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**Human Rights Council**  
**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
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## Summary of stakeholders' submissions on Qatar\*

### Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

#### I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review and the outcome of the previous review.<sup>1</sup> It is a summary of 19 stakeholders' submissions<sup>2</sup> for the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints. A separate section is provided for the contribution by the national human rights institution that is accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles.

#### II. Information provided by the national human rights institution accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles

2. NHRC noted that there had been no amendment to the punishment for the crime of torture, which was three years' imprisonment. It recommended amending the law to increase the punishment for torture, revising the provision exempting public officials from punishment when following orders, modernizing detention facilities, providing mandatory training for staff on detainee rights, and establishing an independent judicial committee to investigate torture allegations.<sup>3</sup>

3. While acknowledging that the 2023 Judiciary Law and Public Prosecution Law had established the principle of independence, NHRC recommended that Qatar undertake measures to ensure the independence of the judiciary, such as ensuring that the removal of judges conforms to international standards.<sup>4</sup>

4. NHRC recommended expediting adoption of the draft law regulating publications, publishing, media activities, and the arts, which had been referred for legislative action.<sup>5</sup>

5. NHRC asserted that the Public Gatherings and Marches Law restricted the right to peaceful assembly, as it required obtaining permission from the Ministry of Interior, and there was no possibility of appealing against a rejection decision. It recommended that Qatar review the laws regulating this right to allow more space for civil society.<sup>6</sup> With many restrictions hindering the right to freedom of association, including the broad powers of the

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



administrative authority to approve the establishment of associations or civil institutions, and to dissolve them without the possibility of appeal, NHRC recommended reviewing relevant laws and allowing more space for civil society.<sup>7</sup>

6. NHRC recommended that Qatar harmonize the Election Law with human rights standards.<sup>8</sup>

7. Regarding migrant workers, and with respect to the requirement under the previous *kafala* sponsorship system for a no-objection certificate from employers to allow a worker to change employment, NHRC noted that 2023 data indicated that the right to change jobs had become more available. It stated that it was necessary to analyze the data to achieve a comprehensive solution and full implementation of abolishing the sponsorship system.<sup>9</sup> While the complaint mechanism for domestic workers had become available online and shelters had been provided, NHRC reported that domestic workers were subjected to abusive practices, such as long working hours. It recommended establishing a mechanism to monitor enforcement of the law.<sup>10</sup>

8. Despite labour law provisions that included the right to organize labour unions, NHRC stated that restrictions imposed by the legislator prevented the exercise of this right. It recommended developing the right to form labour unions in accordance with ILO standards.<sup>11</sup>

9. Achievements in combatting human trafficking included abolition of the sponsorship system, certified electronic contracts, establishing a Public Prosecution unit to investigate reports, the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking to monitor cases, the "House of Humanitarian Care", and training courses for hotel workers.<sup>12</sup>

10. NHRC asserted that Qatar provided equal and free access to healthcare for all residents, with a high level of healthcare, food, clean drinking water, and safe sanitation. However, the mental health law still lacked provisions to establish an independent oversight committee. NHRC recommended reviewing the law accordingly, and establishing facilities for psychiatric patients that meet international standards.<sup>13</sup>

11. NHRC noted that Qatar implemented a law for compulsory and free education. It recommended that Qatar provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate all students in government schools, regardless of their parents' places of work.<sup>14</sup>

12. While women reportedly had equal opportunities in education, with flexible working hours and childcare services, and held several positions in ministries, the diplomatic corps, and the judiciary, NHRC noted that no women obtained a seat on the Shura Council, and reiterated the necessity of providing temporary special measures for appointments. Qatari women were also still deprived of the right to grant nationality to their non-Qatari husbands and children. NHRC recommended reviewing reservations to the CEDAW. Noting no progress in criminalizing domestic violence, NHRC recommended that Qatar adopt legislation that criminalizes all forms of domestic violence, providing protection, victim rehabilitation, and punishment.<sup>15</sup>

13. NHRC reported that Qatar provided children with free health, education, and rehabilitation services, and the draft Child Rights Law was expected to meet CRC standards. NHRC urged Qatar to expedite adoption of the Law and to raise the age of criminal responsibility according to international standards.<sup>16</sup>

14. The draft law on persons with disabilities had been referred to the Shura Council, with provisions in line with the CRPD. NHRC recommended adopting the law quickly.<sup>17</sup>

