. 40 of 2018
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, by virtue of Decree No. 41 of 2018
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, by virtue of Decree No. 27 of 2001
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, July 1976
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, by virtue of Decree No. 28 of 2009
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by virtue of Decree No. 28 of 2008
- Signing the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in July 2007
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, by virtue of Decree No. 15 of 2003,
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

The State of Qatar has also acceded to other international conventions related to the promotion and protection of human rights, including:

- The Arab Charter for Human Rights
- Agreement for the Establishment of the International Anti-Corruption Academy as an International Organization, by virtue of Decree No. 11 of 2019
- The International Convention for the Suppression and Financing of Terrorism of 1999, by virtue of Decree No. 20 of 2018
- The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings of 1997, by virtue of Decree No. 21 of 2018
- The Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled was signed on September 17, 2018
- The protocol for the suppression of unlawful acts of violence at airports that provide international air transport services, by virtue of Decree No. 63 of 2017
- Contemporary Islamic charters and declarations on human rights
- League of Arab States human rights conventions
- The Arab strategy for human rights
- The Arab plan for human rights education
- The Arab Plan for the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights
- Program of work of the Human Rights Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation
- Program of Work of the Standing Arab Committee for Human Rights in the League of Arab States
- Program of Work of the Arab Human Rights Committee (the Arab Charter Committee on Human Rights)
- Declaration of Human Rights of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
- League of Arab States human rights guidelines
- In recent years, the State of Qatar has adopted a strategic approach towards withdrawing its general reservations and declarations regarding human rights conventions, as well as reviewing and aligning them with national legislation, as was the case with the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography.
- The State of Qatar ensured the submission of periodic reports under human rights conventions to which it is a party. By the end of the review process, that approach resulted in the State of Qatar scoring 100 percent in the indicator of compliance by state parties with international conventions in submitting their reports on time, which is the highest percentage in the rating according to the Statistics Indicators of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights during 2017–2019.¹
- The State of Qatar is considered one of the first countries to extend an open and standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders in January 2010.

¹ https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/Reporting_Compliance_map.pdf

Subsequently, the State of Qatar received the following five special procedure mandate holders in 2017–2020:

- The independent expert on human rights and international solidarity, September 2–10, 2019.
- The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, November 3–14, 2019.
- The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, 8-16 December 2019.
- The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, November 24–December 1, 2019.
- The Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in December 2020

The legislative framework for the protection of human rights:

The Constitutional Protection

The 2004 Constitution of the State of Qatar has enshrined the fundamental rights and freedoms in Part Three (Articles 34–58). It has adopted the principles of complementarity, overlapping, interdependence, and indivisibility and guarantees economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights. The fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution include, but are not limited to, equality before the law, prohibition of discrimination, personal freedom, criminalization of torture, freedom of the press and of expression, freedom of association, freedom of worship, the right to work, the right to education, and the right to assembly [Annex No. 2]. The Constitution affirms that those rights should not be restricted or diminished under the pretext of regulating or amending them. Article 146 stipulates that provisions pertaining to rights and public liberties may not be subject to amendment except for the purpose of granting more rights and guarantees for the interest of the citizens.

Legal Guarantees of Human Rights

The fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution have been promoted by the promulgation of a set of legislation and laws, some of which will be discussed in the present report, that are related to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Institutional Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights

The government's interest in human rights is reflected in the establishment of several institutions entrusted with the promotion and protection of human rights as a complementary, interdependent, and indivisible concept at the governmental and non-governmental levels, as follows:

Government Mechanisms

Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established in 2003 in accordance with the Minister for Foreign Affairs Decision No. 16 of 2003 that created the Human Rights Affairs Office. Under Circular No. 30 of 2014, the name of the office was changed in the organizational structure of the Ministry to "Department of Human Rights".

In accordance with Article 16 of Emiri Decision No. 27 of 2016 and the decision of His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs No. 44 of 2017, the primary terms of reference of the department are the following:

- Provision of opinion and advice on matters and issues related to human rights that are referred to it and on draft international conventions related to human rights to which the government intends to be a party.
- Preparing reports, including drafting and discussing human rights reports submitted in compliance with international and regional human rights conventions to which the government has become a party and referring them to the relevant international monitoring bodies. Drafting replies to foreign governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations reports on the human rights situation in the country.
- Preparing studies, research, and reports related to human rights and updating the country's diplomatic and consular missions abroad on human rights developments in the country.
- Following up on issues related to human rights at the local and international levels and on human rights meetings and events held within the framework of regional, Arab, and international organizations
- Representing the ministry in human rights state organs
- It should be noted that the Department consists of three sections, namely: the Section of Human Rights International Affairs, the Section of Human Rights Regional Affairs, and the Section of Human Rights Treaties.

The Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Interior

- The Department was established by virtue of Ministerial Decree No. 26 of 2005 as part of the State of Qatar's interest in human rights and in providing necessary guarantees to promote and protect them in all areas, and to promote human rights in areas that fall under the purview of the Ministry of Interior aimed at maintaining order, upholding the law, combating crime, and providing the public (citizens and residents) with various humanitarian and social services without discrimination. As per Article 2 of the Decision that established it and the organizational structure annexed to the Decision, the Department's terms of reference are as follows:
- Receives complaints and petitions addressed by the public to the Ministry and handles them based on justice, fairness, and applicable laws, in coordination with the relevant agencies of the Ministry.
- Follows up on the implementation of the obligations stipulated in human rights conventions to which the state is a party and which are related to the work of the ministry, in coordination with the relevant agencies of the ministry.
- Proposes to respond to reports received from international human rights organizations and bodies that fall within the purview of the Ministry.
- Comments on draft national laws and Arab and Gulf guidelines, and opines on joining international human rights conventions, taking into account their relation to the work of the Ministry.
- Visits penal and correctional institutions and detention places of the security departments and deportation detention to determine their compliance with the applicable laws and regulations in the country and non-violation of human rights, and reports thereon to the Minister.
- Raises awareness of the Ministry's human rights bodies by issuing bulletins and circulars and holding seminars and lectures in coordination with the Ministry's Department of Public Relations and the National Committee for Human Rights.

- Contributes to the implementation of welfare policies for inmates of penal and correctional institutions.
- Monitors the human rights situation of vulnerable groups (children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities).
- Contributes to the promotion of job satisfaction as part of the work of the ministry.
- Establishes partnerships with local, regional, and international human rights bodies to further the achievement of the department's objectives.

The most notable achievements of the department are:

- Establishing a mechanism to monitor and assess the human rights situation of prisoners and detainees in accordance with UN standards
- Setting up a system of guidelines for addressing complaints and petitions by the public to the Department
- Organizing opinion polls for the public dealing with the department in collaboration with the Planning and Quality Department.
- Carrying out a wide range of awareness activities in human rights education and qualitative training activities on human rights issues, authoring a package of articles, and giving public lectures.
- Publishing a guide on international human rights standards for prisoners and detainees and another guide on the rights of detainees in accordance with the law regulating penal and correctional institutions and relevant international standards.
- Participating in the preparation of state reports for international and regional monitoring mechanisms
- Carrying out theoretical research, research papers, and field studies on the human dimension in security work, the rights of crime victims, terrorism and human rights, domestic violence, combating human trafficking, human rights in immigration and asylum cases, human rights in the context of combating drugs, cybercrime, and guaranteeing the rights of the child in security work, etc.

The Ministry of Social Development and the Family

- The Ministry of Social Development and the Family was established pursuant to Emiri Decision No. 75 of 2021. Article 10 thereof defines the Ministry's terms of reference, which include proposing and implementing national strategies, plans, and policies related to caring for the family and its members, raising community awareness of the importance of protecting the family and family cohesion, preparing and implementing programs and related services for all groups of beneficiaries of social security services, and providing such services to eligible individuals.
- The Ministry is entrusted with collecting and analyzing data and statistics related to the family, with a view to using them in related programs, plans, and policies in coordination with the relevant state and private agencies, and proposing and implementing housing-related policies.
- The new ministry supervises the organization of the charity sector and registers and oversees associations and private institutions.

The National Commission for Women, Children, the Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities

- Cabinet Decision No. 26 of 2019 established the National Commission for Women, Children, the Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities. The Minister of Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs (Ministry of Social Development and Family) is the Chair, and the Assistant Undersecretary for Social Affairs acts as Vice-Chair. Its membership includes representatives of the following organs: Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Municipality and Environment, Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs (Ministry of Social Development and Family). The establishment of the Commission was undertaken in compliance with the recommendations of the international treaty committees regarding the establishment of an independent governmental mechanism that addresses the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.
- The Commission aims to protect and promote the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. To that end, it was entrusted with the following tasks and terms of reference:
 - Monitoring the conditions of the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities;
 - Proposing ways to promote and follow-up on reaching the goals stipulated in international conventions and instruments on the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, to which the state has become a party, and recommending the state's accession to other relevant conventions and instruments;
 - Examining legislation related to women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities and proposing amendments so as to comply with international conventions to which the state has become a party;
 - Coordinating between relevant state authorities regarding the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, with a view to promoting work within a consolidated and regulated national framework;
 - contributing to the creation of national reports on the rights of women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities that the government will submit to international bodies and agencies in regards to the conventions to which the state has become a party;
 - Proposing the organization of and participation in conferences, symposiums, seminars, and panel discussions on topics related to the Commission's terms of reference

The National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking

- Cabinet Decision No. 15 of 2017 established the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking to serve as the national coordinator for monitoring, preventing, and combating human trafficking. His Excellency the Minister for Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs (currently the Ministry of Labor), a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Vice-Chairman, and a representative from each of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Health, Government Communications Office, National Human Rights Committee, and Qatar Foundation for Social Work serve as the committee's chairs. The Committee is entrusted with

developing the national plan to combat human trafficking, establishing a database that includes international legislation related to human trafficking, reviewing relevant national legislation and ensuring its consistency with international conventions and instruments that have been ratified by the State, and increasing awareness about means related to human trafficking, in addition to other functions. In June 2017, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking adopted the National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking for 2017–2022, to serve as an inspiration and a guideline for the Committee and the relevant authorities in preventing, monitoring, and combating all forms of human trafficking.

- It should be noted that the State of Qatar co-hosted the fifth edition of the INTERPOL International Conference on Combating Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants in December 2017 in collaboration with the International Criminal Police Organization “INTERPOL”, the Qatari Ministry of Interior, and the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking.

Independent mechanisms

Judicial Mechanisms

- The Constitution adopted the principle of the independence of the judiciary, as Article 130 thereof stipulates that “the judicial authority shall be independent and it shall be vested in courts of different types and grades.” The Constitution relies on judges’ honour and impartiality to guarantee people’s rights and freedoms. Article 131 stipulates that “Judges are independent, and they shall not be subject to any power, other than that of the law, in the exercise of their judicial functions as provided by the law, and no interference whatsoever shall be permitted with court proceedings and the course of justice.” The principle of the independence of the judiciary was also enshrined in Law No. 10 of 2003 by promulgating the Law on Judicial Authority, whose Article 2 stipulates that “Judges are independent and shall not be subject to removal from office except in accordance with the provisions of this Law. The independence of the judiciary shall be guaranteed, and no inappropriate or unwarranted interference with the judicial process shall be permitted.” Article 35 of the Constitution guarantees the right to litigation. According to the Law on Judicial Authority, courts in the State of Qatar consist of the Court of Cassation, the Court of Appeal, and the Court of First Instance. The Law on Judicial Authority established the Supreme Judicial Council to achieve independence of the judiciary and assume the jurisdiction related to expressing an opinion on issues related to the judiciary, examining and proposing legislation for the development of the judicial system, and expressing an opinion in appointing, promoting, transferring, seconding, and referring judges to retirement in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Judicial Authority, in addition to hearing judges’ grievances, where the Council’s decision in this regard is final. The Law on Judicial Authority ensures the financial independence of the courts, as it stipulates that the court’s budget shall be part of the state general budget.
- The Qatari constitution has adopted the model followed by the majority of modern constitutions based on centralized oversight of the constitutionality of laws and left it up to the laws to regulate such control, which results in the most significant types of checks and balances between the branches of power. Law No. 12 of 2008 stipulates that the establishment of the Supreme Constitutional Court should be an independent judicial body with an independent budget that is specialized in adjudicating disputes related to the constitutionality of laws and regulations, adjudicating conflicts of jurisdiction, and adjudicating disputes that arise from the implementation of contradictory final rulings issued by

judicial authorities or bodies with judicial jurisdiction, in addition to the jurisdiction of interpreting laws whenever a dispute arises from their application and is of such importance that it requires a single interpretation, at the request of the Prime Minister or the President of the Shura Council. According to the aforementioned texts, the Constitutional Court has jurisdiction in adjudicating disputes related to the constitutionality of laws and regulations, be it *proprio motu* or based on the arguments of the litigants. Its rulings and decisions are final, not subject to appeal, and binding on all state authorities and all those present on its soil.

