**State of Qatar 2024**

**Fourth National Report to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism**

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1. **Introduction**
2. The State of Qatar is honoured to be submitting its fourth national report to the universal periodic review mechanism, in accordance with the general guidelines of the Human Rights Council and the guidelines for preparing reports for the universal periodic review mechanism.
3. The State of Qatar submitted its third national report to the universal periodic review mechanism in May 2019 for the 33rd session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. The Working Group report on the State of Qatar was adopted in September 2019 during the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council, where the State accepted 178 out of 270 recommendations.
4. As this report is being submitted, the State of Qatar is fulfilling its obligations to promote and protect human rights, and is positively engaged with civil society to demonstrate its effort in following up and implementing recommendations that accepted it.
5. The State of Qatar looks to the universal periodic review mechanism as an opportunity for self-evaluation, a moment to consider principal challenges, best practice and experiment, in view to achieve further process in the field of promotion and protection of the human rights.
6. **Methodology for following up on the review and preparing the Fourth national report**

1. **Methodology for following up on the review**
2. The standing committee responsible for preparing reports for the universal periodic review mechanism has been restructured. The committee discusses those reports before the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review and follows up on recommendations that established under decision No. 16 issued by the Council of Ministers at its ordinary meeting of May 3, 2023. The decision stipulates that the committee will be chaired by the Minister of State for International Cooperation, with membership of representatives from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Development and Family, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Transportation, and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
3. The committee classified recommendations accepted by State during its report of universal Periodic Review, and referred them to the competent authorities for implementation. The State Qatar has made every effort to follow up sustainable method of work to implement its commitments arising out of the discussion of its first , second and third national reports and engaging in constructive dialogue with the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review.
4. **Preparing the report**
5. The standing committee drafting its fourth report to the universal periodic review mechanism, in line with the standards, goals and principles of the review and with the general guidelines (including updates) related to drafting the information requested under the universal periodic review.
6. The committee reached out to various relevant authorities, including executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations, media institutions, and civil society groups. The purpose was to gather the most recent data and information on human rights within the country from each sector, ensuring comprehensive input from all areas to aid in preparing the report.
7. The committee examined the data, information and statistics related to the human rights and reports of the civil society institutions in the State of Qatar, as well as the reports of visits of independent human rights experts of special procedures of the Human Rights Council, such as the visit of the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity in 2019, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in 2019, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in 2019, Special Rapporteur on the right to education in 2019, and Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in 2020 , beside reviewing the recommendations made to the State through United Nations committees on conventions in which the State is a party.
8. This report was drafted after the State discussed the following: the second periodic report during (73) Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in July 2019; its first report during the (134) session of the Committee of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in March 2022; its first report during the (74) session of the Committee of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in October 2023, and combined twenty-second and twenty-third periodic reports during the (112) session before the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in April 2024.
9. A workshop was organized in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa and the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region for members of the concerned committee with the aim of drafting the fourth national report for the Universal Periodic Review mechanism in September 2023, as well as to learn about best practices in the field of human rights.
10. A series of consultations were held in February 2024 on the process of reviewing and providing comments on the draft report with stakeholders including civil society, the Shura Council, academics, research institutes and relevant institutions.
11. The report was published on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to enable anyone who so wished to express their comments or views concerning human rights in the country. In addition, the final draft of the fourth of national report was submitted to the National Human Rights Committee so that its views could be taken into account. The final report was then submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.
12. **Progress made in implementing the recommendations accepted by the State**

 The state has consistently adopted measures to implement the recommendations. This section will address the actions taken by the State to implement the accepted recommendations, after it categorized into thematic areas, which include the national human rights framework and international cooperation, the promotion and protection of human rights for specific groups, economic, social, and cultural rights, civil and political rights, and comprehensive human rights issues.

1. **The National Human Rights Framework and the Promotion of International Cooperation**
2. **Accession to International Treaties**

A committee has been established to examine the possibility of acceding to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.

1. **National Laws and Legislation**

The State of Qatar continuously works in line with what is guaranteed by the Constitution to review and develop its legislative framework. This is part of the state’s commitment to fulfilling all its international obligations arising from the treaties and international instruments to which it accedes, with the aim of achieving peace, justice, and strong institutions within the framework of sustainable development goals. Since submitting its third report in 2019, the State of Qatar issued the following legislations:-

* Law No. (20) of 2019 Issuing the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Law.
* Law No. (27) of 2019 on Issuing the Anti-Terrorism Law.
* Law No. (9) of 2020 on Amending certain provisions of Decree-Law No. (17) of 1990 concerning the prevention of infectious diseases.
* Law No. (17) of 2020 on the determination of the minimum wages for domestic workers and employees.
* Decree-Law No. (21) of 2020 on private associations and institutions to activate partnership and cooperation between state institutions and private associations and institutions.
* Law No. (6) of 2021 issuing the Shura Council Election System Law.
* Law No. (7) of 2021 Concerning the Shura Council, granting the Council financial and administrative independence.
* Law No. (10) of 2021 Concerning measures for hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.
* Law No. (11) of 2021 Concerning the protection of trademarks, copyright, and related rights specific to FIFA.
* Law No. (22) of 2021Regulating healthcare services within the country.
* Decree-Law No. (19) of 2021 Amending certain provisions of the Anti-Money Laundering Law issued by Law No. (20) of 2019.
* Law No. (1) of 2022 on Issuing the Social Insurance Law.
* Law No. (2) of 2022 Concerning military retirement.
* Law No. (5) of 2022 Concerning the protection of victims, witnesses, and Persons of Similar Status similar .
* Law No. (9) of 2022 on Regulating the right to access information.
* Law No. (6) of 2023 on amending some provisions of Law No. (18) of 2017 on public hygiene
* Law No. (8) of 2023 on Issuing the Judicial Authority Law.
* Law No. (9) of 2023 on Issuing the Public Prosecution Law.
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (12) of 2019 on specifying the categories of persons eligible for political asylum
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (13) of 2019 on Specifying the Conditions and Controls of Privileges and Rights Enjoyed and rights for political refugees
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (27) of 2019 regarding the conditions and controls for permanent residency card holders
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (40) of 2019 regarding leave to care for a parent or relative.
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (41) of 2019 Issuing the executive regulations for the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Law.
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (33) of 2020 on Forming the Minimum Wage Committee, its Work System, and Determining its Remunerations
* Council of Ministers Decision No. (16) of 2023 on Amending Council of Ministers Decision No. (26) of 2019 to establish the National Committee for Women, Children, the Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities.
* Decision of the Minister of Municipality and Environment No. (310) of 2020 regarding air quality
* Minister of Public Health Decision on Issuing the executive regulations for Law No. (22) of 2021 on regulating of healthcare services within the country.
* Minister of Environment and Climate Change Decision No.8 of 2022 amending some provisions of the executive regulations of the Environmental Protection Law
* Minister of Environment and Climate Change Decision No. (8) of 2022 Amending certain provisions of the executive regulations of the Environmental Protection on stations for continuous monitoring of the quality of marine water
* Minister of Public Health Decision No. (9) of 2022 on Defining the rights and duties of patients to be observed while receiving healthcare services.
* Minister of Culture Decision No. (7) of 2023 on Approving the Statute of the Qatari Cultural Center for the Blind.
* Minister of Culture Decision No. (8) of 2023 on Approving the Statute of the Qatari Cultural Center for the Deaf.
* Minister of Commerce and Industry's Decision No. (60) of 2024 regarding reducing service fees provided by the Ministry in Commerce, Industry & Business Development and Consumer Protection Sectors By More Than 90%
1. **Strategies and policies to promote and protect human rights**

The State of Qatar continues to develop national policies and strategies aimed at achieving the pillars of the Qatar National Vision 2030 through the implementation of medium-term national development strategies. It began with the first National Development Strategy (2011-2016), followed by the second National Development Strategy (2018-2022), and has now launched the third National Development Strategy (2024-2030). This third strategy represents the final plan to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030. The strategy was prepared with extensive and effective participation from all stakeholders, including government sectors, the private sector, civil society organizations, and other interested parties. The priorities of the third National Development Strategy are embodied in seven key outcomes to be achieved: sustainable economic growth, financial sustainability, a future-ready workforce, a cohesive society, quality of life, environmental sustainability, and government excellence. (Annex -QNDS3)

The Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to build a society that promotes justice and equality. It embodies the principles of the permanent constitution of the State of Qatar, which protects public and private freedoms, enhances ethical, religious values, customs, traditions, and cultural identity, and ensures security, stability, and equal opportunities. The vision is based on four pillars: human development, social development, economic development, and environmental development.

