

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 52<sup>nd</sup> SESSION

### High-Level Segment: MENA Region Dignitaries

27 February – 2 March 2023

#### H.E. Mr. Maeen Abdulmalek Saeed, Prime Minister of Yemen

Yemen strongly condemns the violation of human rights by the Houthi militias, their state of terrorism and the consequent decline of the rights of the Yemeni people. Yemen condemns the Houthi militia's spread of extremist terrorism through the education system among the youth and the violation of the rights of women. The country denounces the Houthi militias' use of starvation as a weapon to subjugate society; the use of the judiciary as a political tool to terrorize all those who oppose them; and the spread of misinformation against COVID-19, measles and polio vaccines which has led to the return of diseases and epidemics. Yemen classifies the Houthi militias as a terrorist group and calls upon all members of the Council to do so. The country will continue its efforts to end the Houthi Coup and restore the states' institutions and authorities in accordance with the national laws and international conventions. Yemen is committed to activating monitoring and accountability mechanisms to continue investigating human rights violations.

#### H.E. Mr. Abdellatif Ouahbi, Minister of Justice of Morocco

Morocco continues working on major reform projects in social protection, the national health system and education. These projects have strengthened the health insurance system, enabling the generalization of family allowances for children of school age, and the expansion of the base of registration in the retirement fund systems. Morocco has allocated additional human capabilities to improve public school quality. Morocco is committed to foster the right to work by encouraging entrepreneurial activity for youth; women's rights by empowering them with their legal rights; the right to water by developing the national program for water; and the criminal system by preparing a new draft criminal law. Morocco continues its efforts in the promotion of the values of dialogue, peace, tolerance, cooperation and mutual respect between countries, by hosting the work of the 9th Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). Morocco highlights its recent accession to several protocols and its reception of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on Violence against Children who made field visits to the cities of **Tangiers**, **Casablanca** and **Dakhla**. Morocco reaffirms its support for a political solution on the issue of **Western Sahara** and condemns **Algeria** for the harsh conditions of Moroccan detainees in the Tindouf camps.

#### H.E. Mr. Riad Al-Malki, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine

Palestine expresses its condolences to the **Syrian** and **Turkish** peoples as they recover from the aftermath of the earthquakes and endeavors to provide recovery and humanitarian assistance. Palestine denounces the full onslaught by **Israeli** settlers against Palestinian communities in **Huwara**, **Burin**. Palestine reiterates the need for international protection of the Palestinian people from unrelenting Israeli-sponsored violence, terrorism and incitement. The crisis in Palestine is the result of Council members' failure to act, an attachment to rhetorical statements and an insistence to refrain from any action aligned with statements. Palestine condemns the states that continue granting Israel exceptional treatment which allows it to continue committing crimes with impunity. It deplores Israel's killings of Palestinians in the occupied **West Bank**, the demolition of homes, and the deprivation of basic rights to Palestinian prisoners. Palestine condemns the Council members who lecture Palestinians on bias and wish to undercut discussions under Item 7. The State of Palestine calls upon the Council to correct its wrongs against the Palestinian people and take the upcoming commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as an opportunity to correct injustices.

**H.E. Mr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

The Council is not contributing to developing friendly relations among and treating all rights in an equal manner. The Council should not treat economic, social and cultural rights as second-class rights after civil and political rights. The right to development should be given more importance and Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) continue to affect and violate the rights of the targeted populations. Iran highlights, that the UPR mechanism is the right mechanism to promote genuine and constructive dialogue and cooperation. Iran denounces interference by terrorist elements in the peaceful assemblies following the death of Mahsa Amini and the propagation of violence by Persian language TV channels based in the **United Kingdom** and the **USA**. Iran's National Committee was established to investigate the alleged use of unnecessary force by police and will conduct investigations. The country is at the forefront of counterterrorism and denounces the involvement of some states in terrorism laundering by providing financial and logistical facilities to some violent and terrorist elements during the unrest in the country. Finally, Iran denounces the Zionist regime's systematic violation of human rights and crimes against humanity and calls upon them to stop.

**H.E. Hala Mazyad Al-Tuwaijri, President of the Saudi Human Rights Commission of Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia highlights the country's reforms and developments in various fields related to human rights. *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030* focuses on the rights to security, health and work; the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly; the right to development; the right to participate in public life; and the right to freedom of association. Saudi Arabia has developed an initiative to protect children in cyberspace and a national policy on the prevention of child labor, promulgated a national policy to promote equal opportunities and equality of treatment, is committed to meeting the increasing challenges of climate, and to increasing the level of women's participation in the labor market. Saudi Arabia continues to support the right to education and food security at the regional and international levels. The country expresses its solidarity with the **Syrian** and **Turkish** victims of the recent earthquake and will continue to provide humanitarian assistance. Saudi Arabia reaffirms its support for the security and stability of **Yemen** and highlighted its mediating efforts for a resolution of the **Russian-Ukrainian** crisis. The country calls upon **Afghanistan** to restore women's right to university education. Saudi Arabia condemns extremists who burnt copies of the Quran in some European States. Saudi Arabia reaffirms the importance of respect for cultural diversity and equality between peoples. Saudi Arabia calls upon the Council not to focus on some rights at the expense of others.