- The independence of the judiciary was further strengthened by promulgating Law No. 7 of 2007 regarding adjudication of administrative disputes. That law made the abuse of power a ground and justification for the annulment of an administrative decision or indemnity.

Non-governmental Organizations

The National Committee for Human Rights

Emiri Decree No. 38 of 2002 established the National Committee for Human Rights as a national organization for the independent promotion and defence of human rights. The committee works to achieve the following objectives:

- Promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Enriching and spreading the culture of human rights derived from the Islamic Sharia (Islamic law) and all international human rights instruments
- Rolling out and promoting all rights and freedoms stipulated in the Permanent Constitution of Qatar.
- Eliminating all violations to which persons under the legal jurisdiction of the State of Qatar may be subject.
- Developing relations and forms of cooperation between the Committee and all international, regional, and local organizations, be they governmental or non-governmental,
- The National Committee for Human Rights was reorganized under Decree-Law No. 17 of 2010 with a view to providing the Committee with more guarantees and powers to comply with the Paris Principles that regulate national human rights institutions worldwide, granting the Committee full independence, and endowing it with a legal personality and an independent budget, with its headquarters in Doha.
- The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), formerly known as the International Coordinating Committee, which includes all national human rights institutions from around the world as members, has given the National Committee on Human Rights an A rating at the international level. In accordance with the principle of transparency and public awareness of human rights, the Committee publishes its annual reports on its website (www.nhrc-qa.org). It is worth noting that the government pays the necessary attention to the recommendations of the committee and works to implement them.

The Qatar Foundation for Social Work

It was established in 2013 as a non-profit development institution that contributes to social and human development and serves the Qatari society through specialized centres in supporting family stability, orphan care, child and woman protection, youth

empowerment, care and rehabilitation for persons with disabilities, and elderly care. It is regulated by Decree-Law No. 21 of 2006 and its amendments regarding private institutions of public benefit. The Foundation aims to develop the civil society organizations that operate under its umbrella, enhance their capabilities, develop and activate their role in society, and develop strategies, policies, and programs that contribute to the advancement of those organizations so that they can achieve the goals for which they were established. It is worth noting that civil society organizations currently operating under the umbrella of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work include the following:

- The Social Protection and Rehabilitation Centre (Aman) works to protect the rights of women and children who are victims of violence and family disintegration.
- Family Counselling Centre (WIFAQ), which deals with marital and family life
- Orphanage Care Centre (Dreama), which specializes in caring for orphaned children and children whose parents are unknown.
- Empowering and Caring for the Elderly Centre (Ihsan)
- Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities
- Centre for Social Development (Nama), for youth empowerment
- The Best Buddies initiative (Qatar) is aimed at ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in public life.
- Al-Noor Centre for the Blind, which provides exemplary services for the blind and integrates them into society,
- Behavioural HealthCare Centre (Daam): The centre has recently joined the Qatar Foundation for Social Work. It provides effective educational, curative, rehabilitative, and training services in the field of behavioural health while striving to upgrade the services directed at those with behavioural deviations and behavioural disorders in society.

Education Above All Foundation

Out of belief in the right to education and the great importance that the State of Qatar attaches to education, the Education Above All Foundation Initiative was launched in 2012. It aims to build a global movement that contributes to human, social, and economic development by providing quality education and through other well-being initiatives and programs. The Foundation focuses in particular on poor areas and conflict-affected zones through four international programs, namely:

- Reach Out to Asia (ROTA)

Founded in December 2005, ROTA is a private charitable foundation that aims to expand the foundation's mission to the Asian continent and the Asian diaspora. The organization's mission is to support local communities to overcome obstacles and find links with a view to achieving quality basic and secondary education and thus achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All goals set by the United Nations and UNESCO, promoting human relations between communities, creating a safe environment for education, and providing equal educational opportunities and educational relief to disaster-affected areas. ROTA's programs include two main ones: the ROTA Qatar program, whose activities are carried out in Qatar, and the second program, which includes activities in Asia and the Middle East. Since its inception, Reach Out to Asia has provided education and training to more than 1.5 million children and youth in 15 countries in order to build their capabilities to contribute to a sustainable future.

- **Educate a Child Program**

Through partnership and innovation, the Educate a Child program addresses all the obstacles that prevent the world's most vulnerable children from having access to quality primary education.

The program supports children to overcome multiple education barriers such as poverty, social or cultural barriers, crises, conflicts, and insecurity. The program and its partnerships also promote the socio-economic empowerment of children, as well as their self-reliance, and support them in developing communication and problem-solving skills. The program includes 86 projects in 55 countries and collaborates with more than 44 partners around the world.

- **Al-Fakhoora**

This program was launched in 2009 in order to overcome the impact of the conflict in the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the destruction of many schools and universities. Since then, Al-Fakhoora has evolved into a comprehensive and vital support system for education in Gaza. Its mission is to advance the right to education by empowering a new generation of marginalized youth to become future educated leaders, skilled professionals, and pioneers who inspire their families and communities to come together and thrive. Al-Fakhoora projects offer scholarships for students who have completed secondary school and for university students at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It also provides access to higher education for marginalized youth through an overarching program that grants scholarships, addresses student needs, and provides civic leadership training and economic empowerment. In addition, the Al-Fakhoora program is rebuilding and renovating damaged educational institutions, as well as supporting the rehabilitation of healthcare services that have been damaged by conflict.

Silatech Foundation

As part of the state's efforts to effectively support and promote scientific programs offered to young people, especially in the economic field, Emiri Decision No. 3 of 2008 was promulgated to approve the establishment of the Silatech Foundation as a private institution of public benefit with its headquarters in Doha. The Foundation aims to strengthen the youth's connection to the labor market and build bridges of communication among young people of different nationalities and religions. The Foundation has developed programs aimed at helping vulnerable and conflict-affected countries by providing educational alternatives and entrepreneurship for young people to achieve a decent life. Silatech believes in the transformative power that a dignified service opportunity could provide to young men and young women.

Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue

The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue was established in response to the recommendations of the Fifth Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, held in May 2007, and was inaugurated in May 2008, in conjunction with the Sixth Doha International Conference on Interfaith Dialogue. The centre aims to spread and promote a culture of dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

The centre organizes activities and events aimed at promoting dialogue between followers of religions and cultures for peace and consolidating dialogue and coexistence in four regions around the world: the Arab region, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Myanmar. The loftiest goal of the centre is to highlight the value of human diversity in civilization and work towards establishing the rules and foundations that underpin coexistence, dialogue, understanding, and cooperation among people of different religions and cultures.

Doha International Family Institute

The Doha International Family Institute is a global institute working to advance knowledge on Arab families and advocate evidence-based policies at national, regional, and international levels.

DIFI is a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development. It plays a crucial role in the efforts of Qatar Foundation to build healthy societies that enjoy the highest levels of education, underpinned by strong and cohesive families in the State of Qatar and the region.

The Institute has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

DIFI achieves its objectives by:

- Developing policy-supporting scientific research
- Developing evidence-based family policies to influence policymakers and advocate for best practices
- Assessing and developing family programs
- Raising awareness about the role of the Institute
- Promoting the capabilities and sustainability of the institute

Humanitarian Assistance

Qatar's assistance abroad

- In view of its humanitarian and moral role and its commitment to share its responsibility as an active partner in the international community, the State of Qatar is keen to play a leading role in providing humanitarian and development assistance. It continues its generous giving and tireless efforts in support of development and relief issues in brotherly and friendly countries and extends a helping hand to the peoples of developing and afflicted countries and areas suffering from the devastating effects of wars and natural disasters, with a commitment to integrity and impartiality and without discrimination or hidden agendas other than alleviating the suffering of those adversely affected by crises of all kinds around the world.
- As part of its commitment to the principles that underpin its foreign policy, the State of Qatar is working to enhance humanitarian aid in war zones and support efforts to reduce expected humanitarian needs in emergency situations. In fact, it has provided relief assistance to several countries, including Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Sudan, Lebanon, the Philippines, and others.
- In light of its significant humanitarian contributions, the State of Qatar is a member of the Board of Advisory Groups of the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. The State of Qatar also ranks first in the Arab world and sixth in the world on the list of major contributors to multi-partner UN funds and programs and is among the top ten contributors to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The value of Qatari governmental and non-governmental assistance and aid increased from about 483 million US dollars in 2008 to more than two billion dollars in 2017.
- The State of Qatar committed more than 533 million US dollars in total funding in 2020, allocating funding to a variety of partners in development and humanitarian aid. Total contributions of the Qatar Fund for Development to support and relief operations in 2021 exceeded 550 million US dollars; in 2020,

they amounted to more than 533 million; and in 2019, they amounted to more than 577 million.

- The State of Qatar is also a strategic partner of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a member of the *20 Million Dollar Club* that includes the most prominent donor and cooperating countries with the UNHCR, a member of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), and hosts a country office for the UNHCR in Doha. The State of Qatar is also among the first ten countries to make multi-year contributions to the UNHCR, and its contributions for the period 2020–2023 amount to more than 61 million dollars.
- In 2020, the Qatar Fund for Development was able, on behalf of the State of Qatar, to finance projects with more than 530 million dollars that included humanitarian and development assistance and were earmarked for several basic sectors, such as education, health, economic empowerment, infrastructure, and climate change. In 2019, fifty-right countries around the world benefited from Qatar's generous aid, which amounted to 577 million dollars. The State of Qatar will keep forging ahead on this path to alleviate the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Areas of conflict and disasters

- Efforts by the State of Qatar are effective in responding to humanitarian crises and disasters and in supporting and strengthening partnerships with local, regional, and international actors, United Nations organizations, and civil society institutions to coordinate effective humanitarian action in promoting, preparing, preventing, and facilitating sustainable solutions for developing countries.
- Together with the efforts to respond to emergencies and humanitarian aid, the State of Qatar has assisted countries in strengthening their institutional capacities in the health, education, and economic sectors with a view to building resilience, enhancing systemic preparedness for disasters, and promoting inclusive sustainable development, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The State of Qatar committed more than 533 million dollars in total funding in 2020, which it distributed to a number of development and humanitarian assistance partners, including multilateral UN agencies, bilateral partners, and civil society organizations.
- Qatar's disaster response strategy is based on three main pillars: first, protecting all residents in the country without discrimination and providing them with appropriate medical care; second, mitigating the socio-economic impacts by providing support, exemptions, and financial incentives to various economic sectors in the country.
- Enhancing human potential lies at the heart of the state's domestic and foreign policy, as the State of Qatar is keen to provide assistance to those adversely affected by crises of all kinds, such as wars, earthquakes, floods, and other natural disasters, by providing humanitarian assistance while adhering to the ideals of integrity and impartiality.
- Over the past years, the State of Qatar has greatly expanded its international aid program by making government contributions in addition to those provided by Qatari charity institutions.
- UNHCR has recently signed an 8 million-dollar agreement with the Qatar Fund for Development to provide flexible funding for 2021–2022, in support of its

humanitarian efforts around the world and as an affirmation of Doha's commitment to supporting refugees and forcibly displaced people around the world. The State of Qatar has a long history of cooperation in support of refugees and displaced persons that has always been pivotal in furthering UNHCR's humanitarian efforts around the world. As of the end of 2021, the total Qatari contributions exceeded 354 million dollars.

