



Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Forty-seventh session
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Qatar

Compilation of information prepared by 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 outcome of the previous review.¹ It is a compilation of information contained in relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

2. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended that Qatar consider ratifying the core human rights instruments to which it was not yet a party.² The Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar accede to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.³

3. Various human rights mechanisms recommended that Qatar withdraw reservations and interpretative declarations to international instruments to which it was a party.⁴

4. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance recommended that Qatar ratify the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.⁵ The Special Rapporteur on racism also recommended ratifying the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.⁶

5. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on racism recommended that Qatar ratify the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).⁷ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Qatar ratify the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).⁸



6. The Special Rapporteur on the right to education recommended that Qatar ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education.⁹

7. Qatar contributed financially to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2019,¹⁰ 2021,¹¹ 2022¹² and 2023.¹³

III. National human rights framework

1. Constitutional and legislative framework

8. The Human Rights Committee expressed concern about the precedence of sharia law over international instruments. It stated that Qatar should give full effect to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in its domestic legal order.¹⁴

9. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered that its recommendation, to clarify the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the national legal order and adopt legislation incorporating its provisions into national law, had not been implemented.¹⁵

2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures

10. The Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended continuing efforts to ensure that the National Human Rights Committee fully complied with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), and was able to carry out its mandate effectively and independently.¹⁶

11. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended addressing the concerns expressed by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, including regarding the adoption of a transparent and merit-based member selection process.¹⁷

12. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar implement the recommendations made by the National Human Rights Committee to bring national legislation into compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It recommended that Qatar ensure that the cases considered by the National Human Rights Committee were investigated, that the perpetrators were held accountable and that the victims were provided with remedies, and also that Qatar provide the National Human Rights Committee with sufficient resources to ensure that it could carry out its mandate on the rights of women effectively.¹⁸

13. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar reinforce the capacity of the national machinery for the advancement of women and ensure that it had adequate decision-making power and resources, and that it develop programmes to achieve gender equality.¹⁹

14. The Special Rapporteur on racism recommended that Qatar establish an independent specialized equality body to prevent and eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and provide it with sufficient resources to carry out its functions.²⁰

IV. Promotion and protection of human rights

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

1. Equality and non-discrimination

15. While noting that the Constitution proclaimed the principle of equality, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar ensure that its national legal framework contained a comprehensive list of prohibited grounds of discrimination.²¹ The Committee on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended adopting a comprehensive law on non-discrimination that provided sufficient protection against discrimination in accordance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and that included all prohibited grounds for discrimination, defining direct and indirect discrimination, prohibiting discrimination in the public and private spheres, and providing effective remedies.²²

16. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on racism expressed concern about reported structural racial discrimination against non-nationals.²³ They recommended, respectively, that Qatar: adopt all legal and policy measures necessary to prevent and combat discrimination against non-nationals,²⁴ adopt measures to promote substantive equality, collect disaggregated data, and establish indicators on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.²⁵

17. The Special Rapporteur on racism recommended that Qatar adopt a legal definition of racial discrimination that fully implemented article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and a national action plan to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance aligned with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.²⁶

18. The Special Rapporteur on racism noted that racial and ethnic stereotypes reportedly operated in the public and private spheres, including racial and ethnic profiling by the police and private security forces, reinforced by private companies bringing in co-nationals for specific types of work, and resulting in European, North American, Australian and Arab nationalities enjoying greater human rights protections than South Asian and sub-Saharan African nationalities. She recommended that Qatar promote equality, deepen governmental engagement to tackle stereotypes, implement further human rights education measures, adopt a legal prohibition of racial and ethnic profiling, and implement training for law enforcement officers.²⁷

19. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about discrimination in law and in practice against religious minorities, including the registration requirement to obtain an official presence in Qatar, and discrimination against Baha'is.²⁸ Two special procedure mandate holders expressed concern about discriminatory treatment of Baha'is, including deportations.²⁹

20. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended repealing any discriminatory legal provisions that unduly affected the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights of religious groups, and addressing discrimination faced by religious minorities.³⁰ The Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar ensure respect for freedom of religion for all, ensure that its legislation conformed with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and ensure that former Muslims and Muslim women marrying non-Muslims were not subjected to discrimination.³¹

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

21. The Human Rights Committee expressed concern about an execution in May 2020, ending the de facto moratorium on executions since 2000, and that domestic legislation maintained the death penalty for offences that did not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It recommended that Qatar establish a moratorium and consider abolishing the death penalty and acceding to the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, or ensure that it was imposed only for the most serious crimes.³²

22. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended establishing a national preventive mechanism.³³

23. The Human Rights Committee expressed concern about the uncertainty regarding the minimum sentences for torture and the kind of conduct penalized, and about the lack of complaints alleging torture. It recommended that Qatar ensure that its legislation stipulated that the prohibition of torture was absolute and non-derogable, provide for commensurate sanctions, and establish an independent mechanism to receive complaints and investigate cases.³⁴

3. Human rights and counter-terrorism

24. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention expressed concern about administrative detention under security and terrorism legislation, which permitted detention for vaguely worded offences.³⁵ It recommended that Qatar review the Protection of the Community Law, the State Security Service Law and the Law on Combating Terrorism, to ensure that all instances of deprivation of liberty were clearly stipulated and that no indefinite detention was resorted to, and ensure that all such instances were subjected to oversight by an independent judicial authority and that detainees could challenge detention.³⁶ The Human Rights Committee recommended bringing counter-terrorism legislation into compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the principles of legal certainty, predictability and proportionality.³⁷

4. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

25. While welcoming the Code of Judicial Conduct, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar take measures to safeguard the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary.³⁸ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended strengthening the independence of the justice system, abolishing existing laws, regulations, jurisprudence and practices that discriminated against women, and removing barriers regarding their access to justice.³⁹

26. The Human Rights Committee and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention expressed concern about the criminalization of non-violent acts, the Code of Criminal Procedure allowing for prolonged pretrial detention, and individuals being detained due to their inability to repay debts. They recommended that Qatar decriminalize non-violent acts such as adultery, intimate relations outside wedlock, same-sex relations, begging, consumption of alcohol and substance abuse, increase the use of non-custodial measures instead of pretrial detention and ensure that pretrial detention was necessary and as short as possible, and review legislation to ensure that individuals were not imprisoned due to an inability to repay debts.⁴⁰

27. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention identified systemic problems within the criminal justice system that increased the risk of arbitrary detention.⁴¹ It recommended that Qatar: amend the Penal Code to define the circumstances under which deprivation of liberty may be considered arbitrary; engage with the National Human Rights Committee on implementing its recommendations concerning reduced resort to pretrial detention and administrative detention; amend the Criminal Procedure Code so that arrested persons were brought before a judge within 48 hours and had the right to a lawyer upon arrest; introduce standard operating procedures requiring that detainees be notified of their right to communicate with their lawyer; change the detainee register system to ensure ready access to data; and repeal all discriminatory Penal Code provisions.⁴²

28. Regarding fair trial rights, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended that Qatar provide interpretation during all criminal proceedings, train prosecutors and judges on fair trial guarantees, ensure the right of all accused persons to be present during their trial, and provide detainees with consular assistance.⁴³

29. Noting the de facto deprivation of liberty by private actors, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended that Qatar abolish the guardianship system and ensure that all women were free to leave their family homes, ensure respect for the right to personal liberty in public and private sectors, and abolish curfews in worker residences.⁴⁴

30. Several special procedure mandate holders noted the reported arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance of a migrant worker. They expressed concern that those measures appeared to have been in retaliation for his work on human rights.⁴⁵

5. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life

31. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about travel restrictions on, and harassment and arbitrary detention of, human rights defenders, that Decree-Law No. 21 of 2020 restricted the establishment and operations of civil society organizations, about denial of their registrations on the basis of unclear requirements, and

about the dissolution of organizations if they engaged in political matters. It recommended that Qatar take measures to protect human rights defenders and civil society organizations and provide a safe work environment, conduct investigations into travel restrictions, and amend the Decree-Law and other laws that may unduly restrict non-governmental organizations.⁴⁶

32. Three special procedures noted the alleged intimidation of, and cyberattacks against, a human rights lawyer, following his communications with United Nations human rights bodies, which may constitute intimidation or reprisal, and a breach of privacy.⁴⁷

33. Expressing concern that Act No. 18 of 2004 regulating public meetings and demonstrations required prior authorization for the holding of public gatherings, and that non-governmental organizations needed to comply with vague conditions to be able to be established, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar bring its legislation governing peaceful assembly and the establishment of organizations into compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and adopt measures to ensure that organizations were able to operate freely.⁴⁸ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Independent Expert on international solidarity recommended, respectively: amending Act No. 12 of 2004 on associations and private organizations to create an environment in which organizations may be freely established and engage in political and public life;⁴⁹ amending all laws that restricted civil society organizations;⁵⁰ and opening up space for civil society, and reducing registration procedures and limitations.⁵¹

