



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Summary record of the 1914th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 13 July 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Heller

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* No summary record was issued for the 1913th meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention

Initial report of the United Arab Emirates (CAT/C/ARE/1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates joined the meeting.*
2. **Mr. Alblooshi** (United Arab Emirates), introducing his country's initial report (CAT/C/ARE/1), said that the Constitution, laws and institutions of the United Arab Emirates were geared to promote human rights, to guarantee equality and social justice and to prevent torture and ill-treatment. In addition to the Convention against Torture, the United Arab Emirates was also party to a number of other international human rights treaties. The initial report had been drafted by a committee comprising representatives of governmental bodies at the federal and local levels, and with the active participation of civil society institutions. Since submitting the report in June 2018, the State had continued to reinforce its legislative system with a view to protecting human rights in line with its international obligations.
3. In that regard, the State had, inter alia, enacted Federal Decree-Law No. 10 of 2019 to combat domestic violence and Federal Act No. 14 of 2020 on witness protection. One highly significant development had been the creation of the National Human Rights Institution under Federal Act No. 12 of 2021. The new body – which was financially and administratively independent in accordance with the Paris Principles – worked to advance human rights in all sectors of society, conducted visits to places of deprivation of liberty as well to hospitals and schools, and received and followed up on individual complaints. The State had adopted a family protection policy in 2019 and instituted a charter of patient rights and responsibilities in 2021. Beginning in 2018, moreover, the Ministry of the Interior had issued a number of decrees aimed at establishing policies to regulate arrests, searches and preventive detention. In December 2020, consultations on a national human rights plan had begun, drawing heavily on recommendations issued by United Nations human rights treaty bodies.
4. The courts were the bedrock of justice and the right of action was enshrined in the Constitution and the law. In fact, all persons in the United Arab Emirates could file complaints with the police and seek justice via the courts without hindrance or discrimination. The right to legal aid and the right of appeal were likewise guaranteed under the law. Complaints relating to torture and inhuman treatment could be submitted directly to the Office of the Public Prosecution via its website or using a special app created for that purpose, and prosecutors had developed operational mechanisms for dealing with such complaints. Telephone hotlines, text-message services and apps were available in several languages for the general public to report acts of violence or abuse, or to submit complaints relating to human trafficking or the protection of women, children, older persons or persons with disabilities. Special channels were dedicated to complaints from the country's many migrant workers, who had the right to pursue legal action free of charge. If it was shown that they had suffered ill-treatment or violence, they had the right to leave their employment without affecting their legal rights. Labour inspections were conducted to detect signs that workers, including domestic workers, might be suffering abuse.
5. Training courses and workshops had been conducted for judges, lawyers, public officials and law enforcement personnel on such subjects as domestic violence, human rights standards and the treatment of inmates. A total of 6,622 persons had taken part in such activities in the course of 2021. In May 2022, the Ministry of Justice had run a course for 70 judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials on strategies for the implementation of the Convention. Between 2020 and 2022, a total of 18,217 inmates had been released under such pardons, which the Government continued to issue on an annual basis.
6. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Arab Emirates was continuing its efforts to eradicate human trafficking. To that end, it had set up the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, enacted legislation to protect victims and witnesses and signed memorandums of understanding with other States. Between 2020 and 2021, the Ministry of the Interior had organized training initiatives that had been attended by

4,221 persons, and a specialized diploma on combating human trafficking had been developed in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. In 2021, the Ministry of Justice had adopted a guide to judicial cooperation in criminal cases, which had been drafted in accordance with relevant regional and international treaties, including the Convention. For example, the guide envisaged the refusal of extradition requests if there was a risk that the person concerned might be subjected to torture or ill-treatment in the requesting State.

7. His Government would continue to support and finance the programmes, activities and funds of the United Nations, including the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. Dedication to justice and social equality had earned the United Arab Emirates first place regionally and thirty-seventh place globally on the 2021 Rule of Law Index produced by the Washington-based World Justice Project.

8. **Mr. Tuzmukhamedov** (Country Rapporteur) said that he was encouraged by the statement contained in the initial report to the effect that the human rights principles set out in the Convention were duplicated in State law and enshrined in the Constitution. However, he was uncertain as to whether the Convention would take precedence over a domestic law or a judicial ruling should there be a conflict between them.

