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Counsellor
Anne Tamara Lorre

UPR 19, May 7, 2014
Recommendations by Canada

Qatar

Question

In 2010, Qatar agreed to implement recommendations regarding the status of women in the country, including to consider withdrawing reservations to CEDAW, to review legislation relating to laws that discriminate against women, to conduct an awareness campaign to prevent violence against women and to prosecute those who commit such crimes. Could the delegation from Qatar inform us of the concrete steps taken to fulfill these commitments and of the overall progress made to improve the status of women in Qatar?

Recommendations

Canada recommends that Qatar:

1. Continue to improve the working conditions of low-paid migrant labourers, especially those working as domestic help and on infrastructure projects;
2. Continue to build the capacity of an independent judiciary that would process court cases more effectively and independently; and
3. Work to encourage both Qatari and expatriate women to report incidences of sexual violence, such as rape, to authorities and increase awareness of police forces, prosecutors and judges about the seriousness of the issue.

Observations (if time allows):

Canada welcomes Qatar's commitment to addressing and ultimately reducing the incidences of domestic violence through its 2011-2016 National Development Strategy. We encourage Qatar to continue its efforts in this regard so that it can meet its target of implementing a domestic violence protection system by 2016.

Canada commends Qatar for the work done to date to address the rights of migrant workers, including the introduction of a new Workers' Charter by the Supreme Council for Legacy and Delivery. Low paid migrant labourers are the most vulnerable group of expatriate workers in Qatar and Canada encourages Qatar to continue to enshrine their rights in law and to help them exercise these rights free of coercion.

While Canada applauds the efforts made by Qatar to improve human rights within its borders through legislation and the hosting of NGOs examining specific issues, we encourage Qatar to ensure that the Qatari judiciary is able to function independently and without undue influence affecting its rulings. This is critical in ensuring that the laws passed are applied as they were intended and applied equally among all residents of Qatar.