



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/HRC/8/21
22 May 2008

Original: ENGLISH

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Eighth session
Agenda item 6

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

Tunisia *

* Previously issued under the symbol A/HRC/WG.6/1/TUN/4; minor revisions have been added under the authority of the secretariat of the Human Rights Council, on the basis of editorial changes made by States through the ad referendum procedure. Annex is circulated as received.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1 - 4	3
I. SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE REVIEW PROCESS	5 - 82	3
A. Presentation by the State under review	5 - 10	3
B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review	11 - 82	6
II. CONCLUSIONS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS	83	19
III. VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS OF THE STATE UNDER REVIEW...	84	20

Annex

Composition of the delegation.....		21
------------------------------------	--	----

Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, held its first session from 7 to 18 April 2008. The review of Tunisia was held at the 3rd meeting held on 8 April 2008. The delegation of Tunisia was headed by H.E. Mr. Béchir Tekkari, Minister of Justice and Human Rights. At its 7th meeting held on 10 April 2008, the Working Group adopted the present report on Tunisia.
2. On 28 February 2008, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of Rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Tunisia: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mauritius and China.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1, the following documents were issued for the review of Tunisia:
 - (a) A national report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/1/TUN/1);
 - (b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/1/TUN/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR, in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/1/TUN/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Canada, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Tunisia through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the Universal Periodic Review.

I. SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. At the third meeting, on 8 April 2008, H.E. Mr. Béchir Tekkari, Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Tunisia, introduced the national report. The Minister recalled that a few weeks ago, Tunisia's fifth periodic report was examined by the Human Rights Committee and welcomed the discussion of the Working Group on UPR on Tunisia's contributions to the United Nations Human Rights Council mechanisms. The Minister reiterated Tunisia's willingness to cooperate in the area of human rights with all mechanisms and recalled that since its independence, Tunisia has put great efforts in the area of human rights. In particular, it was noted that Tunisia abolished slavery in 1846 and has now ratified almost all relevant regional and international human rights instruments. For Tunisia, the promotion and protection of human rights is an ongoing process which requires consolidated efforts.
6. The Minister also highlighted Tunisia's commitment to objectively and constructively contribute, at the level of examination and follow-up to its report, to promoting the UPR mechanism's modalities and objectives, as contained in General Assembly resolution 60/251, which includes "ensuring universality, objectivity and non-selectivity in the consideration of human rights issues" and making sure that "the promotion and protection of human rights [are] based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue". In the introduction of its report, Tunisia asserted that it "will pursue, in 2008, its commitment to act for the promotion and respect of human rights, and to develop its cooperation with all the concerned parties at the national, regional and international levels. In addition to the measures and initiatives mentioned in the report, Tunisia will

shortly announce new decisions". By this announcement, the Minister indicated that Tunisia meets its commitments. He also informed the Working on new measures that have been adopted to enhance the process of human rights protection and promotion, and to consolidate cooperation with the United Nations and regional bodies:

(a) Tunisia's decision to receive special rapporteurs from the Human Rights Council as well as from the African Commission on Human Rights;

(b) Tunisia's decision to submit, in 2008, eight reports to United Nations bodies, of which seven to treaty bodies:

- (i) Fifth and sixth periodic reports on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- (ii) Third periodic report on the implementation of the International Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- (iii) Eighteenth and nineteenth periodic reports on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
- (iv) Third periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- (v) Initial report on the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, concerning the involvement of children in armed conflicts
- (vi) Third periodic report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- (vii) Fifth periodic report on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

(c) Consolidation of the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in line with the Paris Principles, by giving it legislative status, reinforcing its administrative and financial autonomy, expanding its prerogatives (self-referral, impromptu visits to prisons, individual appeals ...), and developing its means of action to stand against all forms of human rights violation;

(d) Withdrawal of reservations annexed to the law concerning ratification of CRC, given the evolution of Tunisian legislation and the enactment of new laws promoting the rights of the child;

(e) Tunisia's ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, which reflects the clear vision of Tunisia and its sustained efforts to further promote women's status and to safeguard and consolidate their rights;

(f) Approval of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol;

(g) Tunisia does not execute persons sentenced to death. The Head of State has publicly announced that he will never sign a decision of death penalty. The files of those sentenced to death are periodically submitted to the procedure of death penalty commutation;

(h) Tunisia has agreed in principle to allow Human Rights Watch to visit prisons. This is part of its cooperation with international human rights organizations, particularly the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), following an agreement signed in April 2005;

(i) Tunisia decided to create an institution related to the General Human Rights Coordinator in charge of the follow-up to treaty bodies' recommendations in order to promote their effective implementation.

7. The Minister also noted that the national report has been drafted following a broad consultation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders and various NGOs, including lawyers, journalists as well as others representatives of the civil society. In reply to questions that were put in advance, the Minister indicated, on the question raised by the United Kingdom on the contribution of civil society to the drafting of the report, that the list of relevant NGOs consulted was annexed to the State report. In reference to the questions on women's rights, the Minister underlined the important amendment of the Personal Status Code in 1993 that abolished polygamy and repudiation and emphasized the equal rights of women and men and the importance of equality in the management of the family. The Minister also highlighted progress made in the field of education of girls, in particular in primary and secondary school. He also highlighted the efforts made to ensure the promotion and protection of women's rights despite the efforts of some groups to achieve the opposite. Regarding Jordan's question about gender equality and the opportunity of women to occupy posts of responsibility, the Minister stressed the fact that there is a high percentage of women in posts of responsibility, working as teachers (52 per cent), doctors (60 per cent), in the Government (15 per cent) and the Council (25 per cent) or in diplomacy (20 per cent). He further stressed that around 40 per cent of university students are women. With regard to its compliance with the CRC, the Minister noted that Tunisia seeks to ensure that every child fully enjoys life. He highlighted in that regard that the Committee on the Rights of the Child noted with appreciation the progress made toward the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. He further recalled that girls and boys are now allowed to marry at the same age (18) and that Tunisia is considering lifting its reservation to CRC.

