



SHADOW REPORT

SUBMITTED UNDER THE UNIVERSAL

SPECIFIC TO THE HUMAN
RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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PERIODIC REVIEW MECHANISM
FOR THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION

MAY 1 TO 12, 2023

First: Introduction to the organizations submitting the report

The organizations concerned operate for the protection and respect of Human Rights in the Arab world and in the countries of the world. They are active in the protection and promotion of Human Rights as well as affirming international efforts for Human Development. Moreover, they strive to promote dialogue and peace in the world as well as to guarantee the enjoyment of the fundamental rights and freedoms of everyone

 <p>The European Association for Defense of Minorities</p>	 <p>Arab Union for Human Rights</p>	 <p>Bahrain Jurists Society</p>	 <p>Arab European Forum for Dialogue and Human Rights</p>
 <p>United Villages Organization</p>	 <p>Together Organization for Human Rights</p>	 <p>The National Coalition of Independent Women</p>	 <p>International Council for Diplomacy and Dialogue</p>
 <p>cap freedom of conscience</p>	 <p>Arab Network for Digital Media and Human Rights</p>	 <p>IMPAC</p>	 <p>World Council for Public Diplomacy and Community Dialogue</p>
 <p>Ma'arij Foundation For Peace & Development</p>			

Second: Presentation

- ◆ During the thirty-eighth session, the UAE submitted its third universal periodic review at the twelfth session held on 22 January 2018, and the Working Group adopted the UAE report at its seventeenth session held on 25 January 2018
- ◆ During the review session, 97 delegations presented their interventions, which included, in addition to praising human rights efforts and achievements, their recommendations for reinforcing the human rights situation in the UAE. The UAE reviewed the “230 recommendations” presented to it during the review process, and took note of two recommendations that the UAE decided to reject as they fall outside the scope of the Universal Periodic Review
- ◆ The UAE voiced its support for the “132” recommendations and the work to implement them, since many of them have been implemented, and took note of the “98” other recommendations, and pledged to work on their implementation taking into account what is allowed by national laws, legislation, values and principles, to the extent that it is not in contradiction with the provisions of the Islamic Sharia
- ◆ The UAE National Human Rights Committee, with the participation of all concerned authorities, followed up on the implementation of the recommendations that were accepted by the State and which concern a range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and developed a national plan to implement 132 recommendations that take into account the legal and social dimensions, and according to a timetable previously designated by the Standing Committee for the Follow-up of the Universal Periodic Report on Human Rights, and the National Human Rights Committee that was established by Cabinet decision in October 2019, with the aim of coordinating and directing government efforts in order to develop and oversee a national plan for human rights strengthen cooperation with all international bodies and mechanisms, follow up on current and future requirements concerned with human rights, and achieve global leadership for the state

Interaction with the UAE Universal Periodic Review results and outputs

Third round In light of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' letter dated 7 August 2018

Third: Efforts made to combat human trafficking and ban all forms of slavery

- ◆ The United Arab Emirates is a key member of the global campaign against human trafficking, and is one of the countries that have worked the most and the best to combat all forms of human trafficking crimes, and have been keen to eradicate this crime completely. The countries of the region have taken the lead in issuing the Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 on Combating Human Trafficking Crimes
- ◆ The UAE ratified the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Protocol), especially women and children, in 2009, as amended in 2013, and Law No. 51 of 2006 was amended to harmonize it, and the law was amended in February 2015 to strengthen the support and protection of victims and witnesses and the promotion of awareness of crimes related to human trafficking, by the Federal Law no. 1 of 2015 on the fight against human trafficking, which criminalizes everything related to this crime such as sexual exploitation, prostitution, slavery, forced labor, coercion, trade in human organs, begging and all practices similar to exclusion and forced labor. The law punishes with imprisonment of not less than five years and a fine of not less than 100,000 dirhams any person who commits this crime, and the concealment of these crimes is criminalized and punishable
- ◆ The United Arab Emirates established the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking under Cabinet Resolution No. 15 of 2007 to strengthen the frameworks necessary to implement anti-trafficking laws, coordinate efforts to ensure effective law enforcement, raise community awareness of the crime, provide necessary training and rehabilitation programs for national authorities, and represent the state in regional and international forums. The committee includes 18 representatives from various federal and local institutions
- ◆ The UAE has adopted a national strategy to counter human trafficking, which aims to achieve prevention, prosecution and punishment, protect victims and strengthen international cooperation. The committee publishes an annual report that monitors the progress made regarding the prevention and fight against this crime within the country