9. When ratifying the Convention, the Government had declared that the lawful sanctions applicable under national law, or pain or suffering arising from, associated with or incidental to such sanctions, did not fall under the concept of torture or of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as defined in article 1 of the Convention. A number of States parties had objected to that declaration, which they considered to be at odds with the object and purpose of the Convention and in violation of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. He hoped the delegation could tell the Committee why that declaration had been made and whether the State had ever considered withdrawing it.

10. He wished to know why the United Arab Emirates had not yet ratified several core human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Most conspicuously, considering its heavy reliance on migrant labour, the country was not a party to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Given that Islamic sharia was enshrined in the Constitution as a major source of national legislation, he wondered how issues relating to the compatibility of the Convention with the dictates of Islam were decided. Who was responsible for taking such decisions?

11. The Committee was concerned that the prohibition against torture provided for in the Constitution did not appear to be consistent with the absolute prohibition enshrined in article 2 (2) of the Convention. Could the delegation indicate any other piece of national legislation where the prohibition on torture was stated unequivocally? Moreover, the constitutional provision appeared to apply only to citizens and it was thus unclear whether legal residents and illegal migrants also enjoyed the same degree of protection. That issue was particularly important in the State party, where some 85 per cent of national residents were non-citizens.

12. He wished to know if the Constitution used the same language to describe “torture and degrading treatment” as that used in the official Arabic translation of the Convention. He was concerned that the Criminal Code did not appear to contain a definition of torture that was in line with the Convention. Moreover, while the Code envisaged terms of up to life imprisonment for acts of torture committed under aggravating circumstances, under other circumstances – for example, if torture was committed with the intention of forcing a person to give false information to the courts – the penalty was “imprisonment and a fine”. Could the delegation elaborate on the length of that imprisonment and the amount of that fine? The delegation might also provide information concerning the outcome of court cases where anti-torture provisions had been invoked and implemented. He wished to know if courts in the United Arab Emirates had ever invoked the Convention itself, either as a source of law or as a tool to interpret the Constitution or national law.

13. In the light of concerns raised by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, the Committee hoped to learn more about the country’s judges, their gender breakdown and how they were trained and appointed. Were judges aware of the

Convention and of other international legal standards and were they able and willing to apply them? The high number of foreign and foreign-trained judges and reports of pressure exerted by State agents on the judiciary were matters of particular concern. He wished to know if all law enforcement officials, prison staff and border guards were citizens of the United Arab Emirates and he looked forward to hearing further details about the educational programmes that had been developed to ensure they were fully acquainted with the Convention. Had a mechanism been put in place to assess the effectiveness of such programmes in reducing the number of cases of torture and ill-treatment?

14. Detailed information on how judges, prosecutors, forensic doctors and medical personnel dealing with detained persons were trained on detecting and documenting the primary and secondary effects of torture would be appreciated. He wondered whether that training covered the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol).

15. With respect to the deployment of the State party's forces to Libya and Yemen, he would like to know how military personnel were made aware of the Convention and other relevant international provisions. The Committee had received reports that the Government might have relied in its foreign deployments on paramilitary units made up of tribal militias, local armed groups, such as the Security Belt Forces, Hadrami Elite Forces and Shabwani Elite Forces, and foreign contractors. It would be interesting to learn how the Government ensured that such forces were properly regulated. What measures had been taken to guarantee their accountability, including for acts of torture?

16. The Committee had received information alleging that the State party routinely detained and deported non-nationals and that there had been a mass deportation of hundreds of African migrants in 2021. Under the Convention, the State party was prohibited from returning a person to a country where he or she was in danger of being subjected to torture. He wondered how the State party ensured compliance with that provision of the Convention, particularly in relation to the mass deportation in 2021. He wished to know whether the authorities had ever found that a person subject to removal was in danger of being subjected to torture if deported, what the decision-making process was for deportation and whether migrants had access to legal aid and benefitted from administrative and judicial due process. Further data on deportees disaggregated by gender, age and country of destination would be helpful.

17. With regard to extradition, he would like to know whether there was an established procedure in the State party to request assurances from the State of destination that extradited persons would not be subjected to torture or ill treatment. If so, he would appreciate an account of the procedure and details of how the status of the extradited person was monitored.

