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PERMANENT MISSION OF NORWAY

15th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
Geneva, 21 January to 1 February 2013

Statement by Norway:

UPR of the United Arab Emirates

Thank you Mr. President,

We welcome the delegation of the United Arab Emirates

Norway is concerned by the recent deterioration of the freedom of expression in the UAE. We recommend the UAE to encourage freedom of expression and the press, including by amending the penal code to remove all criminal penalties for alleged libel offenses. Norway is also concerned about the reports of arbitrary detentions and arrests. It is important that detainees are given full access to their fundamental legal rights as prisoners, and be given fair and humane treatment. We stress the importance of a fair and transparent legal process, and we recommend a release from custody of any individual detained solely on the basis of peaceful expression of political views.

Norway welcomes reports of a forthcoming establishment of a national human rights institution as an important step to secure implementation and monitoring of human rights. We recommend that the authorities clarify the mandate and scope of its proposed National Human Rights Institution as per the Paris Principles.

We recognize that certain steps have been taken to improve conditions for migrant workers in the UAE. We recommend the implementation of legislation to regulate the living and working conditions of domestic workers and ensure that it is compatible with the standards laid out in the ILO Convention No. 189.

Finally, Norway has taken due note of the recent positive amendments to the law on citizenship. We recommend the UAE to continue strengthening protective measures and legal rights for women and children, including by giving women equal status to men in matters of divorce, inheritance and child custody.

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