The Qatar National Vision 2030 includes several sub-strategies to implement its pillars. For instance, the Qatar Digital Government Strategy (2023-2025) aims to shape digital transformation efforts that impact the daily interactions of citizens, residents, businesses, and government entities in Qatar. Another initiative is the Sustainable Urban Quality Strategy, which focuses on meeting water security requirements. Additionally, the Qatar National Youth Policy aims to address youth issues, priorities, and needs, and to engage them in decision-making processes. The Family Charter, launched under the slogan "The Family is Treasure of nation," aims to enhance family values and the role of the family in building a strong, sustainable society. These national policies and strategies are aligned with the Qatar National Vision 2030 and are designed to achieve various sustainable development goals.

1. **Promotion of international cooperation and dealing with international mechanisms**
2. The State of Qatar prioritizes international cooperation and development partnerships both locally and globally, in line with its commitment to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Qatar National Vision 2030 considers international cooperation an integral part of national development. The vision emphasizes that Qatar, as a responsible member of the international community, will contribute to global security and peace through political initiatives, development assistance, and humanitarian aid. Consequently, Qatar has continued to strengthen its regional and international position and improve frameworks for both bilateral and multilateral cooperation. This includes supporting international and regional initiatives, fostering partnerships, and contributing to international development programs, reconciliation efforts, and conflict resolution.
3. Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has played a significant role in alleviating human suffering and investing in education and economic empowerment as key means to combat terrorism and violent extremism. The fund aims to fulfill Qatar’s international development commitments by providing relief and development assistance. It has achieved significant progress by supporting projects and providing financial grants in over fifty locations across the world.
4. Since 2012 until June 2023, Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has provided over $6 billion in aid to various countries, targeting critical sectors such as education, healthcare, economic development, and relief. This aid has significantly highlighted Qatar's active role internationally in charitable work, development aid, humanitarian efforts, and human rights in order to the principle of equality, non-discrimination and defending human rights. (Annex - QFFD Report).
5. Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has signed a 5-year strategic framework agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the period 2024-2028, renewing its support for core resources. This funding is part of a $500 million commitment announced at the Doha Forum in 2018 to support the core resources of UN agencies.
6. One of Qatar's priorities in the field of development cooperation is to assist countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030, particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). This is achieved through Official Development Assistance (ODA), with Qatar providing international aid to friendly countries across 13 sectors. Government support for foreign aid has exceeded 70%.Additionally, Qatar supports economic and trade assistance by engaging in free trade with all nations and has been a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 1996. (Annex - QFFD Report).
7. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Qatar provided urgent assistance to 88 countries to enhance their ability to respond to the crisis. The total amount of government and non-government aid exceeded $256 million. This included a contribution of $20 million to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and $10 million to support the 13th General Programme of Work of the World Health Organization (WHO).
8. In March 2023, Qatar hosted the Fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), titled "From Potential to Prosperity." The Doha Declaration was adopted, reinforcing the international community's commitment to the Doha Programme of Action for the period 2022-2031, focusing on the 46 least developed countries. Stakeholders from countries, international bodies, and institutions pledged over $1.3 billion in grants, investments, loans, aid, development projects, and technical support to positively impact the 1.2 billion people living in these least developed countries. Qatar announced a financial package of $60 million, including $10 million to support the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action and $50 million to help build resilience in the least developed countries. Additionally, Qatar committed $12 million in humanitarian aid to the Horn of Africa.
9. The Education Above All Foundation has contributed to several projects in times of conflict and disaster. These include the reconstruction and rehabilitation of educational institutions damaged by the Beirut port explosion, the Emergency Education Program in Ukraine, the Zaha Hadid-designed refugee tent project in Pakistan, and the Zaha Hadid refugee tent project in Syria. The total aid provided amounts to approximately 34 million Qatari riyals as of 2023. (Annex - 1).
10. Qatar is committed to ensuring the right to education for all children, especially migrant children. Notable initiatives include scholarships for the Afghan robotics team, educational programs and activities by various local entities to support children displaced from crises in their homes (including Afghan and Palestinian children), and providing education for Palestinian children evacuated from Gaza during their stay in Doha.
11. Qatar has successfully strengthened its role as a key player in mediation and peace efforts both regionally and internationally. This commitment is rooted in its permanent constitution, specifically Article 7, which has guided the country's foreign policy towards promoting international peace and security. Qatar supports peaceful resolutions to international conflicts, aids peoples in exercising their right to self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, and cooperation with peace-loving states.
12. The State of Qatar is keen to follow the United Nations Charter in dealing with external conflicts and resort to the methods stipulated in the Charter within a comprehensive vision of the state's leadership, as it has actively contributed to enhancing regional and international stability through mediation efforts in resolve conflicts in a number of countries, specifically in the Middle East region and the State of Qatar has become a reliable mediator through its ideal and rich record in settling disputes by peaceful means and its strategic relations with actors in the international community.
13. Qatar's mediation efforts have extended to include the release of hostages and facilitating their access to their destination, and this role has received international acclaim, which constitutes a development in its role as a mediator based on the accumulated experience over the past years and contribution to settling of conflicts. The most important efforts of the state in this regard during the year 2023 were as follows:-
* Facilitating the Package of prisoners exchange between the United States of America and Iran in August 2023.
* The State of Qatar hosted an international conference on Afghanistan under the auspices of the United Nations in May 2023 in Doha. The conference discussed ways to enhance stability and multilateral action in Afghanistan and the challenges facing humanitarian work and impeding aid delivery to the Afghani people, after` the efforts led by the State of Qatar to facilitate the evacuation from Afghanistan.
* The State of Qatar facilitated safe evacuation and transfer of more than 40,000 people from the Afghan capital, Kabul, to Qatari territory in coordination with the concerned countries and parties present in Afghanistan. The evacuation efforts came within the context of the State of Qatar's commitment to the brotherly Afghan people and their right to live in dignity and security. The categories of those evacuated include families, women and children, in addition to minorities.
* Then, the State of Qatar hosted meetings between officials from the Afghan Taliban movement and an American delegation in July 2023, during the conference the two parties discussed building confidence, lifting sanctions, canceling blacklists, releasing frozen Afghan financial assets, and human rights issues.
* The State of Qatar embarked in a mediation efforts to reunite Ukrainian children with their families in Ukraine in December 2023. It further, facilitated the hosting of these children and their families at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow to ensure their safety and provide for their needs. In addition, The State of Qatar hosted 20 Russian and Ukrainian families, including 37 children, under an integrated program aimed at providing healthcare and comprehensive support to these families and their children, as part of its ongoing mediation efforts to reunite families affected by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, so as those families receive medical, psychological and social support.
* Qatar undertook joint mediation efforts that succeeded in reaching a humanitarian truce in Gaza in November 2023 between Israel and Hamas. The deal also included the exchange of prisoners and the release of a number of Palestinian women and children held in Israeli prisons. The truce resulted in the entry of convoys and relief aid.
* The arrival of HE minister of state for International cooperation, to Gaza Strip accompanying a Qatari diplomatic delegation to supervise the entry of Qatari aid. A number of 2256 Palestine were evacuated some of them are patients, escorts and residents as well as unification cases, plus, 4766 tons of Qatari aid delivered to support Gaza.
1. Ratification of an Agreement between Qatar and the United Nations regarding the establishment of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs under Decree No. (38) Of the year, 2022.
2. Opening of the United Nations House in Doha, provided by the Government of the State of Qatar to the United Nations agencies in the country with the aim of enhancing coordination to ensure the effectiveness of the United Nations programs and initiatives.
3. Establishment of the Center of the Analysis and Communication of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in the State of Qatar, and ratifying an agreement between the United Nations represented by the Office of the Special Representative and the State of Qatar regarding the establishment of the center pursuant to Decree No. (33) of 2022.
4. As for the State of Qatar's initiatives to restore livelihoods or reconstruction in the post-conflict phase, we could mention among others :
* Initiative of Women in Conflict Zones (2023), with the aim of mobilizing efforts and support in order to protect women in conflict zones, spare women violence, and concentrating the humanitarian and development assistance through access to financing, education, and capacity development programs.
* The State of Qatar pledged of 50 million US Dollars to support the efforts of Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan and the Regional Refugee Plan. This was during Sudan Pledging. the Ministerial Event to Announce Pledges to Support Humanitarian Response in Sudan and the Region, which was held in June 2023.
* The State of Qatar pledged at the Global Refugee Forum in 2023 to provide an initial package of relief support worth 50 million US Dollars in response to the humanitarian situation experienced by the Palestinians, and the Education Above All Foundation pledged to provide hundred university scholarships for students from the Gaza Strip to complete their studies in the State of Qatar.
* The State of Qatar fulfilled its pledge to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in December 2023 through a Multi-Year Contribution Agreement to fund the Agency with, 65.7 Million Qatari/Riyals for the period 2023-2024
1. The State of Qatar, through the Qatar Fund for Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the Republic of Germany, launched the biggest global network aimed at finding better ways to solve complex sustainable development problems, where the State of Qatar’s contribution amounting to 30 million US dollars. Today, the Sustainable Development Solutions Labs Network is the largest and most influential network, currently operating in 115 countries, demonstrating a global presence, and more than 400 flexible learning challenges had been implemented, enhancing innovation. The network revealed 6,000 grassroots-led solutions that cover all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and the network has collaborated with more than 1,500 entities from various sectors, and selected new data sources to make informed decisions.
2. **Promoting and protecting Human Rights for specific groups**
3. **Women's Rights**