18. A number of crimes were punishable by death under the Criminal Code, particularly so-called crimes against State security and interests. Other laws such as those on terrorism and on international crime also made provision for the death penalty. He wondered whether any other legislation prescribed the death penalty. He would be grateful if the delegation could confirm reports that the death penalty was rarely carried out in practice. If courts still handed down death sentences, he wished to know how many had been handed down since the submission of the report. Were any prisoners being held on death row following the rejection of an appeal?

19. Lastly, he would appreciate information on measures taken under Federal Act No. 7 of 2014 concerning the prevention of terrorism offences. It would be helpful to know: how anti-terrorism measures had affected human rights safeguards in law and in practice; how the Government had ensured that any measures taken complied with its obligations under international law, especially the Convention; how many persons had been convicted under the terrorism legislation; the age, citizenship and gender of any convicted persons; whether those persons had received free legal aid; whether there had been any complaints of non-observance of international standards; and whether any such complaints had led to judicial proceedings or convictions.

20. **Mr. Rouwane** (Country Rapporteur) said that he welcomed the consultative process through which the report had been drafted and encouraged the Government to continue to broaden consultations for future reports, particularly by involving the national human rights

institution. He would like to know whether the Government had considered providing for a legal definition of torture that was in keeping with article 1 of the Convention.

21. Under Federal Act No. 43 of 1992, the competent authorities could visit prisons and hear complaints from inmates. He wished to know how many such visits had been undertaken and whether any measures had been taken in cases where torture or abuse had been detected. He also wished to know how many requests to visit places of detention from civil society organizations had been granted. He would be grateful if the delegation could indicate how many prisoners had met with government officials or civil society representatives and describe the outcomes of those meetings. The delegation might provide statistics on the number of complaints submitted by prisoners and the outcomes of those complaints. He would particularly like to know whether any prosecutions had been initiated against perpetrators of torture or abuse. Given that only public interest associations involved in human rights were permitted to visit prisons, he wondered how an organization could gain that status. Would the Government consider removing the requirement that associations had to fulfil to gain that status?

22. It would be interesting to learn what measures, programmes and strategies had been adopted to combat human trafficking. Information and statistics on complaints and legal procedures against networks and individuals involved in human trafficking, as well as information on the victims and any measures taken to support them, would be welcome.

23. Under Act No. 11 of 2009, prisoners were permitted to appeal against decisions to take action against them under martial law. In that regard, further information on the scope of application of martial law in the national legal system would be useful. He wished to know whether the application of Act No. 11 of 2009 had led to any positive outcomes with respect to unlawful detention.

24. It was not clear whether Federal Act No. 3 of 2016 concerning the rights of the child provided for sentences to be handed down to the perpetrators of offences against children.

25. He wondered whether the State party was planning on acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

26. He also wondered whether the State party was considering setting up a coordination mechanism for the different institutional structures responsible for monitoring human rights and engaging with the United Nations human rights system. He would welcome information on the mechanisms and rules for the receipt of complaints regarding torture and abuse. What guarantees were in place to ensure the neutral and efficient review of complaints against police officers? Information on any awareness-raising activities on the Convention undertaken by the Office to Promote a Culture of Respect for the Law would be helpful.

27. He wished to know how many social support centres had been set up at general police headquarters. He would appreciate information on the penalties for domestic violence under the law and guaranteed protections for women and children, as well as statistics on any prosecutions undertaken in that respect. Paragraph 62 of the report referred to the amicable resolution of cases of domestic violence. Given that the amicable resolution of cases of serious violence against women and children was prohibited under the Convention, he would be grateful if the delegation could clarify that point.

28. He would appreciate further information on the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, its operations and how it engaged with civil society.

29. Further information on the policies to combat torture listed in paragraph 84 of the State party report would be useful. He wished to know the main pillars of Strategy for the Protection of Worker's Rights, particularly with regard to the prevention of ill-treatment and torture.

30. Paragraph 95 of the report indicated that the Convention had the force of law in the State party. However, it was not clear whether the Convention had supremacy over national legislation. He would be grateful if the delegation could provide some examples of case law in that respect.

