



**Convention against Torture
and Other Cruel, Inhuman
or Degrading Treatment
or Punishment**

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Chair: Mr. Modvig

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention

Third periodic report of Kuwait (CAT/C/KWT/3; CAT/C/KWT/QPR/3)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Kuwait took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Alghunaim** (Kuwait) said that although Kuwait was beset by many security challenges, including the struggle against extremism and terrorism and the ongoing regional wars and conflicts, it remained dedicated to the rule of law and the promotion of human rights. In accordance with article 70 of the Constitution, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment had become an integral part of national law following its ratification in 1996. As a consequence, and mindful of the voluntary commitment Kuwait had made to the Committee, the Ministry of Justice had recently asked the Council of Ministers to consider amending the legal definition of torture in the Criminal Code in order to bring it into line with article 1 of the Convention.
3. Kuwait had implemented a number of other legislative measures relevant to its obligations under the Convention. They included laws establishing the Public Anti-Corruption Authority, an independent national human rights authority and an office dealing specifically with the rights of children. A human rights office had also been set up within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to act as a link between international organizations and national institutions. Under Act No. 109 of 2014, individuals could now appeal directly to the Constitutional Court, which had the power to overturn any legislation found to be at odds with the Constitution. Moreover, Kuwait had ratified the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two Protocols in 2006 and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2013. The Department of Community Policing, which had been established in 2008, had a hotline for reporting cases of domestic violence, while another hotline had been set up in 2010 to receive workers' complaints and information on human trafficking.
4. The Code of Criminal Procedure envisaged legal channels through which allegations of torture reported to the police or the prosecuting authorities could be subjected to immediate and transparent inquiry. Recent amendments to the Code had reaffirmed the right of accused persons to be attended by a legal representative throughout an investigation. Under those provisions, if a lawyer was unavailable, an accused person could demand the postponement of interrogation until such time as one was. Accused persons were also attended by legal representatives when brought to trial and, if they were unable to appoint a lawyer of their own, the court would appoint one on their behalf at public expense.
5. A project was under way to equip police vehicles and places of detention with surveillance cameras to ensure that any abuse would be documented. Prisons in Kuwait were first and foremost places of correction. The authorities were therefore keen to ensure that prison conditions were such as to enable prisoners to lead dignified lives. The regional delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross made periodic visits to places of deprivation of liberty in Kuwait and regularly praised the authorities for the humanitarian conditions there. Unlike in many other countries, foreign human rights organizations were free to visit Kuwait. Those organizations included Humans Rights Watch and Amnesty International, both of which had visited the country within recent years and had presented their findings at public press conferences attended by local and foreign media.
6. Its open and multicultural society, high standard of living and respect for the rule of law meant that Kuwait attracted many foreign workers from different countries and cultural and religious backgrounds. In view of their diversity and of the fact that they currently

accounted for more than two thirds of the population, Kuwait had ratified a number of conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) particularly concerning protection from forced labour. In cooperation with ILO, the authorities were seeking to find alternatives to the existing sponsorship system and a number of reforms had been introduced in recent years that aimed to restrict the prerogatives employers enjoyed under that system. Legislation had also been passed with a view to protecting the rights of workers: it included the Public Authority for Labour Act No. 109 of 2013, the Domestic Workers Act No. 68 of 2015, and the Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Act No. 91 of 2013.

7. Ministries had been organizing human rights workshops for law enforcement officials, among them a training course for judges in 2015 that had focused on the human rights treaties, including the Convention against Torture. Also in 2015, the Human Rights Council had unanimously adopted the report of Kuwait under the universal periodic review mechanism and Kuwait had accepted all the recommendations it had received regarding freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, the human rights legal framework, cooperation with human rights mechanisms and action to combat human trafficking. The present report had been published on the Internet to allow the public to examine its contents and make comments and suggestions before it was submitted.

8. **Mr. Bruni** said he was happy to note that Kuwait had submitted its periodic report on the date on which it was due. The statement in the report to the effect that Kuwait did not intend to withdraw its reservation to article 20 of the Convention as such a move would undermine the country's sovereignty and independence appeared to be at odds with assurances given to the Committee by the Permanent Representative of Kuwait in 2011 that the Council of Ministers had reached the decision to withdraw the reservation to article 20 after lengthy debate in which the notion that the article interfered with Kuwait's sovereignty had been dispelled. Could the delegation clarify which of the two positions was the correct one?