- ◆ The United Arab Emirates has established national institutions in charge of providing asylum, shelter and support services, which are represented by the "Shelter Centers for Women and Children", the "Abu Dhabi Center for Shelter and Humanitarian Care", the "Dubai Foundation for Women and Children", the Sharjah Department Center for Social Services and Women's Protection" and the "Social Support Centers in Abu Dhabi affiliated with the Abu Dhabi Police", the "General Human Rights Department of the Dubai Police" and the "Dubai Human Trafficking Crime Monitoring Center". The above institutions receive all victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and provide them with temporary shelter, care, legal, humanitarian and psychological support and enable them to return to their respective countries
- ◆ The UAE acceded to the "UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime" in 2007, the "Palermo Protocol" in 2008, and the UN "United Against Human Trafficking" initiative in 2010, in order to strengthen its leadership and progress in the fight against human trafficking. The UAE has regularly hosted the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking, who has commended the progress made. The UAE has also signed numerous anti-trafficking agreements with many countries to share best practices and enhance assistance to victims of this crime. The UAE is also keen to strengthen regional and international efforts to combat the crime of human trafficking

Recommendations


- ▶ To create mechanisms to involve the National Human Rights Commission in strengthening anti-trafficking measures, and strengthen its partnership with national committees and strategies concerned with combating human trafficking
- ▶ To create a partnership between the National Human Rights Commission and all shelters and care centers for victims of human trafficking, including monitoring and auditing the work of these centers and visiting them
- ▶ To strengthen the role and contributions of civil society institutions in the fight against this crime and improve the awareness of society and institutions on this issue

Fourth: Implemented reforms to improve the protection of migrant workers' rights

- ◆ The UAE has issued Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 regarding the regulation of labor relations, and also issued Federal Law No. 10 of 2017 regarding domestic workers. These legislations guarantee the respect and promotion of all rights and freedoms regarding expatriate workers, and these legislations are considered as one of the best legislations in terms of harmonization with international legislation regarding human rights and expatriate workers' rights. The Council of Ministers also issued the Executive Regulation of the Federal Domestic Workers Law, Resolution No. 22 of 2019
- ◆ The UAE has been keen to implement many reform measures to improve the rights of expatriate workers in the country, and has issued many laws and legislations regarding the regulation of the labor sector and private sector workers, and ensuring that workers enjoy their right to health insurance environment, safety, adequate housing, and receive their salary and financial rights. Impose legal, standardized and registered labor contracts, limit the imposition of recruitment fees, confiscate workers' passports or prevent them from leaving, the right to terminate the contract and the free movement of the worker
- ◆ The UAE has introduced numerous reforms in labor laws and regulations to ensure that expatriate workers fully enjoy their legal and human rights, as well as the wage protection system, which includes all workers and domestic workers, and ensures the protection of workers' wages and financial rights through the electronic wage protection system
- ◆ The UAE has adopted a number of International Labor Organization agreements, placing it at the forefront of countries in adopting nine major agreements related to workers' rights, including six basic agreements, two technical agreements, and one governance agreement, which address working hours, forced labor, labor inspections, and night work of women, equal pay, minimum working age, prevention of child labor and protection of workers from arbitrary practices
- ◆ The UAE has been keen on including "domestic workers" in the laws and regulations for expatriate workers since 2017, to ensure that they are provided with legal, financial, and human rights, including the right to be provided with proper working conditions and environment, rest hours, time off, humane treatment, prohibition of confiscation of passports and ensure physical and psychological security, and the right to travel and leave, in order to strengthen the protection of this category of employment, which is characterized by weakness in terms of legislation or monitoring

Recommendations

- ▶ To strengthen supervision of private companies and institutions, ensuring that they comply with laws and legislation related to working conditions and the environment, and strengthening accountability for labor law violations by these companies
- ▶ ,To activate the role of the National Human Rights Commission in educating monitoring, and documenting abuses related to working conditions and the environment



Fifth: Adopting the necessary initiatives to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities

- ◆ The UAE issued Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 and Federal Law No. 14 of 2009 regarding the rights of persons with special needs, ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, and submitted its first periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2013, and also supported Security Council Resolution No. 2475 of 2019 regarding the protection of persons with disabilities during armed conflict, and entered into an agreement with the UN in 2021 in this regard
- ◆ The Council of Ministers approved the Comprehensive National Plan for Persons with Disabilities to further promote and integrate their rights into the national development agenda, and launched the National Policy to Empower "People with Special Needs" to ensure their active participation and equal opportunities for them in an inclusive society. A policy to protect People with Special Needs from abuse has also been launched, which aims to combat all forms of abuse to which people with special needs may be exposed. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi launched the Abu Dhabi Strategy for Determined Persons 2020-2024, the Emirate of Dubai issued Law No. 3 of 2022 regarding the rights of People with disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai, and Cabinet Resolution No. 3 of 2018 was issued regarding the adoption of the Unified National Classification of Disabilities in the country
- ◆ The Council of Ministers adopted Decision No. 43 of 2018 on supporting the work of People with Special Needs in the field of work, enabling them to access available work opportunities in a manner that guarantees the exercise of their rights to work on an equal basis with others, and providing them with the necessary support to seek employment opportunities on an equal basis in all sectors, and supporting those who wish to establish their own work and the activities that lead to their work, as well as setting out the obligations of the authorities concerned to implement their rights in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in force in the country

Recommendations

- ▶ ,To strengthen the participation of civil society in the development of plans programs and strategies for persons with disabilities

To incorporate in the National Plan for Human Rights projects and initiatives to reinforce the leadership of the State and put it at the service of the realization

- ▶ of the rights of persons with disabilities

Sixth: Elaboration of a National Plan of Action for Human Rights

- ◆ The UAE is committed to implementing the requirements of the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Program of Action regarding the elaboration of a national plan of action for the protection and promotion of human rights, the request of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to countries regarding the elaboration of national plans of action, and the recommendations received by the State during the third cycle of the universal periodic review
- ◆ The National Human Rights Commission launched the preparatory process for the elaboration of the National Human Rights Plan, which aims at strengthening the State's concern for protecting and respecting human rights, implementing its obligations related to international commitments and developing the legal and institutional frameworks for human rights. The consultations involved all institutions and agencies concerned with human rights, in particular the National Human Rights Commission, advisory, academic and civil society institutions in the country
- ◆ The National Plan for Human Rights aspires to integration and comprehensiveness with all actors, and strives to document the efforts of the State and its concern for human rights, and to improve the awareness of society and institutions and to strengthen national capacities concerned with human rights, in addition to strengthening cooperation and partnership with all international bodies and mechanisms

Recommendations

- ▶ To work on fulfilling the necessary conditions to launch the national plan for human rights, and include aspects related to improving institutional and societal awareness and national capacity building and strengthening programs
- ▶ To strengthen the institutional and civil partnership with all parties involved in the elaboration of the national plan for human rights

Seventh: Cooperation and consultation with stakeholders and civil society institutions

- ◆ The UAE attaches great importance to strengthening partnership with all stakeholders and civil society institutions, and the National Human Rights Committee strives to strengthen its partnerships and discussions on all human rights issues in the country, and attention is given to ensuring that civil society institutions and stakeholders are represented in the formation of national committees or in national discussions, plans, programs and strategies
- ◆ The UAE's willingness to represent civil society in the formation of the board of directors of the National Human Rights Commission, and the involvement of the National Human Rights Commission in all human rights related work, were monitored

Recommendations

- ▶ To further expand consultations with all active parties in addition to specialized civil associations and centers
- ▶ To reinforce the participation of civil society institutions and their contributions to national reports on the bodies, the Convention and the mechanisms

Eighth: Cooperation with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and international bodies and mechanisms

- ◆ The UAE is keen to strengthen its international partnerships with various international bodies and mechanisms, and strives to do so in order to fulfill its international obligations. It is also committed to submitting its international reports and cooperating with all international bodies and mechanisms. The UAE supports all international funds and programs aimed at promoting the work of the United Nations at the international level, and also shares information, reports and consultations on all matters related to the implementation of its international human rights obligations

Recommendations

- ▶ To consider the possibility of submitting semi-periodic national reports linked to the country's universal periodic review mechanism
- ▶ To strengthen cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner, the Regional Office and the Regional Training Office
- ▶ To strengthen cooperation and coordination with regard to international events, initiatives and conferences organized by the State, in order to contribute to the enrichment of the international benefits derived from them

Ninth: International obligations and cooperation with international human rights bodies, mechanisms and procedures

- ◆ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed in its Document No. CRPD/C/ARE/CO/1 addressed to the United Arab Emirates and relating to the High Commissioner's concerns about the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review at the 38th session, and in light of the 29th session of the Working Group held in October 2018 and the outcome of the collective reports of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the stakeholders' submission, and use it as a focus of the High Commissioner's work to follow the State's periodic review process until the fourth cycle of the review process to be held in 2023
- ◆ The UAE is eager to strengthen the protection and respect of human rights in all its legislation, policies and practices, and its commitment to achieving compatibility with international human rights law, as well as its review and monitoring to ensure its commitment to an approach consistent with international instruments and agreements, in particular the Declaration of the Universal Covenant on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as these instruments represent sovereignty over all human rights legislation and conventions
- ◆ A great commitment has been observed from the UAE in the area of fulfilling its obligations related to agreements and mechanisms. In general, the UAE has been keen to fulfill its contractual and non-contractual obligations and to cooperate with all international mechanisms, including submitting and reviewing periodic national reports related to international agreements and mechanisms