34. Two special procedure mandate holders expressed concern about article 136 (bis) in the Penal Code, introducing criminal penalties for spreading “fake news” online.⁵² The Human Rights Committee expressed concern that domestic provisions might unduly restrict freedom of expression, including the 1997 Printing and Publishing Act, the 2012 Media Law and the 2014 Cybercrime Prevention Act, that vague provisions in Act No. 2 of 2020 amending the Criminal Code provided for up to five years’ imprisonment for disseminating false news, and that defamation was criminalized. It recommended that Qatar revise legislation unduly restricting freedom of expression, ensure that restrictions complied with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, consider decriminalizing defamation, and resort to criminal law only for the most serious cases.⁵³

35. Noting that electoral laws granted the right to vote only to Qatari nationals and those whose grandfather was Qatari and born in Qatar, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar bring its electoral legal framework into full compliance with the Covenant, particularly by eliminating restrictions on naturalized Qatari citizens.⁵⁴

6. Right to marriage and family life

36. Expressing concern about restrictions on women’s mobility and that provisions under the Family Act (Act No. 22 of 2006) would constitute violations of their right to equality, and of other rights, the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls encouraged Qatar to remove all Family Act provisions that discriminated against women and girls, including those establishing male guardianship.⁵⁵ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar: repeal discriminatory provisions in the Family Act; raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years, removing all exceptions and ensuring that women could marry without the permission of a guardian; prohibit polygamy and raise awareness about its harmful effects on women; and ensure that women had equal rights in divorce, in legal guardianship of children after divorce, and in inheritance.⁵⁶

7. Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons

37. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar: investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators of trafficking in women and girls; establish mechanisms for the early identification of victims and their referral to appropriate support; ensure that victims may lodge complaints without fear of arrest, detention or deportation; strengthen victim support; and amend legislation to decriminalize prostitution.⁵⁷

The Human Rights Committee recommended intensifying efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and investigating trafficking cases.⁵⁸

8. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

38. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that there were no independent trade unions in Qatar, and recommended that Qatar enable workers to establish and join trade unions of their choosing, to strike, and to bargain collectively.⁵⁹ The Human Rights Committee recommended guaranteeing the right to form and join trade unions without discrimination and ensuring that restrictions conformed to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁶⁰

39. While acknowledging measures adopted to protect the safety of workers, the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about deaths among construction workers.⁶¹ The Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on racism recommended, respectively, that Qatar: effectively enforce the measures to protect the health and safety of workers and the legal framework concerning investigations into workplace incidents and reparations for the families;⁶² review the approach to investigating work-related deaths and injuries, ensuring accurate identification of the causes and enhancing data collection, ensure compliance with occupational safety regulations and promote awareness-raising among employers and workers;⁶³ and ensure that the workers' welfare initiative of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy was adopted by the construction sector.⁶⁴

40. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights welcomed legislative measures to safeguard the rights of domestic workers. It expressed concern about shortcomings in the implementation of legislation, and reported that many domestic workers continued to be subjected to abusive working conditions, and passport and phone confiscation, and some to physical, verbal or sexual assault, and were not covered by the wage protection system.⁶⁵ It recommended that Qatar: increase the number and reinforce the capacities of labour inspectors; ensure that domestic workers were protected in law and in practice against sexual harassment, and provide redress; and ensure that they were covered by the wage protection system.⁶⁶ Both the Committee and the Special Rapporteur on racism recommended ensuring access to justice and investigating all allegations of exploitation and abuse.⁶⁷

41. The Special Rapporteur on racism noted that it was not uncommon for domestic workers to be confined, that the creation of a separate law (Law No. 15 of 2017) governing the rights of domestic workers had marginalized them, that there was an absence of labour inspections, and that workers often signed contracts in their native language only to later discover that Arabic versions had unfavourable terms.⁶⁸ She recommended that Qatar amend Law No. 15 of 2017 to guarantee domestic workers the same legal protections as under the Labour Law; address their confinement and monitor working conditions; build shelters and ensure access to support services; and amend relevant laws to ensure that migrant workers could sign contracts in their native languages, notarized as identical to the Arabic version.⁶⁹

9. Right to social security

42. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Qatar extend the coverage of the social security system to non-nationals, and ensure that the benefit amounts were sufficient to cover living costs.⁷⁰

