



## Human Rights Watch Statement

### UPR outcome report of Lebanon

17 March 2011

Human Rights Watch welcomes the UPR outcome report on Lebanon which includes important recommendations on the rights of women, refugees, migrants, and victims of enforced disappearance.

We would have wished for the UPR interactive dialogue to also reflect concerns on continued detention of foreigners in Lebanon following the end of their sentences. According to a report by the Internal Security Forces, as of August 24, 2009, 13 percent of detainees in Lebanese prisons were foreigners who had finished serving their sentence and yet remained in jail. The group included asylum seekers and refugees who cannot safely return to their countries. We urge Lebanon to release all foreigners who finished serving their sentences and are currently detained without legal basis.

Lebanon amended its labor law in August to make it easier for Palestinian refugees to obtain work permits by exempting them from reciprocity requirements and eliminating work permit fees. While the law is a step in the right direction, Human Rights Watch urges the government to remove other laws that discriminate against Palestinians such as restrictions that bar Palestinians from working in at least 25 professions requiring syndicate membership, and the property law that prevents Palestinian refugees from registering their property, and to ease access of Palestinians to Nahr al-Bared refugee camp.

Lebanon's rejection of some important recommendations to reform Lebanese laws that discriminate against women is deeply disappointing. Lebanon has rejected recommendations to amend the citizenship law to allow Lebanese women to pass their citizenship to their spouses and children and to remove discriminatory provisions affecting divorce, child custody and inheritance from personal status laws.

We welcome the introduction by the Minister of Labor in February of a draft law to regulate and protect migrant domestic workers in Lebanon and urge the Lebanese authorities to adopt the law as soon as possible and to reform sponsorship laws that require the consent of the existing employer for a migrant worker to change sponsors.

Human Rights Watch welcomes Lebanon's pledge to establish an independent national commission to investigate the whereabouts of missing persons and victims of enforced disappearance and urges the government to ensure that the commission has broad powers to seek information about missing individuals from all official sources, including security agencies, and that its membership includes a representative from the victims' families.