**Women and leadership positions**

The state continued its support for women's participation in all legislative, judicial, administrative and political fields, whether at the international or local levels and this reflects the Qatari leadership's interest in women and enhancing full contribution in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and national legislation and the state's fulfillment of its international obligations arising from the agreements to which the State of Qatar has acceded. Among these contributions:-

* Assigning (3) ministerial portfolios to women in the new government, including the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Ministry of Social Development and Family, which considered a positive step towards empowering Qatari women to assume leadership positions in the state under Emiri Resolution No. (4) Of the year, 2021 to amend the formation of the council of ministers.
* Practicing political rights, including the right to vote and run for office in the Shura Council. A Qatari woman holds the position of Vice-President of the Qatari Shura Council in the current council.
* The participation rate of Qatari women in the labor market reached 49% in late 2023, which reflects the sustainable development goals on gender equality, achieving decent work and economic growth in this important sector.
* Regarding the employment of Qataris citizen in the government sector, the percentage of female employment was 68% in 2022 and 72% in 2023, and women constituted 41% of supervisory positions in entities that apply the Civil Human Resources Law (54) entities.
* The number of females joining the diplomatic corps increased until 2023, reaching 320 female diplomats, including the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations and international organizations in New York, and the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations in Geneva.
* A Cabinet Resolution No. (13) Of 2021 had been issued, which stipulates reducing the number of working hours per week by half, with priority given to benefiting from the part-time system for female employees who have children, to enable them to achieve a balance between work requirements and the needs of caring for their family and children.

**Women empowerment, combating discrimination against women and gender equality**

1. The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar affirmed the effective role of women and the promotion of their rights, enshrined the principle of equality in rights and duties, and stipulated the prevention of discrimination on the basis of gender, and equal opportunities to enjoy services and participate in all fields on an equal footing, in accordance with the provisions of Articles (135), (35) and (46) of the Constitution.
2. The Permanent Constitution established the legal framework for the principle of equality and non-discrimination in Articles (18) and (19) by separating the basic components of society. The principle of equality is one of the highest constitutional principle protected by the constitution it required that no law or legislation conflict with it.
3. The Qatari Constitution guarantees equality between men and women with regard to civil and political rights, especially, their right to run for office and vote in all elections and referendums, and their participation in formulating policies, holding public office at all levels, participating in organizations and associations concerned with public and political life, which is confirmed by Articles (34, 42, 45, 54, 77,80, 83,92,93, 94, 95,100).
4. The State of Qatar, through the Second National Development Strategy 2018-2022, implemented a number of projects aimed at empowering women and combating stereotypes of women in order to achieve equality within the framework of the partnership contract between the public and private sectors and civil society in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development (5, 8 and (17)، and the implementation of these projects is supervised by the Qatar Development Bank, including:
* Supporting entrepreneurship for small and micro enterprises and the Social Development Center (Nama) supervises its implementation, where 149 business-women had been enabled in 2022-2023 to benefit from services Incubation
* At the Social Development Center, which is concerned with developing and qualifying technical and administrative skills, practicing commercial activity, and building public relations with institutions and ministries in the country.
* The number of women who own partial or full companies is about 7,000 Qatari women.
1. Qatar Development Bank provides direct financing to entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium enterprises of both genders. The number of female entrepreneurs who received direct financing from Qatar Development Bank reached 56 women by the end of 2023. The value of these loans amounted to approximately 661 million Qatari riyals.
2. Qatar Development Bank provides indirect loans to entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium enterprises through the "Al-Dhameen" wallet, which provides the necessary guarantees to partner banks in order to grant loans to project owners. The number of women benefiting from this service recorded at about 321 women by the end of 2023, the total value of loans provided to them amounted to about 333.5 million Qatari riyals, in addition to training and development for the beneficiaries of these loans. (Annex (2)
3. The number of women who have benefited from the services of the incubation programs and business accelerators provided by Qatar Development Bank since 2019 has exceeded 30 women in various centers such as Qatar Business Incubator and Business for Fashion and Design in Qatar
4. Microsoft, in cooperation with Injaz Qatar, launched the "Women Technopreneurs" project, which aims to empower young women to innovate and lead in the digital world. The project focuses on providing extensive knowledge and experience in the field of artificial intelligence, which enhances the opportunities for young women to participate effectively in the technical labor market. This project is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals as it calls for achieving gender equality Empowering all women and girls, it ends with a competition that offers winners the opportunity to join the accelerator program at Qatar Science & Technology Park.