15. NHRC asserted that Qatar had addressed the right to development in the context of business principles and human rights. Qatar had enacted more than 22 environmental laws, and approved the 2021–2030 National Environmental and Climate Change Strategy. NHRC recommended that Qatar follow a participatory approach with all stakeholders in developing and implementing strategies, and integrate environmental issues into educational curricula.<sup>18</sup>

### III. Information provided by other stakeholders

#### A. Scope of international obligations<sup>19</sup> and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

16. MAAT recommended that Qatar ratify international human rights instruments, treaties, and protocols to which it was not yet a party and remove all reservations to ratified treaties.<sup>20</sup> ODRII recommended ratifying pending human rights treaties.<sup>21</sup> BCU and JS1 recommended that Qatar ratify the ICCPR-OP 2.<sup>22</sup>

17. JS3 recommended that Qatar withdraw its reservation to CEDAW to grant women equal rights with men regarding the nationality of their children, and remove reservations to the CRC pertaining to nationality rights.<sup>23</sup>

18. JS2 recommended that Qatar ratify the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. It further recommended that Qatar ratify and effectively implement ILO Conventions C87 and Nos. 29, 97, 98, 100, 143, 155, and 190.<sup>24</sup>

19. ICAN urged Qatar to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.<sup>25</sup>

20. CGNK recommended that Qatar ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.<sup>26</sup>

#### B. National human rights framework

##### Constitutional and legislative framework

21. ICSRF reported that the Qatari constitution did not indicate the supremacy of international agreements over domestic laws.<sup>27</sup> It recommended that Qatar issue a decree stipulating the primacy of international treaties and agreements over national legislation.<sup>28</sup> MAAT recommended that Qatar ensure the primacy of international human rights standards in case of any conflict with national legislation, and consider harmonizing national legislation to fully align with international human rights conventions.<sup>29</sup>

22. CGNK recommended that Qatar revise the Penal Code to integrate the crime of genocide.<sup>30</sup>

#### C. Promotion and protection of human rights

##### 1. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

###### *Equality and non-discrimination*

23. ODRII recommended that Qatar consider implementing comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that aligns with international norms.<sup>31</sup>

24. JS1 recommended that Qatar amend the Constitution to provide constitutional protection against discrimination on the basis of nationality and national or social origin.<sup>32</sup>

25. BIC reported that Bahá'í residents had been denied the right to work through various means, such as sudden contract termination, refusal to issue "certificates of good conduct," and restrictions in the "sensitive" education sector. It asserted that the Bahá'í community had never received recognition, including of their marriage and personal status laws, had been refused the granting or renewal of residence permits, and had been subjected to sudden deportation. Restrictions had also reportedly been imposed on holding medium-scale Bahá'í religious events in public, on Bahá'ís interacting with fellow believers from other countries, and on importing religious materials.<sup>33</sup>

26. While noting positively the security provided to the Church Complex, offering protection to the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Indian and Anglican Churches within, ACC encouraged Qatar to continue its openness to expressions of Christian faith and reopen the worship centres in Dukhan and Al Khor, to build another religious complex to alleviate congestion, and to allow Christians visiting or resident in the country the freedom to meet and access the Complex.<sup>34</sup> Noting that apostasy was illegal, and that the Complex could not accommodate all Christians, ECLJ recommended that Qatar reform its laws to protect religious freedom for all its citizens, ensure that laws conform to international standards, and allow for churches to be built to accommodate all believers.<sup>35</sup>

27. MAAT similarly asserted that individuals belonging to religious minority communities in Qatar, such as Christians, Baha'is, Hindus, and Buddhists, continued to face oppression, persecution, and discrimination, and that human rights violations persisted, impeding the integration of these marginalized communities. Challenges included religious cleansing policies, physical attacks, forced expulsion and deportation, employment discrimination, denial of residence permit renewals, exclusion from leadership positions in universities and ministries, as well as restrictions on religious expression, the construction of places of worship, and the display of religious symbols. MAAT recommended that Qatar consider amending or repealing discriminatory legislation targeting religious minority groups, work towards ending policies of expulsion, forced deportation, and religious cleansing, and take measures to halt attacks on associated places of worship and cemeteries.<sup>36</sup>

*Right to life, liberty and security of person, and freedom from torture*

28. ICSRF asserted that there were many crimes punishable by death in the Qatari Penal Code, including Law No. (27) of 2019 issuing the Anti-Terrorism Law, which was reportedly vague in describing terrorist acts and expanded the application of the death penalty. It recommended that Qatar completely abolish the death penalty.<sup>37</sup>