31. He wondered whether the information provided in paragraph 116 of the initial report on accused persons who provided no proof of their innocence meant that the burden of proof was on the accused. He wished to know whether the authorities kept a register of arrests. The delegation might indicate the length and conditions of pretrial detention, including whether the accused had access to a lawyer. He would like to know whether persons in pretrial detention could be medically examined to ensure they were not being subjected to torture. In what circumstances could the Office of the Public Prosecution restrict a detained person's access to a lawyer?
32. It would be useful to have statistics on cases of extraditions that had been cancelled under article 9 (10) of the Federal Act concerning international judicial cooperation in criminal matters.
33. Regarding the criminalization of torture, the initial report referred to the Minister of the Interior's Decision No. 109 of 1989. He would welcome additional information on the legal scope of ministerial decisions. It was not clear whether such decisions were applicable to all situations in which torture might be perpetrated.
34. The scope of application of the Criminal Code for the offences committed on board a foreign ship, as mentioned in paragraph 152 of the initial report, also needed clarification.
35. In relation to article 6, the Committee would welcome further information regarding the legal provisions that governed cases in which foreign persons were alleged to have committed an act of torture. In such circumstances, he wished to know whether it was established practice for the competent authorities to notify the State to which the accused person belonged that he or she was in custody and to indicate whether or not the United Arab Emirates intended to exercise jurisdiction. He would also like to know whether acts of torture had been incorporated into national criminal legislation as extraditable offences and whether the State party would consider using the Convention as the legal basis for extradition in cases involving nationals of another State with which it had not signed a bilateral extradition treaty.
36. With respect to human rights awareness-raising and capacity-building, it would be helpful to know whether any of the State party's activities focused on the definition of torture, as set forth in the Convention. Information on any specific training on the Convention that had been provided for public officials responsible for making arrests and guarding prisoners would also be of particular interest.
37. He would be grateful if the delegation could provide further details concerning its implementation of article 12, since the information provided in its report did not clearly indicate the ways in which the State party ensured the prompt and impartial investigation of torture allegations. Further information on the number of complaints concerning allegations of torture that had been submitted to the judiciary and any steps that had been taken to protect complainants and witnesses against ill-treatment or intimidation would be appreciated. The delegation might explain the practical application of article 255 of the Criminal Code, according to which witnesses who might be subjected to grievous harm that affected their freedom or honour, or those of a close relative, were exempt from punishment.
38. Additional information concerning any redress or compensation that had been provided to victims of torture would be useful. He wished to know what other procedures had been put in place to ensure they were provided with the necessary means for full psychosocial and medical rehabilitation. He wished to know exactly what legal value was attached to declarations and confessions that had been obtained as a result of torture. Could the delegation confirm that such information was considered invalid and was therefore disregarded by judicial officials?
39. The Committee was eager to see the contribution that the State party's newly established human rights institution could make to the promotion and protection of human rights and the prevention of torture. In that regard, he encouraged the State party to ensure that the institution received the human and financial resources that it needed to fulfil its mandate effectively.
40. He would appreciate the delegation's comments on the disturbing reports that the Committee had received from civil society organizations containing allegations of acts of torture and ill-treatment at secret detention facilities. The allegations centred around three

particular sites where people were reportedly being held in solitary confinement for up to several months at a time. The Committee had been made aware of claims and statements made by prisoners regarding the deplorable conditions of detention that they faced in solitary confinement, including a lack of water and basic hygiene. He would be grateful for any information the delegation could provide in relation to those allegations.

41. **Mr. Buchwald** said that the Committee had received reports alleging that certain regulations protecting the rights of prisoners, which would ordinarily stand as a bulwark against torture, did not apply to persons held under the authority of the State security apparatus. It had been suggested that State security officers were authorized by law to hold prisoners for up to 106 days, that prisoners were being denied the right to legal counsel while awaiting a decision on the charges made against them, and that they were sometimes held in incommunicado detention for up to three months with no information made available as to their whereabouts. He wished to know whether the delegation could shed any light on those allegations. Beyond the more general information provided in paragraph 95 of the State party's report, it would also be helpful to know exactly where it was spelled out in national legislation that the State security apparatus was obliged to respect the international human rights of individuals. The Committee had received claims that the official version of the federal law governing the actions of the State security apparatus had not been made freely available online or published in the Official Gazette. If it was available online, he would be grateful if the delegation could provide the Committee with the relevant link. If not, he wished to know whether there was any reason for it to be withheld and whether the State party would consider publishing it.