- In the Syrian Arab Republic, the assistance provided by the State of Qatar to the Syrian Arab Republic amounted to 2,573,590,792 Qatari Riyals during 2014–2021, including 785,199,483 Qatari Riyals in government aid, and 1,788,391,309 Qatari Riyals through non-governmental organizations.
- In view of the current situation in Syria, most of the assistance was humanitarian (about 80 percent), as it was directed to projects related to assisting internally displaced people (IDPs) in Syria (especially in northern Syria), in addition to supporting projects benefiting refugees in other countries.
- Since 2016, Doha has pledged to provide 100 million dollars on an annual basis, out of its belief in the right of the brotherly Syrian people to live a decent life.
- The assistance provided to Syria contributed to achieving several targets within the SDGs, primarily in the eradication of poverty and hunger, health, quality education, and other goals that were achieved as part of the assistance provided during 2014–2021. The government participates in all conferences on Syria, most recently the Seventh Brussels Conference, in which it pledged 75 million dollars.
- Qatari aid to the Syrians, starting from the first years of the crisis until 2021, exceeded two billion US dollars, be it through government aid, civil society organizations, humanitarian and charitable societies, or Qatari donor institutions.
- As part of its support for the Afghan people, Doha established an air bridge to transport dozens of tons of relief aid and basic supplies to the capital, Kabul, following the recent developments in Afghanistan, in collaboration with the United Nations to address the catastrophic humanitarian situation. The volume of Qatari humanitarian aid that reached Afghanistan until last November amounted to 469 tons. Last month, with the support of Doha, the UNHCR dispatched its first urgent shipments of life-saving relief materials to Afghanistan, which were later followed by additional shipments to help displaced families and the neediest cope with the harsh winter weather conditions.
- The State of Qatar played the role of neutral mediator in Afghanistan during the past years between the Taliban and the United States. The negotiations culminated in the signing of the peace agreement in Doha at the end of 2020 between the United States and the Taliban. The State of Qatar subsequently hosted the intra-Afghan dialogue to build trust among the Afghan parties.
- As for its evacuation efforts, since mid-August 2021, the State of Qatar has evacuated more than 100,000 refugees from Afghanistan. Since August, the State of Qatar has received thousands of requests for evacuation and for providing safe passage from journalists, students, teachers, activists, lawyers, doctors, artists, musicians, and many other Afghans.
- The State of Qatar has also evacuated citizens of friendly countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, France, and other countries, as well as workers of international organizations.

- Since September 2021, the State of Qatar has sent and facilitated the arrival of more than 800 tons of medical, food, winter, and other assistance, most recently 60 tons in April 2023, provided to the Afghan Ministry of Education in support of the education sector. This last shipment was sent following an agreement between the Education Above All Foundation and the Afghan Ministry of Education, with the support of Qatar Charity and the Qatar Red Crescent.
- The State of Qatar also provided 26 tons of relief assistance in June 2022, following the devastating earthquakes in Afghanistan.
- The State of Qatar participated in the donors' conference in Afghanistan, held in September 2021, in which it pledged 50 million US dollars for relief efforts and Qatari assistance to Afghanistan. The State of Qatar also co-sponsored with the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United Nations the Afghanistan 2022 Conference, in which it pledged an additional 25 million dollars for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, for a total pledge of 75 million dollars.
- In 2022, the State of Qatar hosted a meeting between the Organization and the Afghan government, which was followed by a meeting in March 2023 attended by representatives of the Organization and the government, in addition to representatives from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and UNICEF. At the beginning of June 2023, the State of Qatar hosted a meeting of the Advisory Group of the World Health Organization to discuss the eradication of polio.
- On March 20, 2023, the State of Qatar hosted a round table on education in Afghanistan that was attended by the Afghan Minister of Education, the Education Above All Foundation, UNICEF, and representatives from Education Cannot Wait. The meeting was held after several meetings since last year between the Qatari side and a number of Afghan delegations. The conference was held thanks to those Qatari efforts. It was agreed to support the Afghan education sector by educating 30,000 girls and boys at the primary level in Afghanistan. That initiative was sponsored by the Education Above All Foundation in partnership with the Qatar Fund for Development.
- With regard to development support for brotherly Yemen, the total Qatari assistance to the Yemenis from 2013 to 2020 amounted to approximately 195 million dollars, of which 70 million were allocated to humanitarian assistance. An amount of 10 million dollars was disbursed by the Qatar Fund for Development in the water and sanitation sector in support of improving the water and sanitation program in cooperation with UNICEF since 2018 in Yemen for 3 years. The State of Qatar allocated 5 million dollars to provide support for the United Nations Population Fund project, and 1,800,000 dollars were disbursed for nearly 800,000 beneficiaries in the health sector. In the shelter sector, two million-dollar support was provided for a project by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Last November, the State of Qatar signed an agreement with the World Food Programme to provide a financial contribution of 90 million dollars to help meet urgent food security needs in Yemen.
- In supporting the Palestinian people, the humanitarian and development assistance provided by the State of Qatar to improve the dire living conditions of the Palestinian people, especially in the Gaza Strip, constitutes a great example of Qatar's policy of supporting brothers and friends. As a result of such support, Qatar is at the forefront of countries supporting the resilience of the Palestinian people to the occupation by enhancing their development efforts in health, education, housing, and other vital sectors.

- The State of Qatar has also allocated a financial grant of 360 million dollars to the Gaza Strip, to be spent throughout the year, starting in January 2021, as part of supporting development efforts in health, education, housing, and other vital sectors, paying employee salaries, providing financial assistance to needy families, and operating power plants, with a view to limiting the worsening of the humanitarian situation and difficult living conditions.
- Pursuant to the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the country, Doha provided a grant of 500 million dollars to support the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip last year.
- For more than two years now, Qatar has been distributing financial aid to hundreds of thousands of poor families in Gaza to alleviate their economic and humanitarian suffering. Qatari relief projects are part of a grant that exceeds half a billion dollars. An amount of 180 million dollars was allocated to provide urgent relief support to the Gaza Strip and boost United Nations programs in Palestine and electricity services. An additional 300 million dollars in grants and loans have been disbursed to support the budget of the health and education sectors of the Palestinian Authority. Since 2014, Qatari grants to the Gaza Strip have amounted to approximately one and a half billion dollars. Such grants come as an addition to a series of Qatari grants and donations that encompassed all spheres of life in Palestine, resulted in dramatic improvements in the living conditions of Gazans, and created thousands of employment opportunities.
- As part of its commitment to existing cooperation and coordination with UN programs, Qatar's Gaza Reconstruction Committee signed, on August 19, a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations, providing 40 million dollars in financial aid to needy families in the besieged Strip. Distribution of that amount started in September, with 100 dollars in monthly aid per family to about 100,000 needy families in the governorates of the Strip. Qatar is still at the forefront of countries supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in order to enable it to carry out its mandate and strengthen its ability to implement its activities more effectively. Qatar comes on top in the Arab world to provide support for the basic resources of UNRWA during 2019 and 2020, as it has provided, through the Qatar Fund for Development, between 2015 and 2020, more than 100 million dollars. The support provided last year by Qatar to the agency amounted to a total of 11.2 million dollars, as per the agreement signed in December 2019 on the sidelines of the Doha Forum between Qatar and UNRWA. After the 2014 war, the Education Above All Foundation, in collaboration with international organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with the support of the Qatar Fund for Development, is rebuilding schools and facilities for 93 educational establishments in the Gaza Strip that were unfortunately damaged in Israeli attacks.
- Last November, the State of Qatar, represented by the Qatar Fund for Development, signed a contribution agreement with UNRWA to support the Agency's core resources for the period 2021–2022, in the amount of 18 million dollars, while providing comprehensive additional support for Palestinian refugees in Syria in the health, education, and economic development sectors, which amounted to a total of 7 million dollars.
- In the Republic of Sudan, which is among the top ten countries receiving aid from the State of Qatar, many development projects have been funded. The total governmental and non-governmental aid provided by the State of Qatar to the

Sudanese government during the period 2014–2022 was 2,091,319,623 Qatari riyals.

- The State of Qatar is also supervising the construction of 10 model villages in Darfur, the power supply line project in the Nile River State, the financing of development projects in Darfur, the Early Recovery Program (UNDF), and the UNICEF/European Commission/Global Partnership for Education co-financing project to improve access to education for 600,000 out-of-school children.
- During the current crisis and in view of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Republic of Sudan since April 15, 2023, the State of Qatar has provided a variety of humanitarian assistance, including a full-field hospital that includes intensive care units, integrated medical supplies, and food and supplies. Qatar has recently participated in the donors' conference for Sudan and pledged 50 million US dollars.

Responding to the pandemic

- As part of its relentless efforts to combat the outbreak of the global threat of the coronavirus pandemic, Doha provided urgent assistance to nearly 88 countries to strengthen their ability to combat the pandemic since its outbreak in 2020, at a time when Qatar was making efforts at the national level to tackle the virus. The total governmental and non-governmental assistance amounted to more than 256 million US dollars. In appreciation of the leading role of the World Health Organization, Qatar signed with it on March 16 a 10-million-dollar core contribution agreement to support the organization's 13th General Program of Work and the initiative to accelerate the availability of anti-coronavirus tools in the countries most in need. As part of the contribution to supporting international efforts to facilitate equitable access to vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics for all people around the world, a total contribution of 20 million dollars has been allocated to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), which aims to provide fair and equitable access to vaccines to more than 92 countries in need of development assistance. Qatar has also provided notable initiatives and contributions to mitigate the repercussions of the pandemic. Represented by the Qatar Red Crescent, it launched, last April, an international fundraising humanitarian initiative to collect 100 million dollars with a view to providing the most vulnerable groups with COVID-19 vaccines as part of accelerating the availability of coronavirus control tools in countries most in need.
- In complementing Doha's efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinians, the State of Qatar provided 150 million dollars in financial support to the Gaza Strip. It has also provided support for the United Nations relief and humanitarian programs in Gaza, including quarantine centers, the provision of meals, basic electrical appliances, basic furniture, and food baskets for the families of some of the quarantined persons, securing the necessary amounts of fuel for power generation in the quarantine centres, as part of supporting the people of Gaza in fighting the spread of the coronavirus, and a contribution from Qatar to the international efforts to limit the spread of the pandemic outbreak.

Education and Development

- The partnership between Qatar and the United Nations strengthened their cooperation in making education a top priority for development policies. In 2019, Doha pledged to educate one million girls by 2021 and to support the Charlevoix Declaration to provide quality education for women and girls. Qatar has also made efforts towards the adoption of the 2010 United Nations

resolution on the right to education in emergencies and is playing a clear role in shoreing up the cause of education in developing countries around the world through its positive partnerships with the United Nations, UNESCO, and civil society organizations.

- In this regard, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chair of the Education Above All Foundation, continues her outstanding efforts on education through the partnership agreement signed between the Foundation and the World Bank to enroll two million children in schools in 41 countries by 2025. The agreement will provide 250 million dollars and will include a group of developing countries in order to provide primary education for children in their countries. The agreement was possible thanks to a contribution from the Qatar Fund for Development, a major partner of the Foundation. Doha also supports several initiatives in the education sector at the international level, such as “Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict”, the Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) initiative, and the Silatech social initiative to expand employment and business opportunities for young people in the Arab world. The Foundation supports projects run by young people and the “Educate a Child” initiative, which is a global initiative aimed at reducing the number of children who have lost their right to education due to conflicts, wars, and natural disasters, and benefits groups that may face special challenges in accessing education, notably girls, persons with disabilities, and minorities.
- In 2020, the Qatar Fund for Development funded one of the Education Above All Foundation and GAVI projects in Nigeria to build a healthy and educated society, through which vaccines could be provided to families of children deprived of education, such as pregnant mothers and siblings under the age of two, in addition to parallel activities like spreading health and awareness messages in the project’s targeted schools and civil society.

Sustainable development

- The State of Qatar continues to affirm its commitment to keep providing humanitarian support, contributing to international efforts aimed at alleviating human suffering and other challenges that face humanity, and advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Qatari foreign policy is based on the principles of cooperation and partnership in facing common challenges. Its National Vision 2030 views international cooperation as an integral part of the national development process and as strengthening the regional and global role of the State of Qatar at the economic, political, and cultural levels, notably within the framework of the United Nations system and regional and international organizations.
- Since joining the United Nations, the State of Qatar has pledged to provide generous financial contributions to many international programs, organs, and entities that support projects in the areas of development and humanitarian aid, so long as their objectives are in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the SDGs, and as part of Qatar’s commitment to its responsibility as an active partner in the efforts of the international community.
- Doha provided multi-year funding for the core resources of international organizations in the amount of 500 million dollars during the signing of a package of agreements with the United Nations on the sidelines of the 2018 Doha Forum. It has also pledged to provide annual support to the UNDP, UNICEF, UNRWA, and UNHCR. The State of Qatar is one of the major supporters of the United Nations.