29. JS1 reported that, despite maintaining a de facto moratorium on executions since 2000, courts continued to sentence people to death, and in 2020 Qatar had executed a migrant worker. It noted that Qatar did not limit the death penalty to the most serious crimes, and was not taking steps toward a de jure moratorium on executions or ratification of the ICCPR-OP 2, and that the nationality of the victim and defendant in capital cases apparently impacted on whether a death sentence was imposed.<sup>38</sup> JS1 recommended that Qatar: abolish the death penalty and replace it with penalties consistent with international human rights standards; adopt a de jure moratorium on executions; commute all death sentences; amend the Penal Code to eliminate the death penalty for any crime not constituting an intentional killing; publish information on the number of people charged with capital offenses, sentenced to death, and under sentence of death, and disaggregate the data; ensure that all defendants in criminal proceedings who are not native Arabic speakers can avail themselves of a court-financed interpreter; establish an independent mechanism to investigate all allegations of torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment within detention facilities; initiate a public dialogue on the death penalty; and appoint a commission to conduct a study on discrimination based on national origin and the death penalty.<sup>39</sup>

30. BCU also noted that the Penal Code provided the death penalty for a range of offences.<sup>40</sup> It recommended that Qatar: uphold and enforce its international obligations to safeguard the right to life, pursuant to the ICCPR; whilst it retains the death penalty, ensure it complies with the ICCPR most serious crimes principle, restricting punishment to crimes of intentional killing; develop a comprehensive action plan towards a moratorium, with a view to abolition, within the next four years; affirm its commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 16 through its support at the next biennial vote on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty; and provide its National Human Rights Institution with a mandate on legislative abolition of the death penalty.<sup>41</sup>

31. CGNK asserted that decriminalization was one of the means needed to attain better suicide prevention and greater respect for the right to life by States. It recommended that Qatar revise the Penal Code to decriminalize suicide, adopt all other measures to prevent suicides and protect life, and clarify and unify suicide data collection.<sup>42</sup>

*Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law*

32. Noting that Law No. (17) of 2002 provided for extending pre-trial detention, ICSRF recommended that Qatar establish a law that allows detainees whose freedom had been restricted without legal reason to demand compensation, implement Article 14 of the ICCPR, and not expand the use of pretrial detention.<sup>43</sup>

33. HRF recommended that Qatar protect the rights of all detainees and their families against torture, physical and verbal abuse, and sexual exploitation, as well as ensure uninterrupted access to lawyers and familial contact, while safeguarding the rights of Qataris to due process of the law.<sup>44</sup>

34. JS1 asserted that, because the Qatari legal system failed to protect women from gender-based violence and to recognize their right to make autonomous decisions, women were at greater risk of gender-based discrimination in the criminal legal system and thus of being sentenced to death.<sup>45</sup> JS1 recommended that Qatar: provide heightened fair trial and due process safeguards in capital cases involving women defendants; in capital proceedings, enact heightened safeguards prohibiting admissibility of evidence obtained through torture or ill-treatment; codify gender-specific defenses and mitigation in capital cases, encompassing women's experiences of trauma, poverty, and gender-based violence; ensure that all judicial officers responsible for sentencing in capital cases receive comprehensive training on gender-based discrimination; and provide training to all defense counsel who take on capital cases regarding gender-specific mitigation grounds.<sup>46</sup>

*Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life*

35. ICSRF asserted that human rights defenders faced retaliation and intimidation for their legitimate work in defence of human rights, and that Law No. (17) of 2002, regarding the protection of society, was used to retaliate against and harass activists.<sup>47</sup> It contended that a large number of bloggers, activists, opposition members, and human rights defenders had been subjected to arrest and imprisonment for long periods, and that the right to freedom of movement was restricted.<sup>48</sup> HRF noted reports of similar acts against human rights activists.<sup>49</sup> JS4 contended that Qatar had arrested, convicted and imposed arbitrary restrictions on human rights defenders, and noted that Law No. (5) of 2003, which regulated the work of the State Security Apparatus, giving it broad powers and an exceptional level of discretion to deny rights or detain any citizen without due process, had allegedly been used to silence and punish human rights defenders for their peaceful work. Targeting of human rights defenders reportedly encompassed nationals working outside the country and online communications, and included incommunicado detention, removal of identity documents, travel bans, disproportionate sentencing following unfair trials, and other arbitrary measures.<sup>50</sup>

36. ICSRF recommended that Qatar amend legislation to guarantee freedom of opinion and expression, and implement the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the ICCPR.<sup>51</sup>