**Legal Protection of Women and Children from Violence and Domestic Violence**

1. The State of Qatar adopts an integrated approach in dealing with issues of combating domestic violence and protecting women and children exposed to violence and family disintegration.
2. The Supreme Judicial Council has established criminal circuits specialized in various types of crimes, which has effectively contribute to achieving prompt justice, the latest of which was in 2021, to consider domestic violence crimes and specializes in considering misdemeanors that occur between family members, in order to achieve peace and justice, one of the goals of sustainable development.
3. The sessions before this circuit are mostly confidential to preserve family secrets and their sanctity.
4. The most important national programs concerned with combating domestic violence –
* "Tad" for family and educational consultations, a free service provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Family in cooperation with the Family Counseling Center "Wafaq"
* Sidra Child Rights Advocacy Program (S-CAP), a service that includes providing advice and support to protect children and adolescents from abuse, provided by a team of doctors, nurses and social workers.
* "Malaaz" project, which includes preparing and implementing programs to prevent children from delinquency and protect them from drugs, and caring for and rehabilitating children with behavioral deviations, and supervising the social care homes designated for this purpose.
1. The Community Police Department at the Ministry of Interior continues its efforts to provide psychological, social, awareness, field, and legal support to victims of domestic violence and to prepare shelters for those affected.
2. The Social Protection and Rehabilitation Center (Aman) continues to provide protection and social rehabilitation for women and children through its contribution to providing protection, rehabilitation, and social empowerment services for women and children who are victims of violence, and activating the hotline for reporting and filing complaints when exposed to violence, whether psychological, physical, or sexual violence, in addition to creating the (Help Me) application via mobile and smart devices to provide assistance to the child and enable him to report when exposed to abuse or violence, or through the center's branches in hospitals, security departments, and the Public Prosecution, in addition to referrals received from correspondence from schools and other relevant authorities.
3. Providing legal, psychological, and social consultations and rehabilitation services for women and children in ways appropriate to their ages, in addition to the children's parents or caregivers.
4. The comprehensive safe house have been established, which represents an integrated shelter and a comprehensive social and health environment for protection and rehabilitation services for women and children. Aftercare services provided to them after the end of their temporary shelter to ensure their reintegration into society and obtain their rights guaranteed by the state in coordination with supporting institutions and partners, and continuous follow-up with them.
5. Organizing workshops, seminars and awareness campaigns for school and university students and employees of ministries and institutions in the state (Annex (3)
6. **Children's Rights**
7. The Ministry of Social Development and Family have been established by virtue of Amiri Decree No. (57) of 2021, and includes in its structure the Family Affairs Sector, which includes the Family Development Department concerned with children, in accordance with Amiri Decree No. (43) of the year 2022 on the organizational structure of the Ministry.
8. The Orphan Care Center (Dreema) continues to provide the necessary care for orphaned children and ensure their stability in alternative foster families and their integration into society, in addition to providing psychological counseling, social, health, educational and legal services (Annex 4)
9. The Family Counseling Center (Wafaq) continues to provide counseling services in the family, educational, social, and psychological, Sharia and legal fields and services in the preventive and therapeutic fields for all children free of charge and without discrimination. It also adopts the mission of defending the rights and interests of children of divorcees, to mitigate the negative effects resulting from the separation of parents (Annex (5).
10. The National Health Strategy 2018-2022 has set a priority on "healthy children and adolescents" for the age group 18-0 years, with the aim of encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. The programs constitute one of the pillars of the strategic plan to achieve the national goals and sustainable development goals related to good health and well-being.

**Within the framework of international and regional cooperation**

* The State of Qatar has paid attention to childhood issues, which was embodied by holding the regional meeting on preventing grave violations against children in areas of armed conflict on May 29, 2023, which was hosted by the State of Qatar as Chair of the (42) session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, in coordination with the League of Arab States, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the UNICEF Regional Office.
* The State of Qatar participated in the International Humanitarian Conference on Children in Conflict Zones held in Oslo, which was held in coordination between the Government of Norway, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Children and Conflict Zones, Save the Children, UNICEF, and the International Committee of the Red Cross in June 2023.

**Child Protection**

1. The state has established several foundations to protect children from domestic violence, including Articles (268) and (269) of the Penal Code No. (11) of 2004 on exposing children to danger and protecting them from all forms of violence, physical or sexual abuse, or illegal acts.
2. Ministerial Resolution No. (15) of the year, 2021 was issued by the Ministry of Health to establish and form the National Team for the Protection of Children from Violence, which specializes in embracing innovations, developing best practices, and establishing a mechanism for classifying cases of violence against children in order to achieve awareness and protect children from violence in the country.
3. The Ministry of Interior communicates with all segments of society for the purpose of crime prevention, and through its membership in the national team concerned with protecting children from violence; it receives cases of domestic violence of all kinds. Each case is studied on its own in cooperation with the relevant authorities and assistance is provided to this group by providing them with protection by referring them to the relevant authorities (Aman Center) and following up with them in order to ensure their safety and assist these authorities in how to deal with the child in accordance with religious and social values ​​and work to change communication patterns and modify negative behaviors and concepts in the family.
4. Sidra Medicine launched an electronic clinical information system that covers more than 90% of the country’s population to coordinate the care of children suspected of abuse and provide them with quality care by a specially trained group of doctors, nurses and social care staff.
5. The law stipulates that the juvenile court may sentence the juvenile to one of the following measures: (joining a vocational training, be obliged to perform certain duties , judicial probation, placement in a home designated for social preparation or placement in a health institution).
6. **Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
7. The National Development Strategy 2018-2022 included a project entitled Vocational and Community Rehabilitation to Enhance the Capacities of Persons with Disabilities. From this standpoint, the Shafallah Center for Persons with Disabilities provides a range of programs for persons with disabilities, and takes all necessary measures to ensure that they receive health, rehabilitation, guidance, protection and social security services in line with the Sustainable Development Goals on good health and well-being and achieving equality, in addition to justice and strong institutions in the country. The Qatar Rehabilitation Institute (QRI) also provides comprehensive rehabilitation services. The Early Detection and Intervention Program (EDIP) is another important initiative that focuses on identifying disabilities early and providing support and intervention in a timely manner.
8. The Digital Inclusive Strategy was launched and the Mada Technology Center was established to help persons with disabilities achieve their goals and obtain equal opportunities in education and work, enabling them to live independently.
9. Including the rights and requirements of persons with disabilities within the framework of the comprehensive urban plan and its planning products, such as the right to access urban centers and buildings, and the right to adequate housing for persons with disabilities, with the aim of integrating this group into society, achieving equality, and confirming the provision of sustainable cities and communities.
10. A number of (86) government integration schools have been provided, including all educational levels, where students receive their education alongside their peers, in addition to specialized intensive schools in the field of special education for those who need additional support for students with mental disabilities, including those with autism spectrum disorder at a simple to moderate level, numbering (8) schools, and a number of students have been enrolled in integration schools with an increase of 32% over the year 2022, in order to ensure the success of their subsequent integration procedures into integration schools. In addition to the Shafallah Center for Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism, the Al Noor Center for the Blind, the two auditory education schools for boys and girls, (5) specialized private schools affiliated with Qatar Foundation, and (16) private educational centers that provide services to students with disabilities.
11. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education provides training programs to promote inclusive education, and focuses on how to educate and support children with disabilities and deal with potential challenges. Many workshops and training courses were organized for families of people with disabilities to train them on how to deal with their children from this category. (Annex 6).
12. The National Strategy aims to integrate 25% more children with disabilities into educational institutions each year until 2026. It also seeks to increase the number of specialized schools by 3% in the coming years. Additionally, technical and vocational courses have been introduced for students with disabilities in government secondary schools, benefiting both citizens and residents.
13. In 2019, Qatar Foundation launched the "For All Abilities" program, which continues to expand and now enables hundreds of children with disabilities in Qatar to participate in sports activities. The foundation also established "Darb," a center dedicated to children and adolescents aged 3 to 18. This center offers educational assessments and therapeutic services to help integrate these individuals into the workforce in Qatar and the region.
14. The Noor Center for the Blind offers outstanding services for individuals with visual impairments, focusing on education, rehabilitation, and raising awareness about their issues and rights to foster greater independence and social integration. The center collaborates with both governmental and non-governmental organizations to ensure that visually impaired children receive an adequate standard of living and a stimulating environment. (Annex 7).
15. Al-Shaflah Center for Children with Disabilities offers therapeutic and educational services to children with mental disabilities and autism, ensuring equal access to education and rehabilitation without discrimination. (Annex 8).
16. The Social Welfare Department at the Ministry of Social Development and Family provides social welfare pensions to individuals with disabilities. This service is available to those under 18 who have been certified by a medical report from the appropriate medical authority as having a disability and lacking sufficient income for living.
17. In 2023, 43 individuals with disabilities were employed, ensuring job opportunities for all segments of the community.
18. Collaboration with the organizing body of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 ensured accessibility for blind individuals and people with disabilities at all tournament stadiums:
* Sensory rooms were established at two football stadiums to help individuals with autism enjoy the event. Additionally, a sensory room was set up at Hamad International Airport to support this group, and airport and aircraft staff were trained on how to interact with individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families.
* Partnerships with Qatar Rail resulted in the creation of a comprehensive Braille guide, making it easier for blind individuals to use the rail and metro systems.
* The "Bonocle" technology, the world's first Braille entertainment platform, was introduced to provide necessary assistive technologies for the visually impaired, allowing them to access digital content and follow World Cup matches.