Recommendations

- ▶ To consider the possibility of acceding to conventions and protocols that strengthen the State's progress and leadership in various areas related to human rights
- ▶ To strengthen cooperation with the High Commissioner and the Human Rights Council regarding national reports on mechanisms and conventions

Tenth: Establishment of a national human rights institution

- ◆ The UAE has committed to establishing a national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights in accordance with the Paris Principles in the country, with the issuance of Federal Law No. 12 of 2021 establishing the National Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Paris Principles, and its board of directors has been appointed by the issuance of Resolution No. 21 of 2021
- ◆ The Commission activated its role at the national, regional and international levels, and participated in numerous national, regional and international events, including its participation as an observer in state meetings to discuss the state's national report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Recommendations

- ▶ To strengthen the commission's partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and all regional and international alliances of national human rights institutions operating under the Paris guidelines
- ▶ To confirm the commission's work and commitment to the Paris guidelines and its achievement of international accreditation and classification by the Global Alliance of National Institutions

Eleventh: Implementation of international human rights and humanitarian law obligations

- ◆ The UAE Constitution fully guarantees all fundamental rights and freedoms stipulated in international human rights conventions and instruments. National laws and legislation also guarantee the protection and respect of human rights, promote and ensure their enjoyment by all in a fair and equal manner without discrimination, and prohibit all forms of infringement and violation contrary to noble human values and principles, including those that infringe upon human dignity, respect and privacy, or that expose people to physical and psychological abuse or prevent them from exercising their rights and freedoms. The document entitled "Fifty Principles", announced by the government on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the UAE, affirms the commitment to the values and principles of human rights, the consolidation of the state of institutions and law, and the preservation of human dignity. The UAE has also acceded to the four Geneva Conventions on international humanitarian law and has shown full commitment to fulfilling its international obligations in this regard

Recommendations

- ▶ To examine the extent of the need to review national laws and legislations and to study and evaluate their need for harmonization with international laws and agreements
- ▶ To work on establishing a national mechanism to document the State's national humanitarian initiatives, efforts and strategies, and transfer them to the world to strengthen international and humanitarian efforts in the world, especially those related to the "Document on Human Brotherhood" and the "State's Efforts to Strengthen the International Response to the Covid 19 Pandemic" within the framework of the protection of the right to Life, Health and Development

Twelfth: Equality and Non-Discrimination

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees respect for human rights and the fight against all forms of discrimination. Furthermore, the UAE has acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and is working to submit its reports and implement its obligations related to this agreement. It issued Decree Law No. 2 of 2015 on Combating Discrimination and Hate, which prohibits all forms of discrimination between individuals or groups, as it launched the National Program for Tolerance in 2016
- ◆ The law regulating labor relations for the year 2021 prohibits any form of discrimination in the workplace, and Federal Decree Law No. 27 of 2018 affirms equal pay for both genders, and Cabinet Resolution No. 43 of 2018 affirms the prohibition of discrimination against people with special needs, The UAE is committed to complying with the International Labor Convention on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958, and strives to encourage equality of opportunity, treatment and employment
- ◆ Significant efforts made by the UAE in terms of achieving equality and combating discrimination have been monitored, as evidenced by the Anti-Discrimination and Hate Decree Law No. 2 of 2015, which aims to disseminate and promote a culture of tolerance and acceptance of the other, and to confront all forms and manifestations of discrimination and inequality. The law addresses discrimination and inequality against individuals or groups based on gender, religion, sect, race or color
- ◆ The Council of Ministers in 2016 adopted the "National Program for Tolerance" for the purpose of consolidating the values of tolerance, cultural pluralism, acceptance of the other, rejection of discrimination and hate by all societal and institutional components

