

Delegation from Qatar

Position paper for the Human Rights Council

The topics before the Human Rights Council Committee are: Reinforcing Businesses' Responsibility to Protect Human Rights; Effects of Terrorism on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights; and The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age. As a Member State of the United-Nations (UN) since 1971 and of the Human Right Council (HRC) since 2007, Qatar feels deeply concerned about these topics and wishes to address them, both nationally and internationally.

Reinforcing Businesses' Responsibility to Protect Human Rights

Human rights remain a challenging issue worldwide, as 16 million human beings deal with exploitation and human rights violations have soared by 70% for 10 years in the business area. Human rights in the business sector range from gender equality, fair wages, child labor, work security, and health coverage. All those issues need to be addressed in order to ensure sustainable development, according to *the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, General Assembly (GA) resolution 70/1 (2015). All things considered, reinforcing businesses' responsibility to protect human rights must be a priority, as it can play a key role in the future of the planet, both for the environment and for workers living conditions.

Protecting human rights at work as always been an important issue worldwide, as the *Universal Declaration of Human Right*, GA resolution 217 (1948) states in article 23: "Everyone has the right [...] to just and favourable conditions of work [...]". Through *Business and human rights: improving accountability and access to remedy*, a HRC resolution 32/10 (2016), Member States wish to coordinate international laws in order to reinforce firms' responsibility. Gender equality at work must be improved according to the HRC resolution 17/4 (2011). *Human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises*. Nationally, in 2008, Qatar adopted the *Qatar National Vision 2030*, which aims at promoting gender equality at work, reinforcing women' presence in the economic life. Qatar supports gender equality at work internationally by financing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Furthermore, Qatar intends to protect domestic workers, mostly foreigners, with the adoption of law number 15 (2015) by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Amad Al Thani. Moreover, the National Committee on Occupational Health and Safety at the Ministry of Labour was created by ministerial decree number 16 in 2011, aiming at increasing work security and health coverage.

Respecting, promoting and protecting human rights in business sector is one of the pillars of Qatar's policy. As a Member State of HRC since 2007, the Qatar would like to pursue in the future its collaboration with the Member States thanks to its candidacy for a seat in the HRC in 2018. It wishes to keep financing the United Nations's High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and increasing the bilateral consultations on human rights in the business sector, implemented in 2011. Besides creating the Human Rights National Committee, and human rights services at different State levels, Qatar is looking forward keeping working with several human rights international organizations of the UN. The government also wishes to apply the universal periodic review's recommendations about gender equality at work and working conditions. Qatar states it is essential to increase working conditions for every employee, regarding its gender and origin in order to implement the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development, by reinforcing international actions to complete Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 16.

Effects of Terrorism on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights

In 2014, 32,764 people died from terrorist attack in 93 countries. Both emerging and developed countries suffer from terrorism: in 2015, 313 OCDE's citizens disappeared whereas African countries such as Kenya, Cameroon or Nigeria lost hundreds of individuals. Terrorism impacts also harmfully the economic growth with a cost of 90 billion dollars in 2015. It threatens population's happiness: after the terrorist attacks in 2015, French people reduced cultural activities. Consequently, fighting against terrorism represent a priority to HRC, given it destabilizes a whole country economic, politic and social balances, international relations and world peace.

Security Council (SC) resolution 1566 (2004) first urges Member States to cooperate together with several Committees, such as the counter-terrorism Committee. The HRC intends to fight terrorism by educating future generations, as stated in the HRC resolution 35/2 (2017). National and international laws condemning strongly terrorism is also essential, as well as a democratic process in all countries is essential to eliminate terrorism's

spreading, according to the counter-terrorism action plan of the GA resolution 288 (2006). By adopting this resolution, Qatar aims at fighting against all forms of terrorism, by working with Member States and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). In the Convention Against Torture (CAT) periodic report 3 (2017), Qatar provides good living conditions to citizens, reducing terrorism's spreading, and condemns torture acts. Qatar also adopted law number 11 (2004), law number 4 (2014) condemning terrorism and its funding. Moreover, Qatar helps other countries to fight against terrorism locally. Indeed, in December 2017, Qatar stated it will financially support Burkina Faso to fight against terrorists in Sahel. Furthermore, the United-States of America (USA), represented by the Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, signed with Qatar, in July 2017, an agreement aiming at combating together terrorism financing. Qatar also recently collaborated with France with the signature of a letter of intent, aiming at fighting again radical Islamism and terrorism.