8. The Minister also recalled that for many years, Tunisia has been recognized by international bodies, such as IMF, as an emerging economy and as a model country with regard to the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights. The Minister noted that Tunisia is a competitive country within the African region, with a wealth growth of 5 per cent despite negative economic conditions, and a rate of poverty that has declined in a significant way since independence. In reference to the death penalty issue, the Minister highlighted the de facto abolition of capital punishment. He further noted that there has been no death penalty sentence since 1999 and underlined the Head of State's commitment to continue on this path. On the question put by the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada, and Sweden on freedom of expression and opinion, including measures to eliminate restrictions to establish political parties and civil organization, the Minister recalled that there are nine political parties in Tunisia, six of which are represented in the Chamber of Deputies, participate in its legislative work and play a role of parliamentary control. The Minister further noted that some parties were not recognized simply because they have yet to be registered. He underlined that in order to encourage pluralism; the Tunisian Government commits to modify the election process to ensure a better representation in the Chamber of Deputies and in the municipal councils.

9. With regard to the follow-up on previous recommendations concerning the freedom of expression and opinion made by the Human Rights Committee, the Minister announced that the Press Code has been amended to ensure a greater liberty and greater freedom. In particular, some of the requirements and need for review have been withdrawn, allowing newspapers to publish without legal registration. The Minister also highlighted the high number of newspapers currently circulating in the country, which demonstrates to what extent freedom of expression, is applied in Tunisia. With regard to the question by Germany on the prohibition of torture, the Minister stressed the fact that Tunisian law expressly prohibits any acts of torture or other cruel and inhuman treatments and punishes anyone involved in such acts. He further stated that law enforcement agents have been sentenced to prison terms if convicted for involvement in acts of torture. The Minister also indicated that redress has been made available to people who demonstrated that they have been victims of torture. In addition, he stated that such efforts are always made to ensure that law enforcement agents who commit acts of torture are brought to justice.

10. With regard to a question raised by Italy, the Minister recalled Tunisia's intention to withdraw its reservations to CRC and CEDAW and noted that a consolidating reform is ongoing in the country, which considers acceding to the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. As concerns violence against children, the Minister recalled that it exists in all societies as it exists in Tunisia. He indicated that there is a mechanism within the Ministry of Women and Children and that an annual report is currently being drafted in cooperation with civil society which is expected to be presented to the Parliament. In addition to that report, judges and child judges are in a position to take all necessary provisions to protect women and children and to ensure that appropriate follow-up is carried out. The Minister recalled Tunisia's full commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights and its awareness of the progress required to further consolidate its ongoing efforts and constant balance between political will and a resolved civil society and the real challenges that result from increasing terrorism, fanaticism and extremism. In order to counter these challenges in respecting human rights, the Minister highlighted the importance for Tunisia to ensure that the international community expresses solidarity with regard to promoting and protecting human rights.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

11. During the ensuing interactive dialogue, 65 delegations made statements praising Tunisia for its high-level representation as well as the high quality of their presentation and their national report.

12. Kuwait commended the constant endeavour demonstrated by Tunisia in the field of human rights and its level of cooperation at the international level, including with United Nations bodies and various stakeholders. Kuwait also noted with interest the new measures taken by Tunisia and welcomed the establishment of the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. A question on the measures taken to strengthen its independency was posed.

13. Palestine noted that Tunisia was among the first countries to adopt a Constitution that promotes values of equality, justice and freedom and praised the international commitments showed by Tunisia in ratifying several human rights instruments. Palestine posed a question to Tunisia on the positive developments regarding the condition of women and asked if Tunisia could describe the measures that allowed this advancement, in particular in the pharmaceutical field.

14. Pakistan noted the strong democratic pluralist system in Tunisia, the freedom of media, the crucial role played by the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the judiciary system and the efforts made in ensuring rights of women and children, the right to work, and the eradication of poverty. Pakistan also noted with appreciation the interaction of Tunisia with civil society, including during the World Summit on Information. Pakistan emphasized the

tolerance showed by Tunisia and its efforts to spread a message of inclusiveness and integration within its society. Pakistan put asked two questions, on the measures taken by Tunisia in its fight against terrorism, extremism and racial hatred while paying attention to the promotion and protection of human rights, and how Tunisia is dealing with the challenges posed by the effects of globalization.

15. Philippines noted that Tunisia's best practices in promoting and protecting human rights in the age of globalization could be set as an example. It requested the delegation of Tunisia to elaborate on Act No. 2001-52 on the organization of prisons, especially on the salient features of the law and its effect on prison management and the situation of prisoners. Philippines also asked a question with regard to the theme "the age of enlightenment in Europe" used in Tunisian religious instruction manuals. It asked if the Tunisian delegation could also elaborate on how this theme relates to religious instruction and the purpose or intention of making it part of religious instruction rather than of history or philosophy.

16. Chad commended Tunisia for having invested considerable efforts in promoting and protecting respect for human rights generally, and in particular rights to equality, the right to life and economic, social and cultural rights in a general development vision. Chad noted that it highly appreciated Tunisia's achievements in the field of human rights since independence and to the present. Chad also noted that Tunisia has worked to reinforce political pluralism in the country. It further noted that there are a number of political parties in Tunisia, that there is freedom of the press, and that there is very encouraging work done by NGOs, that international solidarity has been promoted and work has been done to eradicate poverty. Chad encouraged Tunisia to continue its work to promote human rights, not just in Tunisia but in the whole of the African continent. It highlighted the fact that there may occasionally be some shortcomings, when the State faces many challenges and it called on Tunisia to ensure full respect for human rights. It finally noted that for this reason, the support and technical assistance from others was always very useful in order to consolidate universal values of human rights.

17. Saudi Arabia expressed appreciation for Tunisia's conviction that human rights cannot be protected in a selective manner and emphasized the work done by Tunisia, including constitutional amendments aimed at strengthening human rights. Saudi Arabia welcomed that international instruments ratified by Tunisia take precedence over domestic law. Saudi Arabia recommended that these achievements be highlighted and noted with interest the review of the mandate of Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In that regard, Saudi Arabia asked about the measures that will be taken to ensure that the Paris Principles are respected.

18. The Russian Federation emphasized the serious approach taken by Tunisia in promoting and protecting human rights and its commitment to ensuring fundamental democratic values as well as the nine steps taken by Tunisia to improve its cooperation with human rights defenders mechanisms and United Nations organizations. The Russian Federation stressed that NGOs working in the field of human rights enjoy the support of the Tunisian Government and prove to be a useful experience for other countries. It asked the delegation to provide more details on how this support is provided to NGOs.

