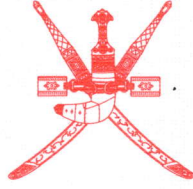


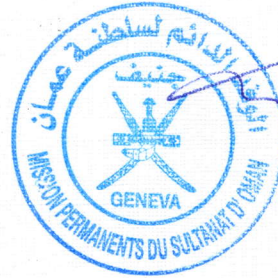
*Mission Permanente du Sultanat d'Oman
aupres des Nations Unies
et des Organisations Internationales
Geneve*



الوفد الدائم لسلطنة عمان
 لدى الأمم المتحدة والمنظمة الدولية
 جنيف

The Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and with reference to the Note Verbale dated 26 August 2019 requesting information with regard to the preparation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' thematic report on new technologies, including information and communications technology, and their impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests, has the honour to attach herewith the input of the Omani authorities on this issue.

The Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



*Office of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights*

United Nations Office at Geneva

CH-1211 GENEVE 10



Thematic Report

Human rights Council Resolution 38/11 on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests

١. **Laws, policies and programs that have been developed to address the impact of new technologies, including information and communications technology, on human rights in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests:**

Internal legislations in Oman regulate the relationship between individuals themselves and between people and the surrounding society. Technology facilities become one of the most important service in public life, as a result, cyber threats arisen. Accordingly, a law was essential to be created in order to provide security to the daily electronic communications and protection of human rights among the social media applications as well as protection of the networks and systems.

There are two main laws that address the method of protection of individuals from improper use of technology in daily life such as: * Combating Cyber Crime Law that was issued in 1٢/٢٠١١ which regulates the use of all forms of information technology means, and * Electronic Transactions Law 96/2008 which regulates the procedures of the electronic transactions, records, signatures, and communications between individuals and authorities.

In relation to human rights in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests, both laws do not include any articles on the regulation of the peaceful protests via technology. On the other hand, it is useful to mention that The Basic Statues of State ensured the right of freedom of expression in the article (29) which stated that "Freedom of opinion and expression through speech, writing and other means of expression shall be guaranteed within the limits of the law." As obviously mentioned in the article that citizens may use various means such as technology, media and/or electronic paper magazines in order to express their opinions and requirements to the government.

In Addition, Article (32) in the Basic Law of the State guarantees freedom of peaceful assembly "Citizens have the right to meet within the limits of the law." The laws in Oman have regulated the procedures that must be followed to exercise this right in general without focusing on the means used to peaceful assembly. Citizens may meet to express their views and to organize any demonstrations or gatherings in peaceful ways. To maintain security,





stability and non-infringement, states seek to prevent this breach by criminalizing it. In order for the meeting to be criminal, the Penal Code requires that the assembly be in order to threaten security or disturb public order. If the assembly is peaceful, the criminalization requirement does not apply to it. Moreover, government authorities approved certain

procedures that must be followed and aware of by the public to initiate a protest or a demonstration.

٢. Effective use of such technologies as enablers of the exercise of human rights in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests (e.g. through networks disruptions, blocking of internet services or restrictions and confidential communications):

Citizens has the freedom of using and initiate groups within the social media applications. Legislations and laws aim to protect human rights and considered as the platform that regulate the use of the technology via various means.

As stated in the 2019 statistics¹ published by National Center for Statistics and Information that 94% of Omani citizens have or use at least one account in one of the social media applications. Therefore, it is shown that most of the citizens are using technology and there wasn't any form of networks disruptions, blocking of internet services or restrictions and confidential communication.



¹National Center for Statistics and Information. Social Media Poll: June, 2019.



٣. **The human rights challenges posed by interferences with the availability and use of such technologies in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests (e.g. through networks disruptions, blocking of internet services or restrictions and confidential communications):**

One of the most challenges people face, in relation to the availability and use of such technologies in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests, is the lack of awareness of the national laws and legislations that regulate the use of the technology via various means and applications in order to guarantee the freedom to expression and share personal opinion as per to applicable law.

٤. **The human rights challenges posed by the use of new technologies, including information and communications technology, in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests (e.g. the use surveillance and monitoring tools by the authorities, including biometrics-based recognition technology to identify protests):**

One of the most challenges people face in relation to, the availability and use of such technologies in the context of assemblies, including peaceful protests, is the lack of awareness of the national laws and legislations that regulate the use of the technology via various means and applications in order to guarantee the freedom to expression and share personal opinion as per to applicable law.