**H.E. Mr. Mehmet Kemal Bozay, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Türkiye**

Türkiye mourns the loss of more than 40.000 people following the largest natural disaster of the century. The country expressed its appreciation and gratefulness for the profound international solidarity. Türkiye expressed its commitment to **Ukraine's** territorial integrity and sovereignty, including **Crimea** as well as diplomatic efforts to reach a just peace. Türkiye reiterated its support for Crimean Tatars' right to live freely and safely in their homeland. Türkiye condemns the rise of Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, racism or xenophobia, in particular, the recent despicable acts against the Quran. Türkiye is concerned about pushbacks and systemic violations of the rights of migrants and refugees, in particular the situation of migrants in the Mediterranean. Türkiye is trying to revitalize the political process in **Syria** to enable safe, voluntary and dignified returns and eliminate terrorist threats such as PKK/YPG and Daesh. Türkiye referred to specific country situations, including: the rights of women in Afghanistan, free and fair elections in Libya, the establishment of an independent and sovereign **Palestinian state**, the normalization process in **Armenia**, and the protection of the rights and freedoms of the Uyghur Turks and other Muslim minorities in **China**. Türkiye wishes for a peaceful resolution of the situation in **Jammu-Kashmir** and reiterates its call for the restoration of democracy and improvement of the Rohingya's living conditions. Turkish Cypriots

still cannot exercise their basic human rights, due to unjust and inhumane embargoes. Finally, Türkiye underlined the importance of international solidarity.

**H.E. Mr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Alzayani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain**

Bahrain reaffirms its commitment to the UPR review mechanism and its work in appointing a permanent coordinator for human rights in **Manama** in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The country is working to implement the government's program (2023-2026) which is the result of national consensus and the full exercise of citizens' political rights. Bahrain's human rights priorities include: raising the standard of living for citizens; supporting the advancement of women and empowering youth; promoting the rights of children, families, the elderly and people with disabilities; and protecting the rights of workers. Bahrain is committed to combating the trafficking of persons, improving the quality of health, education and housing services, addressing climate change, and adopting national strategies and plans, including the National Plan for Human Rights. Bahrain reaffirms its commitment to protecting civil and political rights, including freedom of opinion and expression. Bahrain will continue to develop legislation regarding the criminal system, domestic violence, women's rights and the protection of children from abuse. Bahrain continues to organize international conferences for religious dialogue and is committed to maintaining security and peace.

**H.E. Ms. Najla M. El Mangoush, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Libya**

Libya expressed its deepest condolences to the families of **Syrians** and **Turkish** nations. The Council must stay away from the politicization of issues related to human rights. Libya is committed to building capacity in justice and security institutions. Libya calls upon the Council for support in providing justice for the victims and the oppressed. There is a need for broad reforms and legislation to protect human rights in countries that are undergoing democratic transitions. Libya is making efforts to restore public elections, issue provisions for children of Libyan women married to foreigners, maintain stability and security, support the efforts of the national judicial authorities in pursuing human rights violators and fight impunity. International support is still needed to consolidate the country's transitional justice and national reconciliation paths. Libya calls upon the international community to help guarantee a decent life for Libyan migrants and the displaced. Libya recalls the importance of the right to self-determination in support of the Palestinian people.

**H.E. Ms. Lolwah Rashid Al-Khater, Assistant Foreign Minister of Qatar**

**Doha** will host the Fifth United Nations Conference of the Least Developed Countries. The World Cup provided a space for civilized communication where people of all races, nationalities and beliefs came together. Qatar is committed to fostering the right to education by providing international development assistance in the education sector in several countries, including **Afghanistan**. Education is a human right, and it should not be compromised under any pretext. Qatar condemns actions of hate speech and religious intolerance and the burning of the Quran. It deplores the continuation of crimes, grave violations and attacks by the **Israeli** occupation against the Palestinian people and calls upon the international community to stand up to the Israeli occupation. Serious violations of human rights in **Syria** continue to be undermined by the international community.

**Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**

The OIC expresses concern over the rise of religious violence and acts against freedom of religion materialized through the recent desecration of the Quran. The OIC condemns the rise of islamophobia and urges states to continue countering this phenomenon. The OIC reiterates the importance of the family unit which is crucial to individuals and society to help them stay balanced. The OIC deplores the violations of human rights of the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupation and calls upon the international community to help put an end to it. The OIC expresses concern about **Afghanistan's** violations of women's

and girls' rights to education and civil service and calls upon the authorities to restore all their rights. The OIC is concerned about the situation of the **Jammu-Kashmir** and the Rohingya in **Myanmar**. The OIC condemns the destruction of cultural heritage and religious sites in **Nagorno-Karabakh** by **Armenia** and expresses its support for the government of **Azerbaijan**.