37. HRF recommended that Qatar cease the systematic detention and intimidation of activists, journalists, and dissidents who criticize the government, ensuring that individuals can voice their criticisms against the government.<sup>52</sup>

38. JS4 recommended that Qatar: provide civil society members, human rights defenders and journalists with a safe environment to carry out their work; repeal or amend legislation and decrees that unwarrantedly restrict the legitimate work of human rights defenders; bring the work of the State Security Apparatus under judicial supervision and amend Law No. (5) of 2003 accordingly; immediately and unconditionally release, and lift travel bans on, all human rights defenders; publicly condemn at the highest levels of government instances of harassment of civil society organisations and activists; adopt a specific law on the protection of human rights defenders; and refrain from acts of intimidation and reprisals against individuals, groups and organs of society, who seek to cooperate, are cooperating or have cooperated with the United Nations in the field of human rights.<sup>53</sup>

39. MAAT reported that Qatari authorities enforced laws that curtailed freedom of expression. These laws included Penal Code No. 11 of 2004 (amended Act No. 2 of 2020)

stipulating a prison sentence for anyone who criticizes the Emir, the Printing and Publishing Act of 1997, criminalizing criticism of the Emir and prohibiting journalists from publishing material that authorities considered harmful to the state's supreme interests, offensive to public morals, or disruptive to the economic conditions in the country, and the Anti-Cybercrime Law No. 14 of 2014 criminalizing the publication of content on the Internet that authorities deemed to be violating social principles or values or constituting insults or defamation of others.<sup>54</sup>

40. JS4 recommended that Qatar review the Printing and Publishing Act, the Media Law of 2012, the Anti-Cybercrime Law, and Act No. 2 of 2020 in order to bring them into line with international human rights standards and reform defamation legislation in conformity with ICCPR article 19.<sup>55</sup> MAAT recommended that Qatar consider amending legislation that criminalizes the expression of opinions, adopt laws on freedom of media and the press that align with international standards, and cease the harassment and intimidation of activists, journalists, bloggers, and human rights defenders who exercise their right to freedom of expression.<sup>56</sup>

41. MAAT noted unwarranted restrictions on the right to form and join associations, based on laws such as Law No. 12 of 2014 prohibiting non-citizens in Qatar from establishing associations and civil society organizations, while all civil society organizations were required to register with the government and seek prior permission from the Ministry of Administrative Development and Labour.<sup>57</sup>

42. MAAT recommended revising Law No. 12 to eliminate unwarranted restrictions.<sup>58</sup> JS4 recommended that Qatar take measures to foster a safe, respectful and enabling environment for civil society, including by removing legal and policy measures that unduly limit the freedom of association, bring related legislation into full compliance with the ICCPR, and adopt measures to ensure that all associations, including NGOs, are able to operate freely.<sup>59</sup>

43. MAAT reported that authorities arrested and prosecuted peaceful protesters and demonstrators, supported by laws such as Law No. (18) of 2004 that criminalized unauthorized peaceful public gatherings.<sup>60</sup> JS4 also highlighted restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, including outside of Qatar, and the arrests and detention of protesters.<sup>61</sup>

44. JS4 recommended that Qatar: bring national legislation on peaceful assembly into line with international standards, particularly by decriminalizing unlicensed public gatherings; adopt best practices on the freedom of peaceful assembly; amend Act No. 18 by removing the requirement for prior authorisation from the Ministry of Interior to hold public gatherings; and provide recourse to judicial review and effective remedy in cases of unlawful denial of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.<sup>62</sup> MAAT recommended that Qatar take steps to align relevant legislation with international standards, particularly by decriminalizing unauthorized public meetings.<sup>63</sup>

45. ICSRF reported that Law No. 6 of 2021 promulgating the Shura Council election system restricted the right to vote to those who had original Qatari nationality, or who had acquired Qatari nationality, on the condition that her/his grandfather was Qatari and was born in Qatar. A condition was additionally set for those entitled to membership in the Shura Council, that their original nationality must be Qatari.<sup>64</sup>

46. ICSRF recommended that Qatar repeal Law No. 6 and implement Article 25 of the ICCPR.<sup>65</sup> MAAT recommended repealing all laws that discriminate between citizens regarding candidacy and voting in parliamentary elections, and working towards enhancing the political participation rights of all citizens.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Right to marriage and family life*