10. Right to an adequate standard of living

43. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on racism expressed concern about housing policies and legislation preventing migrant workers from residing in certain areas.⁷¹ The Special Rapporteur noted that the quality of labour accommodations varied according to nationality and national origin.⁷² Both mechanisms recommended that Qatar ensure the right to housing for migrant workers, particularly low-income workers of South Asian or sub-Saharan origin, and review discriminatory housing laws and policies.⁷³

44. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar review the Housing Act to ensure that all widows and divorced women had equal access to land grants and housing loans.⁷⁴

11. Right to health

45. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Human Rights Committee expressed concern that abortion continued to be criminalized.⁷⁵ They recommended that Qatar legalize abortion in cases of rape, incest, threat to the life or health of the pregnant woman or severe fetal impairment, and ensure effective access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including contraception.⁷⁶ The Human Rights Committee recommended ensuring that women who underwent abortion and their doctors were not subject to criminal penalties.⁷⁷

46. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended guaranteeing access to health care for stateless persons and undocumented migrants, and ensuring that women could access sexual and reproductive health-care services without guardian permission or a marriage certificate.⁷⁸

47. The Special Rapporteur on racism noted that low-income workers faced barriers in accessing health care, and that the heat of the Gulf region posed particular challenges. The Special Rapporteur recommended that Qatar ensure access to health care for migrant workers without discrimination, strengthen mechanisms to hold employers accountable, ensure that health-care professionals received human rights training, and address heat illness by implementing safety measures more effectively.⁷⁹

48. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended prohibiting mandatory HIV testing for women migrant workers, and ending the deportation of women migrant workers living with HIV.⁸⁰

12. Right to education

49. The Special Rapporteur on education commended school infrastructure, technologies, teacher training, assistance to poor-performing schools, and financial support for community schools.⁸¹

50. Regarding availability, the Special Rapporteur on education expressed concern about overreliance on the private sector. She recommended that Qatar increase support for the establishment of community schools, make more places available in public schools, prioritize public sector funding, and ensure that low-wage migrant workers had access to vocational programmes.⁸² The Special Rapporteur on racism recommended guaranteeing the right to education to all non-citizens.⁸³

51. On accessibility, the Special Rapporteur on education noted that education was not free for a high proportion of children. She recommended that Qatar: adopt a plan to progressively achieve free compulsory primary education for all, extended to the secondary level of education; understand free education as covering not only school fees; eliminate all public school fees; and extend free access to universities to non-Qatari students who pursued their secondary education in Qatar and/or were long-term residents.⁸⁴ A treaty body recommended guaranteeing non-discriminatory access to free compulsory primary and secondary education.⁸⁵

52. The Special Rapporteur on education also recommended: ensuring that undocumented children could access schools without a residence permit; intensifying efforts towards including children with special needs in the regular school system; eliminating impediments for pregnant girls to attend school; collecting data on out-of-school children; addressing the poor performance of boys; ensuring equal possibilities for women to obtain scholarships to study abroad, and to have access to science schools; and extending obligatory human rights education to private schools.⁸⁶

53. With regard to acceptability, the Special Rapporteur on education recommended that Qatar ensure greater autonomy for public schools, solve residence permit issues and ensure just working conditions for teachers, ensure respect for academic freedom, and respect the principle of equal pay for equal work.⁸⁷

54. While welcoming progress in ensuring that girls had equal access to education, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar: adopt temporary special measures to increase the number of girls in non-female-dominated fields of study; eliminate women-only admission policies for specific fields at tertiary level; improve access for girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination; review curricula and textbooks to eliminate gender stereotypes and enhance teacher training on gender equality; ensure that education on sexual and reproductive health and rights was mandatory in school curricula; and increase the number of women in decision-making positions in higher education.⁸⁸

13. Development, the environment, and business and human rights

55. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about the absence of a specific legal and policy framework to ensure that business entities conducted human rights due diligence and were held accountable for violations of rights under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The same Committee noted that the Qatar Investment Authority undertook investment on behalf of Qatar but lacked a transparent framework for its investment management. It recommended that Qatar: adopt a national action plan to implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; adopt measures to ensure that business entities conducted human rights due diligence throughout their operations; ensure the liability of businesses operating or domiciled in Qatar for violations of rights and for the provision of remedies to victims; and ensure that the Qatar Investment Authority observed the Covenant and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and provided reporting on its performance.⁸⁹