42. He would welcome further information on the steps that had been taken to ensure that the right to complain of persons deprived of their liberty was practically and effectively upheld. He wished to know what procedure was followed to inform prisoners of their right to complain, and whether the State party had considered taking specific measures to reassure them that any complaints were treated fairly by a person working independently from the system under which the alleged acts had taken place. He wondered what steps were taken to ensure that prison officers did not monitor telephone calls made by prisoners to the hotlines set up to receive complaints and to ensure that complainants were not subjected to retaliation. Lastly, he wished to know whether any information that the delegation could provide in relation to the right to complain also applied to prisoners held under the authority of the State security apparatus.

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at noon.

43. **Mr. Alblooshi** (United Arab Emirates) said that torture and inhuman or degrading practices, as defined in the Convention, had already been specifically prohibited under the Constitution of the United Arab Emirates and national legislation. Domestic legislation on torture had been strengthened following amendments to the Criminal Code in 2020 and 2021. Under those amendments, public officials faced fines or imprisonment if they were found to have used torture, excessive force or threats against a witness or to have imposed a penalty on a convicted person that was more severe than that provided for by law. Public officials at places of deprivation of liberty could also be imprisoned if they accepted the detention of a person without having received a formal order from the competent authorities. Specific sanctions applied to cases in which ill-treatment or coercion of any kind was used to induce a person to conceal facts or provide incorrect information to judicial authorities. Under the Criminal Code, anyone found to have unlawfully abducted, arrested, confined or deprived another person of liberty, either directly or through an intermediary, would be sentenced to imprisonment and, in certain cases, to life imprisonment. Intermediaries involved in the offences and anyone concealing an abducted person would receive the same penalty as the principal offender.

44. With respect to the legal status of the Convention, article 125 of the Constitution provided that the Government must take all necessary measures to implement the provisions of international treaties and agreements into which it had entered. Recent legislative amendments aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Convention in his country had included the enactment of laws on domestic violence and violence against witnesses. Upon its ratification of the Convention, the United Arab Emirates had issued an interpretative statement concerning article 1 of the Convention and reservations in respect of articles 20

and 30. Once its dialogue with the Committee had concluded, and following receipt of the concluding observations, the Government would conduct a thorough review and would consider amending or withdrawing its interpretative statement and reservations. However, he wished to reassure the Committee that the statement and reservations had not affected his country's implementation of the Convention and a task force had been set up to ensure that all legislation was fully compatible with its provisions. In that regard, since the enactment of Federal Act No. 52 of 2006 amending the Criminal Code, all forms of physical punishment had been progressively prohibited.

45. A task force had also been set up to look into the potential ratification of the Optional Protocol. His country placed the utmost importance on the strength of its institutional and legal framework, and it took great care to determine any amendments that needed to be made upon signing international treaties or agreements. It had recently established its national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles and had also set up a mechanism to study the potential ratification of other regional and international human rights treaties. In any case, when the Government developed legislative amendments aimed at promoting human rights, its practice was to review all relevant international instruments, even those to which it was not yet a party.

46. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that the Office of the Public Prosecution was the judicial body tasked with investigating crimes and directing indictments in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Under article 2 of the Code, it was prohibited to cause physical or mental harm to anyone accused of a crime or to subject any person to torture or degrading treatment. Furthermore, in compliance with article 15 of the Convention, any information obtained as a result of harmful treatment could not be used as evidence in judicial proceedings. In investigations involving persons who did not speak Arabic, the services of a translator were required to ensure that all parties, including the defendant and any witnesses, could follow the proceedings. Any legal proceedings that took place or sentences that were handed down without the presence of an interpreter were declared null and void.

47. The Office of the Public Prosecution was also mandated to receive complaints concerning acts of torture and ill-treatment. Complaints could be submitted electronically by victims, legal counsel and other interested parties using a digital application. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Office conducted a thorough and independent investigation into all allegations. During the preliminary stage of the investigation, a doctor was assigned to examine the victim for any signs of torture or ill-treatment. Once the preliminary evidence had been gathered and the doctor's formal report had been submitted, the accused party was interviewed in relation to the allegations. Anyone found guilty of committing an act of torture or ill-treatment would face prosecution in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

48. The Office of the Public Prosecution oversaw the management of prisons and places of detention. It could make unannounced visits, and it conducted prompt investigations in response to signs or complaints of ill-treatment. More than 900 such visits had been conducted at prisons and places of detention in the preceding three years.