47. MAAT noted that the Personal Status Law in Qatar failed to grant women equal rights to men in marriage and divorce, and recommended that Qatar reform discriminatory laws.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons*

48. Noting that the *kafala* or sponsorship system made it easy for human traffickers to exploit migrants seeking employment opportunities, ECLJ asserted that Qatar must do more to prevent human trafficking and protect the victims, create a national referral mechanism to

identify victims of human trafficking and provide them with assistance, and commit to effectively investigating and prosecuting all cases of human trafficking.<sup>68</sup>

*Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work*

49. MR and JS2 reported that migrant workers could not join or form trade unions, and only a small number had access to a limited form of representation through voluntary joint committees at the company level.<sup>69</sup> MR recommended that Qatar allow freedom of association and collective bargaining for all migrant workers, including domestic workers.<sup>70</sup> JS2 recommended that Qatar establish a genuinely independent Migrant Worker Centre as a first step towards advancing social dialogue, make joint committees mandatory for companies of a certain size, increase the number of such committees within key sectors such as transport, construction, and hospitality, create sectoral bodies to support broader social dialogue at the industry level, and pass legislation recognizing workers' right to freely associate, organize, bargain and form a trade union in line with international labour conventions.<sup>71</sup> JS4 recommended allowing the formation of unions, and including workers not covered by the Labour Code.<sup>72</sup>

50. JS2 reported that migrant workers employed in the construction, domestic work, and security sectors were subjected to various combinations of all eleven indicators of forced labour.<sup>73</sup> JS2 recommended that Qatar effectively implement the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), train labour inspectors to identify forced labour indicators as part of routine labour inspections, punish employers for forced labour with criminal sanctions, intensify awareness efforts for migrant workers around what is a legally permissible contract, how to identify forced labour, and resources to help if they find themselves in forced labour, and penalize companies that subject workers to forced labour conditions.<sup>74</sup>

51. Despite the Occupational Health and Safety Policy (2020), JS2 asserted that migrant workers continued to be subject to occupational health and safety dangers, including excessive heat, lack of proper nutrition, poor accommodation, extended working hours in cold and dusty conditions, and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>75</sup> It recommended that Qatar mandate that employers provide workers with easy access to water and refrigerated food storage facilities at work sites, along with air-conditioned accommodations and rest areas, ensure that essential healthcare services for low-income migrant workers are free, regardless of their immigration status, and expand the definition of work related injuries and fatalities.<sup>76</sup>

52. Notwithstanding the National Labour Inspection Policy (2019), JS2 reported that workers feared retaliation and that there were inconsistent penalties for employers for confirmed rights violations.<sup>77</sup> It recommended that Qatar: strengthen workplace labour inspections, particularly for domestic workers, to include direct engagement with migrant workers while safeguarding workers from retaliation, on a regular basis, by staff trained on how to recognize the indicators of forced labour, and leading to identifying and remediating violations; simplify procedures for migrant workers to submit complaints; ensure that workers have adequate guidance on how to prepare for court hearings; and design standard operating procedures and monitor the efficiency of grievance mechanisms.<sup>78</sup>

*Right to education*

53. BCN noted the high costs of private education, largely catering to the immigrant population and in English, and that those who could attend private schools benefited from their facilities and staff expertise.<sup>79</sup> It recommended that Qatar allocate more funding to education to reduce the socioeconomic gap in educational opportunities, provide more, and better advertised, scholarships to reduce the financial burden on families, increase funding to public schools for the improvement of facilities and teaching staff, and partially subsidise or regulate private school fees to make them more accessible and less business-oriented.<sup>80</sup> It further recommended establishing public schools that administer education in English and offer diverse curricula, allowing non-Arabic-speaking immigrants to pursue free education.<sup>81</sup>

54. BCN asserted that transparency within schools, across them and with the relevant ministry was a crucial area for development.<sup>82</sup> It recommended that Qatar further promote transparency by establishing an accessible means of communication for the ministry to

publish their initiatives, opportunities and new directives, and creating policies for schools to foster communication within departments and with parents.<sup>83</sup>

55. While recognising efforts in encouraging the education of women and girls, BCN noted that the government only ran one, male-only, Science Technology Engineering and Math-specialised school.<sup>84</sup> It recommended that Qatar continue to build up Science Technology Engineering and Math and vocational training for girls and women, beginning with the opening of a government technical facility for girls, and encourage women's equal pursuit of educational opportunities abroad, including through offering such opportunities via the ministry or Qatar Foundation.<sup>85</sup>