56. The same Committee expressed concern about the heavy reliance on natural gas and oil, as the main economic engine and source of revenue, and about plans to boost the production and trade of liquified natural gas.⁹⁰ Three human rights mechanisms recommended, respectively, that Qatar: intensify efforts to achieve its nationally determined contributions plan under the Paris Agreement and to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions,⁹¹ undergo a paradigm shift towards renewable energy and combating climate change, and reduce emissions,⁹² and strengthen efforts to reduce carbon emissions.⁹³

57. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Qatar boost efforts to meet the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income.⁹⁴

58. The Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity praised Qatar for its support for international cooperation, including post-disaster funding, education investments, and hosting international organizations and conferences.⁹⁵ He recommended strengthening efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and integrating measures to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals into governmental entities.⁹⁶

59. The Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights noted the impact on human rights of measures imposed by four States from 5 June 2017, including the severing of diplomatic relations with Qatar and the closing of their land, sea and airspace to the movement of Qatari persons and goods. The Special Rapporteur welcomed the Al-Ula Declaration of 5 January 2021, declaring the resumption of relations with Qatar, and commended the related efforts as an example of dialogue.⁹⁷

B. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women

60. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Human Rights Committee expressed concern about patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles of women.⁹⁸ They recommended, respectively, that Qatar: undertake a review of its national legislation and amend all provisions that legitimized discriminatory stereotypes, review

programmes assisting women to reconcile family and professional duties to eliminate stereotypes about women's roles only as caregivers, and encourage the involvement of men in domestic responsibilities;⁹⁹ develop strategies to combat patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes;¹⁰⁰ and combat patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes.¹⁰¹

61. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the Community Policing Department's work in preventing gender-based violence, and government-funded associations that assisted victims of domestic violence.¹⁰² It recommended that Qatar: adopt legislation to criminalize all forms of gender-based violence against women; adopt a national action plan to combat all forms of gender-based violence; encourage reporting; ensure that victims had access to justice, protective measures, support services, and reparation; hold perpetrators accountable; and provide training for judges, prosecutors and the police.¹⁰³ The Human Rights Committee recommended criminalizing domestic violence, encouraging reporting, and ensuring data collection and awareness-raising.¹⁰⁴

62. While commending the increased participation of women in the labour market, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar: abolish regulations that required women to present a letter of consent from a male guardian in order to obtain employment; enhance access by women to the formal labour market; encourage women to choose non-traditional career paths; promote the equal sharing of domestic responsibilities between women and men; repeal sections of the Labour Act (Act No. 14 of 2004) prohibiting women from work considered harmful to their health or morals; and amend the Labour Act to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value.¹⁰⁵

63. Expressing concern about the criminalization of extramarital sex (*zina*), and that women faced a higher risk of conviction, another treaty body recommended that Qatar decriminalize extramarital sex and address inequalities in legal proceedings.¹⁰⁶

64. Notwithstanding the increasing number of women in political and public life, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar: take measures to reach gender parity in the Advisory Council; adopt temporary special measures to increase the participation of women in political and public life; adopt legislation to ensure that political parties nominated equal numbers of female and male candidates; implement programmes on leadership skills for women candidates; and remove structural barriers to access by women to decision-making positions in the judiciary, the foreign service and government.¹⁰⁷

65. The same Committee recommended that Qatar adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that included a definition of discrimination against women in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopt temporary special measures to achieve equality between women and men, and avail itself of international technical assistance.¹⁰⁸ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stated that failure to comply with obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights could not be justified by reference to political, social, religious, cultural or economic considerations, and recommended that Qatar amend or repeal all laws and regulations that were discriminatory or had a discriminatory effect on women.¹⁰⁹

2. Children

66. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Human Rights Committee expressed concern that the minimum age of criminal responsibility was set at 7 years.¹¹⁰ The Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar accelerate the adoption of the Children's Code, raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility in accordance with international standards, and enact legislation prohibiting corporal punishment of children in all settings.¹¹¹ The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years, and ensuring that all persons under 18 were not punished as adults, and ensuring that diversion from the criminal justice system became the preferred manner of dealing with children.¹¹²

3. Persons with disabilities

67. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern that women with disabilities faced discrimination in various fields, especially access to employment, and were exposed to higher risks of abuse.¹¹³ It recommended that Qatar mainstream the rights of women and girls with disabilities in its national development policies and programmes aimed at protecting the rights of women.¹¹⁴

4. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons

68. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that same-sex relations between consenting adults were criminalized, and about the prevalence of intimidation, violence and stigma against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. It recommended that Qatar decriminalize same-sex sexual relations between consenting adults, and ensure protection from discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity.¹¹⁵

5. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

69. While welcoming the adoption of Act No. 21 of 2015, formally abolishing the sponsorship (*kafala*) system, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern that this law retained provisions that were similar to this system, particularly the requirement for migrant workers to obtain employer consent to switch jobs. It considered the response to its recommendation to end the system and related practices that exposed migrant workers to abuse, unsatisfactory.¹¹⁶ Several human rights mechanisms made related recommendations, that Qatar: remove the 72-hour notification requirement from Decision No. 95 of 2019, ensure that domestic workers were not penalized for not notifying their employer, and accelerate the adoption of legislation to eliminate the “no objection” certificate requiring employer approval to change jobs;¹¹⁷ rescind the employer approval requirement from the “no objection” certificate;¹¹⁸ and amend Act No. 21 to decriminalize the act of leaving a job without the employer’s permission.¹¹⁹

70. The Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern about employers withholding salaries and about employees underreporting abuse due to fears of reprisals, detention and deportation, with the Human Rights Committee also expressing concern about employers violating the prohibition on confiscating passports, and about abuse and exploitation of migrant domestic workers.¹²⁰ The Human Rights Committee recommended that Qatar ensure the enforcement of legislation protecting migrant workers, increase labour inspections, investigate allegations of abuse, prosecute and sanction abusive employers, and provide reparation to victims and access to legal remedies;¹²¹ and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Qatar reinforce the capacities of labour inspectors, improve cooperation between countries of origin and destination to hold employers accountable, ensure accessible complaint mechanisms with protection against retaliation, and promote awareness-raising among workers on rules.¹²²

71. The Special Rapporteur on racism recommended that Qatar strengthen the capacity of enforcement authorities to address racial discrimination; improve the labour court committees; end detention and deportation as punishment for leaving work without employer permission, for consensual sexual relations outside marriage, and for financial reasons; and ensure that the rights of detained migrants were respected.¹²³

72. The Special Rapporteur noted that salaries reportedly depended on the employee’s country of origin. Three human rights mechanisms recommended, respectively, that Qatar: ensure that migrant workers were paid equal pay for equal work, improve the wage protection system, impose sanctions on employers not paying workers fully on time, and expedite the adoption of the law establishing a minimum wage for all migrant workers;¹²⁴ establish stronger monitoring mechanisms;¹²⁵ and strengthen the Workers’ Support and Insurance Fund, and improve the wage protection system.¹²⁶

73. While commending the Political Asylum Act, the Human Rights Committee expressed concern that it restricted liberty of movement and residence and banned asylum-seekers and refugees from engaging in political activity.¹²⁷ The Human Rights Committee,

the Independent Expert on international solidarity and the Special Rapporteur on racism recommended, respectively, that Qatar: bring this legislation into compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;¹²⁸ bring it into line with international standards;¹²⁹ and amend the Act to ensure its alignment with the refugee definition under international law, guarantee rights without discrimination, provide asylum-seekers with redress and legal remedies, and remove provisions of the Act that may infringe on the principle of non-refoulement.¹³⁰

6. Stateless persons

74. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that stateless members of the Ghufran clan faced discrimination. It recommended that Qatar take measures to prevent and reduce statelessness.¹³¹ The Special Rapporteur on racism recommended reinstating the nationality of all persons who had been arbitrarily deprived of it, amend the Nationality Act to prevent arbitrary deprivation of nationality and ensure redress and the right of appeal, prohibit the deprivation of nationality resulting in statelessness, and establish independent procedures to determine stateless individuals in Qatar.¹³²

75. The Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Qatar amend the Nationality Act to ensure that Qatari women and men had equal rights in transmitting their nationality to their children and foreign spouses.¹³³