**Within the framework of International and regional cooperation:**

* On the sidelines of the Arab Ministers of Social Affairs Council meeting, a side event titled "Continuing the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Towards Flexible National and Regional Policies and Strategies to Overcome Challenges" was organized. Held in June 2023, the event focused on leveraging technology and digital innovation to support reproductive health and ensure full access for individuals with disabilities. Its goal was to build partnerships to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.
1. **Rights of the Elderly**
2. The constitution and national legislation guarantee the protection of elderly people’s rights, including legal protection, social security, housing, employment, healthcare, and comprehensive home care. Qatari legislation addresses these aspects in the family law, labor law, social security law, and housing regulations.
3. The State of Qatar established the “Ihsan” Center for Empowerment and Care of the Elderly People, which aims to empower them and promote their participation in all fields, raise community awareness about their rights and fundamental issues. The center provides accommodation, healthcare, and social services for the elderly, as well as psychological, social, and legal counseling.
4. The Community Care Department was established within the Ministry of Social Development and Family to propose amendments to legislation and develop and implement national strategies, plans, and policies related to the elderly. Its goal is to raise awareness and educate the community about elderly rights, in collaboration with relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations.
5. In the State of Qatar, elderly individuals and persons with disabilities receive special assistance when visiting government departments. This assistance includes the following :-
* Establishing Service Section for Elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in the Public Relations and Communication Department of the Ministry of Social Development and Family, this section responses to the their inquiries and requests . It also ensures that their requests meet all necessary conditions in order direct them to the appropriate administrative units to complete their transactions.
* The Ministry of Interior has established a special hall in General Directorates of Border Passports and Expatriate Affairs, to provide good and better service to elderly individuals and persons with disabilities.
* All government buildings now offer a fast track service to assist elderly individuals, retirees, and people with disabilities. Additionally, an emergency hotline is available at the Execution Court for urgent cases involving these groups.

**3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

1. **The Right to Health**
2. Qatar's Second National Development Strategy (2018-2022) focused on enhancing the well-being of all citizens and residents, improving public health, and meeting the needs of future generations through a comprehensive healthcare system. The strategy aimed to achieve better health, care, and prevention for everyone by reducing hospital admissions by 15%, promoting healthy lifestyle habits in the community, and lowering unhealthy behaviors such as smoking. The state aims to reduce smoking rates by 30% over the next five years.
3. .Public health indicators show significant improvement in the health of Qatar's population. The average life expectancy rose to 80.3 years in 2021. The number of individuals benefiting from health services increased by 6% from the previous year, reaching over 2.8 million patients at health centers by the end of 2023.
4. The Ministry of Health has introduced advanced programs for patient benefit, such as the Smart Screening Program, which is one of the objectives of the National Health Plan. This program involves a general health check designed to proactively assess an individual's health and detect potential future diseases.
5. The gradual implementation of a health insurance system has begun, which will cover all population groups and visitors to Qatar. This aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 10, which focus on health and reducing inequalities.
6. Since 2019, six new health centers have been opened, which has alleviated pressure on existing centers and is in line with the geographical distribution of population density. By 2023, the total number of health centers in the country reached 31.
7. The country received World Health Organization (WHO) accreditation for Healthy Cities. Qatar adopts a health-in-all-policies approach to create a healthy environment for its residents and visitors, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 11. Additionally, all eight municipalities in Qatar have been accredited as Healthy Cities, making it the first country in the world where all cities have received WHO accreditation.
8. The National Development Strategy 2030 focused on the importance of preventive health as a fundamental pillar for improving the health and well-being of its citizens. This was reflected in the National Health Strategy and the Primary Health Care Strategy, and several initiatives and projects were implemented to highlight preventive health and integrate it into the public health system and the healthcare system. Below are some examples of how preventive health has become a major focus in the State of Qatar, most notably:
* Launching campaigns to raise awareness of preventive measures and healthy behaviors, targeting a variety of health issues such as diabetes, obesity, and cancer, where the Ministry of Public Health was able to improve the overall health and well-being of individuals, contributing to enhancing the overall quality of life and increasing motivation to achieve personal and social goals. Additionally, the national vaccination program was launched to protect citizens from preventable diseases.
* Integrating initiatives to promote a healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity and balanced nutrition, in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, encouraging citizens to adopt healthier habits from an early age, which contributes to improving overall health and well-being.
1. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Qatar ensured the provision of free healthcare to all members of the community without discrimination, including citizens and expatriate workers who received free treatment without the need for a health card and regardless of their violation of residency laws. Free vaccination was also provided to all expatriate workers, encouraging them to get vaccinated through the national COVID-19 vaccination program. As a result of these efforts, Qatar recorded one of the lowest mortality rates in the world.
2. The Aman Committee for Injured Workers is committed to providing services to injured workers who have suffered accidents or illnesses leading to permanent or semi-permanent disabilities, preventing them from fulfilling the primary purpose of their presence in the country. The committee addresses problems that may face the patient and facilitates the process of transferring the patient to their home country. Its main responsibilities include:-
* Communicating with the patient's friends in Qatar and with their family outside the country to gather required information, coordinating with them on necessary actions, and cooperating with some embassies to facilitate the committee's mission.
* Proposing and providing an appropriate medical center for continued rehabilitation in the patient's home country and communicating with them.
1. **The Right to Work**
2. The Ministry of Labor was established in 2021, after the labor sector had been under the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs. The ministry works to improve its services and enhance the state's efforts to develop the legislative and institutional framework of the labor sector to align with international standards, in accordance with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the sustainable development goals related to decent work and economic growth.
3. The first phase of implementing the technical cooperation program with the International Labor Organization (2018-2021) was completed, achieving notable success in developing national legislation and practices in line with international labor standards and promoting sustainable development goals, particularly by fostering partnerships to achieve them. Qatar accomplished significant reforms in a short period in the five main pillars of the technical cooperation program: wage protection, labor inspection and occupational health and safety, a contractual employment system replacing the sponsorship system, combating forced labor, and enhancing workers' voices. These achievements were praised by international trade unions, the International Organization of Employers, and all international parties during discussions at the 340th session of the International Labor Organization's Governing Body.
4. The second phase of the program was launched to consolidate the significant achievements made in the first phase, and new areas of cooperation were identified, including labor market management and labor migration, law enforcement and access to justice, enhancing workers' voices and social dialogue, international cooperation, and the exchange of experiences to contribute to the transition to a more competitive knowledge-based economy in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategies 2018-2022 and 2024-2030.
5. The third phase of the technical cooperation program was also launched in 2024, which will extend until 2027, to consolidate ongoing efforts and cover new areas, including employment policy, labor market information systems, and skills development.
6. The nation has undertaken a series of legislative reforms and developments in the labor field, the most notable of which are:-
* Ministerial Decision No. (95) of 2019, which abolished the exit permit requirement for all categories, was issued, and Decree-Law No. (19) of 2020 amended some provisions of Law No. (21) of 2015 regulating the entry, exit, and residence of expatriates. Decree-Law No. (18) of 2020 amended some provisions of the Labor Law to abolish the requirement of employer consent for a worker to change employment (Annex 9).
* Workers and employers have the right to terminate the employment contract at any time without stating reasons, provided they respect the notice period.
* Law No. (21) of 2015 prohibits the confiscation of a worker's passport. It is worth noting that there are procedures followed by the Search and Follow-up Department at the Ministry of Interior in case a worker's passport is confiscated by his employer (Annex 10).
* The effectiveness of the Ministry of Labor's electronic system for changing employers has doubled, and it has been linked to the Ministry of Interior's electronic system to prevent employers from taking any retaliatory actions against workers who submitted requests to change their employer.
* Law No. (17) of 2020 was issued regarding setting the minimum wage, which applies to all workers, nationalities, and sectors without discrimination, including domestic workers. The minimum wage was set at 1,000 Qatari riyals per month, in addition to the worker's right to adequate food and housing. If the employer does not provide suitable accommodation or appropriate food for the worker or domestic helper, the minimum housing allowance is 500 Qatari riyals, and the minimum food allowance is 300 Qatari riyals (Annex 11). A committee was also established to review the minimum wage, considering economic factors and the needs of workers and their families, in line with sustainable development goals, particularly good health and well-being, decent work, and economic growth.
* Decree-Law No. (18) of 2020 stipulates stricter penalties for violators by enhancing the Wage Protection System to improve its effectiveness in detecting violations. Non-compliant employers are subject to a one-year imprisonment and a fine of ten thousand Qatari riyals, in addition to halting all transactions with the Ministry of Labor and referring them to the competent judicial authorities. Over 1,660,000 workers, or 96% of eligible workers, have registered in the Wage Protection System. The Workers' Support and Insurance Fund pays workers' dues if the employer is unable to pay, achieving peace and justice among the sustainable development goals.
* Decision No. (17) of 2021 was issued regarding the necessary precautions to protect workers from heat stress at open work sites during the summer period from June 1 to September 15, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
* Decision No. (21) of 2019 regarding the regulation of the conditions and procedures for electing worker representatives in joint committees, which are the main means for social dialogue within companies to discuss labor-related issues. For the first time in the Gulf region, expatriate workers were able to elect their representatives. A special department for joint committees was established in the Ministry of Labor to support their formation, in line with the state's goals of achieving equality, peace, and justice.
* The conditions and procedures for licensing the recruitment of foreign workers for others were reorganized under Decision No. (21) of 2021, including the prohibition of charging the workers recruitment fees.
1. In 2019, a national policy for labor inspection was adopted, focusing on evidence-based strategic planning to increase efficiency and achieve sustainable compliance with national and international standards. This policy was based on an assessment of the labor inspection system in Qatar conducted by the Ministry of Labor and the International Labor Organization. An annual report for 2019 was prepared for the Labor Inspection Department to enhance transparency and accountability in inspection services, in line with the requirements of Labor Inspection Convention No. (81) of 1947. A comprehensive training plan for the period 2019-2021 was developed, providing training on various topics for all labor inspectors, including inspection skills, labor law, forced labor, and human trafficking. This plan aimed to enhance the capabilities of the Labor Inspection Department and increase the number of inspectors to make inspection processes faster and more effective. Inspection results are published on the Ministry of Labor's website as part of a transparency approach to deter non-compliant employers.
2. Qatar has signed 43 bilateral agreements with labor-sending countries to regulate the recruitment and employment of workers in a systematic manner, ensuring their protection and respecting their rights and duties. Additionally, 22 memorandums of understanding have been signed with 19 countries for cooperation in labor-related areas to exchange expertise. Moreover, Qatar Visa Centers (QVCs) have been established in labor-sending countries, with 14 centers in 6 countries (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, and the Philippines) since 2019.