56. BCN stated that the challenge faced by Qatar was now the underperformance of boys and men compared to their female counterparts.<sup>86</sup> It recommended that Qatar set a quota for male teachers, establish mentorship programs and further enrichment activities, and consider some level of integration of sexes in segregated schools.<sup>87</sup>

57. In order to enhance the overall quality of education and performance, BCN also recommended investing in and promoting pre-primary education, and allowing greater school independence regarding decision-making processes.<sup>88</sup>

## 2. Rights of specific persons or groups

### *Women*

58. HRF expressed the view that national legislation intrinsically discriminated against women, notably article 58 of the Family Law mandating women to obey their husbands, and the male guardianship system. HRF recommended that Qatar ensure that legislation, specifically regarding the treatment of women, fully adheres to the international human rights instruments it has signed or ratified. It further recommended that Qatar protect, respect, and promote, without reservation, the rights of all women in the country to exercise their freedom of movement and right to choose their own partner, and ensure that women are protected by law against sexual assault and rape, while also abolishing the male guardianship practice.<sup>89</sup>

59. MAAT noted the absence of laws criminalizing domestic and gender-based violence against women, as such violence was not classified as a separate crime in the Qatari Penal Code, that unmarried women under the age of 25 required their guardian's permission to travel outside the country, and that the participation of women in decision-making positions remained disproportionately low, with no women appointed to the Shura Council.<sup>90</sup> MR similarly reported that Qatar had yet to introduce legislation on domestic violence.<sup>91</sup> MAAT recommended that Qatar reform discriminatory laws, and enact legislation to combat violence against women and criminalize domestic violence.<sup>92</sup>

### *Children*

60. ECP noted that no legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings had been adopted. Prohibition was yet to be achieved in the home, alternative care settings, day care, schools, and as a sentence for a crime under Sharia law. Although there appeared to be no confirmation in the Penal or Family Codes of a "right" to use corporal punishment in childrearing, legal provisions against violence were reportedly not interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment.<sup>93</sup>

61. ECP expressed the hope that States would make a specific recommendation during the fourth cycle review that Qatar intensify its efforts to enact a law to clearly prohibit all corporal punishment of children, however light, in every setting of their lives.<sup>94</sup>

### *Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers*

62. MR contended that, although Qatar had dismantled some aspects of the *kafala* system over the previous six years and entered into an ongoing technical cooperation agreement with the ILO in 2018 to support labour and immigration reforms, several outstanding issues remained. These included reports that: the *kafala* system was not fully abolished due to work and residence permits being linked to the sponsor/employer; despite the fact that legally the requirement for a no-objection certificate to change jobs had been removed, a signed



resignation letter functioned as a de facto no-objection certificate; notwithstanding exit permits being abolished for most workers in 2020, domestic workers must inform their employers of their intended departure 72 hours in advance, leaving them vulnerable to detention and deportation if their sponsor filed a false absconding report to prevent them from leaving; domestic workers were excluded from the labour law and were only covered by the less comprehensive domestic workers law of 2017; absconding charges, which allowed employers to report workers as “runaways,” remained unchanged, and may be used as threats to exploit workers; and the *kafala* system continued to abet structural and systemic racism.<sup>95</sup> HRF also noted that the government still mandated migrant workers to obtain signed letters from their initial employer, thus effectively upholding the system of oppression of employees.<sup>96</sup> JS2 made similar observations regarding *kafala* reforms, including that many workers remained uninformed about the reforms.<sup>97</sup>

63. MR recommended that Qatar: abolish absconding laws; include domestic workers in all provisions of the labour law, and until then, apply all mechanisms under the Ministry of Labour to domestic workers, including inspections and the wage protection system; eliminate the de facto no-objection certificate processes, including requirements for signed resignation letters; provide drop-in shelters for migrant workers; end legal and de-facto restrictions on migrant mobility and ensure that migrants enjoy equal legal, social, and economic rights regardless of race, colour, origin, or gender.<sup>98</sup>

64. HRF recommended that Qatar protect, respect, and promote, without reservation, the rights of all migrant workers in the country, improve working conditions and standards of living, and ensure that private companies are fully compliant with laws that protect against the exploitation of migrant workers.<sup>99</sup>

65. JS2 recommended that Qatar prohibit employers from filing absconding charges or cancelling residency permits in retaliation for workers utilising *kafala* reforms and hold non-compliant employers accountable.<sup>100</sup>

