



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Seventy-fifth session

Summary record of the 2206th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 23 May 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Winter

Contents

Consideration of reports of States parties (*continued*)

Combined third and fourth periodic reports of Qatar (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Consideration of reports of States parties *(continued)*

Combined third and fourth periodic reports of Qatar (continued) (CRC/C/QAT/3-4; CRC/C/QAT/Q/3-4 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Qatar took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Aldoseri** asked whether any instruments, such as surveys, had been established to assess the needs of students when developing human rights curricula, and whether those curricula were subject to periodic evaluation. She would appreciate further information on courses to prepare teachers to teach human rights curricula.
3. **Ms. Aho Assouma** asked whether the child mortality rates for private clinics had been factored into the rates mentioned at the 2205th meeting, and whether those rates were national rates. She wished to know how routine vaccinations were carried out in remote areas, and how they were provided to the children of refugees, as well as how the births of the children of refugees were registered. As there were a greater number of traffic incidents, resulting in children's deaths, in Qatar than in countries with comparable economies, she asked who was responsible for guaranteeing the proper implementation of road safety programmes, and who was the target audience of those programmes. Finally, she asked how the Government ensured that it had a holistic approach to protecting women and children from violence and abuse.
4. **Mr. Gastaud** wished to know whether teaching and textbooks were available in the languages of minority groups, such as Hindi, Urdu, Pashtun and Farsi, in order to facilitate access to education for children from those groups. Referring to paragraphs 390-393 of the State party's report (CRC/C/QAT/3-4) on organized extracurricular activities, he asked how much free time children had to themselves. As there was no reference to children living and working on the streets in the report, he wondered whether there was a lack of available information or whether those children were ignored. With regard to paragraphs 166-168 of the report, he would appreciate information on any laws to ensure that the opinions of children were gathered and heard in judicial and administrative processes in which they were involved.
5. **Ms. Otani** requested clarification of paragraph 80 of the State party's reply to the Committee's list of issues (CRC/C/QAT/Q/3-4/Add.1) as it seemed to imply that child victims of trafficking in persons were placed in institutions for the social monitoring and care of juvenile delinquents, and that they were treated as delinquents rather than victims.
6. **Mr. Kotrane** said that, although legislation regulating the entry and residence of migrants guaranteed that families would be kept together, he requested further information on children in migration situations, with particular reference to the authority over migrant workers and their families granted to employers under the kafalah sponsorship system. He asked whether the Government intended to modify the kafalah system, and what steps had been taken to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants to prevent the detention of children.
7. It was of concern that the Criminal Code did not clearly and comprehensively cover the sale of children or child pornography, and that men and women were treated differently under articles 296 and 297 of the Code, despite requests from the Committee on the Rights of the Child that the Code be revised. He wished to know how far extraterritorial jurisdiction could apply, and whether crimes could only be prosecuted in the country where they took place. He would appreciate clarification on measures to be taken prior to the 2022 International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup, including on the draft resolution to punish child trafficking in sports.
8. **Mr. Cardona Llorens** (Country Rapporteur), noting that education in Qatar was free only to children with citizenship of Qatar or another member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, asked what measures were in place to enable access to education for children of other nationalities in the event of financial difficulties. He wished to know whether free access to health care was also determined on the grounds of citizenship, and who was

responsible for paying for services not covered by the compulsory medical insurance provided by employers. He asked for clarification of the potential sentences for *hudud* crimes committed by young people aged between 16 and 18, and whether those sentences included flogging, forced labour or life imprisonment.

9. **Mr. Nelson** said that he would appreciate information on measures to tackle obesity among young people in Qatar.

10. **Ms. Hassan** (Qatar) said that women were legally entitled to two months of fully paid maternity leave upon providing proof of their pregnancy, with leave of three months if a woman was carrying twins. Maternity leave was not deducted from annual leave allowances. Upon returning from leave, female employees could be granted two hours per day for breastfeeding. Qatari female employees could also be eligible to receive funding for childcare costs.