19. Slovenia referred to the concluding observations adopted by CEDAW in 2002, which expressed concern at the lack of legal remedies or court decisions in which women have obtained redress. For this matter, CEDAW recommended the intensification of education and training programmes on the Convention to enhance the knowledge of judges, lawyers and law enforcement personnel. It asked whether such education and training already started to be implemented and if so, if the delegation could give more detailed information about its conduct. Furthermore, Slovenia referred to concern of CEDAW at the low level of women's labour force participation, including in

the private sector, and asked if the Government of Tunisia already adopted appropriate measures to ensure women's equal access to paid employment and if so, how efficient the measures are in practice.

20. China noted with appreciation the achievements made by Tunisia in the field of human rights and its new measures to strengthen human rights protection. China also highlighted Tunisia's constructive progress in the area of civil, political and economic, social and cultural rights and on the right to development as well as its cooperation with human rights treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council and Tunisia's commitment to follow-up on human rights recommendations. With respect to the issue of the effects of globalization and the relation between human rights and economic development, China asked the delegation how in its view the economic cooperation could be further strengthened for the development of Tunisia.

21. India welcomed Tunisia's desire to strengthen cooperation with all actors concerned at the national, regional and international levels with the objective of better promoting and protecting human rights. It indicated that the steps taken recently by Tunisia attest of its sincerity and determination in this regard. India also commended Tunisia for its comprehensive efforts to integrate the study of human rights into all levels of its education system as well as law-enforcement and health agencies. The respect for pluralism and tolerance in its fight against incitement to racial and religious hatred was also praised. India joined Tunisia's call to the international community to give top priority to combating the threat of terrorism and commended Tunisia's efforts in enhancing the role of the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in line with the Paris Principles. In that regard, it asked about the work of National Commission for International Humanitarian Law and requested information with regard to its independence and autonomy. Furthermore, India noted with appreciation the agreement of April 2005 with the ICRC on giving access to prisons. In that regard, further information on Tunisia's experience of cooperation with ICRC was requested.

22. Madagascar noted with sincere appreciation Tunisia's investment in social policies and strategies to reduce poverty and noted with interest the comprehensive solidarity mechanisms which, inter alia, contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. It asked Tunisia to share its experience in the development of solidarity values and in particular the National Solidarity Fund which has helped many families - over a million people. Madagascar also welcomed the General Assembly resolution on the World Solidarity Fund to eradicate poverty in the world initiated by Tunisia and recommended that Tunisia and States Members continue to work for its implementation and the achievements of economic, social and cultural rights.

23. Ghana commended recent measures taken by the Government aimed at consolidating the Higher Committee on Human Rights and fundamental freedoms. It also praised the efforts made at the national level to align constitutional provisions with relevant international human rights instruments and recent amendments in its Code of Criminal Procedure aimed at respecting the rights of suspects during trial procedures. Ghana noted also the positive developments in ensuring women's rights and women's enhanced participation at the decision-making level. Ghana also noted that Tunisia is reported to have one of the most efficient and effective healthcare systems in Africa in spite of its modest resources. Ghana also noted the decline in communicable diseases and the reported number of HIV/AIDS cases. It suggested that Tunisia may wish to request necessary international technical cooperation and assistance to enable it to provide the necessary support for an enhanced health delivery system. Ghana stated that the international community owes it a duty to assist Tunisia to attain the highest standards of human rights promotion.

24. Mauritania noted the legislative measures adopted by Tunisia in the past few years aimed to respect and comply with its international human rights obligations, in particular in the area of

education, health and women's rights. Mauritania praised the reforms that were undertaken to reform the family code and to ensure that women fully enjoy equality with men. In that regard, further information was requested on programmes aimed at empowering women and on measures taken to enhance the role of women and children.

25. Bangladesh noted that in the areas of good governance and rule of law, the independence of the judiciary and media freedom, Tunisia's record and reputation is praiseworthy and stressed its tremendous progress in recent years in socio-economic developments. It was pleased to note that by 2015 Tunisia will achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals, that it has achieved enviable success in improving the status of women and made remarkable progress in maintaining a high standard for education at all level.

26. Angola noted the accession to most of the human rights instruments and the national jurisprudence, in particular to the transmittal of citizenship and succession rights. The efforts made by Tunisia in fighting against poverty were also praised, including the National Solidarity Fund which impacts inter alia, the health, education and housing system. With respect to the recent reform on the Press Code, information was requested on its impact on the freedom of expression and on the impact of education programmes in the dissemination of a culture of human rights.

27. Japan said that the image the delegation had of Tunisia was a country of civilization and noted that the Japanese Ambassador to Tunisia had reported that it was indeed the case: Tunisia is one of the most democratic societies, which shows a great respect for human rights, in the Arab world. Japan also noted the very high status of women. Japan put forward three questions. First, while acknowledging that combating terrorism was a very important task, it asked how Tunisia intended to pursue this objective while respecting human rights. Second, Japan asked how Tunisia intended to continue to develop the right of freedom of association. Third, Japan requested information on how Tunisia intended to develop its relations with the NGOs. Recognizing that H.E. Mr. Laibidi, the Ambassador of Tunisia to the United Nations Office at Geneva, is one of the most respectable and active ambassadors in Geneva, Japan expressed its expectation that he would play a very important role in this regard given his great experience. Japan finally conveyed its wish that Tunisia would continue its reforms.

28. The United Kingdom acknowledged the progress made at the national level especially laws reform in the area of economic, social and cultural rights as well as its political will to advance women rights. However, the United Kingdom was concerned about the restriction to freedom of expression and the requirement for registration by political parties and NGOs. It stressed that careful note was taken on the explanation given in Tunisia's presentation but recommended that Tunisia give full consideration to reform these requirements. The United Kingdom also recommended that Tunisia set a date for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to CAT and strongly encourage the Government of Tunisia to work closely with international human rights bodies particularly regarding the follow-up of UPR recommendations.