66. JS4 recommended developing and implementing legislation to abolish the *kafala* system.<sup>101</sup>

67. MR highlighted that although Qatar had established a minimum wage in 2021, it was extremely low, given that Qatar had one of the highest costs of living in the region.<sup>102</sup> Despite introducing a wage protection system to monitor salary payments, it did not cover domestic workers and wage theft remained rampant, and in the absence of wage calculations and wage slips, workers could not easily challenge deductions and overtime pay.<sup>103</sup> JS2 noted that nationality-based wage discrimination persisted.<sup>104</sup>

68. MR recommended that Qatar increase the non-discriminatory minimum wage to better reflect the cost of living in Qatar, and ensure that the wage protection system flags wage theft early on, with the inclusion of payslips and wage calculations monitored by the system.<sup>105</sup>

69. JS2 recommended that Qatar require employers to produce proof of wages paid in full and in a timely manner through the wage protection system, ensure all workers are paid equally for equal work, regardless of their nationality or any other protected characteristic, and regularly collect related data.<sup>106</sup>

70. MR reported that workers were often unable to access justice mechanisms due to language barriers, intimidation by employers, and misinformation by court officials.<sup>107</sup> It recommended that Qatar improve access to justice by providing free translation services to low-income workers, improving capacity among officials, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, including penalties against erring employers.<sup>108</sup> ODRII stated that the Qatari government should address barriers to justice, such as language, costs, and time, to ensure that migrant workers and their relatives had access to remedies.<sup>109</sup>

71. While congratulating the government for its improving trend in the care of migrant workers, ACC encouraged investment in the provision of Arabic language classes to help foreign migrant workers to communicate, obtain healthcare, and enjoy a better quality of life in Qatar.<sup>110</sup>

*Stateless persons*

72. JS23 and MAAT noted that the Nationality Law did not permit a Qatari woman married to a non-Qatari man to confer her nationality on her children and spouse, unlike Qatari men married to foreign women. They recommended that Qatar amend the Nationality Law, to enable Qatari women to confer their nationality on their children and foreign husbands on an equal basis with men.<sup>111</sup>

*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/42/15, A/HRC/42/15/Add.1, and A/HRC/42/2.

<sup>2</sup> The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org) (one asterisk denotes a national human rights institution with A status).

*Civil society**Individual submissions:*

ACC	Anglican Consultative Council, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
BIC	Bahá'í International Community, Geneva (Switzerland);
BCN	The Stichting Broken Chalk, Amsterdam (the Kingdom of the Netherlands);
BCU	The UPR Project at BCU, Birmingham (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
CGNK	Center for Global Non-Killing, Grand Saconnex (Switzerland);
ECLJ	European Center for Law and Justice, Strasbourg (France);
ECP	End Corporal Punishment, Geneva (Switzerland);
HRF	Human Rights Foundation, New York (the United States of America);
ICAN	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Geneva (Switzerland);
ICSRF	International Center for supporting Rights and Freedoms, Geneva (Switzerland);
JSC	Journalist Support Committee, Beirut (Lebanon);
MAAT	Maat Foundation for Peace, Development and Human Rights, Cairo (Egypt);
MR	Migrant-Rights.org, Baarn (the Kingdom of the Netherlands);
ODRII	Office against Discrimination and Racism, and for the Defense of Rights and Intersectionality, Lima (Peru).

*Joint submissions:*

JS1	<b>Joint submission 1 submitted by:</b> Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis (the United States of America); the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty;
JS2	<b>Joint submission 2 submitted by:</b> Anti-Slavery International, London (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); the Coalition on Labour Justice for Migrants in the Gulf; Equidem; Global Labour Justice-International Labour Rights Forum; and Solidarity Center;
JS3	<b>Joint submission 3 submitted by:</b> Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, New York (the United States of America); Equality Now; and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion;
JS4	<b>Joint submission 4 submitted by:</b> GCHR A19 AccNow CIVICUS, Dublin (Ireland); the Gulf Centre for Human Rights; Access Now; CIVICUS; and ARTICLE 19.

*National human rights institution:*

NHRC	National Human Rights Committee, Doha (Qatar).
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<sup>3</sup> NHRC para. 2.

<sup>4</sup> NHRC para. 3.

<sup>5</sup> NHRC para. 5.

<sup>6</sup> NHRC para. 6.

<sup>7</sup> NHRC para. 7.

<sup>8</sup> NHRC para. 1.

<sup>9</sup> NHRC para. 9 a).

<sup>10</sup> NHRC para. 9 c).

<sup>11</sup> NHRC 9 d).