9. Also in line with information provided by Kuwait in 2011, he wondered whether the delegation could assure the Committee that the crime of torture, as defined in article 1 of the Convention, had in fact been fully incorporated into domestic criminal law and whether penalties commensurate with the seriousness of the crime were envisaged. The legislation referred to in the report dated back to the 1960s and 1970s and contained provision for only relatively mild penalties for torture.

10. In the light of widespread conflict in the Middle East and of new antiterrorism legislation being contemplated by Kuwait, he would welcome more information about measures to give effect to article 2 of the Convention under which no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, including war, threat of war or internal political instability, could be invoked as a justification of torture. The Human Rights Committee had recently expressed its concern about an increase in reports of torture and ill-treatment by security forces in Kuwait and it was important to recall that an order from a superior officer or a public authority did not exempt subordinates from individual criminal responsibility if the order they obeyed involved torture.

11. He had been pleased to hear in the opening remarks that detained persons had free access to a lawyer at all times but wished to know whether such a right was automatic or whether it required authorization from the authorities. Were accused persons allowed to contact a relative in addition to a lawyer? Kuwait was taking positive measures to ensure that persons in detention had access to medical assistance but he was concerned about a recent case known as the Abdali cell in which persons who had made allegations of torture and ill-treatment had allegedly been refused independent medical examinations. Could the delegation comment in that regard? He also wished to know whether medical reports indicating the presence of injuries compatible with torture were immediately referred to the

prosecuting authorities, whether medical personnel reporting on torture received training in the Istanbul Protocol and whether they were protected from possible retaliation by security officials.

12. He wished to know if there was any truth in reports that female prisoners were sometimes guarded by male security personnel, thereby exposing them to potential sexual harassment and assault. He was concerned about the level of independence of the national human rights institution that had been set up in 2015. According to information from NGOs, it appeared to operate under the supervision of the Council of Ministers. He wondered what powers and resources the institution had to enable it effectively to monitor living conditions in places of detention and to bring prisoners' complaints to the attention of the judiciary.

13. The Committee was concerned that the State party had carried out a number of executions in 2013. In that regard, it would like the delegation to confirm that the *de facto* moratorium on executions, which had been in place since 2007, would be resumed. It would be helpful for the delegation to respond to the question on the conditions of detention of death-row prisoners included in paragraph 19 of the Committee's list of issues (CAT/C/KWT/QPR/3), since no response seemed to have been provided in the State party's report. Clarification was also needed on the minimum age at which the death penalty was applicable: while the Committee had been informed that it could be applied to persons who had been aged at least 16 years at the time of the offence, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Kuwait was a party, defined a minor as any person aged under 18 years. If the minimum age was indeed 16, might it be raised to 18?

14. What was the situation of Kuwaiti citizens who had been repatriated from the Guántanamo Bay detention centre? Had some or all of them been convicted or had they been acquitted? The Committee would also like an update on the situation at the Tala deportation centre. Was it true that deportees were sometimes held there for many months or even years, as had been reported by the Kuwait Society for Human Rights? In the light of recent reports of poor conditions at detention facilities, had the conditions of detention been improved? It would be helpful for the delegation to provide an update on the plans to construct a new prison complex. Were national and international human rights organizations that had access to places of detention authorized to make unannounced visits? Could the delegation also explain why the State party's penitentiary system was under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior rather than that of the Ministry of Justice, as was the case in the vast majority of countries? The delegation should comment on reports received that some of the punishments used in places of detention, in particular extended periods of isolation in small, poorly lit and unsanitary cells, amounted to cruel treatment.

15. The Committee would like to know of any recent judicial cases in which the Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Act No. 91/2013 had been applied. Had any sponsors or employers implicated in the trafficking of migrant workers been prosecuted and, if they had been convicted, what penalties had been imposed on them? The State party's mechanism to prevent the repatriation to third countries of persons at risk of torture seemed inadequate. Was there an authority specifically empowered to decide whether a person was at risk of torture and, if so, what criteria were used to make that decision? How many of the 25,000 foreign nationals deported from Kuwait in 2014 had claimed to be at risk of torture if repatriated? How were Syrian nationals treated if they did not have valid residence permits? Were they kept in detention without any procedural safeguards?

16. The Committee would like to hear the delegation's comments on administrative deportation, which, as explained in paragraph 55 of the State party's report (CAT/C/KWT/3), was a mechanism by which the Minister of the Interior could order the expulsion of a person without judicial oversight and without any possible recourse, provided that it was deemed to be in the public interest or public order was threatened. Did such a mechanism not risk facilitating violations of the principle of non-refoulement? Was

the State party considering accession to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees?