Recommendations

- ▶ To work toward the development of national mechanisms to monitor the implementation of international anti-discrimination obligations and to ensure the achievement of fair equality for all without discrimination
- ▶ To strengthen the societal culture of equality and non-discrimination, and to develop complaint procedures for violations related to discrimination and inequality in all governmental and private agencies
- ▶ To work to consolidate the values and principles on which the National Program for Tolerance is based, particularly with regard to the achievement of equality and non-discrimination, and to disseminate them throughout all governmental and private agencies and institutions

thirteenth: Human Rights and Counterterrorism

- ◆ The UAE attaches great importance to the issues of terrorism and extremism, and is keen to adopt a human rights-based approach to combat them. It has issued a set of laws and legislation concerned with combating terrorism and violent extremism, such as Federal Law No. 7 of 2014 concerning combating terrorist crimes, and Federal Decree-Law No. 2 of 2015 on combating discrimination and hatred, Federal Decree-Law No. 5 of 2012 on combating information technology-related crimes, and Federal Decree-Law No. 20 of 2018 on combating money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism
- ◆ The UAE has sought to activate all legislation and laws related to countering terrorism and violent extremism through numerous regional and international programs, initiatives, and partnerships, particularly its membership in the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum and the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group, in addition to the establishment of the Hedayah Center. In 2012, the Hedayah Center, which seeks to promote dialogue and research on counterterrorism and extremism, and the "Sawab" Center in 2015, which seeks to support international efforts to counter terrorism and extremism

- ◆ The UAE has strengthened its commitment to fight terrorism and extremism on the basis of a humane approach, by appointing a Minister of Tolerance who works to spread the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among all human societies. The UAE also established the International Institute for Tolerance in 2019 with the aim of consolidating a culture of human and civilized dialogue in human societies and fighting terrorism and extremism. The UAE also hosted the Conference on Human Brotherhood and launched the document "Human Brotherhood for Peace and Coexistence in the World" with the aim of raising the issues of coexistence and human brotherhood between different religions and cultures in the world, and dedicated an international day to celebrate "Human Brotherhood" in partnership with the United Nations

Recommendations

- ▶ To review the laws and legislations related to the fight against terrorism and ensure their consistency with the approach based on the respect and promotion of human rights in force in the country
- ▶ To work for the strengthening of the role of the state and its leaders in the fight against terrorism, extremism and its financing, and to promote international efforts and initiatives aimed at strengthening international peace and security and protecting civilians around the world

,Fourteenth: The right to life liberty and security of the person

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees the right to life and personal and psychological security, affirms respect for fundamental rights and freedoms for all, equality before the law without any discrimination, protects personal liberty, and prohibits all practices that infringe on the security and safety of individuals such as detention, search, or imprisonment except in accordance with the law, and affirms the principle of innocence until proven guilty and prohibits all practices related to psychological and physical abuse, and although there is no prohibition of the death penalty in the UAE, the use of the death penalty is almost non-existent and is only applied in very specific cases and is necessary to ensure the safety and security of society and its protection

- ◆ The UAE Constitution and all national laws and legislations protect freedoms and rights and prevent torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions, prohibit all forms of humiliating and degrading treatment, and guarantee civil liberties, including freedom of opinion, expression, press, peaceful assembly, association and religion without any discrimination
- ◆ The UAE is keen to harmonize all procedures related to responsibility accountability and the fulfillment of justice in accordance with the stipulated laws and controls, based on respect for rights and freedoms and in accordance with the State's international obligations. No practices of arbitrary arrest or forced detention, or any acts or practices related to torture or cruel or inhuman treatment, were monitored. It is also committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Convention against Torture, whose national report was presented, reviewed and discussed before the Committee against Torture at its 74th session in July 2022. In addition, no orders of arrest or detention inconsistent with the law and international obligations have been observed, and procedures related to state security or terrorism are procedures within the framework of national laws and international obligations, and there are no detainees for exercising their right to freedom of opinion and expression, and there are no secret detention centers. Those whose names are cited are only serving the sentence that has been decided against them by the judiciary, after having received all the guarantees that ensure them a fair trial, and after all the instances of litigation have passed

Recommendations

- ▶ To promote the societal culture of laws and legislation related to the fight against terrorism and extremism
- ▶ To promote the institutional and civil culture related to the protection and promotion of the right to life, liberty and personal security
- ▶ To promote the partnership between the National Human Rights Commission and civil society institutions in order to disseminate the culture of human rights in society

,Fifteenth: Administration of justice law supremacy and non-impunity (accountability)