<sup>12</sup> NHRC para. 9 b).

<sup>13</sup> NHRC para. 10.

<sup>14</sup> NHRC para. 11.

<sup>15</sup> NHRC para. 12.

<sup>16</sup> NHRC para. 13.

<sup>17</sup> NHRC para. 14.

<sup>18</sup> NHRC para. 15.

<sup>19</sup> *The following abbreviations are used in UPR documents:*

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

<sup>20</sup> MAAT p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> ODRII para. 1.

<sup>22</sup> BCU para. D iv) and JS1 para. 35.

<sup>23</sup> JS3 para. 24 II-III.

<sup>24</sup> JS2 p. 10–12.

<sup>25</sup> ICAN p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> CGNK p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> ICSRF para. 1.

<sup>28</sup> ICSRF p. 5 a).

<sup>29</sup> MAAT p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> CNGK p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> ODRII para. 3.

<sup>32</sup> JS1 paras. 15 and 35.

<sup>33</sup> BIC paras. 2–22.

<sup>34</sup> ACC paras. 3, 5, 6 and 8.

<sup>35</sup> ECLJ paras. 12–18 and 28.

<sup>36</sup> MAAT p. 5–6.

<sup>37</sup> ICSRF para. 6.

<sup>38</sup> JS1 paras. 1–17.

<sup>39</sup> JS1 para. 35.

<sup>40</sup> JS4 paras. 6 and 21–31.

<sup>41</sup> BCU para. D ii)-iii) and v)-vii).

<sup>42</sup> CGNK p. 5.

<sup>43</sup> ICSRF p. 8–9.

<sup>44</sup> HRF para. 34 a).

<sup>45</sup> JS1 paras. 23–27.

<sup>46</sup> JS1 para. 35.

- 47 ICSRF para. 10.
- 48 ICSRF para. 7.
- 49 HRF paras. 21–23.
- 50 JS4 paras. 3.2–3., 3.7 and 4.3.
- 51 ICSRF paras. 7 a) and 8 a).
- 52 HRF para. 34.
- 53 JS4 p. 13–14.
- 54 MAAT p. 2–3.
- 55 JS4 p. 14.
- 56 MAAT p. 3.
- 57 MAAT p. 4.
- 58 MAAT p. 4.
- 59 JS4 p. 13.
- 60 MAAT p. 4.
- 61 JS4 para. 5.4.
- 62 JS4 p. 15.
- 63 MAAT p. 4.
- 64 ICSRF paras. 15–17.
- 65 ICSRF p. 9 a) and b).
- 66 MAAT p. 5.
- 67 MAAT p. 6.
- 68 ECLJ paras. 19–27 and 29.
- 69 MR para. 9 and JS2 para. 9.
- 70 MR para. 41.
- 71 JS2 p. 10–12.
- 72 JS4 p. 13.
- 73 JS2 paras. 15–17.
- 74 JS2 p. 10–11.
- 75 JS2 paras. 44–52.
- 76 JS2 p. 12.
- 77 JS2 paras. 53–58.
- 78 JS2 p. 13.
- 79 BCN paras. 17–22.
- 80 BCN para. 41.
- 81 BCN para. 43.
- 82 BCN paras. 30–31.
- 83 BCN paras. 45–46.
- 84 BCN para. 36.
- 85 BCN paras. 49–50.
- 86 BCN para. 33.
- 87 BCN para. 48.
- 88 BCN paras. 44 and 47.
- 89 HRF paras. 25–28 and 34 c)-d).
- 90 MAAT p. 6.
- 91 MR para. 16.
- 92 MAAT p. 6.
- 93 ECP paras. 1.1 – 1.2 and 1.4 - 2.9.
- 94 ECP paras. 1.3.
- 95 MR para. 3 a) - g).
- 96 HRF paras. 29–30.
- 97 JS2 paras. 18–24.
- 98 MR paras. 35–36, 38, 40 and 42.
- 99 HRF para. 34 e).
- 100 JS2 p. 11.
- 101 JS4 p. 13.
- 102 MR para. 4.
- 103 MR paras. 6 and 15.
- 104 JS2 paras. 25–32.
- 105 MR paras. 37 and 39.
- 106 JS2 p. 11.
- 107 MR para. 7.
- 108 MR para. 43.

<sup>109</sup> ODRII para. 4.

<sup>110</sup> ACC paras. 4 and 9.

<sup>111</sup> JS3 paras. 16–19 and 24 I, and MAAT p. 6.

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