17. The Committee would like to know whether torture was an extraditable offence in any extradition treaty, bilateral or multilateral, between the State party and other States parties to the Convention, as was required under article 8 of the Convention. Could the delegation confirm that, in the absence of an extradition treaty, the State party considered the Convention to be the legal basis for extradition in respect of the offence of torture?

18. **Mr. Hani** (Country Rapporteur), referring to paragraph 63 of the State party's report, said that the Committee would like to know what measures were taken to educate law enforcement officials and prison staff on the provisions of the Convention, in particular the complete ban on torture. It would also be helpful to know the results of the evaluations mentioned in paragraph 65 of the report. Had the evaluations led, for instance, to proposals for greater cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and civil society organizations? The delegation might also clarify whether foreigners were entitled to receive training at the Kuwait Institute for Legal and Judicial Studies established by Decree-Law No. 37 of 1994. More information was also needed on the training programmes provided for those involved in documenting the physical and psychological effects of torture. It would be advisable for the Istanbul Protocol to feature in those training programmes and for training and awareness-raising programmes on the international standards governing the use of force to be provided for law enforcement officials.

19. While the State party had provided information in paragraph 69 of its report on the amendments made to the Code of Criminal Procedure to provide safeguards relating to the interrogation, custody and treatment of persons held under any form of arrest or detention, the Committee had been informed of further planned amendments of a more regressive nature, including an extension of the maximum detention period, and would appreciate an update on the situation. It would also be helpful for the delegation to comment on: reports that the lawyers of accused persons faced certain restrictions at the preliminary investigation stage; the alleged violations of legal guarantees in the prosecutions of those involved in the so-called "Abdali cell" and terrorist incidents such as the mosque bombing of 2015; and the draft law to require all persons resident in the country to provide DNA samples.

20. The Committee would like to know what measures had been taken to guarantee the independence of foreign judges, who were often employed on insecure, fixed-term contracts. According to reports, the right of legal recourse was not enjoyed equally by Kuwaitis and foreign nationals, since decisions regarding citizenship and residency were apparently not subject to judicial review. It would also be helpful for the delegation to provide more information on the Abdullah Fairouz Abdullah Abd Al-Kareem case and to explain what measures had been taken to prevent cases of arbitrary detention in the future. In the light of reports that conditions in places of detention had deteriorated, what was the State party doing to improve the situation? What measures had been taken to prevent minors being held alongside adults?

21. Although the State party had done a great deal to facilitate inspections of detention facilities, it lacked an independent visiting body for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In that regard, the Committee would like to know whether the State party would review its position on the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, which required States parties to establish a preventive mechanism of that kind.

22. The State party's recent application of the death penalty seemed to run counter to the general trend towards its abolition at the international level. Furthermore, although the State

party did not conduct public executions, the manner in which the death penalty was applied, as detailed in paragraph 87 of its report, remained a source of concern. Article 49 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, for example, stipulated that a woman sentenced to death must have her sentence commuted to life imprisonment if it transpired that she was pregnant and gave birth to a living child, which seemed implicitly to punish stillbirth. Was the family of an executed person informed of his or her place of burial?

23. The Committee would like more information on the situation of Faiz Mohammed Ahmed Al-Kandari, who had been detained at Guántanamo Bay before his repatriation in January 2016, and the measures taken to rehabilitate him and other detainees who had been repatriated in similar circumstances. Could the delegation also comment on reports that a number of persons convicted of espionage activities conducted during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait remained in detention?

24. Despite the various measures taken by the State party to establish mechanisms for the investigation of allegations of torture, it nevertheless lacked a fully independent complaint mechanism. What practical measures would be taken to establish such a mechanism? Did the State party intend to grant the Supreme Human Rights Committee and the national human rights institution the power to conduct independent investigations of allegations of torture? Why did so few cases of abuse by police officers result in dismissal and what measures would be taken to provide information on the crime of torture in particular? It would also be helpful to learn more about the ill-treatment allegedly suffered by Nasser Abul in detention. Finally, the Committee would like an update on the progress made in investigating cases of enforced disappearances of Kuwaiti nationals following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

25. With regard to article 14, although some positive precedents had been mentioned, including the payment of compensation to the relatives of Mohamed Ghazi Al-Maymuni Al-Matiri, the State party report did not provide information on the legal guarantees for the protection of the rights of victims of torture to redress, compensation and rehabilitation and whether they would be taken into account in the review of criminal legislation. Noting that the compensation and rehabilitation of victims of torture was not only an individual responsibility of the State but also a collective responsibility of the international community, he asked about the State party's willingness to support the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, particularly since the Arab region was a major beneficiary but contributed only minimally.