**Enhancing Mechanisms for Complaints and Labor Dispute Resolution**

1. The Constitution of the State of Qatar includes all citizens and residents within its territory with rights related to equality before the law, access to the judiciary and grievance mechanisms, security, and freedom, as indicated by the articles addressing individuals in general without discrimination between citizens and residents (Articles 18, 35, 36, 46, 135). Article 52 specifically addresses residents.
2. The number of labor dispute resolution committees was increased from three to five under Cabinet Decision No. (17) of 2022, amending some provisions of Decision No. (6) of 2018 regarding the formation of labor dispute resolution committees. This increase aims to support the legal recourse available to workers and expedite the resolution of labor cases.
3. Legal remedies in the State of Qatar for expatriate workers include submitting complaints to the National Human Rights Committee, the Labor Relations Department at the Ministry of Labor, the labor dispute resolution committees, and the Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Interior.
4. The Ministry of Labor launched a series of electronic applications aimed at enabling employees and workers in the private sector, as well as domestic workers, to submit complaints electronically. This includes a hotline that provides a 24-hour service for receiving complaints.
5. The Labor Dispute Resolution Department at the Ministry of Labor offers free legal advice to workers with the assistance of an interpreter.
6. The Ministry has also established a special department for receiving and resolving complaints from domestic workers.
7. Labor dispute resolution committees are responsible for resolving all disputes arising from the provisions of the law or employment contracts, including domestic worker contracts, within a period not exceeding three weeks. If the ministry's mediation does not lead to an amicable resolution, the case is referred to the committee by the relevant department.
8. In 2022, the 'Humanitarian Care House' was established in collaboration between the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and the Qatar Red Crescent.
9. **The Right to Education**
10. Education is a fundamental right guaranteed by the constitution and is considered a key pillar of society’s progress. The State of Qatar has placed significant emphasis on education, which is a major pillar of Qatar National Vision 2030 and a priority in the strategic development plan. Qatar is committed to ensuring high-quality, comprehensive education for all in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (Quality Education), which is the fundamental basis for achieving progress in all 17 Sustainable Development Goals by preparing a generation capable of facing future economic, social, and environmental challenges.
11. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has been keen on achieving gender equality in the development process, as evidenced by equal educational opportunities. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the number of female students in public schools was 66,929 compared to 62,320 male students. The ministry encourages both genders to enroll in various scientific fields, and the percentage of students enrolled in secondary education programs specializing in sciences and engineering or in the scientific courses in the 11th and 12th grades in public schools during the 2022-2023 academic year was 47.4% of the total student body, with 48.6% being female students in this level.
12. Specialized schools have been established for both genders, including two schools for banking and business studies, and two technical schools, one for boys and one for girls.
13. Universities in Qatar offer equal opportunities for females in choosing their preferred academic fields. Qatar University has over 100 academic programs available to both genders, with clear and approved mechanisms ensuring equal opportunities for enrollment in these programs.
14. The state provides a comfortable and stimulating educational environment for students, along with training for teachers, updating curricula, and providing modern technology and educational resources. Vocational and technical training programs are also offered to equip students with practical skills to enhance their economic opportunities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the state utilized distance education to ensure the continuity of learning, which helped reduce the educational gap.
15. The National Qatar e-Learning Portal was developed to facilitate remote education, with Microsoft Teams widely used for virtual classrooms. The government provided over 50,000 tablets and internet connections to students from low-income families.
16. The state has facilitated to establish private schools that accommodate diverse curricula, including 24 international curricula such as the International Baccalaureate, British, American, French, and Indian curricula, as well as schools following Arab national curricula and other community schools. This supports progress towards sustainable development goals, particularly Goal 8, which focuses on decent work, and Goal 9, which aims to promote innovation, in line with the National Development Strategy to prepare a workforce ready for the future and ensure sustainable economic growth.
17. Mechanisms for the inclusion of out-of-school children in the State of Qatar have been developed through the establishment of free specialized schools called "Al Salam" schools for children who were unable to enroll in education or who stopped going to school for various reasons, including age or language challenges. Seven (7) schools have been established, 5 of which have been opened so far, and home education has been adopted (Distance education) to enroll the largest number of students in schools, noting that some of Al Salam schools are vocational and technical schools.
18. The State of Qatar has taken the lead in the field of access to information and communications technology (ICT), by achieving the first rank globally and regionally from among more than (137) countries in the second edition of the Digital Access Rights Evaluation Index (INDEX DARE 202) issued by the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ICT), one of the United Nations initiatives.
19. The achievements of the “Reach Out to Asia – ROTA” program are many, including promoting global citizenship among youth and building their capacities to contribute to a sustainable future over the past 15 years through 66 projects in 21 countries in Asia and Africa, reaching more than 2 million children and youth beneficiaries, engaging more than 7,310 volunteers in community service, improving the quality of education by training 19,885 male and female teachers, in addition to establishing and rehabilitating 336 schools.
20. ROTA’s recently launched “Education for Climate Action Initiative” supports the integration of climate change education into secondary schools. Under this initiative, ROTA is working with partners to engage most vulnerable youth to climate risks to develop their capacities and implement concrete actions that contribute to mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change facing their communities in areas such as renewable agriculture, afforestation, clean and renewable energy, water conservation, waste management, environmental conservation and recycling in order to enhance progress achieved on sustainable development goals, particularly the 17th. Goal on establishing partnerships for achieving the Goals.
21. The Doha International Family Institute has launched the “Tanshia’a” Program (Upbringing) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which is designed to build the child’s personality and provide him with an integrated social upbringing for the early stages of life, and to protect children from behavioral deviations.