With a gross national product growth of 3,7% in 2015 and a demographic growth of 7,2% in the 5 last years, Qatar is a dynamic country, ranked first among Arabic countries in the human development area. Considering terrorism could only affect its environmental, social, political and commercial balances, Qatar wishes to pursue further efforts with Member States in combating terrorism. Consequently, like its collaboration with the USA, Burkina Faso or France, Qatar is willing to prevent terrorism financing with other countries, especially African countries, suffering harmfully from terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram in Nigeria. Qatar wishes to attack terrorism at its roots, meaning to promote, at schools, values of tolerance toward religions, origins, gender, and ideas, as it is recommended by the HRC. Qatar will continue to teach human rights at school. As the HRC stated a weak economy foster the appearance of terrorism, Qatar will do its best efforts to pursue its economic growth. Qatar would also suggest the HRC to increase field assistance in countries victims of terrorist groups, such as Nigeria or Burkina Faso, in order to prevent terrorism among population. As Qatar ratified the *Convention of protection and promotion of cultural expressions diversity* (2005) in order to promote values such as tolerance and freedom of speech, it will continue to work in that direction, as it can prevent terrorism.

The Right to Privacy at the Digital Age

The *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy*, GA report 31/64 (2014) states technological devices have greatly increased the information's access and freedom of speech of mankind. Thus, democratic process started to spread worldwide, as human rights proponents used data to denounce injustices or violence. However, as digital area empowers people, it also talks States into implementing abusive monitoring systems toward human beings. The examples of the National Security Agency of the USA in 2013, and the General Communication Headquarters of the United-Kingdom in 2014, collecting private data, show how important it is for the HRC to address this issue, as it can threaten worldwide human rights.

Aware of these digital abusive behaviors toward human rights, from both States and corporations, the HRC implemented in its resolution 28/16 *The Right to Privacy at the Digital Age* (2015) the analysis of the right to privacy issues at national and international levels, in order to properly address them jointly with Member States, the UN, and several UN's programs and funds. The GA, with its resolution 68/167 (2014), *The Right to Privacy at the Digital Age*, urges Member States to implement national mechanisms ensuring digital monitoring transparency and to review domestic laws in order to insist on privacy's right, as well as meeting all the international requirements. By approving this resolution, Qatar abides by international standards. Qatar will take measures to condemn any national violations of privacy's right. Nationally, the Emir of Qatar issued law number 13 (2016) concerning the protection of private data. The law points out the necessity for organizations to make sure personal data is safely kept and article 17 protects children's digital rights. Furthermore, article 2 prevents from any private data business, as corporations can't email individuals without their consent. Moreover, in its letter to the President of the GA, letter 72/78 (2017), Qatar underlines the protection of journalists, media and freedom of press implemented, as it is linked to online privacy.

In the spirit of law number 13 (2016), Qatar foresees to modify its domestic and national laws in order to respect the international standards concerning the right to privacy online implemented by the UN. Moreover, Qatar wishes to increase the transparency of its digital policy, as the HRC resolution 28/16 (2015) mandated a Special Rapporteur, Prof. Joseph Cannataci of Malta, to examine policy implemented nationwide and internationally to address these issues. Consequently, Qatar will pursue the UN's work by publishing its own data on the subject. Qatar is also willing to keep protection freedom of press and journalists' work within its borders, as it guarantees a tolerant society where individuals data are less risky to be used illegally. As Brazil, Germany, Mexico, Norway and Switzerland met in February 2014, Qatar aims at working with other Member States, especially Middle-East ones, such as Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates, to strengthen local measures on these issues.