**H.E. Mr. Fayssal Mekdad, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic**

Syria reaffirms its commitment to developing and strengthening the legislative and institutional frameworks related to the promotion and protection of human rights. Syria rejects the politicization practices of some countries in the Council that seek to interfere especially with developing countries' internal affairs. Syria stresses the importance of discussing the impacts of terrorism through a comprehensive approach. Syria is committed to protecting victims from terrorist armed groups by restoring the rule of law in the areas liberated. The country launched an emergency response plan at the national level to address the repercussions of the earthquake. Syria appeals to countries and international organizations to support the affected areas and expresses its gratitude to those who have shown solidarity. Syria condemns UCMs which contribute to a shortage of rescue and relief equipment for victims and continue to undermine the enjoyment of basic rights by the Syrian people. Syria reaffirms support for agenda Item 7 and its right to fully restore the **occupied Syrian Golan**, rejecting any measures taken by the **Israeli** occupation.

**SH.E. Mr. Nabil Ammar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad of Tunisia**

Tunisia has adopted a new constitution that reflects Tunisian's aspirations to build a true democracy. This constitution fosters individual and public rights; freedom of belief, opinion and expression; freedom of information; the rights of women; and the right to quality education. Despite resistance resulting from the transition process, Tunisia's new parliament will take up its role soon and is committed to the full respect of rights and freedoms. The right of freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate should not serve as a pretext to spread rumors or incite hate speech. Tunisia is committed to establishing an authentic democracy that is protected from corruption and other abuses. By establishing a court, Tunisia aims to foster an independent justice system that combats corruption, terrorism and impunity. Tunisia reaffirms that civil and political rights cannot be achieved without strengthening economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development. Tunisia is advancing in its achievement of the SDGs but needs additional resources that are currently abroad. Tunisia calls upon countries to support its resolution submitted along with the African Group on the adverse effects of the non-return of funds of unlawful origin to countries of origin. Tunisia calls upon all countries to respect the will of the Tunisian people and its sovereignty.

**Mr. Omer Ahmed Berzinji, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq**

Iraq is committed to developing economic, financial and service reforms; building effective tools to combat corruption in all its forms; addressing poverty and unemployment; accelerating the process of rebuilding areas liberated from ISIS; and completing the file of the internally displaced. Iraq is currently developing several laws, including on freedom of expression, assembly, and peaceful demonstration; anti-terrorism; anti-torture; and domestic violence, among others. Iraq is committed to enhancing accountability for the crimes of ISIS against the Yazidis, Christians, Turkmen, Shabak, and other Iraqi people. Iraq is working to strengthen women's role in society as well as developing accountability systems for any violation to the right of freedom of opinion, expression and peaceful assembly. Iraq has received the International Committee for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and will host the 52nd session of the Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights. Iraq continues efforts to support the internally displaced by rehabilitating the liberated areas and returning the majority of the displaced to their areas of residence. Iraq emphasizes the decrees that granted Yazidi Iraqis ownership of their homes in **Sinjar**. Iraq

reaffirms its adherence to the values of the family stemming from the bond between men and women and the protection of children.

**H.E. Khaled EL Bakly, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt**

Egypt is concerned about the food and energy crises and an increase in racism, populism, hate speech, and polarization. Egypt denounces the actions of extremists who burned a copy of the Quran and warns about the dangers of fueling feelings of hatred and violence under the pretext of freedom of opinion and expression. Egypt calls upon the Council to pay special attention to the growing phenomenon of "Islamophobia" and hostile movements against Islam and Muslims in **the West**. Egypt stresses that the Council must not become a politicized arena. Egypt expresses its commitment to the issues of terrorism and human rights, the right to work, family protection as the basic nucleus of society, and the right to medicine. Egypt is concerned about the **occupied Palestinian territory**, the suffering of the people in **Syria, Libya** and **Yemen**, and the violations against the Rohingya Muslims in **Myanmar**. Egypt is leading national efforts to lay the foundations for the new republic based on the values of citizenship, equality, the rule of law, democracy and human rights. Egypt is working to improve political and civil rights as well as promote economic and social rights. This includes actions that enable national dialogues; reconcile civil society organizations; promote the right to food; and protect the rights of women, children, the elderly and people with special needs. Egypt draws attention to the climate change crisis and its repercussions on human rights, stressing the exacerbation of the global water crisis and the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach that takes into account the human right to water in its various dimensions.