**4. Civil and Political Rights**

1. **The Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression**
2. The State of Qatar affirms its constant care in supporting, promoting and protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and in ensuring the enjoyment of such right in accordance with national legislation that meets the criteria and conditions for the realization of this right as provided for in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
3. The State of Qatar has made progress in the 2023 Press Freedom Index, approved by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), as the country ranked 84th globally after being ranked 105th in 2022.
4. The Qatari Constitution affirmed the right to peaceful assembly in Article (44), and Law No. (18) of 2004 also regulated public meetings and marches.
5. The sixteenth goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Plan included the goals to be achieved within this goal, including goal No. (10), which aims to “ensure public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements”.
6. The right to freedom of expression and opinion is also considered a basic guarantee in achieving the goals of the plan, as confirmed by the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression in her report dated April 19, 2023, submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council, entitled “Sustainable Development and Freedom of Expression: Why voice matters” in which she stressed that freedom of expression is a fundamental factor which helps achieve sustainable development. In the “Riga Declaration” issued on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day in 2015, UNESCO considered freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and the right to access information are to be fundamental rights that enable the enjoyment of all other human rights and the goals of sustainable development.

**The promotion of the right to freedom of opinion and expression has contributed to the achievement of some of the goals contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including:**

* Goal 5 on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, where the right to freedom of expression and opinion has contributed to combating traditional cultural patterns of women's image in society by providing introductory spaces for women aimed at promoting women's successes in various areas and assuming leadership roles, thereby demonstrating their role as actors in society.
* Through the promotion of the right to freedom of opinion, the State has achieved important results in the course of achieving Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Plan 2030 providing, within this goal, 13 of the total 14 indicators according to the State's report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Plan of 2022.
* Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, where the promotion of the right to freedom of opinion and expression has contributed to upholding the rule of law through the availability of numerous channels that help with reporting various manifestations of corruption, providing free spaces for citizens to criticize and evaluate the policies of public institutions in the State, thereby enhancing the status and effectiveness of those institutions and ensuring transparency.
* Promoting the right to freedom of opinion and expression also contributed to ensuring the achievement of the goal 16 by the State, which is related to ensuring public access to information by supporting the press sector, whether by providing the potential of free journalistic work or by strengthening the economic environment for the press sector, which stimulated investment and supported pluralism in this sector. Thus, the country advanced 21 ranks forward in the journalism index for the year 2024 and ranked 84th globally.
1. **Combating hate speech**
2. The State has been keen, at the level of general legislation, to provide the necessary guarantees to protect and promote human rights in all areas, including combating hate speech, where it blocked the gaps that would fuel racist tendencies or discriminatory practices on any basis. This can be deduced from the following:
* Article (256) of the Penal Code No. (11) of 2004.
* Article (47) of the Press and Publications Law No. (8) of 1979.
* Law on Combating Cybercrime No. (14) of 2014.
1. The State of Qatar is also interested in further promoting dialogue among civilizations and coexistence among different religions and cultures. It has elaborated a plan for the Alliance of Civilizations (2023-2027), based on the directives of the political leadership, the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar and the Qatar National Vision 2030, which affirmed and supported the dialogue of civilizations and coexistence among different religions and cultures. The plan included the implementation of programs and activities in the Alliance's four areas (education, youth, migration and information).
2. The role of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue is to enhance the practice of freedom of religion and belief by all members of society, to continue encouraging dialogue among civilizations and coexistence among religions and cultures, to activate the principles of peaceful coexistence and to endeavor towards dialogue and cultural, civilizational, ethnic and religious diversity on the ground.
The Centre organizes a series of local and international programs to discuss issues of religious freedom practices in the State, in addition to supporting the cultural activities of foreign communities. The Centre also receives foreign community leaders, church chiefs, heads of community associations and institutions concerned with communities’ affairs in Qatar, with different religious and ethnic affiliations and cultures, and promotes the culture of dialogue and peaceful coexistence (Annex 12).
3. The 14th Doha Interfaith Dialogue Conference 2022 was held under the title: "Religions and Hate Speech: Practice and Scriptures", with the participation of about 300 scholars, religious leaders, researchers, academics and media professionals from 70 countries around the world.
4. **Rights to fair trials**
5. Article 60 of the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar stipulates that the system of government is based on the separation of powers and shall be exercised in collaboration with the manner specified in this Constitution. Legislative Authority shall be vested in Al‐Shoura Council (Advisory Council), while His Highness the Amir assumes Executive Authority and is assisted by the Council of Ministers. The Judicial Authority shall be vested in courts of law as prescribed in this Constitution; and court judgments shall be pronounced in the name of the Amir.
6. Exercising control by the legislative authority over the executive authority is a direct result of the constitutional recognition of the principle of separation of powers, which aims to achieve balance and collaboration between the executive and legislative authorities, ensuring that the governing bodies are subject to constitutional rules. The legislative authority, being the representative of the people, has the right to direct and hold the executive authority of the state accountable, which is one of the legislative authority’s functions according to the text of Article (76) of the Constitution. Constitutional institutions exercise their functions in accordance with the law and respect for the principle of legitimacy which governs the work of such institutions. The scope and form of parliamentary control are determined as stipulated in the Constitution and relevant laws.
7. The Qatari Constitution ensures the independence of the judiciary and separates it from the practices of the executive and legislative authorities. Article (130) of the Constitution stipulates that “The judicial authority shall be independent and it shall be vested in courts of different types and grades. The courts shall make their judgments according to the law.” As well as Article (131) regarding the independence of judges, and this independence was also confirmed by Judicial Authority Law No. (8) of 2023.
8. The Constitution also stipulated in Article (39) the necessity of providing a fair trial, including the necessary guarantees of the right of self‐defense. Article (135) also stipulated that “The right of litigation is inviolable and it shall be guaranteed to all people”. In addition, the Criminal Procedures Law No. (23) of 2004 has guaranteed a set of fair trial guarantees.
9. **Combating human trafficking**
10. The State of Qatar has promulgated several legislations consistent with the objectives of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children, as well as the National Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, which is in line with the global vision and sustainable development goals to achieve peace and justice, which is as follows:
* Law No. 5 of 2020 amended certain provisions of Law No. 15 of 2011 on combating trafficking in human beings. It amended certain articles to become more comprehensive, to ensure effective prosecution of perpetrators and increase penalties for certain offences.
* Decision of the President of the Court of First Instance No. 37 of 2022 on amending and distributing the competences of the competent courts, whereby a Criminal Division was allocated to deal with cases relating to trafficking in human beings.
* Law No. 2 of 2020 on amending certain provisions of the Penal Code promulgated by Law No. 11 of 2004 was issued, with a view to dealing with certain cases of human trafficking in Article (3) thereof, entitled "Offences relating to an organized criminal group".
1. The National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking acts as the national coordinator for monitoring, preventing and combating human trafficking, prosecuting perpetrators, and providing support and protection to victims through coordination with the relevant authorities in this regard. It continues its efforts by developing and implementing strategic plans and policies as required. (Annex (13).
* A Memorandum of Understanding was concluded within the framework of combating human trafficking between the State of Qatar and the United States of America in 2018 and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2023, as well.
* In 2020, the Government established a specialized unit to combat human trafficking in the Ministry of Labor, and in 2021 it allocated resources to the unit and provided it with 50 staff.
* A Section for Combating Human Trafficking was established at the Ministry of Interior within the jurisdiction of the Criminal Investigation Department.
* A memorandum of understanding was signed with Qatar Charity to support victims of human trafficking in the amount of 3 million Qatari riyals for 3 years.
* The Committee participates in the Qatar-US Strategic Dialogue, which is held annually, to discuss human trafficking issues, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two Parties in 2021.
* Coordination has been made with the Qatar Lawyers Association to plead for free in human trafficking cases brought before the competent courts.
* Approval of the establishment of a global center for training and studies in the field of combating human trafficking, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as part of the project's study made in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
* In 2022, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking launched direct contact methods to report abuses related to human trafficking cases via the hotline 16044 and the email: ht@mol.gov.qa
* The Committee regularly, and within its plans, conducts periodic reviews of the legislation in force and related executive procedures. The Committee’s Secretariat’s Activation Plan for 2022 included the following:-
1. Strengthening mechanisms and procedures of prevention and protection.
2. Launching (Afdal “Best” Communication Programme), which contributes to the promotion of the rights of migrant workers through the provision of basic ICT training. The program has been able to link more than 1.5 million migrant workers to digital services, opening up new opportunities for learning and work. This reflects Qatar's commitment to improving conditions for migrant workers and promoting decent work and economic growth, which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal No. 8.

