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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, Reem Alsalem, on her visit to the United Arab Emirates

Comments by the State*

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



1. The Government of the United Arab Emirates would like to extend its thanks to Ms. Reem Alsalem, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, for her visit to the United Arab Emirates from 9 to 19 December 2024.

2. The Government, upon reviewing the report, would like to make the following comments in relation to the paragraphs mentioned below:

Paragraph 26

3. The UAE Government continues its efforts to ensure that inclusive and equitable healthcare services meet the needs of all, regardless of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it provides healthcare services in the main spoken languages, and in Braille language, in selected health facilities, to ensure that individuals who are blind or visually impaired can access health information.

Paragraph 27

4. The National laws and Patient Rights Charter explicitly ensures the patient's informed consent, and protects their right to privacy. Federal Law No. (5) of 2019 explicitly prohibits the disclosure of health information without the patient's consent, except in specific cases permitted by law. In addition, Federal Law No. (4) of 2016 requires consent prior to any medical intervention and upholds the patient's right to full disclosure about their health condition.

Paragraph 30

5. Within the framework of legislative updates to the Nationality and Passports Law and its regulations, Emirati women married to foreign men are allowed to pass their nationality to their children, in accordance with the rules set in the Executive Regulations in the Federal Decree-Law No. (16) of 2017 which amended certain provisions of Federal Law No. (17) of 1972.

Paragraph 49

6. The Emirate of Sharjah has issued many Laws on protecting the rights of the child, including Law No. (9) of 1985 on the Care of Child of Unknown Parentage.

Paragraph 54

7. The Domestic Violence Law of 2019 was repealed and replaced by Federal Decree Law No. (13) of 2024 on Protection against Domestic Violence, which entered into force upon its publication. While it encouraged finding family reconciliation in cases of domestic violence, its rationale is to preserve the cohesion of the family as the cornerstone of social stability. However, this does not intervene with the right to file a case or a complaint.

Paragraph 84

8. The primary entity leading these efforts is the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT), formed in 2007 by Cabinet Decree No. 15. The NCCHT has implemented a comprehensive five-pillar strategy focusing on prevention, prosecution, punishment, protection, and the promotion of international cooperation. The UAE has established specialized programs to provide comprehensive support to victims, including safe housing, medical and psychological care, legal assistance, and rehabilitation programs.

On the rights of workers

9. On the rights of workers, there are some important developments that were introduced to address discrimination, human trafficking, forced labour, and all forms of violence and harassment. The UAE introduced Labour Law No.33 of 2021, and the subsequent laws to ensure protection for workers in the private sector, regardless of the nationality. In addition, as of 2024, all workers in the private sector must subscribe to an unemployment insurance scheme to ensure coverage in case of involuntary loss of employment for a period of 3 months.

10. In addition, the UAE introduced laws and regulations to ensure workers' wage protection in the private sector, which help reduce gender pay gap and inequality in the labour market, by promoting pay transparency, implementing equal pay for equal work policies, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms to combat wage discrimination.

11. The 2022 Domestic Workers Law (Federal Decree-Law No. 9) introduced significant enhancements to the working conditions of domestic workers. It established a rest or non-working period of 12 hours per day, with a minimum of 8 consecutive hours. It addresses the specific nature of domestic work, which typically includes periods of rest when the worker is not actively performing tasks, but remains available to provide services as needed.

12. In addition, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization introduced alternative wage protection mechanisms, including a written wage receipt, under the responsibility of the employer. In the event of any labour dispute in which the worker claims non-payment of wages, the burden of proof lies with the employer.

13. The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, in partnership with relevant federal authorities, has launched a Basic Health Insurance package at a competitive annual cost of AED 320. Employers are responsible for covering the insurance costs when issuing or renewing work permits. The insurance covers medication, treatment of chronic diseases, and cancer.

14. In addition, in 2023, it launched the Labour Inspectors Guide on Combating Forced Labour as part of the national strategy. It equips inspectors with standardized tools, procedures, and training to identify, prevent, and respond to cases of forced labour across all sectors.

15. The Labour Law explicitly prohibits harassment, bullying, and any form of verbal, physical, or psychological abuse in the workplace, as outlined in Article 14. Furthermore, Article 4 of the Law forbids discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion, national or social origin, or disability. This is reinforced in Federal Decree Law No. 9 of 2022 concerning Domestic Workers, which further prohibits discrimination, workplace violence, and forced labour. The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation has established complaint mechanisms that allow workers—including women in the private sector—to report grievances anonymously. The Labour Disputes and Grievances System provides a fast-track channel for addressing harassment and discrimination complaints.

16. The UAE laws provide strong protections for domestic workers by strictly prohibiting the imposition of recruitment and employment costs on workers. Article 6 of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2022 prohibits employers from charging workers for recruitment, directly or indirectly.

17. Furthermore, strict regulations are imposed on the licensing and operations of domestic workers recruiting agencies to ensure ethical and transparent recruitment practices. According to Administrative Resolution No. 36 of 2022, agencies must meet specific criteria, including having no prior criminal convictions related to human trafficking or breaches of trust, and must provide written acknowledgment of compliance with relevant laws.