- The State of Qatar is among the top countries that provide humanitarian and development assistance at the bilateral level, through the United Nations, and in all regions of the world, especially to developing countries facing crises, wars, and natural disasters. In various situations and occasions, the State of Qatar reiterates its commitment to contribute to international efforts aimed at alleviating human suffering, addressing other challenges that face humanity, and advancing the implementation of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The State of Qatar supports the pioneering role played by development and humanitarian assistance UN organizations and international institutions. The numerous agreements signed between the State of Qatar and UN programs attest to Qatar's role in working towards achieving international peace and security and sustainable development.
- The agreements include a pledge of 500 million dollars (1.82 billion Qatari riyals) to various UN programs, making Qatar the sixth largest global donor to the United Nations. Four new UN offices were opened in Doha. Qatar also pledged to provide annual support to the UNDP, UNICEF, UNRWA, and UNHCR.
- The inauguration of the United Nations House in Doha during the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries was an embodiment of the long-term strategic partnership between the State of Qatar and the United Nations in facing global challenges.

The FIFA Qatar 2022 for All Initiative to Share the Joy with Refugees and Displaced Persons

- The State of Qatar has always paid great attention to all kinds of sports and has been keen to invest in this field decades before the kick-off of the first match in the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, out of its belief in the ability of sport to contribute to achieving the SDGs and promoting the values of peace and understanding among all peoples. Sport also plays a major role in Qatar National Vision 2030, through which the State of Qatar aspires to use sport to promote development and peace around the world, to promote values of respect for and social inclusion of all people, and to bring about positive social change.
- In parallel to the kick-off of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, Qatar launched a humanitarian initiative entitled "FIFA Qatar 2022 for All: Sharing the Joy with Refugees and Displaced Persons." The initiative aimed to spread the joy of the World Cup among refugees and displaced persons (IDPs) in their camps, where many of them suffer from psychological stress and crises, high levels of isolation, frustration, depression, and anxiety as a result of the harsh experiences they live through due to displacement, deteriorating living conditions, a lack of livelihoods, poor access to basic services, and uncertainty about the future, which may, in turn, lead to increased risks of violence. Therefore, this initiative aims to ensure that no one is left behind, contributes to building positive relationships between refugees and their host communities, and sheds light on the issues and conditions of IDPs and refugees inside the camps.
- Fan zones were established inside refugee and IDP camps in a number of countries, including Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Turkey, Bangladesh, Sudan, Somalia, northern Syria, and Kenya, to allow them to watch football matches and enjoy various World Cup events on giant screens.
- Sites were prepared to hold tournaments simulating the World Cup. Cultural, educational, and recreational activities and programs were organized to promote

sport as a vehicle for peace and to alleviate the suffering of refugees in light of the dire humanitarian, social, and psychological conditions they live in.

- With the start of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, Qatar Charity established two fan zones in Bhasan Char in Bangladesh, including a separate area for women and children to ensure their safety and protection, in addition to another fan zone for men. In total, 238,800 spectators enjoyed the FIFA World Cup matches from November 20 to December 18, 2022. The Fan Zone was a new initiative for Rohingya refugees, as it was the first time the island had witnessed entertainment activities for refugees. Violence decreased in the areas where cultural and entertainment programs were organized daily by the refugees.
- Fan zones created alternative livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees, especially women, by preparing and selling freshly cooked staples of the national culture of Myanmar. More than 187 women and men operated the local food market, which generated a total income of more than 39,000 US dollars in 23 days on Bhasan Char Island.
- In Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar camp, the largest refugee camp in the world and home to nearly 800,000 refugees, most of them Rohingya, who fled violence in Myanmar, World Cup matches were screened in 20 community centres in collaboration with the UNHCR, where they were shown separately for at least 16,000 women, children, and men. The presentation was also associated with promoting basic values related to fair play, anti-discrimination, anti-racism, and child protection.
- Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp, located near the border with Somalia, included 218,873 refugees and asylum-seekers registered as of the end of July 2020, making it the third largest refugee camp in the world. Three fan zones were established in different areas of Dadaab to accommodate the large number of refugees, namely in Dagahaley camp and Ifo camp. Each fan zone accommodated around 800,000 spectators per day.
- In Jordan's Zaatar refugee camp, the largest refugee camp in the Middle East and one of the largest in the world, with nearly 80,000 Syrians forced to flee the war in Syria, a fan zone was established, which gathered hundreds of children, young people, and the elderly on a daily basis to watch the World Cup matches. A tent was set up that can accommodate about 700 people with a maximum occupancy of 1,000 people of different age groups.
- In Somalia's Shabelle IDP camp, which accommodates around 13,000 internally displaced persons who have sought refuge due to violence, a fan zone was established, which gathered hundreds of children, young people, and the elderly on a daily basis to watch the World Cup matches. A tent was set up that can accommodate about 700 people with a maximum occupancy of 1,000 people of different age groups. Moreover, 500 meals were distributed on a daily basis in the fan zones, in addition to 1,000 food baskets that were distributed, with support from the Qatar Fund for Development, to needy families in the camp as part of the Somalia Emergency Drought Response Project.

Number of countries	8
Number of sites	52
Number of beneficiaries	241,000

- By providing several entertainment programs, this humanitarian initiative launched by the State of Qatar had a positive impact on rekindling hope and restoring a sense of normalcy among refugees and IDPs inside the camps. It also

helped promote the values of respect and social inclusion and taught young people the values of peaceful interaction through various forms of artistic expression and collective activities for refugees and IDPs.

The humanitarian and development work of Qatari charitable associations and organizations

- The humanitarian and development work of Qatari charitable associations and organizations has recently undergone a remarkable transformation, focusing on providing means and tools that enable the needy to rely on themselves, namely providing means of production, building capabilities, acquiring new skills, and broadening the horizons in earning and livelihood. Such endeavours have earned Qatar a leading international reputation in humanitarian work.
- The role of Qatari organizations and associations is pivotal in alleviating human suffering, as these contributions create hope instead of despair. Effective response and provision of humanitarian and development assistance are a crucial turning point in the lives of the afflicted peoples, a phase stage for their economic empowerment, and a step into building effective philanthropic partnerships.
- Over the past years, Qatari relief and development organizations have played a pivotal role in helping afflicted people in crisis-stricken areas. Qatar's Charitable Organizations and Societies, Qatar Red Crescent, Qatar Fund for Development, and other national humanitarian organizations have actively contributed to alleviating human suffering, investing in education and economic empowerment, and supporting the poor with productive projects that contribute to the development of their communities and provide them with job opportunities.
- In this context, the Qatar Red Crescent strengthened its developmental role in humanitarian work, as it provided a package of projects that mainly target livelihoods, by providing agricultural tools to poor families along with professional training, and financing a cattle-raising project for widows and providing fodder, training and veterinary care, financing commercial projects to open a door of livelihood for needy families and persons with disabilities, financing agricultural projects and cattle and goat raising for housewives, financing a fishing project for fishermen, financing small commercial projects for the poor such as sewing machines and tools, cheese and dairy factories, in addition to providing agricultural tractors to poor farmers to secure a stable source of livelihood.
- The total number of beneficiaries of the Red Crescent's services and aid during the past seven years alone reached 62 million people in 57 countries around the world, and the amount of aid provided during the same period reached 3.25 billion riyals. Its external activities are carried out through 14 offices and missions, and it has representation in most of the countries that require its activities the most. It also collaborates with a large number of partnerships, national societies, and local authorities in the host countries, as well as with international humanitarian organizations operating in those countries. The Qatar Red Crescent also launched a campaign during the month of Ramadan of this year entitled "Humanity First: Your Generosity is Kindness" that will target about 720,000 beneficiaries during and after this period through various Ramadan development projects inside Qatar and in 18 countries around the world.

Qatar Fund for Development

- In the same context, Qatar Fund for Development contributions amounted to 708 million dollars over the past year in total humanitarian and development aid, making Qatar one of the major donors to and supporters of the least developed countries. Its efforts have made a difference in fragile and marginalized communities around the world through projects that encompassed various humanitarian aspects, be they developmental, health, educational, social, or other.
- Contributions from Qatari charitable organizations and societies are key to supporting needy and poor families by enabling them to own the means of production, thereby bringing about a paradigm shift in their lives and livelihoods. Such a role has recently been strengthened in agricultural training and extension, owning the means of production, refining skills in manual labor such as blacksmithing and carpentry, and providing means and tools to help those in need at this level, such as donating livestock, agricultural tools, and grain mills, to achieve economic empowerment for widows and poor housewives. Such projects go a long way in the development of poor families, provide them with some of their most basic requirements, and help fight poverty and reduce unemployment.

Qatar Charity

- Since its establishment as an international humanitarian organization operating in more than 50 countries in the world and implementing projects through its field offices in more than 30 countries, Qatar Charity has sought to achieve the SDGs by combating poverty, eliminating hunger, and supporting the health and education sectors. The number of projects implemented during 2020–2021 was over ten thousand, benefiting more than 62,000 people at a total cost of nearly 35 million Qatari riyals in Somalia, northern Syria, the Gaza Strip, and Pakistan.
- The number of beneficiaries of Qatar Charity's humanitarian and development projects that were implemented during the past 10 years exceeded 176 million people around the world, at a total cost estimated at 436.5 billion riyals. Areas of intervention included food security, health, education, shelter, water, sanitation, social welfare, economic empowerment, capacity building, and training. The total cost of supporting humanitarian situations inside Qatar amounted to 5.554 million riyals, benefiting thousands of debtors, patients, divorcees, the elderly, widows, students, low-income families, families of prisoners, abandoned women, and people with special needs. Over the past ten years, Qatar Charity has also been able to sponsor 869,345 people. The total number of currently sponsored people amounts to more than 194,000.
- Projects have also been implemented in 41 countries (in the State of Qatar and 40 countries around the world), at a total cost of more than 118 million riyals. Projects inside Qatar include seasonal projects benefiting of workers, low-income families, orphans, and children of expatriates. It also provides assistance to debtors, widows, humanitarian and medical cases, and others through *Al-Aqraboun*. Such amounts are expected to reach about 71 million riyals disbursed on 10,000 cases, in addition to the implementation of a number of awareness and cultural projects and voluntary initiatives.
- Outside Qatar, 40 projects are currently being implemented through field offices and in collaboration with local partners, focusing on disaster and crisis areas such as the Syrian hinterland, Turkey, Somalia, Bangladesh (including Rohingya refugees), and Palestine.

Achievements and best practices

The right to freedom of expression

The constitutional and legal system of the State of Qatar enshrines the right to freedom of opinion and expression without discrimination on grounds of gender, origin, colour, or religion. The country has recently witnessed an increasing societal growth in freedom of opinion and expression at the level of individuals, the media, and publishing. The legislation of the State of Qatar is devoid of any restriction imposed on the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression. It stipulates legal regulation to protect freedom of expression online or offline as follows:

- The constitution of Qatar guarantees everyone's freedom of opinion and research in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated by the law. Article 47 stipulates that "freedom of expression of opinion and scientific research is guaranteed in accordance with the conditions and circumstances set forth in the law." Article 48 also stipulates that "freedom of press, printing, and publication shall be guaranteed in accordance with the law."
- The right to freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. The legal basis of that right lies in international and regional instruments and covenants and national laws and constitutions. It was stipulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Article 19 thereof, where the article states the following:
 - Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
 - Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
 - The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
 - For the protection of national security, of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.
- The State of Qatar has acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by virtue of Decree No. 40 of 2018 that approved the accession of the State of Qatar to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The permanent constitution of the State of Qatar stipulates the right to freedom of opinion in Article 47, which reads, "Freedom of expression of opinion and scientific research is guaranteed in accordance with the conditions and circumstances set forth in the law." Therefore, the constitution of Qatar guarantees the right to freedom of opinion. Consequently, regulating that right by a law is compatible with the regulation of all rights, as there is no contradiction in a law regulating the exercise of a particular right in a way that does not preclude the exercise of such a right as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Workers' rights

- An independent Ministry of Labor Affairs was established recently. The labor sector thus ceased to be affiliated with the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs. The creation of that ministry reflects the importance the state attaches to this sector. The terms of reference of the

Ministry of Labor were set up by Emiri Decision No. 57 of 2021, dated October 19, 2021. In this context, the Ministry seeks to improve the level of its services and promote the State's efforts to develop a legislative system for the labor sector that would be compatible with international standards for the protection of workers' rights and adopt best practices in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, which aims at building a modern and competitive labor market.