**5.** **Common Issues**

1. **Environment Issues**
2. The Ministry of Environment participated in the Paris Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee Meeting on Plastic Pollution aimed at working on a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution at UNESCO in 2023.
3. The Ministry of Environment Participated also in the International Conference on Climate Change and Human Rights held in February 2023.
4. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change cooperates with several entities such as the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), in addition to cooperating with the United Nations Environment Programme on several projects.
5. The State of Qatar has renewed its support to the UNDP's Network of Accelerated Development Impact Laboratories. An additional contribution totaling US $10 million was recently announced for the Network of Laboratories, bringing the total support to US $30 million.
6. The Qatar Development Fund (QDF) signed a contribution agreement in June 2021 with the Adaptation Fund established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with the aim of financing adaptation to climate change in countries vulnerable to climate change, including the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).
7. The organization of an international conference on the importance of recycling and sustainability, with the aim of presenting the latest experiences in the field of waste and recycling management and their role in preserving the environment and reducing their impact on climate change.
8. The Million Tree Initiative (2019-2022) was implemented with the participation of all segments of society, to contribute to the implementation of global commitments to reduce temperatures and reduce the risks of carbon emissions. The 10 Million Trees Initiative was also launched with the aim of achieving it by 2030, in implementation of the commitments of the State of Qatar towards the Paris Charter, and international pledges to preserve the environment, reduce climate change, and achieve one of the sustainable development goals, which is climate action.
9. The Ministry participates in a regional technical cooperation project with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the purpose of using nuclear techniques to measure plastic pollution in the sea and the environment. The Ministry has trained some cadres through this project on the process of using such techniques.
10. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is implementing a number of technical cooperation projects with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to measure and monitor radioactive pollution in the terrestrial and marine environments in line with the Sustainable Development Goals on life on land, in addition to using nuclear technologies to measure air pollution and treat radioactive waste resulting from oil and gas extraction (NORM) for the safety of the environment, the public and workers. In collaboration with the Food Safety Laboratory at the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is implementing a project to measure radioactive contamination in foods.
11. The establishment of the National Plan for Preparedness and Response to Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies. The Ministry began the establishment of a radiological map for the State of Qatar as well as the installation of radiation monitoring stations to monitor radiation in the air and the Gulf to measure radiological doses.
12. Installation of non-ionizing radiation monitoring stations for telephone towers, and readings are monitored around the clock in the Data Analysis Unit.
13. Implementation of the Convention on Nuclear Safety by submitting Qatar's first report to the Convention and attending review meetings of IAEA member States.
14. Cooperation with the European Union's Centre of Excellence on Nuclear Security and Safety, in collaboration with the Crime and Justice Office in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals on partnerships to achieve the Goals.
15. Participation in the IAEA General Conference in September 2023.
16. Issuance of the Directory of Radiological Practice in Nuclear Medicine. The Ministry has also completed the work of guidance manuals in the areas of medical diagnostic radiation, industrial radiography, nuclear measurements and well logging, radiological and nuclear emergency preparedness and response, storage requirements for radioactive sources and materials, security transport of radioactive materials on the State's land roads and in the management and treatment of radioactive waste from petroleum and gas extraction.
17. Holding training courses for customs employees at ports in the field of controlling the import, export and smuggling of radioactive materials.
18. Holding a national symposium on the peaceful uses of atomic energy with the aim of spreading awareness among the public about the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the extent of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

**6. Training, capacity-building and awareness-raising**

1. Awareness-raising and training programs on human rights principles have been upgraded. Training programs have been developed for law enforcement personnel in the protection and promotion of human rights. Trainers have also been trained in this area in the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The National Human Rights Committee continues to translate its education and awareness-raising competencies into a variety of mechanisms and tools for human rights values and principles. (Annex “14”).

**7. Enhancing the work of the National Human Rights Committee (Annex “15”)**

1. In accordance with the Committee's Organization Act No. 17 of 2010, the number of representatives of civil society organizations in the National Human Rights Committee is (9) members and (5) members representing government institutions.
2. The Committee participates in the discussion of the annual periodic reports on the situation of human rights in the State of Qatar, in addition to the parallel reports prepared by the Committee on national performance in implementing the provisions of the human rights agreements ratified by the State, as well as the national periodic report submitted to the Universal Review Mechanism.
3. The Committee’s achievements in the legislative field include providing opinions and comments on the provisions of draft laws referred to it before being promulgated and comparing them with human rights standards, with the aim of harmonizing them with relevant international standards (Annex (16).
4. The measures taken by the Committee to enhance the rights of migrant workers are represented by its tasks in redressing these rights through:
* Establishing offices for foreign communities at the headquarters of the National Human Rights Committee, receiving complaints submitted by migrant workers that arise within the framework of work relations between them and their employers, where these problems focus on issues related to (changing an employer, financial dues, etc.). During the period (2019 - 2023), the number of these complaints and petitions has reached 8,987. That is in addition to providing legal assistance for critical humanitarian cases in the context of processing such complaints through volunteer law firms to plead the cases of the concerned parties free of charge before the courts.
1. The Committee concluded a memorandum of understanding between the National Human Rights Committee and the Ministry of Social Development and Family, with the aim of establishing an effective partnership between them in the areas of supporting and empowering the family, women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, through various cooperation mechanisms in the areas of law, awareness-raising, and exchanging expertise and best practices.
2. **Challenges, Future Prospects**
3. The Third National Development Strategy (2024-2030) is the final phase towards achieving the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. The strategy aims to maintain readiness with a view to addressing challenges and to moving the State of Qatar to the ranks of advanced countries by 2030.
4. National mechanisms on human rights issues continue their efforts to review and amend national legislation in conformity with international instruments and to submit proposals for laws that would strengthen the protection of human rights, as well as proposals for accession to international conventions.

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