29. Zambia welcomed the informative presentation and the national report. It also noted Tunisia's human rights achievements and urged it to continue its efforts. The measures taken to ensure that media operate in an independent manner and that the freedom of expression and opinion is ensured were also highlighted.

30. The Syrian Arab Republic noted with interest the measures taken by Tunisia in the areas of health, education and the women's rights. It requested more information on these sectors. It recommended that Tunisia pursue its achievements and its consolidated approach in the promotion and protection of all human rights including in the field of education, health and the promotion of the status of women.

31. Morocco noted the tangible advancement in the field of human rights and the implementation of, inter alia, the Paris Principles; the application of treaty bodies' recommendations; the question of the diversity; access to housing for families; policy reforms and their positive effects on economic development; and the high level of schooling and protection of women's rights. Morocco stressed Tunisia's efforts to ensure religious and civilization specificities; the tolerant spirit demonstrated by Tunisia and its commitment towards further promoting and protecting human rights. It requested concrete examples of judicial ruling relating to the promotion and protection of human rights and information on measures taken to eliminate disparities in the health-care system and illiteracy.

32. Singapore praised Tunisia for holding wide consultations with stakeholders at the national level for the drafting of the report. Singapore also welcomed Tunisia's efforts in advancing economic, social and cultural right; in improving the human rights institutions and on the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. Singapore also agreed with Tunisia that the threat of terrorism, extremism, racism, and religious defamation represents a deadly scourge to efforts to promote and protect human rights. In that respect, Singapore asked the delegation the measures taken by Tunisia, as well further steps that can be taken at the inter-governmental level to further address these challenges.

33. The Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Tunisia thanked all the speakers and indicated that the level of dialogue clearly shows the very good reaction on the reforms of Tunisia in the field of the promotion and protection of human rights. As regards the questions regarding the advancement of women, the Minister noted that the status of women stems from several factors including reforms, enlightened view of Islamic Sharia and the interpretive views of the teaching of Islam, and the political will demonstrated since 1956 especially by President Bourguiba and now by President Ben Ali. Concerning prison management, the Minister recalled that a collection of all relevant texts will be available in English. With regard to human rights cooperation, Tunisia is committed to the idea of cooperation of all States, including North-South and South-South cooperation. In reference to Chad's question, the Minister stressed Tunisia's willingness and openness to bringing in other countries their experience and vice-versa, should other countries so wish.

34. Concerning the cooperation with ICRC, the Minister stressed that this is extremely helpful and underlined its assistance for the improvement of prison conditions. It was in this spirit that Tunisia initiated contacts with Human Rights Watch, allowing it to visit Tunisian prisons. Regarding Mauritania's question concerning women and children, the Minister referred to the 1992 reform. With regard to the rights of association, the Minister stressed that association is not submitted to an authorization regime and some 10,000 associations enjoy the support of the Government. In addition, associations considered as public utility receive subsidies from the State. With regard to the issue of poverty the Minister indicated that Tunisia has been able to combat poverty by maintaining a large middle class and by establishing a social solidarity fund which operates in areas that are outside the classic investment parameters. The Minister also noted that Tunisia combats terrorism through eradication of poverty, through education, and lastly by punishment through the law. Whatever the seriousness of the offence, Tunisia believes there must always be proper guarantees and it has always provided them. With regard to freedom of expression, the Minister noted that certain Internet sites have been closed down in accordance with article 19 of ICCPR. While recalling the principle of freedom of expression, the Minister stressed that the sites that have been closed were advocating terrorism and inciting to behead innocent people.

35. The Minister welcomed the interest shown for the Tunisian process toward freedom of press and free access to sources of information and mentioned the progress made. He indicated that the press code was amended four times to further promote and liberalize press activities and the removal of imprisonment penalties from the press code. The Minister also mentioned two types of reforms, the reform of prison penalties and the abolition of legal submission of copies press. He also indicated that besides legal guarantees, there are a number of important developments on the ground, for example, there is not one single journalist in jail and for the past 20 years this has been the case. He also stressed that Tunisian media organizations elect their own leaders and that recently, the Tunisian Association of Journalists elected a syndicate. The Tunisian Government does not try to influence the media, and the independence of the media is noted by journalists themselves. The Minister emphasized that the Government respects the independence of the media and does not try to influence or intimidate the media.

36. The Minister also noted that 90 per cent of the media is private and freely available. Opposition parties participate readily in public television and material support is provided by the Government with no strings attached, and one cursory look shows the variety of media outlets. He also noted that there is no longer administrative authorization required to distribute books, and stressed that there is no restrictions on electronic media. On the issue of Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Paris Principles, the Minister noted the paradox that the Human Rights Committee was set up 1991 and has not yet the accreditation by the ICC, while being a pioneer institution in Africa and in the Arab world. He indicated that the President Ben Ali announced that the legal status of the Human Rights Committee was no longer depending on a presidential decree and include several branches and high capable representatives as well as representatives of civil society. A bill is currently under consideration, which will further strengthen the role of the Human Rights Committee, including the possibility by the chair of the Human Rights Committee to visit prisons and engage in developing programmes to take stock of the human rights situation. On the rights of women, as raised by Palestine, Slovenia and Bangladesh, the Minister indicated that Tunisia has achieved women and men parity, and provided information on the legislative reform to ensure equality in the private and public sphere as well as in fight against discrimination.

37. Senegal highlighted the quality of the country report as a clear commitment and sincere desire of Tunisia to achieve more progress in the field of human rights. It requested further information on the efforts by Tunisia to ensure that progress made in the advancement of the status of women is irreversible. Further explanations on the didactic approach to promoting a culture of human rights were also asked. Senegal indicated that the report submitted is dedicated to economic social and cultural rights and stresses the importance of national solidarity and the eradication of poverty. It enquired about the programmes implemented in this area and about measures to strengthen civil and political rights. Regarding the situation of women, a question on the Government plan of action was also asked.

38. Lebanon commended Tunisia on its historic report and achievements in the field of human rights. The efforts and the professional and methodical work to prepare the report were also praised, notably in engaging and involving all stakeholders. It noted that Tunisia has been unanimously applauded for its achievements in the field of women's rights and in particular for its Family Code, thanked for the replies regarding the status of women and encouraged Tunisia to further work to strengthen and develop the rights of women necessary for a just, balanced and participatory society.

