

SUBMISSION FOR THE UN UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF QATAR

Presented by ODRI - Office against Discrimination, Racism, and Intolerance

April 4, 2024

(480 words)

About ODRI

Since 2017, the Office against Discrimination, Racism, and Intolerance (ODRI) actively engages with various human rights mechanisms. ODRI is dedicated to empowering rights holders through capacity-building initiatives while advocating for increased accountability from governments and relevant actors. ODRI firmly believes that ongoing interactive dialogue with Qatar during this fourth cycle will continue to foster new recommendations to enhance their human rights record.

Scope of international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

1. Qatar can further strengthen its normative framework by ratifying pending human rights treaties, such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the 2011 ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, the 2019 ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as well as the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture (CAT-OP).
2. To maintain cooperation with Special Procedures, Qatar could consider responding to visit requests from the Special Rapporteur on privacy, the Working Group on business and human rights, and the Special Rapporteur on torture, among other special procedures.

National Human Rights Framework

3. The Qatari Constitution explicitly protects individuals from discrimination based on sex, race, language, or religion (Article 35), and also refers to equality under Articles 18, 19 and 34. To further safeguard human rights, Qatar could consider implementing comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that aligns with international norms, such as Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Promotion and protection of human rights

Equality and non-discrimination

4. Migrant workers and their families play a crucial role in supporting Qatar's economy and deserve adequate protection to prevent nationality from dictating their salaries, social security, and healthcare access. Recruitment agencies should refrain from offering positions favoring specific nationalities without providing an objective reason. Both businesses and the Qatari government should address barriers to justice, such as language, costs, and time, to ensure that migrant workers and their relatives have access to remedies.

Right to privacy

5. Qatar has embraced artificial intelligence systems and technology as part of its broader objectives under the Qatar National Vision 2030. In October 2019, the Qatari Minister of Communications and Information Technology issued the Artificial Intelligence Country Strategy, comprising six pillars: education, data access, employment, business, research, and ethics. The Digital Strategy cites Data Privacy regulations within an Artificial Intelligence Ethics and Governance Framework, which should be strengthened to address current challenges pertaining to artificial intelligence use in Qatar.