- Implementation of new laws related to changing employers
- It is incumbent upon the Ministry of Labor to supervise the implementation of and compliance with the Labor Law. The Ministry is keen to ensure the effective implementation of the legislative amendments that were enacted recently, which introduced radical changes in the workplace, including:
- Cancellation of the Exit Permit

Exit permits for employees in ministries, government agencies, state establishments and institutions, workers in the oil and gas sector and related corporations, workers in marine media, workers in agriculture and grazing, and workers in private offices (Ministerial Decision No. 95 of 2019) have been abolished. Exit permits for domestic workers have also been abolished without requiring permission from their employer.

- Cancellation of the "Employer's No Objection Certificate" requirement for the workers willing to change jobs

Decree-Law No. 19 of 2020 was promulgated to amend provisions of the law regulating the entry, exit, and residence of migrants. Henceforth, migrant workers can change jobs in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth by the Ministry of Labor.

Decree-Law No. 18 of 2020 was promulgated to amend provisions of the Labor Law, authorizing both the worker and the employer to terminate the work contract without showing cause, provided that the notice period is enforced. The notice period shall be one month for the first and second years of work, and two months after the second year of work.

- Online notifications for changing jobs

The Ministry has established an online notification service to terminate the contract and change jobs while ensuring the implementation of new procedures for the transfer of workers in accordance with the aforementioned legislative amendments.

- Deadlines for changing jobs

Changing jobs must occur while the residence permit is valid, unless such permit has expired for reasons beyond the migrant's control or within a period of 90 days from the date of expiry of the residence permit.

- Secondment of workers

Workers may be seconded from one company to another for a period not exceeding 6 months, subject to renewal. The employer must submit the appendix to the contract that was attached to the employment contract, signed by both the previous employer and the worker, and certified by the Ministry of Labor.

- Implementation of the minimum wage law

Law No. 17 of 2020 regulates the minimum wage for workers and domestic workers. The minimum wage for workers and domestic workers was determined pursuant to Ministerial Decision No. 25 of 2020, which requires the employer to pay workers a basic wage of no less than 1,000 Qatari riyals per month. In the event that the employer does not provide adequate housing or food for the worker or domestic

worker, the minimum housing allowance shall be 500 riyals per month, and the minimum food allowance shall be 300 riyals per month.

The minimum wage decision came into effect in March 2021. In coordination with employers, the Ministry amended work contracts in which the worker's wage was less than the minimum wage specified in the aforementioned ministerial decision, without prejudice to any agreement stipulating a higher wage.

- Developing a wage protection system

The Wage Protection System is essential to the implementation and enforcement of a non-discriminatory minimum wage. It also plays a pivotal role in detecting and addressing violations related to workers' wages. The Ministry has therefore developed the wage protection system with a view to achieving a higher degree of clarity and transparency in how workers' wages are calculated. Ticking boxes related to food, housing, and additional working hours were added, and the system became able to monitor less-than-the-minimum-wage payments. Introducing positive incentives is under consideration through issuing a "Certificate of Compliance" to contractors as a precondition for submitting their bids for public procurement. More than 1,660,000 workers have been registered in the Wage Protection System (96 percent of qualified workers). To complement the initiative by the Ministry and the Qatar Central Bank to facilitate the opening of bank accounts for domestic workers, consideration is being given to adopting a mechanism similar to the Wage Protection System, intended for domestic workers.

With regard to the rights and protection of domestic workers, Law No. 15 of 2017 regarding domestic workers was promulgated. Its provisions are in line with international labor standards and the provisions of the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189) regarding decent work for domestic workers, through a set of guarantees such as setting maximum working hours (ten hours per day, punctuated by periods of worship, rest, and eating, which are not counted within the working hours). It is worth noting that the standard employment contract approved by the Ministry stipulates the performance of agreed-upon work for a period of 8 hours per day, as normal working hours. A domestic worker may work two hours of overtime per day, compensated by an increase in wages in accordance with the provisions of the Labor Law.

The law also obligates the employer to provide adequate food and housing for the domestic worker, adequate health care, and medicines and medical supplies in the event of their illness or injury during or resulting from the performance of work, without burdening the worker with any financial charges. The law also provides for treating them well in a manner that preserves their dignity and physical integrity, not endangering the employee's life or health or causing them any physical or psychological harm in any way, and not putting them to work during their sick leave, daily rest times, or weekly vacations. The law also regulates their annual leave and end-of-service remuneration and identifies cases that warrant the termination of their work contract while preserving their right to end-of-service remuneration.

- Online services

As part of its digital transformation strategy, the Ministry of Labor launched a set of new online services to provide paperless e-services and to contribute to achieving excellence in performance, speed up processing times, and streamline procedures.

The Ministry's plan for digital transformation will contribute to speedy processing without the need to visit the Ministry's building or recruitment agencies or submit paper documents, a time-consuming process for citizens and employers alike.

The Ministry of Labor has begun receiving full or partial secondment requests online. Such a process allows a company to apply for the secondment of the worker to another

company online without the need to change employers. It also contributes to revitalizing the economy and the labor market for individuals and companies alike. The Ministry is keen to upgrade the qualifications of its personnel to enable them to implement the service digitization plan of the Ministry, which envisions developing and providing 80 online services. Trained personnel will have a major role in completing the required tasks in a timely manner. In addition, the online infrastructure capable of receiving, processing, and responding to tens of thousands of requests in real time needs to be provided.

- Adoption of a new employment contract form for domestic workers

The Ministry of Labor recently approved a new employment contract form for domestic workers to complement the above-mentioned provisions of Law No. 15 of 2017. Additional measures ensuring their protection have been approved and aligning their rights with those of other workers who are subject to the Labor Law with regard to maximum working hours, weekly rest, overtime compensation, and sick leave. Under the new standard contract, a domestic worker has become subject to the same terms and conditions stipulated in the Labor Law, on an equal footing with any other worker in the private sector. Clear provisions have been introduced regarding the conditions for contract termination, which would allow domestic workers to terminate their work contract at any time, provided that the notification period is adhered to, in order to ensure the freedom of movement of the domestic worker in the house and their mobility in the labor market similarly to all other workers, in accordance with the recent legislative amendments that abolished the “No Objection” clause of the employer to change jobs.

Qatar visa centres in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are now using the new standard labor contract to process applications for domestic workers heading to Qatar. Additionally, the Ministry of Labor will expand the work contract digital certification system to include the digital certification of the amended work contracts for domestic workers.

- Insurance policy for domestic workers

It is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Labor and the Qatar Chamber. The proposal calls for enabling Qatari employers to opt for an insurance policy for domestic workers. It will be approved after an extensive study of the market in a manner that takes into consideration the interests of all parties, especially the employer. According to the proposal, the insurance policy covers a number of cases, including the worker’s unwillingness to work, the worker’s escape, work injuries, or death. The travel ticket is also covered by this policy. The insurer would compensate the employer based on the amount of damage caused. Coordination between the Chamber and the Ministry of Labor in this regard is ongoing.

- Awareness and educational efforts on the rights of domestic workers

The Ministry of Labor is making continuous efforts to raise awareness of the rights and obligations of domestic workers, the importance of their role, and the need to care for and protect their rights. In this regard, the Ministry of Labor collaborated with the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to organize a virtual celebration of International Domestic Workers Day on June 16, 2021. On that occasion, a panel discussion was held that included representatives of domestic workers in Qatar, the IDWF, the Humanities Initiative, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of the Interior. The discussion highlighted the impact of the labor reforms adopted by the State of Qatar regarding domestic workers and the role of employers in supporting decent work for this group of workers.

In view of the importance of educating employers and workers about their rights and obligations in accordance with the law, the Ministry of Labor issued educational brochures targeting both groups. It also published the “Know Your Rights Guide” for domestic workers in Qatar, in twelve languages, and the “Guide to Employing Foreign Domestic Workers in Qatar” for employers, in two languages, in partnership with the NGO Migrant Rights. Both guides were widely published and disseminated via social media, government offices, Qatar Visa Centres, embassies, and the IDWF.

- Training program for recruitment agencies in Qatar on decent work for domestic workers

As part of the second phase of the Technical Cooperation Program, the Ministry is currently collaborating with the ILO to design and develop a training program for licensed recruitment agencies in Qatar on the topic of decent work for domestic workers. In view of the vital role of recruitment agencies in the labor relationship between domestic workers and their employers, the training will focus on increasing those agencies’ awareness and knowledge of the legal framework regulating domestic work, providing them with practical guidance on good practices for fair employment in the domestic setting, and how to deal with potential disputes between employers and domestic workers. The training will be provided by the Ministry of Labor in coordination with the office of overseas Filipino workers located in Qatar and with the IDW and ILO.

The Ministry collaborates with the representative of the IDW in the State of Qatar and constantly reaches out to her to coordinate the implementation of the aforementioned awareness and training programs.

- Enhancing complaint mechanisms and legal redress

The Ministry of Labor is constantly working to take all necessary measures to develop and improve the complaints mechanisms available to domestic workers with a view to enabling them to have effective means to respond to their inquiries and resolve their complaints as soon as possible, through modern and easy means such as the hotline and the development of online platforms on the Ministry’s website, such as the Amerni application for smartphones. The Ministry recently launched the *Standard Platform for Complaints and Reporting*, available to domestic workers online. The system also provides a service for complaints that enables all citizens and residents to use the platform to report general violations of the Labor Law and the Domestic Workers Law.

To facilitate litigation procedures for workers and domestic workers and fast-track the settlement of their complaints, Labor Dispute Settlement Committees were established by virtue of Law No. 13 of 2017, to adjudicate, within a period not exceeding three weeks, all disputes arising from the provisions of the law or the employment contract (including domestic worker employment contracts). Should its mediation not result in an amicable settlement of the dispute, the relevant department of the Ministry would then refer the dispute to the committee.

The Ministry of Labor established a section to receive and settle domestic worker complaints. It also set up an office in the Ministry to execute judgments at the location of the practical dispute committees, with the aim of facilitating judicial processing for workers, completing them in a short time in the same place, and ensuring the speedy implementation of judgments.

- Provide shelter and legal assistance to victims.

The State of Qatar is keen to protect domestic workers from abuse and exploitation by providing shelter for people who need it and establishing suitable locations to shelter, care for, and rehabilitate the victims in a manner that considers their needs,

human dignity, age, and gender. Established as a shelter affiliated with the Protection and Social Rehabilitation Centre (AMAN), which is one of the centres under the umbrella of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work, the Comprehensive Safety House is an integrated shelter and a comprehensive social and health environment for providing protection and rehabilitation services to targeted groups, including victims of human trafficking (especially women domestic workers). A humanitarian care house has been recently established in collaboration between the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and the Qatar Red Crescent and aims to provide protection and social welfare for workers who need it. It specializes in providing the required assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking, rehabilitating and integrating them into society, and providing workers with temporary accommodation until their departure from the country is secured. The shelter can accommodate nearly 200 victims who are admitted based on the assessment of their situation by the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking.

The Ministry is making continuous efforts to educate domestic workers of their basic rights through the hotline, strengthen complaints mechanisms and means of litigation, ensure their access to justice, establish a department for domestic worker complaints and their settlement, and organize awareness campaigns through various media. A celebration of International Domestic Workers Day was organized, and a video clip to raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of domestic workers and an information booklet for domestic workers were translated into 10 languages in partnership with a non-governmental organization. An information booklet is being prepared for employers of domestic workers in English and Arabic. Those tools are widely disseminated through the media, social media platforms, government offices, and the IDWF.

During the COVID-19 crisis, efforts were coordinated with Qatar Central Bank to enable all workers to continue transferring money seamlessly to their families in their home countries, provide domestic workers with all necessary facilities to open bank accounts, and exempt them from the minimum amount for account opening. In complementing this initiative, consideration is being given to adopting a mechanism similar to the wage protection system for domestic workers.

- Strengthening complaint mechanisms and settling labor disputes

The Ministry is keen to take all the necessary measures to develop and improve the work of complaint mechanisms. The Ministry provides various means so that workers and domestic workers will be able to submit complaints by providing modern and easy means, such as the hotline, which provides a 24-hour service to receive complaints, smart applications, and Amerni applications.

The Ministry has also recently launched the Standard Platform for Complaints and Reporting, which enables community members to submit complaints from private sector employees and workers, in addition to submitting complaints by domestic workers online. The system also provides a reporting service that enables all citizens and residents to report general violations of the Labor Law through the Platform, which is compatible with all modern browsers and smart phones.