39. The representative of Sweden expressed its appreciation on the efforts made by the Minister to directly provide answers to a number of questions put in advance of the review. Nevertheless, Sweden asked the Minister to further elaborate on his answer relating to concern in two areas which

are also subject of recommendations. On the issue of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, Sweden noted that both freedoms are guaranteed in the Constitution of Tunisia but wanted to know what criteria are used when taking decisions to close down or prohibit the contents of a specific website. With respect to registration and legal status for civil society organizations, Sweden asked the Minister to elaborate on the restrictions to obtain those registrations.

40. Mali noted with great interest the presentation and noted with satisfaction the achievements and various measures taken in field of human rights by Tunisia. Mali had a question with regard to amendment to the Press Code to strengthen the freedom of press and expression and stressed that the response provided by the Minister was satisfactory.

41. Azerbaijan congratulated the delegation of Tunisia on the serious preparatory work undertaken in the preparation of the report, and noted with appreciation that the national report of Tunisia is the result of extensive consultations within the country, involving civil society, and stressed the importance of a wide consultation. Azerbaijan also welcomed the promulgation of the Constitutional Law of 1 June 2002 adopted by referendum that has added the provision into the Constitution. He noted the priority given by Tunisia to the international instruments on human rights and their direct application in domestic law. This creates conditions for the value judgement of the human rights norms and their imperativeness everywhere around the globe, including in Tunisia. Azerbaijan equally appreciated the measures taken by Tunisia in legislative and practical procedural fields aimed at implementing the recommendations formulated by the treaty bodies, such as CAT, CRC, etc. He indicated that it was worth mentioning the activity of the Chief Committee on Human Rights and Main Freedoms established in 1992 which has been further developed institutionally in recent years. The National Commission on International Humanitarian Law is another body to be mentioned in this non-exhaustive list created in the context of the latest developments on human rights protection which necessitates such protection in all circumstances, including during armed conflicts. In conclusion, Azerbaijan asked what measures the authorities of Tunisia plan to put in effect to reinforce the participation of all citizens in public life as well as the situation related to reinforcement of the independence of judges necessitate judiciary reforms.

42. France thanked Tunisia for the quality of its report. It noted that it was good to identify recommendations and avenues for future cooperation to support and implement the commitments made today as this was a future-oriented exercise, and enquired about additional measures with respect to the rights of children and to the activities of NGOs working on human rights.

43. Bahrain thanked Tunisia for its exhaustive presentation on its human rights achievements and promotion and protection of human rights, and noted that Tunisia has clearly demonstrated that it is truly committed to international human rights standards. It also commended Tunisia on its report which shows the importance it attaches to human rights. Bahrain also especially praised the measures to strengthen the role of the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in line with the Paris Principles, and asked what latest measures were taken to strengthen human rights with regard to the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

44. Sudan asked the Working Group to praise the political steps taken by Tunisia on a voluntary and definitive basis. It noted that Tunisia has committed to receive special rapporteurs to visit the country, both within the United Nations system and other human rights organizations; its compliance with the Paris Principles; its consideration of withdrawing its reservation to the CRC and CEDAW, as well steps taken towards accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He asked also if Tunisia could provide more information regarding vulnerable groups with specific needs.

45. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya indicated that Tunisia has done a great deal to promote and protect human rights and freedom of expression, to ensure the independency of the judiciary and to promote human rights in the school curriculum. It noted that human rights are a fundamental part of the Tunisian State and noted with appreciation that the Family Code has been reformed. It stated that Tunisia has taken steps to implement recommendations and has adhered to 58 conventions related to labour law and human rights, and stressed that Tunisia paid particular attention to the right to health and to protect human rights.

46. The Democratic Republic of the Congo commended Tunisia's report and praised the progress made in the protection and promotion of human rights including the consolidation of the Higher Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Coordinator. It noted that Tunisia intends to accede to the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, welcomed the fact that Tunisia applies treaty body recommendations and noted, as recognized by UNDP, that economic, social, and cultural rights are being promoted. It indicated that Tunisia is at the forefront of developments in this area and encouraged it to honour commitments by pursuing positive actions with regard to promoting and consolidating human rights.

47. The United States of America welcomed the Tunisian delegation and Tunisia's report, including the nine steps listed to promote human rights. The United States underscored the importance of civil society in the UPR process and appreciated Tunisia's statement of its engagement with civil society in preparing the national report. On the issue of NGOs and unions, the United States noted that there have been reports that the registration of some NGOs were refused by the Government and asked what the applicable registration requirements and controls were for NGOs operating in Tunisia. With regard to media freedom, the United States noted that there are concerns about the Government seizing domestic newspapers and asked what measure are taken to address the issue of freedom of expression. Regarding election laws, the United States noted that there are concerns that access to news media is limited and asked when a 2009 election-specific law would be promulgated and how to encourage access to media.

48. Qatar expressed admiration for Tunisia's commitment, noting that Tunisia has ratified most of the core human rights instruments and that it is endeavouring to implement these commitments. Qatar noted that Tunisia is seeking to reinforce bodies to promote and protect human rights, and in this context welcomed that Tunisia is reinforcing its national human rights committee and making efforts to ensure that the Paris Principles are adhered to. It also welcomed the large number of NGOs in the country. Qatar recommended that Tunisia continue to implement procedures it has noted and to improve its engagement of obligations at the national level. He also asked what kind of representation civil society has in the Supreme Council and if they have the right to vote.

49. Romania commended Tunisia on commitments assumed in the field of human rights, by acceding to the core international human rights instruments, and also, for its determination to continue its policy of promoting and protecting the human rights. It congratulated Tunisia for the efforts made and progress achieved under the Millennium Development Goals, in improving the economic performance and the social wellbeing of the Tunisian people, including by fighting discrimination against women and by setting up a system of education, training and access to labour market for all citizens. Romania referred to the national report, which outlines legislative measures taken pursuant to the latest review by CAT to bring national legislation in line with international standards. Bearing in mind the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, which does not expressly prohibit evidence obtained in "confessions" made under detention, Romania asked what measures the Government plans to strengthen in its Criminal Procedure Code, in order to ensure that such statements are not used in any legal proceedings. It also asked how the Government intends to follow up on and ensure implementation of the outcome of the review and if it plans to

meet with key stakeholders after the review to debrief and discuss implementation of the outcome of the review.