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees the separation of powers, promotes the independence of the judiciary, ensures fair, independent and transparent trials, and prevents any interference in the affairs of the judiciary. It affirms that there is no power over the judges except the law and conscience. The trials and procedures of the courts in all the emirates of the country have been unified, and all courts take into account the legal principles and are concerned with providing fair and transparent trials, without any interference affecting the independence and integrity of the judiciary in the country
- ◆ The judicial authority did not monitor any practices related to preventing individuals from accessing justice or depriving them of the right to a fair impartial, transparent, and independent trial. The judicial authority is concerned with providing all guarantees that reinforce the right of the accused to a fair and impartial trial and that all rights and guarantees are accessible to him. It has not monitored practices related to intimidation and harassment of human rights activists and defenders because of their work in the field of human rights and fundamental rights
- ◆ The Judicial Inspection Department of the Ministry of Justice monitors the work of judges to ensure that justice is done, and the Department of Fatwa and Legislation reviews national legislation and laws and ensures their consistency with international legislation related to the protection and promotion of human rights. The Human Rights Commission of the Federal National Council also reviews all legislations, laws, regional and international human rights conventions, so as to ensure the compatibility of all national legislation with international legislation and obligations

Recommendations

To promote the partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and specialized international institutions to implement special programs to build and develop capacities and knowledge related to justice and the judicial system

To take advantage of modern technologies and artificial intelligence to develop dispute resolution mechanisms and enhance transparency with respect to the judicial authority and the judiciary in the country

Sixteenth: Fundamental freedoms

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees all fundamental freedoms guaranteed by international law, and specifically emphasizes the guarantee of freedom of opinion, expression and the press. Its Article 30 states, "freedom of opinion and its expression through speech, writing and any other means of expression is guaranteed within the limits of the law." The UAE wishes to strengthen the enjoyment of freedom of opinion and expression in accordance with legal controls, and strives to activate the role and partnership of civil society institutions in the country, especially those dealing with rights, freedoms, media, press and human development
- ◆ The Ministry of Information and the National Media Council, as the official authority concerned with the implementation of the "old" law, are keen to strengthen the self-censorship of the media and press institutions and to ensure them the highest levels of independence. Federal Law No. 15 of 1980 on publications and publishing regulates the licensing and activities of printing and publishing in the country, using traditional media. Such as newspapers, magazines, television and radio programs, and digital media. In 2018, the National Media Council issued the Electronic Media System, which aims to support the electronic and digital media industry in the country
- ◆ The "Media Regulatory Office", affiliated to the Ministry of Culture and Youth, assumes all the tasks and responsibilities of the former "National Media Council". The Media Regulatory Office prepares legislation, regulations, standards and the basis for the regulation of media affairs in the country, and works in partnership with many civil society organizations concerned with the media. Moreover, press and media institutions to upgrade the media industry in the Emirates and improve the environment of freedoms in which they operate. The UAE is considered one of the most prominent countries in terms of regions, means and media, press and digital channels

- ◆ The “Media Regulatory Office”, affiliated to the Ministry of Culture and Youth, The United Arab Emirates is working on a draft federal law to regulate “media affairs and activities”. This law is in line with the country’s legislation and international obligations and replaces Federal Law No. 15 of 1980 on the press and publications. The law aims to strengthen the freedom of the press and media. The law has been the subject of consultations. It has been extended to media institutions, experts, academics, lawyers, the Emirates Journalists Association and civil society institutions, and it has also been harmonized with similar laws and legislations in Arab and foreign countries. The law aims to ensure the free flow of information, the prohibition of prior censorship, the non-closure of the media, the guarantee of the freedom of journalists to exercise their knowledge and the prohibition of imprisonment or arrest. The law is under final review for publication in the coming period

Recommendations

- ▶ To explore the possibility of issuing a law amending the Press and Publications Act

Seventeenth: Right to Privacy and Family Life

- ◆ The UAE attaches great importance to the family and works to enhance its role in building society and guarantees it privacy, protection and freedom of choice and education. In 2019, the UAE adopted the "Family Protection Policy" launched by the Ministry of Community Development with the aim of strengthening the family's social system and ensuring the protection of the family entity and its rights. It helps to improve its participation in society, and the "Family Protection Policy" takes care of women, children, people with special needs and the elderly. This policy is responsible for developing legislation, laws, and strengthening preventive protection mechanisms
- ◆ The family policy adopted by the UAE ensures the protection of family privacy and respect for family life in terms of formation, sustainability, support and advancement of the family in light of societal values and principles, as well as the achievement of happiness and well-being. This placed the UAE first among Arab countries and 22nd in the world in the list of "Best Countries for Family Welfare" for 2019, which measures the quality of family life based on numerous criteria related to human rights, family environment, equality, justice, community safety, and healthcare

Recommendations

- ▶ To improve family privacy systems and ensure that they are not violated or infringed, especially by information and technology companies
- ▶ To strengthen society's culture of family planning and protection, creating initiatives and projects to disseminate the values and principles contained in the Family Protection Policy, and involving civil society organizations in this process