The Ministry also provides workers or domestic workers with legal advice, using the help of its many translators in all the languages spoken by migrant workers. Interpreters are also available, free of charge, in the Dispute Settlement Committees Section. Should the worker or domestic worker wish to seek a legal opinion (at any stage of the complaint), they can meet with a legal expert from the Labor Relations Department during official working hours.

The Ministry also established a special section to receive and settle domestic worker complaints. It also created a new section to review complaints that are referred from

settlement to adjudication to ensure that any pending cases are dealt with. An office for the execution of judgments was also opened at the headquarters of the Labor Disputes Committees to facilitate judicial processing for workers, fast-tracking them in the same place, and ensuring the speedy implementation of judgments, which might include online seizure of property and assets of liable companies and real-time online connection between the competent government agencies. The Ministry is working on increasing the number of labor dispute settlement committees as part of its efforts to address the increase in the number of labor disputes, ensure that workers' rights are fulfilled, and expedite litigation procedures. The Ministry also conducts, on an ongoing basis, a comprehensive evaluation of the labor complaint submission mechanisms, the settlement process, and the labor dispute settlement committees.

- Activating the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund

The Workers' Support and Insurance Fund was established pursuant to Law No. 17 of 2018 to provide sustainable and necessary financial resources with a view to supporting and insuring workers and disbursing the workers' allowances that are determined by the Labor Dispute Settlement Committees in the event of the employer's insolvency and inability to pay, provided that they are collected from them at a later stage.

- Support for establishing joint labor committees

Ministerial Decision No. 21 of 2019 was promulgated to regulate the conditions and procedures for electing workers' representatives in joint committees. The Ministry supported the formation of joint committees in several establishments, thus enabling workers to directly elect their representatives.

- Establishment of Qatar visa centres

In cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Qatar Visa Centre was established in the countries of origin of migrant workers to ensure fast and transparent recruitment procedures. The centres manage the processing of fingerprinting, medical examination, and documentation of work contracts in the country of origin through integrated online services that are fast and user-friendly, ensure that prospective workers are not charged any fees for using the system in the country, protect them from any exploitation, and document their contracts before entering the country to guarantee their rights.

There are currently 14 Qatar visa centres abroad, located in six Asian countries of origin for migrant workers, namely Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, and the Philippines.

- Adopting a fair recruitment program

The program includes a set of initiatives to develop measures and procedures that regulate recruitment and placement. It prohibits the payment of placement fees and organizes the workflow of placement agencies so that placement is conducted through licensed companies that consider all workers' rights. It also makes it mandatory for companies in the State of Qatar to be responsible for choosing companies that abide by the provisions of the law, in line with the General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment issued by the ILO through partnerships with the private sector and activities dedicated to capacity building (a partnership between the public and private sectors to implement a pilot project for fair recruitment between Bangladesh and Qatar in the construction sector) and the implementation of a strategy for capacity building in the hotel and security sectors through joint worker groups with the Ministry to exchange knowledge and develop best practices for placement and advocating for workers' rights. A new guide for employment and hiring in the hotel industry in the State of Qatar was published.

Ministerial Decision No. 21 of 2021 was promulgated to amend provisions of Decision No. 8 of 2005 on regulating the conditions and procedures for licensing the recruitment of workers from abroad for a third party. The new decision requires the owners of the recruitment agencies to abide by the amendments to the labor legislation, regulations, and policies applicable in the country of origin, to provide the worker before their recruitment with a copy of the terms and conditions of work, signed by the employer, to provide the worker, before their arrival in the country, with an employment contract that reflects the same conditions they agreed to, and to provide private housing and meals for the recruited workers until they are on board, or when the agency takes back the worker recruited by the employer.

- Adopting a labor inspection policy

The Labor Inspection Policy and the Occupational Safety and Health Policy have been adopted to ensure the use of more strategic, harmonized, and data-based approaches and to inform training strategies, media campaigns, inspection visits, and labor inspectors' investigations about occupational accidents. An 2019 annual report was prepared for the Labor Inspection Department with a view to enhancing transparency and accountability in inspection services, in line with the requirements of the Labor Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), developing a comprehensive training plan for 2021–2022, providing training on various topics to all labor inspectors (including labor inspection skills, Labor Law, forced labor, and human trafficking), strengthening the capabilities of the Labor Inspection Department, and increasing the number of inspectors to make inspections more nimble and effective.

- Reemployment with the Qatar Chamber

In cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, the Qatar Chamber launched the *Reemployment Platform in the Private Sector* to help companies recruit workers from within the Qatari labor market. In this context, the platform enables companies to recruit qualified and trained workers who have experience in the local market instead of having to recruit new workers from abroad. Such measures save time and effort for companies, fast-track project delivery in the country, and promote companies' role in facilitating the transition of skilled workers from companies that are in the process of reducing their workforce or that have excess workers due to project completion to other companies looking to hire new workers.

The Ministry is keen to reduce the red tape for companies complying with the Labor Law. In fact, law-abiding companies that have no labor law-related violations, outstanding salaries and wages, or other violations stand to benefit the most from the platform.

- Adoption of the occupational safety and health policy

The occupational safety and health policy was developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health and in consultation with employers' and workers' representatives. It is intended to strengthen the system of recording workplace injuries and occupational diseases, improve data collection and analysis, increase public awareness, enhance training, develop inspections, and exchange best practices among authorities at different levels of the national occupational health and safety system. A comprehensive dossier on safety, health, and the environment was drafted in cooperation with the ILO and the British Health and Safety Executive, and a report prepared by an independent expert will soon be published by the ILO on workplace-related injury and death data in the State of Qatar. Data collection, analysis, and dissemination fall within the specific objectives of the national policy on occupational safety and health in Qatar. In this context, the Ministry, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Hamad Medical Corporation, implemented a series of

initiatives to improve the collection and analysis of data on occupational safety and health, with the support of the ILO.

- Protection of workers from heat stress

Ministerial Decision No. 17 of 2021 was promulgated regarding the necessary precautions to protect workers from heat stress, which extended the period of banning work in workplaces during the summer to include the period from 1 June to 15 September of each year. Accordingly, it is prohibited to work from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The new legislation included important additions, notably “imposing a maximum temperature limit that, when reached, prohibits conducting all kinds of work and granting workers the right to determine by themselves the pace of work by taking breaks when needed. The Ministry organizes annual awareness and inspection campaigns to ensure compliance with the ban on outdoor work during the summer and to protect workers from heat stress, which contributed significantly to reducing the number of injuries.

- Efforts to combat human trafficking

Established by Cabinet Decision No. 15 of 2017, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking is keen to play the role of the national focal point for monitoring, preventing, and combating human trafficking through coordination with the relevant authorities. The committee makes continuous efforts in training and capacity building of national personnel and law enforcement officers on human trafficking to enhance their capabilities to identify those crimes and detect cases that amount to human trafficking crimes. The committee organized several training courses in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the ILO, and the UK and US embassies on conducting investigative interviews, joint coordination in dealing with cases of human trafficking, methods of conducting interviews with victims, and protection of victims and witnesses. Several workshops were also organized on indicators of the crime of trafficking, distinguishing between labor disputes and human trafficking cases, dealing with, protecting, and providing victims with psychological support, as well as practical aspects of filing cases in situations of human trafficking.

The state ensures the effective implementation of the legal provisions that guarantee the protection of victims of human trafficking and provide them with assistance, like adequate shelters. The Comprehensive Safety House, which is affiliated with the Protection and Social Rehabilitation Centre (AMAN), which is one of the centres that falls under the umbrella of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work, has been inaugurated. It is an integrated shelter and a comprehensive social and health environment for providing protection and rehabilitation services to targeted groups, including victims of human trafficking (especially women domestic workers). A humanitarian care house has also been recently established in collaboration between the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and the Qatar Red Crescent. It aims to provide protection and social welfare for workers who need it. It specializes in providing the required assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking, rehabilitating and integrating them into society, and providing workers with temporary accommodation until their departure from the country is secured. The shelter can accommodate nearly 200 victims who are admitted based on the assessment of their condition by the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking.

- Cooperation with the International Labour Organization

The State of Qatar implemented a technical cooperation project with the ILO, by virtue of which the two parties promoted, during 2018–2020, national legislation and practices and built the capacities of employees, employers, and workers to increase

their awareness of basic labor principles and rights in line with international labor standards and international labor conventions ratified by the State of Qatar. The project included five areas of concentration: protection of wages; labor inspection and occupational health and safety; a contractual employment system to replace the *kafala* system; combating forced labor; and amplifying the voice of workers. An ILO office was established in Doha to support the aforementioned technical cooperation program. The Ministry of Labor coordinated and cooperated with the organization's office to implement the initiatives and projects included in the program during 2018–2020. The first phase of the program was concluded in June 2021.

The technical cooperation program achieved remarkable success in developing national legislation and practices in line with international labor standards. Within a short period of time, the State of Qatar introduced significant reforms related to the five areas of the program. Those achievements were praised by the international trade union federations, the International Organization of Employers, and all international parties during the discussions of the 340th session of the ILO Governing Council.

It was agreed to launch a second phase of the technical cooperation program with the ILO, which extends to December 2023, to consolidate the important achievements made in the first phase. New areas of cooperation have been identified (managing the labor market and labor migration; law enforcement and access to justice; amplifying the workers' voice and promoting social dialogue; international cooperation and exchange of experiences) to contribute to the transition to a more competitive and knowledge-based economy, in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy 2018–2022.

- Partnerships with global trade unions

The Ministry has been keen to establish international partnerships with international trade unions, notably with the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Building and Woodworkers International (BWI), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), and UNI Global. The Ministry holds periodic meetings with those unions to discuss labor issues and address their sectors' complaints and inquiries. On March 2–3, 2022, the first meeting of the Steering Committee of the ITF Arab World was held in Doha. During the meeting, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Ministry of Labor and the ITF for joint cooperation in fair recruitment of transport workers, combating human trafficking, protecting wages, enhancing inspection, and occupational safety and health. On March 28, 2022, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Ministry of Labor and the BWI to share experiences and cooperate in work-related training and awareness.

The rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities in the State of Qatar

The State of Qatar has been making efforts to promote and protect the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. These efforts include legislative, legal, and administrative measures to integrate those groups and include them in all strategies, policies, and programs that ensure those rights by providing the necessary resources and means while monitoring their implementation and examining ways to further develop them and make them available to respond to the needs of those groups.

The State of Qatar has granted constitutional protection for the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Article 34 of the Constitution stipulates that “the citizens of Qatar shall be equal in public rights and duties”, and Article 35 thereof stipulates that “all persons are equal before the law, and there shall be no discrimination whatsoever on grounds of sex, race, language, or religion.” In

its implementation of those constitutional principles, the state issued ad hoc legislation to enforce them, in addition to integrating those rights into the overarching national strategies of the state represented in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which is based on four pillars: human, social, economic, and environmental development. It is designed to achieve sustainable development by upholding the values of equality, protecting public rights and freedoms, and instilling religious and moral values in a secure and stable society.

As part of fulfilling its international obligations to promote human rights, the State of Qatar ratified and acceded to many conventions and treaties, including those related to the protection of the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, namely the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

As part of the practical measures it has taken to uphold the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, the State of Qatar established the National Committee for Women, Children, the Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities, which is a ministerial committee comprising all ministries and agencies. It has been provided with extensive authority allowing it to monitor the conditions of the rights of women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, propose necessary ways to promote and follow-up on the achievement of the goals provided for in the international conventions and covenants related to the rights of women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, to which the State has become a party, and recommend the State's accession to other relevant conventions and covenants, examine legislation related to women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, propose amendments thereto so they would comply with international conventions to which the State has become a party, act as focal point among the relevant authorities in the State regarding the rights of women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, to enhance action within a unified and organized national framework, contribute to the preparation of national reports to be submitted by the State to international bodies and organs relevant to the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, regarding the conventions to which the State has become a party, and propose organizing and participating in conferences, seminars, sessions, and panel discussions on topics relevant to the purview of the committee.

The State has recently made the greatest progress in promoting the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, by establishing the Ministry of Social Development and the Family in 2021 as a specialized ministry that ensures implementing national strategies, plans, and policies in the relevant fields, most notably those related to the welfare of the family and its members, raising awareness of the importance of protecting it, and family cohesion, providing social security services to the beneficiaries, initiating and implementing housing-related policies, preparing and implementing related programs and services for all groups of beneficiaries of social security services, and sponsoring institutions and initiatives active in social and voluntary work and human rights.