50. Yemen noted the great importance given by Tunisia to all human rights, including civil and political rights that are enjoyed by a large number of NGOs. It also noted that Tunisia has achieved a 5 per cent growth rate annually between 2003 and 2005. Yemen noted the efforts in the education system and the high percentage of children enrolled, and asked the Minister to provide an overview of measures taken to teach human rights in school.

51. Cuba noted that Tunisia as a developing country and as a member of the non-aligned movement has made a great deal of efforts in the field of human rights. Cuba indicated that Tunisia is a fascinating country, and its history and culture reminds Cuba of scenes from ancient Carthage. Cuba also noted that Tunisia is a country of transit, expressing solidarity and commitment to continue economic development and to achieve impressive changes despite circumstances in the world. In the concept of solidarity, Cuba requested more information on the National Solidarity Fund and the results of its implementation. Cuba recommended that Tunisia continue on along the path in the field of economic, social and cultural rights and empowerment of women.

52. Netherlands was impressed by the strong engagement of Tunisia in the UPR process and commended Tunisia on the new measures to strengthen the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including with the aim to increase the independence of this Committee based on the Paris Principles. It welcomed President Ben Ali's statement that the death penalty will no longer be implemented, but recommended that follow-up to these good initiatives is given with regard to appropriate legislation and implementation on the ground. Netherlands also stressed the importance to implement legal safeguards under Tunisian law against torture and ill-treatment.

53. Ukraine thanked Tunisia for the high quality report and for the commitments it has announced. It noted that Tunisia is among the pioneers and their presentation is a touchstone, and this touchstone is a very high quality one. It congratulated Tunisia and noted the broad consultation for the preparation of the reports with civil society. Ukraine requested information related to the measures to deal with the threat posed by terrorism and how it adapts its legislation to the new challenges posed by this threat.

54. Brazil noted that the report of Tunisia presents a useful and detailed description of measures on the development and strengthening of its national legal and institutional framework related to the human rights situation in the country. Brazil recognized that significant progress was achieved in the body of legislation on the promotion and protection of human rights and also recognized the achievements and the political will to face important human rights challenges. However, Brazil had some concerns about the implementation and concrete impact of the new legal human rights framework put forward by the Government. It noted that Tunisia has demonstrated willingness to undertake a series of important internal legal reforms aimed at the protection and promotion of civil and political rights, but asked how the Tunisian authorities assessed the implementation of such advancements in the promotion of freedom and peaceful coexistence of religions and beliefs. Brazil also indicated that Tunisia has experienced significant changes in its legal framework regarding the status of women. It requested more information on the major advancements in term of the promotion of women's rights as well as on the concrete impact of the legal measures to ensure the advancement of social and political status of women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

55. The Islamic Republic of Iran commended the valuable efforts and strong commitments of Tunisia to the promotion and protection of all human rights. It noted with interest the new measures that have been taken by the Government to enhance the process of human rights promotion and

protection and to consolidate cooperation with the United Nations, in particular active cooperation and interaction with human rights special procedures and treaty bodies; consolidation of High Committee on Human Rights And Fundamental Freedoms as the national human rights institution and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It asked Tunisia to elaborate further on the steps taken by the Government to face the effects of globalization at the national level.

56. Nigeria congratulated Tunisia as the first African country to be reviewed in this historic process and for its remarkable national report. Nigeria also stated that the open, cooperative and positive manner in which the report was prepared is highly commendable. Nigeria commended Tunisia on its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and the progress it has made in advancing the rights of women, children, and indeed its poverty agenda in general. Nigeria recognized Tunisia's successes in guaranteeing civil and political rights, media pluralism, independence of the judiciary and wide ranging economic and social rights towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. As a developing country, Nigeria noted with appreciation that some of the challenges faced by Tunisia in its attempt to engender development and promote and protect human rights are fully addressed. It also noted with interest the complex challenges in providing unhindered health facilities, combating HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, as well as matters related to law enforcement. Nigeria therefore recommended that Tunisia highlight the areas in which the Government needs technical support and assistance to achieve these laudable objectives.

57. Egypt noted the progress achieved and thanked the delegation for its hard work. It highlighted Tunisia's efforts in women's rights and children's rights and sought more details on promoting human rights in these areas in order to encourage a social renaissance, and noted significant progress with regard to education free of charge and was interested in education opportunities to enhance a human rights culture in Tunisia.

58. The Republic of Korea noted statistics that indicate a high level of women's participation in many areas of public life. It indicated that Tunisia fully deserves praise in these areas and in the social and political life in the country, and noted that Tunisia's example serves as a good practice both nationally and regionally. However, it noted that Tunisia still retains several reservations to CEDAW and expects that Tunisia will give more thorough consideration to the withdrawal of these reservations.

59. Algeria noted that the Council should recognize challenges faced by Tunisia with regard to terrorism. It indicated that States must guarantee the right to life and stressed that yet it is a most difficult challenge to balance the protection of human rights and countering-terrorism. Algeria suggested that the Council should set up a working group to address this issue, in particular to help protect the lives of innocent people, and asked what the Tunisian Minister of Justice and Human Rights thought about this suggestion.

60. Malaysia noted that Tunisia has adopted as early as 1956 a Personal Status Code, which UNDP described as a model for promoting the principle of equality in marital relations. Malaysia also noted that Tunisia has ratified nearly all the international human rights instruments. It further stated that Tunisia, in its national report, has highlighted the international dimension of the challenges faced by the Government in consolidating progress in human rights promotion and protection, which include terrorism, extremism, and abuses by media and perverse effects of globalization. Malaysia stated that it is crucial therefore that the UPR exercise takes this dimension into due account, and proposed that this dynamic be reflected in the recommendation of the Working Group.