11. The Family Counselling Centre, in cooperation with the Supreme Judicial Council, was responsible for protecting the best interests of children in the event of their parents' separation. Established in 2003, the Centre was a private, non-profit organization that provided guidance in family disputes and various free services to children, irrespective of their backgrounds. The Centre's reports were used by judges in custody cases to ensure the child's welfare and limit conflict. In addition, the Qatar Foundation for Social Action provided services to parents in custody cases, including counselling sessions. A hotline was being developed to receive relevant information and facilitate coordination in custody cases, and psychological care was available for the children involved.

12. **Mr. Al-Dosari** (Qatar) said that Qatari children were not recruited into the armed services or involved in armed conflict. Only people over the age of 18 were drafted into the military.

13. Non-Qatari women incarcerated in Qatar were detained at the behest of the intelligence or security services. Incarcerated women received services including free medical examinations, and had visitation rights, with weekly contact with representatives of their embassies. Women that had violated immigration laws were detained pending their deportation. In the event that they could not pay to return to their countries of origin, the Government purchased plane tickets on their behalf; it had issued over 7,000 tickets in 2016 and over 4,000 in the first 4 months of 2017. *Laissez-passer* had also been issued, in conjunction with embassies. In some cases, the Government had cancelled fines owed by women subject to expulsion decisions.

14. There were nine cases of incarcerated women with children in 2016, five cases in 2015 and eight cases in 2014. Incarcerated pregnant women received specialized care from obstetricians and were transferred to hospitals to deliver their babies. Birth certificates did not refer to the incarceration of the mothers. In such cases, children remained in their mothers' custody for up to two years, after which custody was granted to their fathers or, if they had no relatives, to caregiving institutions. When their children were no longer in their custody, incarcerated women had rights granting them visits lasting up to two hours three times per week.

15. **Ms. Khazova** asked for clarification of custody procedures in cases of separation or divorce.

16. **Mr. Rodríguez Reyes** reiterated his request for statistics on the proportion of female prisoners allowed to breastfeed.

17. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that, according to the prison authorities, there were nine cases of female prisoners breastfeeding their children. There were 92 female prisoners in total in Qatar.

18. **Mr. Al-Dosari** (Qatar) said that the infants of nine women who had given birth in Qatar Central Prison in 2016 were breastfed. Incarcerated women were permitted to look after their infants for up to two years.

19. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that in cases of separation or divorce, the mother was awarded custody of a girl up to the age of 12 years, since it was deemed to be in the child's

best interest. Once a boy reached the age of 7 years, he could choose to remain with his mother or to live instead with his father.

20. **Mr. Al-Saad** (Qatar) said that, pursuant to article 68 of the Constitution, all ratified international treaties acquired binding legal force. A bill on the rights of the child had been drafted in light of the relevant human rights treaties and on the basis of the principle of the child's best interests. A child was defined as a person under 18 years of age and criminal responsibility under the bill had therefore been raised to 18 years. Penalties under the 2014 Cybercrime Prevention Act could be imposed only on persons who had reached 18 years of age.

21. **The Chair** reiterated the question regarding the imposition of penalties of flogging and hard labour on persons aged between 16 and 18 years.

22. **Ms. Hassan** (Qatar) said that children in that age group were detained in juvenile facilities in their area of residence. They were not transferred to adult prisons until they reached the age of 18.

23. **Mr. Al-Tayeb** (Qatar) said that the penalty of hard labour still existed in the legislation but it had not been imposed for more than 10 years in juvenile prison facilities.

24. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that Act No. 22 of 2006 on the family permitted a judge to rule on the custody or guardianship of a child in accordance with his or her best interests. Pursuant to article 170 of the Act, custody of boys could be awarded to the mother until they reached the age of 13 years and custody of girls until they reached the age of 15 years. Article 173 concerned cases in which custody could be awarded to the father. Article 181 required appropriate housing to be made available to mothers who had been awarded custody.

25. **Ms. Khazova** said she took it that judges had discretionary authority to decide whether children should stay with their mother or father. It was automatically assumed that it was in the best interest of girls to stay with their mothers until the age of 12, and in the best interests of boys to stay with them until the age of 7.

26. **Ms. Todorova** asked how judges could exercise discretionary authority, since the law imposed strict criteria based on age and gender.

27. **Mr. Cardona Llorens** noted that the marriageable age was 16 for girls and 18 for boys. He asked why the law imposed such great differences in terms of gender.

28. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that article 173 of Act No. 22 permitted judges to allow children to opt for the granting of custody to either parent. Custody of girls continued until their marriage and custody of boys until the age of 15 unless a court decided otherwise.

29. **Ms. Hassan** (Qatar) said that the Family Counselling Centre (*Wifaq*) sought to reconcile parents in the best interests of the child before the case was referred to a court. Judges consulted the Centre before handing down a decision on custody.

30. **Ms. Skelton** noted that, according to the Criminal Code, a person under the age of 16 could not consent to sexual intercourse and a person who had intercourse with an underage person faced life imprisonment. She asked whether a person aged 17 who had intercourse with a person aged 15 faced life imprisonment or whether mitigating circumstances could be taken into account.

31. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that such penalties were applied for criminal acts such as rape and not for sexual intercourse as such, and the penalty depended on the age of the offender. A person under 18 years of age would be referred to a juvenile detention facility.

32. **Mr. Al-Henzab** (Qatar), referring to a question regarding the detention of refugees, said that Qatar had welcomed tens of thousands of families, especially from the Syrian Arab Republic, and had treated them as guests rather than refugees. They were offered free education and health-care services, and two special schools for Syrian children had been opened in the course of the 2013/14 academic year. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education paid the teachers' salaries and provided accommodation for the staff.

33. Qatar also provided support for refugees outside its territory in cooperation with international bodies. It was a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect. The State had announced the establishment of a vocational training fund for displaced persons, refugees and victims of Middle Eastern conflicts at the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice hosted by Qatar in 2015, with a view to enabling young students to contribute to the national reconstruction process and sustainable development on returning to their countries.

34. Qatar had also launched the Education Above All Foundation in 2012 as a global educational initiative for needy children. The Foundation had provided support for 45 projects in 40 countries on behalf of more than 6 million children who had not been enrolled in school.

35. In December 2015, Qatar had launched a three-year partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) aimed at providing access to education for about 50,000 displaced children in Africa and the Middle East.

36. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that Qatar attached great importance to education for children with disabilities. It maintained a comprehensive database of enrolment of all pupils, including children with disabilities, in public and private educational establishments. A number of institutions also specialized in providing educational services for children with disabilities. The number of children with disabilities enrolled in private and public schools totalled 9,897, of whom 5,399 were Qatari citizens and 1,097 were girls.

37. The National Development Strategy for 2011-2016 had contained four basic programmes on behalf of persons with disabilities. The programmes, policies and procedures for early identification of disabilities had been assessed and developed. Qatar fully endorsed the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the documents issued by the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO), in particular action to achieve Sustainable Development Goal No. 4, namely to ensure inclusive and quality education for all. That goal had been incorporated in the new National Development Strategy for 2017-2022. Teachers and psychologists had also been trained and familiarized with the principles of inclusive education under the previous Strategy in coordination with Qatar University.

38. A special needs advisory, support and assessment centre had been established, and teachers had been trained to use appropriate textbooks and communication technology. School buildings had been rendered accessible for children with disabilities; special wings had been built for recreational activities, and means of transport had been provided.

39. Twenty-five schools had participated in a research project on integration of children with disabilities and involvement of their parents in the process. Parents and teachers were trained to use new technology and were offered advice on appropriate interaction with children with disabilities.

40. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that many awareness-raising campaigns had been conducted on the harmful effects of early marriage, including a campaign involving 10 primary schools and 18 secondary schools, which would eventually be extended to include all schools. The Department of Family Affairs had also launched campaigns in 2017 on the proper treatment of children targeting all sectors of society.

41. **Mr. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that very few cases of HIV/AIDS had been recorded in Qatar, only 18 cases in 2016 and a total of 338 cases since 1999. Very few children had been affected during that period and none at all in 2016. Vigorous action had been taken to fight the disease in line with the recommendations contained in international and regional strategies. A comprehensive and effective national strategy had been developed to prevent transmission of the virus in coordination with various international and regional stakeholders. The strategy included voluntary screening, awareness-raising campaigns and excellent treatment services. The Ministry of Public Health endeavoured to raise awareness of risks and means of access to treatment, to promote the requisite changes in behaviour, and to provide social and legal services and training in vital skills. The State was implementing joint activities with the World Health Organization (WHO) aimed at assessing the current national strategy and developing new strategies in line with Decree

Law No. 17 of 1990 on Protection from Infectious Diseases. The WHO global health sector strategy on HIV for the period 2016-2021 had been endorsed and reflected in the National Health Strategy for the period 2017-2022.

42. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education had launched HIV/AIDS awareness-raising programmes to assist students. They included spiritual, physical, social and ethical dimensions, and education regarding sexual conduct and risks pertaining to HIV/AIDS. The general science curriculum in schools also included a section on HIV/AIDS.

43. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that a centre had been set up to provide care for children without known parents, up to the age of 18 years. A special commission had been established by that centre to oversee the implementation of foster care services.

44. The commission in question was responsible for selecting the most suitable foster family for a child, on the basis of certain requirements: guardianship was generally awarded to couples (although unmarried women could be selected if they were otherwise eligible); applicants must be between 25 and 45 years old and the application must be submitted in writing. Applicants' material resources, religious beliefs and psychological state were also taken into account. Where possible, guardianship was granted to relatives of the child.

45. The foster family must undertake to tell the child about his or her situation, with support from the authorities, and to report any difficulties encountered to the authorities. In addition, all school-age children in foster care must be enrolled in school.

46. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that there had been 43 children without known parents in 2004, compared with 1 in 2017. To date, a total of 181 children without known parents and 34 children without a father had been registered. Services such as health care, legal aid and material support had been provided to 216 families.

47. **Mr. Cardona Llorens**, noting that 9,000 children with disabilities were being educated in special centres, while just 1,000 children with disabilities were in mainstream schools, asked whether the delegation could confirm that the vast majority of children with disabilities were being educated in a segregated manner.

48. **Ms. Khazova** asked whether abandoned children and street children were registered and provided with identity documents, so as to be able to fully exercise their rights under the Convention. She further enquired whether children without known parents who did not have the appearance of Qataris were properly registered, given identity documents and placed with families. Lastly, she asked whether the Government had considered introducing a system of joint custody for parents who had separated, noting that children might be traumatized by having to choose between their mother and father.

49. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** (Country Rapporteur), with reference to the fact that 50,000 Syrians had been received in Qatar as guests but had not been granted refugee status, asked how guest status of that kind was related to refugee status.

50. **Ms. Aldoseri**, noting that only 82 children with disabilities attended mainstream schools at kindergarten level, enquired whether an awareness campaign had been conducted to encourage parents of children with disabilities to enrol their children in kindergarten.

51. **Mr. Lumina** said that it would be useful to know what percentage of teachers in State schools held degrees or formal teaching qualifications and whether there was any difference between State school teachers and private school teachers in terms of their level of qualification.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.55 a.m.

52. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that a school health and safety framework, which covered safety measures relating to the use of school vehicles, had been introduced. Various booklets on safety and security, including road safety, had been published and distributed in schools. Many initiatives to increase road safety awareness among children had been conducted within schools and more widely. In addition, a number of events had been organized by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry

of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Matters to address the issue of road accidents and their impact on children.

53. Schools for migrant children from specific countries, such as Pakistan and India, had been set up; those schools followed the national curriculum of the country in question and taught in the children's own language. In addition, various countries, including the Philippines, China and Spain, had set up international schools in Qatar. In schools throughout the country, languages such as Spanish and German were taught and a special programme had been introduced to foster intercultural dialogue between different ethnic groups and nationalities.

54. State and private schools offered a range of extracurricular activities, in fields such as sport, literature, art and volunteering, to suit students' interests. Sports were also taught as part of the school curriculum. The Government was strongly committed to promoting gender equality. The indicators for female participation in education were very promising: women currently accounted for 75 per cent of students in higher education and 64 per cent of students in public education. In order to become a teacher, it was necessary to obtain a specific teaching qualification; teachers also received in-service training.

55. **Mr. Al-Dosari** (Qatar) said that a number of seminars, workshops and awareness campaigns on road safety had been organized throughout the country by the Ministry of the Interior, in collaboration with the police and institutions such as the Childhood Cultural Centre. On the website of the Ministry of the Interior, there was a section on educating children about road safety and the role of traffic police.

56. There were no problems relating to birth registration in remote areas because there were no remote areas in Qatar. Children were registered by the hospitals where they were born. Birth certificates, giving the parents' names and nationality, were issued by the civil registry office. Children born in Qatar, children born to Qatari parents outside Qatar and children born in Qatar without known parents were eligible for citizenship.

