



**The Committee for the Preparation of
Human Rights Action Plan**



National Human Rights Action Plan in Qatar

Concept and Characteristics

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The Importance of National Human Rights Action Plans

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in June 1993, undertook wide-ranging review of the progress in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The Conference also sought to identify obstacles to further progress and ways in which they might be overcome. The Conference and its preparatory process thus resulted in a close examination of existing concepts and mechanisms as well as many proposals for new approaches to the promotion and protection of human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) was particularly important because of its comprehensiveness and its adoption by consensus.

The Conference recommends that “each State consider the desirability of drawing up a national action plan identifying steps whereby that State would improve the promotion and protection of human rights” (Part II, Para. 71).

Several countries have adopted national action plans in the field of human rights. These plans, which are seen as tools for improving the human rights situation in the concerned state, differ in their scope and focus.

The plans cover civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. The plans might be targeted particular disadvantaged individuals and groups. Some of these plans also address specific issues related to human rights and the environment, consumer rights or victims of crime.

Following the Vienna Conference, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) prepared a Handbook on National Human Rights Plans of Action as a guide for the preparation of plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights. OHCHR also provided assistance to several states embarked on the preparation of such plans.

The National Plan of Action for Human Rights is a realistic and pragmatic approach towards the promotion and protection of human rights. While some general principles apply to all national plans of action, there is no single approach that can be applied to all states. Therefore, each country has to develop proposals suited to its own political, cultural, historical and legal circumstances. It is up to each state to decide the policies, programs and activities that it will embark into to achieve its general goals in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Establishment of the Committee on the Preparation of the National Action Plan for Human Rights in the State of Qatar

The Council of Ministers at its ninth ordinary meeting of 2017 held on March 1, 2017 decided to establish a committee to be entrusted with the preparation of the National Action Plan for Human Rights. The Cabinet resolution should be seen in the light of the accelerated efforts of the State of Qatar for the promotion and protection of human rights, which is strategic choice for the country and it constitutes the corner stone for the country's comprehensive reform policy. This has been emphasized in the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy 2011-2016 and 2018-2022. The Committee is headed by His Excellency the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its membership include the following bodies and entities:

1. Human Rights Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers.
3. Human Rights Department, Ministry of Interior.
4. Ministry of Justice.

5. Ministry of Education and Higher Education.
6. Ministry of Public Health.
7. Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs.
8. The National Human Rights Committee.

The Characteristics of the National Human Rights Action Plans

The process of development of National Plan of Action for Human Rights and its content depend on the specific circumstances prevailing in the country concerned. However, there are some general principles that apply to all national action plans, namely:

- Based on universal human rights standards.
- Comprehensive in its scope.
- National undertaking.
- Action-oriented.
- A document accessible to the public.
- Continuous process.

- International dimensions.

The national action plan should be in accordance with the State's obligations and commitments to international, regional and national human rights standards. National action plans should adopt a comprehensive approach to human rights and be guided, among other things, by the following principles:

- Universality.
- Interdependence and indivisibility.
- Participation and inclusion.
- Progressive realization.
- Accountability.
- Equality and non-discrimination.
- Rule of law.

The Development of Human Rights National Action Plans

The process for developing a national action plan includes different phases, namely: preparation, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Some of these phases are necessarily consecutive, while others can take place simultaneously. It has to be emphasized

that the process and outcome are equally important to a national action plan.

Preparation and development steps should include the following aspects:

1. Establishment of a national coordinating committee.
2. Preparation of a baseline study of the state of human rights in the country concerned.
3. Benefiting from best practices.
4. Engaging in consultation process with stakeholders.
5. Formulating the national action plan.
6. Adopting the national action plan.
7. Launching of the national action plan.
8. Implementation of the national action plan.
9. Monitoring.
10. Evaluation.

For more information, please check the Committee website at the following link:

www.mofa.gov.qa/cpnhrap