Eighteenth: Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

- ◆ The UAE is concerned with providing the highest levels of welfare to its citizens and all residents within its borders, and it strives to achieve this through numerous initiatives related to improving the quality of life and achieving welfare and happiness. It has adopted the “National Happiness and Wellness Program”, which aims to improve policies and services that enhance the quality of life. It works with all government agencies and sectors to implement numerous initiatives and projects, in partnership with 70 government agencies and through 700 national initiatives to improve quality of life
- ◆ The UAE is ranked first in the Arab world and 21st internationally in the People's Happiness Index, and the national agenda for the “UAE Vision” aims to place the UAE among the top five countries in the world in the happiness index. The national agenda for the UAE Vision aims to create a competitive knowledge-based economy based on innovation and works to strengthen the country's global economic position in a way that contributes to improving living conditions and quality of life and promoting well-being

Recommendations

- ▶ To strive to make the most of all development and humanitarian aid programs and initiatives in the country, and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy an appropriate level of happiness, well-being and quality of life

Nineteen: Right to Health

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees the right to health care and ensures the right of citizens to health care and the means of prevention and treatment of diseases and epidemics. It encourages the establishment of public and private hospitals, clinics and nursing homes. The laws ensure the provision of the best and most efficient health care services, while guaranteeing the rights of patients. Federal and local government agencies have defined policies in many health sectors, such as health care, medicine, health care facilities and others, in order to achieve the objectives of the law in accordance with an integrated approach to health services in the country
- ◆ Federal Law No. 2 of 2019 on the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Health Care ensures the optimal use of information and communication technologies in health care, guaranteeing the compatibility of the approved foundations, standards and practices with their internationally approved counterparts, and ensuring the security and integrity of health data and information
- ◆ The UAE works in cooperation with all relevant authorities in the country's health sector to ensure that all public and private sector hospitals adopt clear national and international standards to ensure the highest levels of quality in the health services provided, as well as the maximum efficiency of the medical staff and health facilities, and all health centers and facilities are subject to the control and supervision of many official institutions concerned with health services
- ◆ The UAE aims to improve the quality of healthcare received by all citizens and residents of the country, and is striving to achieve this through many innovative initiatives and strategies, by launching the Health Innovation Strategy 2022, the National Nursing and Midwifery Strategy 2025, the National Nutrition Strategy 2017-2021, and the National Medicines Policy and National Immunization Policy. In addition to the Abu Dhabi Media Sector Strategy and the Dubai Health Strategy

Recommendations

- ▶ To consider the possibility of creating more initiatives and projects to provide health care, curative and preventive services for all

Twentieth: Right to education

- ◆ The Constitution guarantees the right to free education to citizens in schools, colleges and universities in accordance with Article 17, and it is binding until the secondary level in accordance with Article 1 of the Federal Law No. 11 of 1972 and the Education Law of 2012, and emphasizes the role of the government in developing the necessary plans to spread education and elimination of illiteracy. The UAE has adopted a high standard education system as one of the pillars of the national agenda to achieve the UAE Vision 2021. All educational institutions are subject to monitoring and supervision by numerous official government institutions to ensure that everyone receives an education as a fundamental right guaranteed by law, and to ensure that all educational institutions comply with national laws and legislation in force in the country
- ◆ In 2017, the UAE launched the "National Strategy for Higher Education 2030," which aims to expand education outcomes and enhance their attractiveness. The Ministry of Education has also developed its 2017-2021 strategic plan to ensure the achievement of educational equality for all, create safe, supportive, and stimulating educational environments, and establish a culture of innovation in education. The "Education Strategy 2010-2020" was adopted by fifty national initiatives as a blueprint with the aim of achieving a distinguished education system

Recommendations

- ▶ To carry on the national efforts in order to achieve compulsory education for all citizens and work to create initiatives and projects that guarantee state leadership in the quality and results of education and to benefit from artificial intelligence technologies

Twenty-first: Rights of women

- ◆ The Constitution of the United Arab Emirates guarantees the rights of women and ensures the principle of equality and affirms their fundamental rights and freedoms. The UAE also acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2004, submitted its first periodic report in 2008, and has been keen to strengthen its international commitments to achieve equality and empowerment of women. It also submitted its combined "second and third" national reports, and during 2022, submitted its fourth report to the relevant committee, strengthened its partnership and focus on fulfilling its international commitments to women, and was a member of the UN Women Executive Council during 2013-2015 and 2016-2018
- ◆ The UAE attaches great importance to women's rights and is committed to fulfilling its relevant international obligations. It is learning to strengthen its legislative and institutional system regarding women's empowerment and leadership. In 2015, the Council of Ministers approved the formation of the "Emirates Council for Gender Balance", with the aim of achieving balance and narrowing the gap. According to the United Nations Development Program's report for the year 2020, the UAE ranks 18th in the world and first in the Arab world in the gender equality index