61. Mexico noted that the Minister of Justice and Human Rights addressed the progress made in the area of gender equality and accordingly recommended that Tunisia withdraw its reservations to CEDAW. Mexico welcomed the announcement of increasing cooperation with human rights bodies, including special rapporteurs, and recommended consideration of cooperation with, for example, the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism. It noted that the national report refers to recommendations made by civil society and asked if there is any reform to the Law on Associations contemplated.
62. Latvia was interested in the new measures taken by Tunisia. It noted the proactive approach taken by Tunisia and its decision to receive special rapporteurs of the Council and Africa. Latvia asked if Tunisia will issue a standing invitation to special procedures.
63. Belgium noted that the Human Rights Committee expressed concern regarding freedom of the press and noted observations by the stakeholders that article 51 of the Code relates to the crime of defamation and holds severe punishment. In this regard, Belgium enquired about the measures being taken to harmonize this law with ICCPR to ensure freedom of expression. Belgium also noted that the Human Rights Committee, special procedures and NGOs were concerned that human rights associations are encountering obstacles to obtaining official recognition, as well as about the intimidation of human rights defenders. Belgium asked whether Tunisia intended to receive the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights defenders.
64. Germany welcomed the considerable efforts to improve the situation of human rights in Tunisia and encouraged it to continue on this path. Germany was grateful for Tunisia's satisfactory answer to its question related to the treatment of suspects by security officials.
65. Djibouti hoped that the spirit of dialogue demonstrated by Tunisia will be complemented by increased objective human rights performance. Tunisia is a model country for progressive social and cultural rights. Djibouti would welcome initiatives to set up a body to follow up on the recommendations of the outcomes of the Working Group and to develop a central framework for combating poverty.
66. Sri Lanka acknowledged Tunisia's achievements in the field of human rights and at the same time expressed understanding for the obstacles and challenges that developing countries face. Sri Lanka noted the success of Tunisia in reducing the rate of poverty from 22 per cent in 1975 to 3.8 per cent in 2007. Sri Lanka requested Tunisia to inform the Working Group on how it reduced poverty by such a large percentage as it could be a best practice for other countries.
67. Oman enquired about the objectives and challenges that are faced by Tunisia in its fight against terrorism and fanaticism.
68. Thailand welcomed Tunisia's dialogue with civil society and efforts made by the Government to address the important challenges on terrorism and extremism that all States face individually and collectively. It requested Tunisia to share the steps it has taken regarding ongoing efforts to establish a culture of Human Rights and requested that it share its experiences, and in particular in the field of human rights education.
69. Indonesia stressed Tunisia's partnership with NGOs and the freedom of press and judiciary and the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights and its work to eradicate poverty and improve education. Indonesia is confident that Tunisia will fulfil its responsibilities to promote and protect human rights in all dimensions. It asked about the role of the Constitutional Council pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights.

70. Turkey commended Tunisia on its decision to extend its ratification of human rights treaties, withdraw its reservation, and submit its reports in 2008, and requested information on measures to ensure follow-up to recommendations made by treaty bodies. It welcomed the invitation extended to special procedures that Tunisia renewed during the UPR session and encouraged it to continue its cooperation with all stakeholders.

71. Canada noted its agreement with Latvia's recommendation regarding cooperation with mechanisms to combat torture and referring to the Tunisian decision to host a visit of the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture asked whether a date has been set. Canada also congratulated Tunisia for the open invitation to all special procedures. It also noted that Tunisia referred to the Human Rights Committee and asked if it could elaborate on measures taken to protect the independence of the judiciary.

72. Albania congratulated the delegation for providing a clear picture of human rights in Tunisia and took note of changes in the national structure, and commended Tunisia on the enormous progress made in the field of human rights. While recognizing that death penalty is not implemented, Albania asked the Tunisia whether it was working toward the abolition of death penalty.

73. Bosnia and Herzegovina noted Tunisia's positive and oriented self-assessment in improving its human rights performance, and welcomed the announcement made by Tunisia on measures planned to consolidate and expand cooperation with the United Nations and regional bodies.

74. Jordan welcomed the steps taken by Tunisia in the field of human rights. It requested Tunisia to provide further information on intercultural and interreligious dialogue and recommended that Tunisia continue to work on the enhancement of a dialogue between civilizations and religions.

75. Mozambique commended on the great achievement made by Tunisia toward women's rights, notably the abolition of polygamy and repudiation, in the field of education, and on the establishment of the solidarity fund. It asked Tunisia what advice it could share with other countries concerning women's rights and economic, social and cultural rights.

76. South Africa highlighted the statement made by the Minister stressing that no country has yet achieved a perfect human rights record and commended in particular on progress achieved in the field of equality between men and women, and access to benefits that these measures brings with it. South Africa also commended Tunisia on the preservation of life through the abolition of death penalty and public awareness and information campaigns on human rights. It further noted with interest the impressive economic policy which has been widely recognized by IMF, UNDP and other international institutions, and the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights. South Africa requested Tunisia to share best practices in the alleviation of poverty and in establishing this delicate balance.

77. Ethiopia noted Tunisia's significant achievement and realization, notably in the field of economic, social and cultural rights and its fight against poverty. It further noted that the national report underscored interrelatedness of all human rights. Ethiopia also noted that human freedom is impressive, notably in the area of education, which positively affected the lives of children and women. Ethiopia requested Tunisia to share information about what policies are responsible for such impressive achievements.

78. The Holy See noted that the promotion of tolerance and dialogue among the different components of society was a good strategy for peaceful coexistence and needed to be strengthened in practice. It further noted that fighting racial and religious intolerance becomes a symbol of the

will to apply all other human rights. It requested Tunisia to provide further information on the education in school and society to mutual respect and understanding, on the rights of individuals to freely exercise their beliefs in the respect of the rights of others, and on the right for individuals to freely practice their religion with others in a community of faith within the provision of international human rights instruments.

79. Zimbabwe welcomed the efforts made by Tunisia in the field of human rights and the decision made to introduce human rights curriculum in the educational system and to agree upon visits of prison by Human Rights Watch and ICRC. Zimbabwe requested further information on the intention of Tunisia to authorize visits of prisons by Tunisian NGOs.

80. Italy welcomed the announcement made by Tunisia concerning the de facto moratorium on death penalty enforced since 1991 and suggested to include this important commitment in the present report.

