



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
1 July 2024  
English  
Original: Arabic

---

**Human Rights Council**  
**Fifty-sixth session**  
18 June–12 July 2024  
Agenda item 6  
**Universal Periodic Review**

## **Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review\***

### **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

**Addendum**

**Views on conclusions and/or recommendations, voluntary  
commitments and replies presented by the State under  
review**

---

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



## I. Introduction

1. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirms the importance of the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, the purpose of which is to improve the situation of human rights around the world. With this in view, Saudi Arabia has cooperated to the utmost degree with the universal periodic review mechanism over its four cycles (in 2009, 2013, 2018 and 2024). One form this cooperation has taken has been the country's support for and implementation of most of the recommendations submitted during those cycles. In fact, over the previous three cycles, the implementation rate of the recommendations submitted to Saudi Arabia stands at over 85 per cent. The State has also worked constructively with the troika and with the secretariat of the Human Rights Council, and it has itself made positive recommendations to a number of countries.

2. During the forty-fifth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, at the fourth review cycle in January 2024, Saudi Arabia was presented with 354 recommendations from 135 countries. Those recommendations were examined by the standing committee for the drafting of reports, which was established pursuant to Royal Order No. 13084 dated 27 Rabi' I A.H. 1436 and which is the country's national follow-up and reporting mechanism, then by the board of the Human Rights Commission, which includes several experts in various human rights-related domains. Finally the recommendations were examined by a government committee and a position for the country vis-à-vis each recommendation was adopted.

3. The result of the broad-ranging national review of the recommendations made to Saudi Arabia during this cycle was that 273 recommendations were supported, 24 recommendations were partially supported, 52 recommendations were noted and 5 recommendations were rejected.

## II. Views and conclusions of Saudi Arabia on the recommendations it received

### A. Supported recommendations

4. Saudi Arabia engaged in a positive and constructive spirit with the recommendations it received during the forty-fifth session of the universal periodic review. This is evinced by the fact that it supported most (83 per cent, including partially supported recommendations) of the recommendations received. Saudi Arabia also wishes to point out that support for a recommendation does not necessarily mean that the measures the recommendation envisages do not already exist or have not already been taken. Nor does it mean that the abuse or violation implicit in the recommendation actually exist. In fact, an analysis has shown that a number of the recommendations presented to Saudi Arabia are based on an inaccurate understanding or perception of the human rights situation in the country, or on unreliable or inaccurate sources. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia has engaged positively with those recommendations, moved by its concern for human rights and by its desire to cooperate with the universal periodic review mechanism.

5. Saudi Arabia accepts the following recommendations: 43.25, 43.26, 43.27, 43.28, 43.29, 43.31, 43.32, 43.34, 43.35, 43.37, 43.40, 43.44, 43.45, 43.46, 43.47, 43.48, 43.49, 43.50, 43.51, 43.53, 43.54, 43.55, 43.56, 43.57, 43.62, 43.64, 43.66, 43.67, 43.68, 43.69, 43.70, 43.71, 43.72, 43.73, 43.74, 43.75, 43.76, 43.77, 43.78, 43.79, 43.80, 43.81, 43.82, 43.83, 43.84, 43.85, 43.86, 43.87, 43.88, 43.89, 43.90, 43.91, 43.109, 43.113, 43.114, 43.115, 43.118, 43.120, 43.123, 43.125, 43.126, 43.127, 43.128, 43.129, 43.130, 43.131, 43.132, 43.133, 43.134, 43.136, 43.137, 43.138, 43.139, 43.140, 43.141, 43.142, 43.143, 43.144, 43.145, 43.147, 43.151, 43.152, 43.153, 43.154, 43.155, 43.156, 43.157, 43.158, 43.159, 43.160, 43.162, 43.163, 43.164, 43.165, 43.166, 43.167, 43.168, 43.169, 43.170, 43.171, 43.172, 43.173, 43.174, 43.175, 43.176, 43.177, 43.178, 43.179, 43.180, 43.181, 43.182, 43.183, 43.185, 43.186, 43.187, 43.188, 43.189, 43.190, 43.191, 43.192, 43.193, 43.194, 43.195, 43.196, 43.197, 43.198, 43.199, 43.200, 43.202, 43.203, 43.204, 43.205, 43.206, 43.207, 43.208, 43.209, 43.210, 43.211, 43.212, 43.213, 43.214, 43.215, 43.216, 43.217,