Notes

- ¹ [A/HRC/42/15](#), [A/HRC/42/15/Add.1](#) and [A/HRC/42/2](#).
- ² [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 57; [A/HRC/45/16/Add.2](#), para. 97 (a); and [A/HRC/44/44/Add.1](#), para. 48. See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 48.
- ³ [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 5.
- ⁴ [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 7; [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 7; [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), paras. 10, 26 (e) and 34 (b); [A/HRC/45/16/Add.2](#), paras. 15 and 99 (a); [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), para. 116 (b); [A/HRC/44/44/Add.1](#), para. 50; [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 62; and [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 7 (d).
- ⁵ [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 34 (c); [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 27; and [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 73 (a). See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 43.
- ⁶ [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 74 (c).
- ⁷ [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 46 (f); [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 37 (f); and [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 68 (f).
- ⁸ [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 37 (f), 39 and 43.
- ⁹ [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), para. 116 (a). See also the UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of Qatar, para. 27.
- ¹⁰ OHCHR, *United Nations Human Rights Report 2019*, p. 91.
- ¹¹ OHCHR, *United Nations Human Rights Report 2021*, p. 115.
- ¹² See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/VoluntaryContributions2022.pdf>.
- ¹³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/about-us/fundingbudget/VoluntaryContributions2023.pdf>.
- ¹⁴ [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 4 and 5. See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 7 (a).
- ¹⁵ See https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCEDAW%2FFUD%2FQAT%2F47247&Lang=en, p. 1.
- ¹⁶ [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 9; and [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 9. See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 11.
- ¹⁷ [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 20 (a)–(c); [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 9; and [A/HRC/45/16/Add.2](#), para. 99 (c).
- ¹⁸ [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 20 (a)–(c).
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 18 (a) and (b).
- ²⁰ [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 63 (b).
- ²¹ [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#) paras. 12 and 13. See also https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_NAME,P11110_COMMENT_YEAR:4320680,103429,Qatar,2022.
- ²² [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 20 and 21. See also the UNESCO submission, para. 29.

- ²³ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 22; and A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, para. 16.
- ²⁴ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 23 (a).
- ²⁵ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, para. 64 (a) and (b). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 5.
- ²⁶ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 62 and 63 (a). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, paras. 9, 13 (a)–(d) and 51.
- ²⁷ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 18–24 and 66 (a)–(d). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, paras. 15 (a)–(c), 17 and 25 (a)–(d).
- ²⁸ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 24.
- ²⁹ See
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=24773>.
 See also the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=34956>.
- ³⁰ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 25.
- ³¹ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 37; and CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 29.
- ³² CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 20 and 21.
- ³³ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, para. 97 (b).
- ³⁴ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 28 and 29 (a)–(c).
- ³⁵ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, para. 94.
- ³⁶ Ibid., para. 102 (a) and (b).
- ³⁷ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 10 and 11.
- ³⁸ Ibid., paras. 34 and 35.
- ³⁹ CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 16 (a)–(c).
- ⁴⁰ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 30 and 31 (a)–(c); and A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, paras. 25, 26, 92 (a), (e) and (h) and 100 (a), (e) and (h).
- ⁴¹ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, para. 92 (b)–(d), (f) and (g).
- ⁴² Ibid., paras. 98, 99 (b) and 100 (a)–(d), (f) and (g). See also CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 34 and 35.
- ⁴³ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, para. 101 (b)–(e). See also
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25631>
 and the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=35907>.
- ⁴⁴ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, para. 103 (a)–(c).
- ⁴⁵ See
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=26483>.
 See also the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=36542>.
- ⁴⁶ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, paras. 10 and 11 (a)–(c). See also
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=27053>,
 and the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=37233>.
- ⁴⁷ See
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=27927>.
 See also the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=38112>.
- ⁴⁸ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 40 and 41 (a) and (b).
- ⁴⁹ CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 22.
- ⁵⁰ A/HRC/45/16/Add.2, paras. 99 (b) and 104.
- ⁵¹ A/HRC/44/44/Add.1, para. 49.
- ⁵² See
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25158>,
 pp. 1–3. See also the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=35801>.
- ⁵³ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 38 and 39 (a)–(c). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 27; and UNESCO submission, paras. 40–43.
- ⁵⁴ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 44 and 45. See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 39.
- ⁵⁵ See
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=28437>.
 See also the government response at
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?gId=37834>.
- ⁵⁶ CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 50 (a)–(f). See also the UNESCO submission, para. 32.
- ⁵⁷ CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 30 (b)–(e).
- ⁵⁸ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 27.
- ⁵⁹ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, paras. 42 and 43.
- ⁶⁰ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 41 (c).