81. Following the dialogue, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights provided answers to the questions raised. On the question of the Philippines, the Minister indicated that one of the main pillars in Tunisia is tolerance. He mentioned that the Tunisian's approach is based on an educative approach which mainstream human rights through all subjects when it comes to promoting a culture of human rights. With regard to the rights of the child, the delegation of Tunisia indicated that the Child Protection Code contains relevant provisions in that respect and to assist the family. Regarding the electoral law, the Tunisian delegation noted that there has not been changed or amendment of law as there was forthcoming election campaign but rather an attempt to improve turnout in parliamentary elections. Regarding the participation of citizens in the election process, the delegation of Tunisia indicated that the age to vote is now 18 and that election process is monitored by the Constitutional Council. On the issue of the use of forced confession, the Tunisian delegation noted that a ruling says that if force has been used to achieve a confession than that evidence cannot be used in the judiciary system. On the issue of religious understanding, the delegation of Tunisia indicated its full commitment to ensure this principle. The Minister further indicated that particular attention was paid regarding the withdrawal of reservations, particularly to CEDAW, and that a working group studying the lifting of those reservations was currently working on the issue. Regarding the issue of terrorism and the right to life, the Minister also indicated that a working group has been set up and supported the suggestion made by Algeria to hold a seminar within the framework of the Council. The Minister also stated Tunisia's openness in inviting special rapporteurs as part of its effective cooperation with all treaty bodies and special procedures. Regarding the monitoring of Human Rights Council recommendations that emerge from the UPR, the Minister informed that a special body to ensure the follow-up arising from all United Nations treaty bodies has been set up. He also indicated that the Constitutional Court is taking into account international treaties and human rights documents and instruments for its decisions in particular the CRC and CEDAW. He also mentioned that the Human Rights Committee did not cast doubt on the independence of the judiciary, but only pointed out that the 2005 reforms are positive but further reforms are needed. The Minister further stated that Tunisia has increased the number of judges and the current make up of the Constitutional Council is very much in line with similar councils in other countries. Regarding the issue of death penalty, the Minister indicated that Tunisia has de facto abolished the death penalty and this has lead to a debate on abolishment within the society and Tunisia hope to make further progress along this path and to abolish the death penalty once and for all.

82. The Minister of Justice and Human Rights concluded his intervention by thanking warmly all those who have taken the floor and recognized the support and understanding shown during the debate. The Minister noted that the reports are very positive and the statements of delegates were

along the lines of these reports. He also reaffirm that Tunisia will pursue its efforts in the field of human rights.

II. CONCLUSIONS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS

83. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue have been examined by Tunisia and the recommendations listed below enjoy the support of Tunisia.

- 1. Recommends that Tunisia pursue its programmes and consolidated approach in the promotion and protection of all human rights including in the field of education, health and the promotion of the status of women (Syrian Arab Republic) as well as the empowerment of women. (Cuba)**
- 2. Encourages Tunisia to work closely with international human rights bodies particularly with relation to the follow-up of UPR recommendations. (Qatar, United Kingdom)**
- 3. While recognizing the considerable progress made by Tunisia in the field of women's rights and gender equality, recommends the consideration of the withdrawal of reservations to CEDAW (Republic of Korea, Mexico and Brazil)**
- 4. Recommends that the mandate of the Higher Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms be in line with the Paris Principles (Saudi Arabia)**
- 5. Encourages Tunisia to continue working for the promotion of international solidarity and eradication of poverty (Chad, Madagascar) and calls upon it to share its experience in the development of its solidarity values and in particular the National Solidarity Fund (Madagascar); and further recommends Tunisia to continue working for the implementation of the General Assembly resolution establishing the World Solidarity Fund to eradicate poverty in the world (Chad, Madagascar)**
- 6. Recommends Tunisia to continue its efforts in the field of economic social and cultural rights (Cuba) and requests Tunisia to share its best practices in the alleviation of poverty and establishment of the delicate balance between economic, social and cultural rights (South Africa)**
- 7. Encourages the reinforcement of freedom of expression and assembly in particular through the revision of article 51 of the Press Code. (Belgium, Sweden and United States of America)**
- 8. Encourages the facilitation of the registration of civil society, unions and political parties (Belgium, Sweden, United States of America and United Kingdom)**
- 9. Recommends a follow-up on the decision to not carry out the death penalty (Netherlands)**
- 10. Recommends Tunisia to consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to CAT (Canada) as soon as possible (United Kingdom)**
- 11. Recommends Tunisia to continue its endeavour in enhancing dialogue between civilizations, cultures and religions (Jordan and the Holy See)**

12. Recommends Tunisia to consider cooperation with, for example, the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism (Mexico)

III. VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS OF THE STATE UNDER REVIEW

84. Reference is made to the commitments made by Tunisia in its national report to the UPR as well as to those referred to in paragraph 6 above of the present report.

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Tunisia was headed by H.E. Mr. Béchir TEKKARI, Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Tunisia, and composed of 18 members:

M. Samir LABIDI, Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Ridha KHEMAKHEM, Coordonateur Général des droits de l'Homme, Ministère de la Justice et des Droits de l'Homme;

M. Oussama ROMDHANI, Directeur Général de l'Agence Tunisienne de Communication Extérieure (ATCE);

M. Joseph Roger BISMUTH, Sénateur;

M. Mohamed CHAGRAOUI, Chargé de l'Unité des droits de l'homme, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères;

Mme Monia AMMAR, Chargée de Mission, Ministère de la Justice et des droits de l'homme ;

M. Nejib AYED, Directeur Général, Ministère de l'Education et de la Formation;

M. Tahar TRIKI, Agence Tunisienne de Communication Extérieure (ATCE);

Mme Zohra BEN ROMDHANE, Agence Tunisienne de Communication Extérieure (ATCE) ;

M. Sadok BOULIFA, Agence Tunisienne de Communication Extérieure (ATCE);

M. Mohamed BEL KEFI, Conseiller près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Hatem LANDOLSI, Conseiller près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Ali CHERIF, Conseiller près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Mohammed Abderraouf BDIQUI, Conseiller près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Anouar BEN YOUSSEF, Conseiller près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Belhassen MASMOUDI, Premier Secrétaire près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Samir DRIDI, Premier Secrétaire près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève;

M. Abdessalem JAGHMOUN, Attaché près la Mission de Tunisie à Genève.