- ◆ The state has undertaken policy and legal changes to eliminate discrimination against women. Over the past decade, the UAE has carried out important reforms in the field of women's rights and has devoted its efforts to promoting and strengthening women's rights and involving them in the national decision-making process in all areas. The state has also strengthened its legal system to combat discrimination against women and domestic violence and criminalize sexual harassment, which has contributed, according to the World Bank's "Women, Business and the Law" report for the year 2021, to the country's overall index rising to 82.5 points out of 100 points in 2021
- ◆ The UAE has published, in accordance with the 2012 Cabinet Resolution, requiring institutions to represent women in the boards of government agencies. It also issued the "National Strategic Plan for Motherhood and Childhood" 2017-2021 and the "National Plan Strategy for Women's Empowerment and Leadership" 2015-2021. Women's representation in ministerial positions is 30%, 50% of the members of the Federal National Council, 50% of the diplomatic staff, and they occupy 66% of public sector jobs, 30% of which are in decision-making positions

Recommendations

- ▶ The need to accelerate the publication of the national strategy for women's empowerment for the year 2022-2027, and the national strategy for motherhood and childhood for the year 2022-2025
- ▶ To strengthen the participation of the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations in women's empowerment and leadership strategies, and to activate their role and representation in all plans, programs and strategies concerning women

Twenty-second: Rights of Children

- ◆ The UAE acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1996. The UAE has also enacted the Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on the Rights of Children, known as the "Wadi-mah Law", which guarantees the child's right to life, survival and development, and guarantees all the rights and freedoms stipulated in international legislation. It is keen to ensure all the necessary opportunities to strengthen the protection of the child and works to protect him or her from all manifestations of neglect, exploitation, abuse, and physical and psychological violence. These measures were also strengthened in 2017 in order to achieve the best interests of the child
- ◆ The Federal Labor Law of the United Arab Emirates prohibits the employment of minors of both sexes before the age of fifteen years. The State shall provide free education to citizens in schools, colleges and universities in accordance with article 17 of the Constitution and article 1 of the Federal Compulsory Education Act No. 11 of 1972
- ◆ The UAE has strengthened its care for children by establishing the "Higher Committee for Child Protection" in 2009 and the "Child Protection Center" in 2011. They also enacted Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 to provide the legal framework for the protection of children, and launched the "Strategic Plan for the Rights of Children with Disabilities" 2017-2021 and the National Strategy for Motherhood and Childhood 2017-2021, with the aim of creating a child-friendly environment that guarantees and protects their rights and safety
- ◆ The UAE has strengthened its initiatives aimed at child protection by launching the Ministry of Education's initiative "Child Protection Unit", which aims to protect children from all kinds of abuse, neglect and exploitation to which they are exposed in the surrounding environment, whether at school or at home, and to preserve the physical, psychological and academic safety of students. The Ministry of Interior has established the "Higher Committee for Child Protection" and the "Ministry of Interior Center for Child Protection" with the aim of improving the safety, security and protection of children. It also launched the "Together to Prevent Child Abuse" campaign to promote community awareness of children's rights and protect them from abuse and exploitation. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), launched a guide for parents to protect their children from bullying

Recommendations

- ▶ To strengthen supervision and monitoring at all levels and in all public and private institutions, so as to ensure the full implementation of child protection laws and legislations and to promote the enjoyment of all rights stipulated in the laws and legislations

Twenty-third: Rights of Stateless Persons

- ◆ The UAE Constitution guarantees the right to nationality and the right of citizens to acquire Emirati nationality. Nationality can only be revoked in accordance with the law. Federal Law No. 17 of 1972 regulates the granting of Emirati nationality, and in 2021, the UAE adopted major amendments to the Nationality Law, in which the provisions relating to the implementing regulations of the Federal Law on Nationality and Passports were amended, and the amendments allowed the granting of Emirati nationality to many non-citizens eligible under the law and their families based on numerous checks and conditions, and the new amendments allow the applicant to retain the current nationality
- ◆ 4No cases of statelessness or Bedoun have been observed in the UAE, and recent amendments to the nationality laws allow for the processing of any individual case or application related to obtaining Emirati nationality

Recommendations

- ▶ To strengthen the commitment to implement the Nationality Act in light of the changes contained in the Act's regulations for the year 2021