49. According to its records, the Office had received 81 complaints of torture or ill-treatment in the preceding three years. Professional, independent investigations had been conducted in all cases, under the Office's direct oversight. Of the 81 complaints, sufficient evidence to prosecute had been found in 9 cases. They had been taken to trial; in 4 cases, the offenders had been sentenced to a fine and imprisonment, and in the remaining 5 the accused had been acquitted. The severity of penalties for torture offences varied according to the individual circumstances, including whether the offender was a civil servant. Offenders could also be ordered to pay compensation to the victims.

50. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that a number of capacity-building initiatives for employees of the Ministry of the Interior and for prison guards were being carried out. Thousands of individuals had received training thus far, encompassing a large majority of employees. Programmes were also in place to advance the fight against impunity, promote awareness of the Convention and combat abuses of power and inhumane treatment within the Ministry of the Interior.

51. The United Arab Emirates had been one of the first States in the region to adopt a law criminalizing human trafficking. Offenders could be sentenced to anything from a fine of up to 100,000 dirhams to life imprisonment. A strategy for combating human trafficking had been adopted in 2012, which covered prevention and awareness-raising, judicial prosecution, penalties, victim protection and the strengthening of international cooperation. Shelters and centres for trafficking victims had been established at the emirate and federal levels, to which more than \$300,000 in funding had been allocated in recent years.

52. The United Arab Emirates had adopted a variety of measures to monitor the movement of people into and out of the country while seeing to it that there was no human trafficking. To cite one example, it was part of the secure global police communications network of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) called I-24/7 and had adopted advanced identification technologies. In addition, children were required to travel on their own passports. The United Arab Emirates also participated in various international efforts to combat trafficking, which had led to hundreds of arrests and prevented the victimization of thousands of persons.

53. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that, as one of the most popular destinations for migrants in the world, the United Arab Emirates was taking numerous measures to combat human trafficking. It worked closely with countries of origin to ensure that recruitment processes were clear and that migrants received sufficient pre-departure training on their rights and obligations, the laws and culture of the United Arab Emirates, and the complaints mechanisms available to them. Employers were not allowed to charge employees fees for recruitment, and they had a duty to provide migrant employees with post-arrival training on their rights and local laws and with access to tools for communicating with their families and with the authorities. Through the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the United Arab Emirates was working with numerous other countries to conduct projects and research related to protecting temporary contractual workers in the region. A complaints system was also in place; trained inspectors with awareness of the relevant provisions of international and domestic labour law were available to examine cases, and complainants had access to free interpretation. No prosecution fees were charged for complaints involving claims of less than 100,000 dirhams.

54. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that a comprehensive framework of policies, legislation and reporting mechanisms had been established to combat violence against women and children. All forms of domestic violence, including the threat of violence, were prohibited by law. Specialist units for the protection of women and children had been established within the Ministry of the Interior and the Dubai police force. National hotlines for reporting domestic violence and violence against children were available, in addition to online reporting mechanisms.

55. The United Arab Emirates was working with other countries to combat child sexual exploitation, including by targeting websites where the offence took place, developing programmes to protect children and offer guidance for parents and identifying offenders. The Ministry of the Interior had developed a smart system to support the search for missing children and was working with civil society to raise awareness of online child sexual abuse. It worked with INTERPOL and the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children to identify victims and perpetrators of child sexual exploitation. The country had also recently hosted an INTERPOL working group on crimes against children and was working with international partners to build the capacity of law enforcement to use artificial intelligence to prevent child abuse.

56. Under the law, juvenile offenders could not be sentenced to life imprisonment or the death penalty. Juvenile offenders under the age of 18 could be sent to social rehabilitation centres, which contained no adults. In cooperation with partners and non-governmental organizations, various projects were being carried out to support the rehabilitation and educational reintegration of juvenile offenders, in which thousands of juveniles had already taken part.

57. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that, in 2019, the National Human Rights Committee had been established as a high-level coordinating body within the Government. It was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International

Cooperation, and its members included a variety of stakeholders. The committee's responsibilities included implementing the national human rights strategy, following up on the State's international human rights obligations and the recommendations made by the human rights treaty bodies, strengthening the framework for cooperation with the United Nations and promoting a culture of human rights.

58. **A representative of the United Arab Emirates** said that a fixed term of imprisonment was one of the penalties that could be applied in torture offences. The Criminal Code provided that public official who used torture, force or threats could be sentenced to a fixed term of imprisonment of between 3 and 15 years, which was considered an appropriate penalty.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.