To that end, the Ministry established several specialized departments, namely the Social Security Department, the Public Housing Department, the Community Welfare Department, and the Family Development Department. The Social Security Department pays pension benefits to groups of widows, divorcees, needy families, persons with disabilities, orphans, those unable to work, the elderly, families of prisoners, abandoned wives, and families of missing persons. The Public Housing Department is also implementing the state's plan to provide free public housing for groups in need, including all groups of women citizens, including widows, divorcees, women with disabilities, elderly women, and women married to non-Qataris, by benefiting from a housing unit or a rent allowance. The Community Care Department

caters to the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities by providing them with care, rehabilitation, training, conducting necessary studies and research, and drafting reports. The Family Development Department takes care of women and children by implementing programs to develop women's capacities and raise awareness and education about women's and children's rights.

Regarding children, the country has witnessed, during the past decades, huge achievements in building and spreading the primary health care network and maternal and child health care centres, which helped deliver health services to all residents of the country. In the same context, the scope of education expanded at all levels and became accessible to all children. The State of Qatar has also made progress in improving living patterns and introducing more forms of economic and social well-being for all segments of society. Those achievements reflected a significant and positive development in the indicators of childhood and motherhood, most notably the low level of childhood mortality, the high enrollment rates in all educational stages for both genders, and the high level of social welfare services.

In caring for persons with disabilities, the Ministry launched the initiative *Taqdir*, which benefits people who do not have the ability to visit government departments in person. They receive the care service in their homes in a way that suits their multiple needs.

The Ministry and the Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Qatar Airways, operated the Muzn lounge at Hamad International Airport, designated for persons with disabilities due to autism, to **provide them with sensory stimulants** while they were at the airport. The lounge is equipped with the latest assistive technology and educational equipment to provide the best travel experience that travellers and transients with autism and disabilities deserve. The service is provided 24/7 under the supervision of a specialized team.

In order to harness information and communication technology to unleash the full potential of persons with disabilities and help them achieve independence and self-reliance, a digital inclusion strategy was launched, and a centre (Mada) for assistive technology was established to help persons with disabilities achieve their goals and enjoy equal opportunities in education and work so they can live independently. In this context, the Global Research, Innovation, and Education on *Assistive Technology* (GREAT 2018) summit was convened by the Mada Centre in April 2018 and sponsored by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, and the Assistive Technology Industry Association in the United States.

A club dedicated to innovators with disabilities has also been set up to support programming skills and enhance the skills of students with disabilities to prepare them for the labor market. Employment and employment opportunities have been provided for people with special needs according to their abilities and rehabilitation by the relevant authorities. Citizens have been educated about the rights of persons with disabilities, about treating them well, and about their integration into society. The State of Qatar will host the Fourth Global Disability Summit in 2028, in cooperation with the International Disability Alliance.

The Qatar Foundation for Social Work and its specialized centres became affiliated with the Ministry in 2022. Those centres are the Family Counselling Centre (Wifaq), the Centre for Empowerment and Elderly Care (Ihsan), the Centre for Protection and Social Rehabilitation (Aman), the Centre for Orphan Care (Dreema), the Centre for Social Development, the Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities, and the Best Buddies initiative.

All those efforts are integrated with the progress made in other ministries and sectors, including the privileges, exemptions, and facilities provided by the Ministry of the Interior to groups of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The Ministry has also exempted people with special needs and groups that receive a monthly remuneration from fees for services and certificates, including the issuance and renewal of passports, the issuance and renewal of an identity card, the activation and renewal of a digital certificate, the issuance and renewal of a driving license, the issuance and renewal of a driving license, certificates issued by the Ministry, the issuance and renewal of visas and residency permits, and the transfer of sponsorship. In addition, the Ministry launched the service for the elderly and persons with disabilities in the General Directorate of Nationality and Ports, where they are received and provided with outstanding services until their requests are processed.

As part of empowering women and enhancing their capacities, the Ministry of Interior set up the Women's Affairs Committee. The Committee's terms of reference include examining women-related issues, eliminating obstacles that adversely affect the performance of their job functions, recruiting women to fill civil service and police jobs, including work in forensic laboratories, criminal investigation, penal and correctional institutions, and community police, representing the Ministry of Interior in conferences and women-related events inside and outside the country, as well as on committees and advisory bodies, formulating operational plans in line with the strategy of the Ministry of Interior, networking and communicating with women, family and community institutions, supervising and preparing social and awareness-raising activities for women.

Regarding the right to work, Human Resources Law No. 15 of 2016 addresses the conditions of women. The previous law of 2009 was amended to take more into account the rights of women and facilitate their participation in public life. Reforms to the previous law included granting women a three-month-long leave in the event of giving birth to triplets, the possibility of granting female employees a leave up to five years to care for their children with disabilities, granting women a fully paid leave to take care of their children who have disabilities or who suffer from illnesses that require mothers to take care of them, and granting women breast-feeding leave for a period of two years instead of the period of one year provided for by the previous law.

The Human Resources Law also took into account the conditions of the elderly and people with disabilities. It allows for the possibility of granting a Qatari employee a leave to take care of a parent or relative up to the first degree with disabilities or diseases that require the employee to stay with them constantly for a period of one year, subject to renewal, with a maximum of five years. An additional extension could also be authorized, with the approval of the Prime Minister, with a basic salary in addition to the due social and housing allowances.

The Social Insurance Law allows the private sector that hires Qatari employees to participate in the pension fund. In keeping with this law, a minimum pension was established. Should the pension not be sufficient for the elderly and his family to live a decent life, the social security pension would cover the difference between his pension and what he and his family are entitled to.

In education, thanks to the strategies it adopted to empower women, the State of Qatar achieved a broader protection of the right to education for women and persons with disabilities. Women have thus become pioneers in many fields, including education, aviation, medicine, law, international affairs, Sharia, media, management, the arts, and applied sciences.

At the political and diplomatic level, Qatari women have achieved great success in representing the country in international missions and institutions and have held

senior positions. The most recent Cabinet of 2023 includes three women who hold ministerial positions, namely the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education and Higher Education, and the Minister of Social Development and Family. In addition, Ms. Lulwa bint Rashid Al-Khater became an official spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2017; in 2023, she was appointed Minister of State for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; in 2013, Sheikha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif Al Thani became the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations; and in 2022, Dr. Hind bint Abdul Rahman Al-Muftah was appointed Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

In human rights, Sheikha Hessa bint Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani held the position of Special Rapporteur on Disability of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. The trailblazing woman in human rights, Ms. Maryam bint Abdullah Al-Attiyah, held the position of Secretary-General of the National Human Rights Committee, won the *Women Achiever Excellence Award* in the Middle East and the award for Best Strategic Leader in the National Human Rights Committee, and became chair of the National Human Rights Committee in 2022.

In higher education, Qatar University provides advanced support for persons with disabilities by establishing the Inclusion and Special Needs Support Centre that accommodates students with mobility disabilities, visual impairments, hearing impairments, brain and nerve injuries, learning disabilities, mental disorders, hyperactivity disorder, autism, and chronic diseases in all academic programs.

The State of Qatar also offers international, regional, and national initiatives to provide quality education to millions of children who are deprived of education due to conflict, poverty, insecurity, and racial discrimination around the world.

In sports, the State of Qatar established the Sport Federation of People with Special Needs and the Qatar Women's Sport Committee, which aim to promote women's sports and raise their level of performance. Persons with disabilities were present at the 2022 World Cup, with the participation of young man Ghanim Al-Moftah in the opening ceremony. A number of playgrounds were equipped with sensory rooms for people with mental disabilities.

Finally,

The State of Qatar is committed to pursuing its efforts to provide any and all necessary help to protect the rights of women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities in a manner that preserves their dignity and inclusion in accordance with international human rights standards.

The right to litigation and a fair trial

The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar guarantees the independence of the judiciary and the integrity of judges by virtue of exhaustive constitutional texts that emphasize the essence of total independence between the government branches. The constitution provides for several rigid principles and tenets related to the independence and impartiality of the judiciary in order to ensure a fair trial. It explicitly states that the judiciary is independent, the judges are independent, and they shall not be subject to any power other than that of the law in the exercise of their judicial functions, and no interference whatsoever shall be permitted with court proceedings and the course of justice. Court hearings are in principle public unless the court decides otherwise to preserve public decency and the family's sanctity. Judges are not dismissed except in cases explicitly stated by the law. The Constitution also stipulates the preservation and guarantee of the right to litigation for all people without racial or sexual discrimination. Based on this constitutional argument, the

Qatari legislation seeks to implement a genuine interpretation of conducting trials that is anchored in justice, integrity, and independence.

Based on the foregoing, the Code of Criminal Procedure was promulgated in 2004 as a reflection of the constitutional texts to emphasize the guarantee of a fair trial by striking a balance in its legal texts between two prominent rights only, the first being the human right to non-interference in their affairs and privacy and not to restrict their freedom, and the second being the right of the state to solve the crime and identify its perpetrator. Such a balance emphasizes the need for all human safeguards to be available to accused persons or suspects from the moment the crime was committed until a final judgment is issued by the competent court and inherently results in ensuring the conduct of proceedings, investigations, and trials with integrity, justice, impartiality, and transparency.

On developments regarding the principle of applying human rights to a fair trial, Law No. 5 of 2022 was promulgated to protect victims, witnesses, and others. This law also ensures the protection of victims, witnesses, and their up-to-second-degree relatives in some serious and international crimes related to state security, terrorism, narcotics, money laundering, financing of terrorism, human trafficking, and cybercrime. Thanks to such protection, victims and witnesses of those serious crimes felt safe to submit their testimony to ensure a fair and effective trial.

Furthermore, Judicial Authority Law No. 8 of 2023 was promulgated to ensure a fair trial by adopting constitutional texts related to the independence of the judiciary, integrity of judges, non-interference in their work, and quality of the workflow in their consideration of disputes before them. The law explicitly refers to the possibility of holding trials, hearing witnesses, and conducting other judicial procedures online or remotely to facilitate and preserve the right to a fair trial. It also

referred to the establishment of a “body” called “Judicial Inspection” to ensure the quality of judicial rulings, inform the judges about the quality of their rulings and their compliance with legal texts and principles, and hold them accountable, with a view to ensuring a fair trial.

To ensure speedy dispensation of justice and the right to a fair trial, the Supreme Judicial Council adopted the Judicial Code of Conduct during the second high-level meeting of the Global Judicial Integrity Network, held in Doha, from February 25 to 27, 2020. The objective of the meeting was to promote the independence, impartiality, integrity, and competence of judges and their assistants, as well as the effectiveness of their procedures. The Code was one of the first codes of conduct that explicitly stipulated the adoption of international references in addition to traditional local references, namely the international agreements and treaties concluded by the state, including the following:

1. The United Nations Convention against Corruption
2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
3. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 217 in Paris in December 1948.
4. The principles of the independence of the judiciary were adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Milan in September 1985, and subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in resolutions 32/40 of 29 November and 146/40 of 13 December 1985.
5. The 2003 Bangalore Principles on Judicial Conduct, endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 2006

It is noteworthy that the Qatari judicial authority has, for the first time, included in its judicial code of conduct an item regulating the use of online means of communication in the work of judges and their assistants. Work is underway to translate, publish, and circulate the Code of Conduct into the six official languages of the United Nations to the judicial authorities through the Global Network for Judicial Integrity, whose current session is chaired by the State of Qatar, represented by the Supreme Judicial Council.

As part of its efforts to consolidate the principle of speedy justice, the Supreme Judicial Council has recently taken the initiative to confirm the principle of “judicial specialization” with a view to recruiting specialized judges who are “scientifically and practically” knowledgeable in various courts and serving swift justice through the speedy settlement of disputes. To that end, many laws have been promulgated to keep up with this specialization vision, like the law establishing the Investment and Trade Court of 2021 and the Law of Procedures for the Division of Estates of 2023. Specialized chambers in the Criminal Court have also been established to hear a host of specific specialized cases, including state security crimes, terrorism, cybercrime, money laundering, financing of terrorism, domestic violence, drugs, traffic, and human trafficking.

Regarding the detention of people, the laws of Qatar provide for restrictive conditions and specific controls. Before deciding on detaining a person, there must be sufficient evidence that the accused has committed a “felony” or a “misdemeanour punishable by imprisonment for a period of more than six months” in the event that the accused has a fixed and known place of residence. The law makes it mandatory to inform the detainee of the reasons for his detention and of the charge against him, and it gives them the right to contact any person and hire a lawyer. Qatari law identifies specific periods for the public prosecution and the competent court regarding the duration of detention, which may not be exceeded under any justification. The objective of such limitations is to protect members of society from the perpetrators of serious and dangerous crimes and also to protect the rights of victims, witnesses, and others from having criminals living among them.