- 61 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 22; and [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 38.
- 62 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 23.
- 63 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 39. See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 21.
- 64 [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 67 (e).
- 65 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 36.
- 66 *Ibid.*, para. 37 (a), (b) and (e).
- 67 *Ibid.*, para. 37 (c) and (d); and [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 68 (c) and (d). See also https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_NAME,P11110_COMMENT_YEAR:4320680,103429,Qatar,2022.
- 68 [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), paras. 29–34.
- 69 *Ibid.*, paras. 67 (c) and 68 (a), (b) and (e). See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 23 (a)–(f).
- 70 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 46 and 47 (a) and (b).
- 71 *Ibid.*, para. 48; and [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 49.
- 72 [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 50.
- 73 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 49; and [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 71 (d).
See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 33.
- 74 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 42.
- 75 *Ibid.*, para. 39.
- 76 *Ibid.*, para. 40 (a) and (b); and [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 19 (a) and (c).
- 77 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 19 (b).
- 78 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 50 (a) and (b) and 51 (a) and (b).
- 79 [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), paras. 45, 46 and 71 (a) and (b). See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 35.
- 80 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 40 (c).
- 81 [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), para. 106.
- 82 *Ibid.*, paras. 108 and 109 (a)–(d).
- 83 [A/HRC/44/57/Add.1](#), para. 71 (c). See also [CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23](#), para. 37; and UNESCO submission, paras. 2 and 28.
- 84 [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), paras. 110–112 and 113 (a)–(d).
- 85 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 52 and 53. See also the UNESCO submission, para. 30.
- 86 [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), para. 114 (a)–(g). See also [A/HRC/44/44/Add.1](#), para. 53; and the UNESCO submission, paras. 31, 33, 35 and 36.
- 87 [A/HRC/44/39/Add.1](#), para. 115 (a)–(e). See also [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 52 and 53.
- 88 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 35 and 36 (a)–(f).
- 89 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 12 and 13 (a)–(d).
- 90 *Ibid.*, paras. 14 and 15.
- 91 *Ibid.*, paras. 14 and 15.
- 92 [A/HRC/44/44/Add.1](#), paras. 54 and 55.
- 93 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), paras. 43 and 44.
- 94 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 17.
- 95 [A/HRC/44/44/Add.1](#), paras. 18–20 and 45.
- 96 *Ibid.*, paras. 51 and 52.
- 97 [A/HRC/48/59/Add.1](#), paras. 8, 14, 18, 23–48 and 76–78.
- 98 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 25; [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 30; and [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 14.
- 99 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 26 (a)–(c).
- 100 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 15 (a).
- 101 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 31.
- 102 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 27.
- 103 *Ibid.*, para. 28 (a)–(f).
- 104 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 16 and 17.
- 105 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), paras. 37 and 38 (a)–(f). See also https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_NAME,P11110_COMMENT_YEAR:4320680,103429,Qatar,2022.
- 106 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), paras. 32 and 33.
- 107 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), paras. 31 and 32 (a)–(e). See also [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 15 (b).
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- 109 [E/C.12/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 31.
- 110 [A/HRC/45/16/Add.2](#), para. 92 (i); and [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 42.
- 111 [CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1](#), para. 43. See also the UNESCO submission, para. 34.
- 112 [A/HRC/45/16/Add.2](#), para. 100 (i) and (j).
- 113 [CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2](#), para. 47.
- 114 *Ibid.*, para. 48 (b).

- ¹¹⁵ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, paras. 28 and 29.
- ¹¹⁶ See https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCERD%2FFUL%2FQAT%2F43393&Lang=en, p. 2.
- ¹¹⁷ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 38–44 and 70 (a) and (c). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 19 (a)–(c) and (f)–(h).
- ¹¹⁸ A/HRC/44/44/Add.1, para. 56.
- ¹¹⁹ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 35 (d). See also https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_ID,P11110_COUNTRY_NAME,P11110_COMMENT_YEAR:4320680,103429,Qatar,2022.
- ¹²⁰ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 24; and E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 34.
- ¹²¹ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 25.
- ¹²² E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, para. 35 (a), (b), (e) and (f).
- ¹²³ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 67 (d) and (f) and 69 (a)–(c).
- ¹²⁴ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 27, 67 (a) and (b) and 70 (b). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 19 (d) and (e).
- ¹²⁵ A/HRC/44/44/Add.1, para. 56.
- ¹²⁶ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, paras. 35 (c), 40 and 41.
- ¹²⁷ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 32 and 33. See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 41.
- ¹²⁸ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, paras. 32 and 33.
- ¹²⁹ A/HRC/44/44/Add.1, para. 50.
- ¹³⁰ A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, para. 74 (a) and (b).
- ¹³¹ E/C.12/QAT/CO/1, paras. 26 and 27. See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 43.
- ¹³² A/HRC/44/57/Add.1, paras. 73 (b)–(e).
- ¹³³ CCPR/C/QAT/CO/1, para. 15 (c); and CEDAW/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 34 (a). See also CERD/C/QAT/CO/22-23, para. 31.
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