43.218, 43.219, 43.220, 43.221, 43.222, 43.223, 43.224, 43.225, 43.226, 43.227, 43.228, 43.229, 43.230, 43.231, 43.232, 43.233, 43.234, 43.235, 43.236, 43.237, 43.238, 43.239, 43.240, 43.241, 43.242, 43.243, 43.244, 43.245, 43.246, 43.247, 43.248, 43.249, 43.250, 43.251, 43.252, 43.253, 43.254, 43.255, 43.256, 43.257, 43.258, 43.260, 43.261, 43.262, 43.263, 43.264, 43.265, 43.266, 43.267, 43.268, 43.269, 43.270, 43.271, 43.272, 43.273, 43.274, 43.275, 43.276, 43.278, 43.279, 43.280, 43.281, 43.282, 43.283, 43.284, 43.285, 43.286, 43.287, 43.288, 43.289, 43.290, 43.291, 43.292, 43.293, 43.294, 43.295, 43.296, 43.297, 43.298, 43.299, 43.300, 43.301, 43.302, 43.303, 43.304, 43.305, 43.307, 43.308, 43.309, 43.310, 43.311, 43.312, 43.313, 43.314, 43.315, 43.316, 43.317, 43.318, 43.319, 43.320, 43.321, 43.322, 43.323, 43.324, 43.325, 43.326, 43.327, 43.328, 43.329, 43.330, 43.331, 43.332, 43.333, 43.334, 43.335, 43.336, 43.337, 43.338, 43.339, 43.340, 43.341, 43.342, 43.344, 43.348, 43.349, 43.350, 43.351, 43.352 and 43.353.

## B. Partially supported recommendations

6. Saudi Arabia received several recommendations which include parts that it cannot support. There are a number of reasons for this, most notably because the parts in question contradict the country's values and principles; because they fall outside the scope of national priorities; or because they designate a specific description and time frame for the measures envisaged. Nonetheless, other parts of those recommendations can be supported. The purpose of the universal periodic review mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in the world, notably by using the recommendations made within the framework of the review. In the light of that, it is inappropriate for certain recommendations to receive a State's full support when, in fact, they contain parts that the State in question cannot support. Such a course of action might entail missing an opportunity to achieve what is, after all, the main purpose of the review mechanism; i.e., "to improve the human rights situation in the world". Saudi Arabia therefore believes that a position of "partial support" is most consistent with that purpose and it promotes positive and constructive interaction when addressing the recommendations made to States under the universal periodic review mechanism.

7. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.24:

**It supports the part concerning** the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

**It notes the part concerning** the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

8. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.30:

**It supports the part concerning** the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

**It notes the part concerning** the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

9. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.52:

**It supports the part concerning** the acceleration of studies on acceding to the core human rights treaties.

**It notes the part concerning** the two International Covenants.

10. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.61:

**It supports the part concerning** strengthening cooperation with United Nations special procedure mandate holders.

**It notes the part concerning** the standing invitation to rapporteurs.

11. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.63:

**It supports the part concerning** the acceptance of pending requests by special procedures.

**It notes the part concerning** the standing invitation to all United Nations human rights special procedures.

12. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.107:

**It supports the part concerning** reducing the number of crimes punishable by death and limiting them to the most serious crimes under international law.

**It notes the part concerning** the formalization of a moratorium on the use of the death penalty for drug-related offences.

13. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.108:

**It supports the part concerning** compliance with the obligation to ensure the limitation of the death penalty to the most serious crimes, as defined under international law.

**It notes the part concerning** the abolition of the death penalty for drug-related offences.

14. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.124:

**It supports the part concerning** the need to ensure that counter-terrorism legislation complies with international human rights standards so as not to criminalize the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression and association.

**It notes the part concerning** freedom of assembly, which does not fall within the obligations of Saudi Arabia.

15. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.135:

**It supports the part concerning** the creation of an enabling environment for local human rights non-governmental organizations.