57. **Mr. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that the Ministry of Education had drafted a strategy on child nutrition for 2016-2017, in collaboration with other competent ministries. Preventive measures to promote good health among children included initiatives to encourage breastfeeding and the provision of vitamin D supplements to children in order to prevent anaemia. Primary and preventive health care for children was provided by 23 health centres across the country. Special health-care services were available for children suffering from anaemia and malnutrition. Information on tackling malnutrition had been published in the form of a booklet. Other measures to promote child health included the "We Are Healthy" programme that had been implemented in primary schools, as described in paragraph 314 of his country's report.

58. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that a policy had been introduced to ensure that only healthy food and drinks, with a low sugar content, were available to children in schools. Penalties were imposed on schools for any breach of that policy.

59. School curricula and textbooks, which already covered human rights to a certain extent, were being developed further to incorporate a broader range of human rights concepts, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. Children were also taught about the provisions of international human rights treaties, including the Convention and its Optional Protocols. Various handbooks on human rights had been published, including a guide to the Arab Charter on Human Rights. In 2017, a total of 17 workshops on human rights had been organized for children from primary and secondary schools, in the languages spoken by the students in question.

60. Qatar hosted visits from national human rights institutions of neighbouring countries and the National Human Rights Committee conducted visits to neighbouring countries and countries outside the region. Joint workshops had been organized, in collaboration with human rights institutions across the world, with the aim of educating children on human rights. The Government had also organized a number of training courses on human rights for teachers and school administrators, in coordination with various universities.

61. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that an agreement had been reached with Qatar University regarding the provision of training courses on intercultural dialogue.

62. **Mr. Al-Tayeb** (Qatar) said that the provisions of the Convention had been incorporated into domestic law and could be invoked by the national courts. The principle of regionalism was enshrined in the Criminal Code. Within the region, Qatar was one of the countries that had made the most progress in bringing its Criminal Code into line with international standards. Extraterritorial jurisdiction applied in cases of piracy, terrorism and human trafficking.

63. With reference to paragraph 52 of his country's report, he said that the Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue had been set up to foster a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between religions. A number of initiatives in that regard, aimed at specific religious communities, had been introduced. Freedom of religion was supported by the Constitution, which provided for the protection of all religious communities in Qatar.

64. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that, according to the Penal Code of Qatar, once a person had been sentenced in another state, that person could not be prosecuted for the same crime in Qatar.

65. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that the education system emphasized tolerance towards other cultures and religions. School textbooks were not prejudicial towards other faiths and encouraged respect.

66. **Mr. Al-Henzab** (Qatar) said that there were no street children in the country, since living standards were high according to international indicators. Nevertheless, preventative measures were in place and Qatar had contributed 5 million dollars over the previous two years to eliminate violence against homeless children overseas.

67. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that the country endeavoured to implement the declaration of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and had contributed 49 million dollars towards providing an education for children living on the streets and in shanty towns, as well as towards rehabilitation for detained women. A plan for 2015-2020 was in place to follow up on that programme.

68. **Mr. Al-Saad** (Qatar) said that article 2 of Law No. 15 of 2011 outlawed trafficking in human beings for any form of exploitation, which included trafficking for the removal of organs or other body parts. Penalties included up to 7 years in prison and a fine of up to 250,000 Qatari riyals. A committee for combating human trafficking had been set up in 2017 as part of the national strategy in that regard.

69. The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy was currently responsible for all matters related to the hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

70. **Mr. Al-Dosari** (Qatar) said that special rooms had been set up and equipped for children with disabilities and special needs at football matches, as part of the Humanitarian World Cup programme.

71. **Mr. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that the mortality rate among children under 5 years of age had decreased by 1 percentage point between 2006 and 2015. All children received vaccinations and benefited from health services in all regions of the country. Emergency care was also provided, even to children who did not hold health cards. There were campaigns to raise awareness among children of their rights to health care; one such example was the national campaign to combat diphtheria and tetanus. In early 2007, a campaign had been organized to distribute enough vaccinations for 10 years among all schools in the country. There were also day trips to familiarize children with the various types of health centres.

