NHRC Statement No. (07/2019)

On the decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), on the complaint filed by the State of Qatar against the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia

The National Human Rights Committee welcomes the decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in Geneva to declare the admissibility of the two complaints filed by the State of Qatar against the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia about the discriminatory measures imposed on Qatari citizens since June 2017, and the continuing grave violations of the rights of citizens and residents of Qatar. These complaints were submitted in accordance with Articles (11), (12) and (13) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted in 1965.

Expressing its utmost satisfaction with this decision, the National Human Rights Committee considers this decision an important step towards the recognition by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination that violations against citizens and residents of the State of Qatar fall within the scope of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Additionally, the decision proves beyond any doubt that the violations and collective punishments imposed by the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia constitute a criminal offence pursuant to the Convention.

This historic decision come to refute allegations, media misconceptions and statements of officials of those countries. The decision is also considered a preliminary victory for the victims, preceding the forthcoming CERD's decision to condemn the discriminatory measures that the UAE and Saudi Arabia have continued to practice against citizens and residents of Qatar.

The National Human Rights Committee considers the decision to declare the admissibility of the complaints in terms of form as an important achievement, as well as a step towards redressing and compensating the victims for violations and damages resulting from the unjust blockade.
The National Human Rights Committee stresses that, despite all global efforts to combat racial discrimination, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia continue to be intransigent and defy international laws and conventions by taking punitive measures that constitute offences of racial discrimination against citizens and residents of Qatar. Indeed, such practices have become an established approach to their policy and international relations.

The decision by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is considered a strong indictment, that has joined previous indictments against the United Arab Emirates, such as the report of the OHCHR technical mission to the state of Qatar issued in December 2017, the order of the International Court of Justice of 23 July 2018 on the request for the indication of provisional measures, European Parliament resolutions, and the reports of both international organizations and the National Human Rights Committee of the State of Qatar.

The National Human Rights Committee looks forward to a decision by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in the coming months, to condemn definitively and decisively the discriminatory and racist actions taken by these states against citizens and residents of Qatar.

The National Human Rights Committee concludes by reaffirming its determination to defend the rights of victims, who have suffered since the beginning of the blockade imposed by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

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29 August 2019
Doha, Qatar