**It notes the part concerning** the registration of international human rights non-governmental organizations, as the Civil Society Associations and Institutions Act does not contemplate the registration of such organizations.

16. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.146:

**It supports the part concerning** the adoption of legislation to guarantee the rights to freedom of opinion, expression and association, including protection for journalists, human rights defenders and civil society, in accordance with international human rights law and relevant international human rights standards.

**It notes the part concerning** freedom of peaceful assembly, which does not fall within the obligations of Saudi Arabia.

17. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.148:

**It supports the part concerning** the amendment of the Terrorist Crimes and Terrorism Financing Act and the Cybercrime Act, in as much as the country's laws are subject to a regular and constant process of review.

**It notes the part concerning** the amendment of the Basic Law.

18. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.149:

**It supports the part concerning** the harmonization of domestic legislation with international standards to protect the freedoms of assembly and expression.

**It notes the part concerning** freedom of assembly, which does not fall within the obligations of Saudi Arabia. It notes, moreover, the expression "without exception", as international law does admit that necessary legal restrictions can be imposed on certain rights and freedoms in order to protect several higher interests such as national security, public order, public health, public morals and the rights and reputations of others.

19. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.150:

**It supports the part concerning** the alignment of legislation with international standards to protect freedom of association and freedom of expression.

It notes the part concerning freedom of peaceful assembly, which does not fall within the obligations of Saudi Arabia. It notes, moreover, the expression “abolish restrictions”, as international law does admit that necessary legal restrictions can be imposed on certain rights and freedoms in order to protect several higher interests such as national security, public order, public health, public morals and the rights and reputations of others.

20. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.259:

**It supports the part concerning** the harmonization of nationality laws with the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

**It notes the part concerning** the alignment the provisions of article 9 (2) of the Convention, to which Saudi Arabia has entered a reservation.

21. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.277:

**It supports the part concerning** continuing work to improve women’s rights.

**It notes the part concerning** the amendment of nationality laws so that they apply equally to men and women, in the light of the fact that Saudi Arabia has entered a reservation to article 9 (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

22. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendations 93, 94, 101, 106, 110, 111 and 306. It does so in view of the enactment of the Juveniles Act, which eliminates the death penalty for juveniles in *ta'zir* offences. In fact, the death penalty in Saudi Arabia is applied only for the most serious crimes. Having thus already been partially implemented, these recommendations can be partially supported.

23. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.347:

**It supports the part concerning** a comprehensive, transparent investigation of all allegations that Saudi security forces are killing and abusing migrants crossing the Yemeni border, cease any abuses and ensure accountability for any abuses or violations, something that Saudi Arabia has already effectively done.

**It notes the part concerning** the issuance of a public report of the results of the investigations, as there is no provision or obligation under international law that would require Saudi Arabia to divulge the outcome of its internal investigations.

24. Saudi Arabia gives partial support to recommendation 43.354:

**It supports the part concerning** the need to ensure accountability for the reported killings of Ethiopian migrants and asylum-seekers.

**It notes the part concerning** sharing the findings of the investigations, as there is no provision or obligation under international law that would require Saudi Arabia to divulge the outcome of its internal investigations.

### C. Noted recommendations

25. Saudi Arabia notes the following recommendations: 43.1, 43.2, 43.3, 43.4, 43.5, 43.6, 43.7, 43.8, 43.9, 43.10, 43.11, 43.12, 43.13, 43.14, 43.15, 43.16, 43.17, 43.18, 43.19, 43.20, 43.21, 43.22, 43.23, 43.33, 43.36, 43.38, 43.39, 43.41, 43.42, 43.43, 43.58, 43.59, 43.60, 43.92, 43.95, 43.96, 43.97, 43.98, 43.99, 43.100, 43.102, 43.103, 43.104, 43.105, 43.112, 43.119, 43.121, 43.122, 43.161, 43.184, 43.201 and 43.343.

**D. Rejected recommendations**

26. 43.65, 43.116, 43.117, 43.345 and 43.346.

27. Saudi Arabia rejects these recommendations as some of them constitute false allegations based on unreliable sources, some contradict the country's values and principles, and others fall outside the scope of its obligations under international human rights law.

---