72. **Ms. Hassan** (Qatar) said that in matters pertaining to shared custody, the courts and the Family Counselling Centre (*Wifaq*) made efforts to reconcile parents, especially when the woman had to find a new house or continue living in the family home. Custody was shared when both parents lived together.

73. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that child domestic servants were not employed in Qatar. However, there were new arrivals from abroad who worked in accordance with the law of Qatar and in coordination with the embassies of the States of origin, to ensure that all rights and obligations were respected.

74. **Mr. Al-Henzab** (Qatar) said that decisions made by the State on the basis of moral and religious principles and international standards, and legislation and measures had been introduced to promote rights. The kafalah system had been abolished and work contracts were currently used instead. Salaries were protected under those contracts and workers were paid via bank transfer. Measures to enforce the new rules included stronger security and the hiring of more inspectors and social workers, and were subject to oversight by the authorities. Furthermore, dispute settlement committees had established centres to monitor complaints, which could be lodged in a number of languages. Sanctions were in place for employers who violated the rules.

75. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that employers were obliged to take out social insurance policies for foreign employees, and had to make payment into bank accounts to ensure timely automatic payment.

76. **Ms. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that Qatari children, as well as those from members of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and foreign children whose parents worked in companies, were entitled to free education. There was also assistance for poor families and migrants. Companies had to pay education fees for workers' families, and were obliged to ensure that children attended school and had access to health-care services.

77. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that there were measures in place to verify that all children attended school. The University of Qatar accepted applications from up to four citizens from the countries of each of the 16 embassies in country.

78. **Mr. Aboulenein** (Qatar) said that Qatar had not organized a conference on child rights; however, there had been a congress on organized crime where issues such as juvenile detention were raised. A seminar had been held in conjunction with Interpol, which had resulted in recommendations being established. A database had been set up on the sexual exploitation of children, in which Qatar participated and was a stakeholder. The country also participated in a child protection initiative, for which a seminar had taken place in the United Kingdom in 2016. The issue had been followed up and monitored as a result of the Abu Dhabi conference. Lastly, Law No. 14 of 2014 prohibited the distribution of pornography involving children and established penalties of a maximum of 5 years in prison and a fine not exceeding 500,000 Qatari riyals.

79. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that a youth conference had been set up following the Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to enable students and schoolchildren from 30 different nationalities to take part and familiarize themselves with the issues raised in the agenda. The resulting declaration had been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations at that time, and a similar initiative would be undertaken at the next Congress in 2025.

80. Qatar had not acceded to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court since the country did not have enough high-ranking officials. Nevertheless, the treaties and conventions that the State party had signed and ratified were reviewed periodically.

81. **Mr. Al-Muftah** (Qatar) said that improving the health of children and adolescents, by preventing diseases and conduct that is harmful to health, was a priority of the country's health strategy. Care was both physical, including detection of ill-treatment, and psychological, for conditions that included autism, depression, and eating and sexual disorders. Screening and other preventative measures were part of the comprehensive approach to health care. Furthermore, dangerous behaviour such as the excessive use of the Internet was monitored. Reproductive health care was provided in accordance with the guiding principles in that respect.

82. Custodial sentences could be imposed on anyone who induced an abortion through pharmaceutical means; punishments were more severe for medical practitioners. Furthermore, women who agreed to take such drugs without authorization by the State could also face penalties. Nevertheless, exceptions were granted in the event of birth defects or where there was a risk to the mother's health, with the authorization of the father and the doctor.

83. **Ms. Al-Abdullah** (Qatar) said that a ruling from 2004 governed inheritance rights and management of assets in the child's best interest.

84. **Mr. Al-Hamadi** (Qatar) said that the law allowed adoptive families to draw up a will leaving their assets to adopted children.

85. In order to raise awareness of the importance of sport, a national sports day was held in the second week of February each year. It was a public holiday in which high-ranking Government officials participated.

86. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** (Country Rapporteur) said that he commended the progress made following the recommendations of 2009. Nevertheless, further effort should be made to bring the future law on children into line with the Convention, particularly with regard to the application of the Criminal Code to children as if they were adults. Measures should be taken to address discrimination of girl children and the children of immigrants, particularly with regard to family reunification and freedom of movement. Lastly, a child rights based approach should be applied to the institutional reforms.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.