The right to obtain judicial information

To establish the principle of the right to obtain judicial information, the Qatari judicial system provides channels that enable access to the corpus of rendered judgments through Al-Mizan and the Supreme Judicial Council websites. Such online media include user-friendly research methods that are rich in information and that enable the judge to have access to the rulings and principles of the Court of Cassation and the rulings and principles of the Court of Appeal through multi-search methods, including by topic. Subjects have been classified in a scientific way so that the judge can have access to the rule in question by simply choosing the letter of the alphabet with which the topic under investigation begins, thus avoiding the hassle of reading all the rulings to reach the researched topic.

Climate change issues and the right to a safe, clean environment

The State of Qatar has placed the issue of protecting the environment and supporting sustainable development at the forefront of its priorities and has proven its continuous commitment to addressing global environmental challenges on more than one occasion, especially when it became one of the first countries to ratify the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1996. The State of Qatar is an active partner in the international community in tackling the climate crisis.

His Highness, the Emir of the State of Qatar, announced in his speech during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Glasgow in 2021 that “climate

change is a national priority for the State of Qatar. We have set bold and realistic ambitions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors, and we are committed to achieving our goals, albeit ambitious.”

To that end, the State of Qatar established in 2020 a ministry for environmental protection and climate change, and a new post was created for a special envoy of His Excellency the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on climate change.

During the Climate Action Summit in September 2019, the State of Qatar announced a contribution of 100 million US dollars to support Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries to address climate change and environmental challenges.

Out of their belief in the fundamental role of scientific research in assessing potential environmental risks and identifying possible solutions, effective and specialized environmental institutions in the State of Qatar conduct relevant research while spreading and enhancing public awareness about environmental protection and encouraging the use of green technology. The Government of the State of Qatar provides full support to start-up companies, research centres, and organizations for innovation and development in environmental preservation, sustainability, and technology.

Qatar Science and Technology Park is a leading centre for applied sciences, technological innovation, nurturing, and entrepreneurship. Its projects aim to develop cleaner and more efficient fuels while focusing on exploring new ways to produce energy.

Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute conducts and coordinates long-term interdisciplinary research that addresses pressing national priorities in water security, energy, and the environment.

In September 2021, the Cabinet approved the National Climate Change Plan, a strategic framework that reflects the country’s long-term ambitions for sustainability and the urgent need to respond effectively to the climate crisis. The Qatar National Strategy for the Environment and Climate Change is a fundamental pillar of policies aimed at preserving the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Qatar is also home to the cities of Lusail and Msheireb in downtown Doha, which are smart and sustainable cities designed to combine environment-friendly technology with enhanced urban planning. Both cities meet the highest environmental standards and promote environmental stewardship and research. They are hailed as the world’s first sustainable downtown development project.

Air quality is ensured by compliance with specific standards set forth in environmental legislation. As a result, efforts are made to ensure that air quality remains within national and international standards through continuous monitoring and measurement of ambient air pollutants by dedicated 24/7 active stations deployed across the country.

The most important legislation and achievements

- National environmental legislation is regulated by the Constitution of the State of Qatar, the Environmental Protection Law No. 30 of 2002, the Executive Regulations No. 4 of 2005 for the Environmental Protection Law, Qatar Vision 2030, and the mechanisms and procedures that guarantee environmental rights for all residents.
- Action taken by the state for risk mitigation includes the national environmental legislation that is regulated by the Constitution of the State of Qatar, the Environmental Protection Law No. 30 of 2002, the Executive Regulations No. 4 of 2005 for the Environmental Protection Law, Qatar Vision 2030, and the

mechanisms, procedures, and executive regulations for each law. Monitoring is carried out by the qualified inspectors of the relevant national authorities. Companies dealing with hazardous and toxic materials must obtain a license to handle such materials. The companies are monitored and inspected to ensure that they have a world-class storage license for hazardous materials to prevent leakage accidents that may be harmful to the environment and people.

- Decision of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change No. 8 of 2022 amending the executive regulations of the Environmental Protection Law regarding continuous monitoring stations of the marine environment water quality
- Completion of the first phase of the Environmental Data Monitoring and Analysis Unit. The unit is linked to the national air quality monitoring network. Combined, they constitute the largest national monitoring network in the region, operating according to the highest international standards.
- Strengthening, expanding, and increasing the efficiency of the national air quality monitoring network, thanks to the promulgation and implementation of the ministerial decision on ambient air quality, the cooperation of various agencies and owners of air quality monitoring stations to standardize work and operation procedures, and the accreditation of their stations. This nation-wide cooperation will result in providing high-accuracy data and maintaining air quality in accordance with the highest international standards.
- Provision of a new mobile station equipped with state-of-the-art monitoring equipment. As a result, there are now two mobile stations for monitoring ambient air quality that are directly linked to the Ministry to support the national network for monitoring air quality.
- Implementing a comprehensive plan to monitor air quality around all the major stadiums and training grounds for the FIFA World Cup 2022 and installing stationary stations that operate continuously within locations that have been identified in accordance with the highest international standards
- The installation of stations has been completed in Al-Bayt Stadium, Al-Janoub Stadium, Al-Rayyan International Stadium, Lusail Stadium, the training fields at Qatar University, Al-Khor Club stadiums, and the training fields at Al-Sailiya Club. Those stations are equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and have been linked to the national network for monitoring air quality. Additional stations are now being installed in new locations within the environmental stress areas to ensure that air quality does not go beyond national standards. All stations will be linked to the national air quality monitoring network.
- Procedures and laws ensuring the protection from and prevention of exposure of individuals to ionizing and non-ionizing radiation:
- Law No. 31 of 2002 regarding protection from radiation:
- Article 8 of the aforementioned law stipulates that the licensee has an obligation to comply with the provisions of the law, including taking the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of individuals and radiation workers, protecting the environment from radiation exposure hazards, providing the necessary health and technical services to protect the workers and the public, committing to developing a detailed radiation protection plan to prevent accidents and damages, and maintaining the level of radiation activity within the permissible dose limits for workers, air, soil, and others.
- Adherence to the dose limits, the need to follow the principles to achieve radiation security and safety so that the normal exposure of individuals would

not exceed the total effective dose or the equivalent dose, and the need to achieve ideal protection and safety with the amount of the individual dose and the number of exposed persons

- Setting of working conditions: such as for pregnant women, dose limits for radiation exposure, local rules of supervision, evaluation of exposures in the workplace, provision of appropriate and adequate personal protection equipment, gloves, protective shields for body parts, and protective equipment for monitoring.
- Prevention of medical exposures by not exposing any patient to radiation without the presence of a medical practitioner and setting certain conditions for license issuance to practitioners and technicians
- Justification of medical exposures.
- Exposures of the general public, taking the necessary precautions, developing contingency plans, and making radiological monitoring arrangements that are commensurate with the nature and extent of radioactive hazards.
- General requirements for management and safety performance, setting up adequate organizational arrangements to ensure ease and speed of the communication mechanism and the mechanism for transmitting prevention and safety information at all levels of the entity.
- Ensuring the security of radioactive sources by preserving the sources without causing any damage, conducting periodic supervision, and constantly establishing an inventory to achieve radiation safety and security for the material and moral protection of the public and physical protection

The country's international efforts in environmental protection and climate change

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the country, pledged 100 million US dollars to the Small Island Developing States and the LDCs to tackle the impacts of climate change and pursue sustainable development. In this context, the Qatar Fund for Development signed a cooperation agreement with the Global Green Growth Institute to support the SIDS and LDCs to create green job opportunities, develop green industries, and support the agricultural sector to provide food security.

The State of Qatar has also established a long-term strategic partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Among the remarkable results the partnership achieved is the UNDP Accelerator Lab Network. The State of Qatar's contribution of 30 million dollars to these laboratories has helped provide vital support to more than 100 countries and address global development challenges such as climate change.

The State of Qatar has also partnered with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to provide up to 200 million dollars to support inclusive and climate-smart agricultural and economic development, resilient food systems, and markets that enhance nutrition and generate income and economic opportunities for small-scale producers in Africa.

In partnership with the United Kingdom and the United States of America, the State of Qatar announced the launch of a 10.5 million-dollar drought assistance and resilience program through the Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCiS) consortium. The trilateral partnership builds upon famine prevention and resilience investments made by the Qatar Fund for Development, USAID, and UK Agency for International Development in 2021/22 and will sustain emergency cash assistance for

the purchase of food and multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance along with resilience activities to ensure the protection and empowerment of communities.

The Qatar Fund for Development also partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization, through which the State of Qatar contributed 1.7 million dollars to Somalia. Launched at the end of 2021, the partnership targets food insecurity and aims to enhance agricultural and livestock production for smallholder farmers through proactive climate resilience action.

The right to freedom of thought, belief, and religion and combating hate speech and discrimination against foreigners

The state's legal framework, which includes the Constitution and national laws, provides for a set of legislation that adopts the principles of equality and non-discrimination. In fact, all rights and obligations stipulated by Qatari legislation do not practice any discrimination on the basis of colour, race, religion, national origin, or any other differences or causes of discrimination. As part of its concern to promote and protect human rights in all areas, the state has sought, through the Permanent Constitution, to uphold the values of equality, anti-discrimination, tolerance, and acceptance of others, guided by the following Articles of the Constitution:

Article 18: The Qatari society is based on the values of justice, benevolence, freedom, equality, and high morals.

Article 35: All persons are equal before the law, and there shall be no discrimination whatsoever on grounds of sex, race, language, or religion.

On every national, regional, and international occasion, the State of Qatar has been renewing its full commitment to the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance and to the comprehensive implementation of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action. In its statement at the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council, held on March 30, 2023, the State of Qatar affirmed its firm and principled position against all racist practices based on racial discrimination, regardless of who, where, or by whom they were committed.

The voluntary pledges and commitments by the State of Qatar

As it aspires to become a member of the Human Rights Council for 2022–2024, the State of Qatar pledges to continue its active contribution to the work of the Council and to support all activities aimed at promoting human rights everywhere with a view to making human rights a dominant trend in all fields. In this context, the State of Qatar undertakes the following:

At the national level

- To further examine the State of Qatar's accession to human rights international instruments to which it is not a party yet;
- To further develop and harmonize its national legislation to become compatible with international human rights law;
- To mainstream a human rights perspective in implementing the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the national strategies established accordingly;
- To further develop, empower, and enhance the effectiveness of the work of human rights national institutions and civil society organizations and examine their recommendations with a view to implementing them;
- To strengthen coordination between national institutions and the departments that have been set up within various human rights state bodies;

- To support public policies aimed at promoting human rights for social groups, including women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and expatriate workers; and
- To keep hosting human rights-related conferences, workshops, training courses, and education for all segments of society.

At the regional level

- To stimulate addressing human rights issues as priority topics in regional forums and mainstream that approach in regional forums, programs, activities, and priorities;
- To keep advocating for dialogue and for resolving disputes by peaceful means in a way that preserves international and regional peace and security;
- To keep advocating for establishing a regional security system that preserves security and stability for the Middle East and the Gulf region;
- To support joint programs and projects at the bilateral and multilateral levels among the countries of the region that contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights;
- To keep playing constructive, impartial, and sincere roles, especially through mediation, to resolve crises in the region from a human rights and humanitarian perspective with a view to protecting human rights and addressing threats to those rights; and
- To continue providing various forms of support to the activities of the Doha-based United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region.

At the international level

- To maintain the active, constructive, and positive engagement of the State of Qatar as a member of the Human Rights Council in order to advance human rights and fundamental freedoms around the world by:
 - Engaging in a constructive and transparent dialogue on human rights with states and NGOs;
 - Continuing to support OHCHR
 - Contributing to developing UPR modalities and empowering institutions of the Human Rights Council;
 - Cooperating constructively in reforming the United Nations treaty body system; and
 - Renewing the open invitation to the Human Rights Council's special procedure mandate holders.
- To attach importance to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially stepping up work as part of the international efforts towards reporting on progress in implementing SDG 16;
- To continue cooperating with and providing support to international organizations and United Nations bodies that promote and protect human rights; and
- To keep responding to human rights threats that affect international peace and security, including the COVID-19 pandemic.