

Qatar's Legal Framework



- Qatar's Constitution only guarantees freedom, of Association "...in accordance with the law..."
- Signatory to ICCPR (2018)
- Law 5 (2003) State Security Apparatus
- Cybercrime law of 2014
- Private associations and institutions (Decree Law No. 21 of 2020)

Freedom of Association



General Recommendation: Take measures to foster a safe, respectful and enabling environment for civil society...

Specific recommendations:

(1) Bring legislation governing associations and NGOs into full compliance with the ICCPR,.. [allowing them] to operate freely and independently.

(2) Develop and implement legislation to abolish the kafalah system, and allow the formation of unions.

Human rights defenders and civil society activists



General Recommendation: Provide civil society members, HRDs and journalists with a safe and secure environment in which to carry out their work

Specific Recommendations: (1) repeal or amendment legislation, especially counter-terrorism laws, that restrict the legitimate work of HRDs, (2) Bring the work of the State Security Apparatus under judicial supervision and amend Law No. 5 of 2003 accordingly (3) Abolish the Death Penalty (4) Ensure an independent judiciary (5) access to legal counsel (6) amend counter-terrorism legislation, (7) Release HRDs, journalists and bloggers imprisoned for exercising their human rights, and lift travel bans (8) Refrain from reprisals.

Freedom of Expression



General Recommendation: Ensure that journalists and writers work freely and without fear of retribution for expressing critical opinions or covering topics that the government may deem sensitive.

Specific Recommendations: (1) Review the Printing and Publishing Act of 1997, the Media Law of 2012 and the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2014, and Act No. 2 of 2020 amending the Criminal Code law in order to bring these laws into line with international human rights standards. (2) Reform defamation legislation in conformity with ICCPR article 19.

Freedom of Assembly



General recommendation Bring national legislation on freedom of peaceful assembly into line with international standards, particularly by decriminalizing unlicensed public gatherings.

Specific Recommendations: (1) Adopt best practices as put forward in 2012 by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, (2) Fully allow the right to the freedom of peaceful assembly by removing the requirement for prior authorisation to hold public gatherings. (3) Allow judicial review and effective remedy, including compensation, in cases of unlawful denial of the right.