26. Regarding article 15, he said that the Committee remained concerned at the refusal by some courts to dismiss evidence or testimony obtained through torture or ill-treatment. He invited the delegation to comment on the cases of the "Abdali cell", especially Zuhair Al-Mahameed, who had allegedly been subjected to psychological and material ill-treatment, and similar allegations of torture by those suspected of the 2015 mosque bombing and blogger Bader Abdul-Aziz, among others. What measures had been taken by the judiciary to investigate allegations of torture and submit the defendants to independent medical examinations? He would be also interested to hear more about how the independence and protection of the Department of Forensic Medicine were guaranteed and whether training was provided to all its staff on the Istanbul Protocol.

27. Regarding article 16, the Committee appreciated the positive developments outlined in paragraph 115 of the report to prevent exploitation, mistreatment, forced labour and slavery-like conditions of migrant domestic workers, but would welcome further information on the case of Vanessa, a migrant worker tortured by her employer, who had subsequently been sentenced to 4 years in prison. He wondered what lessons had been drawn from that case in terms of ensuring that vulnerable migrant workers were made aware of their rights and preventing such abuses by employers.

28. He would also be interested to hear about measures taken to improve the situation of the Kuwaiti Bidun and further details of the February and March 2011 protests in which Bidun had been detained and allegedly beaten — specifically, the number of people arrested and the sentences handed down. Noting the State party's reservations about the use of the term "Bidun", he recalled that the word had been used for the first time in Kuwait to describe the situation of the some 100,000 stateless Kuwaitis who had lived in the country for long periods, some of them having been born there to Kuwaiti mothers.

29. The Committee welcomed the establishment of a central institution to handle the situation of non-national residents and the measures taken to provide a decent standard of living and basic rights for that category of the population. However, he wished to know how the Government planned to limit the phenomenon of statelessness and introduce a methodical policy to examine applications for Kuwaiti citizenship and regularize the legal situation of stateless persons.

30. With regard to refugees, the Committee commended the State party on its cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and would be interested to know whether there were any plans to institutionalize that relationship so as to allow UNHCR to visit places of detention and deportation. He wished to know the percentage of Palestinian and Syrian refugees living in vulnerable conditions and whether the State party might exempt them from detention procedures for violations of residency rules, given that the situation in Palestine and Syria was not likely to be resolved in the short term. Noting that the Prisons Administration had not received any complaints from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people, he wondered what measures were taken by prison authorities to monitor their treatment and protect them from sexual violence in particular.

31. Despite the guarantees described in paragraphs 130 to 134 of the State party report, there was some concern that the interpretation of article 29 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which provided that parents had the right to impose disciplinary measures on their children, might permit parents to inflict corporal punishment on their children. He wondered what legal measures had been taken to prevent such an interpretation. Regarding disciplinary measures in prisons, he noted that article 58 of the Prisons Act allowed the use of shackles for up to one month. Was that punishment still enforced and, if so, what measures were planned to put an end to it? He wondered whether the proposed reform of the State party's criminal laws to bring them into line with the Convention would involve the prohibition of all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment that amounted to torture. He invited the delegation to comment on recent statements by government officials justifying the use of torture in the context of combating terrorism and asked what measures had been taken to prevent such promotion of torture.

32. **Ms. Belmir** commended the State party on its efforts to uphold the principle of non-discrimination between Kuwaiti nationals and foreign migrants, which was an important objective. She requested clarification of whether the death penalty had actually been enforced since 2013 or whether a moratorium was still in place. She would also welcome further details of the range of offences to which the death penalty applied. Stressing the importance of non-discrimination in the enforcement of penalties, she recalled that, under Islam, all persons were considered equal and religion could therefore not be used to justify making distinctions between people when they committed offences. For example, if a woman was raped by one of her family's employees, he faced the death penalty or life imprisonment. Given the very high number of complaints of rape among domestic workers, she wondered whether the same punishments applied if the rapist was the woman's employer. Similarly, in the case of honour crimes, a woman's husband, father or brother could benefit from attenuating circumstances if the woman had committed adultery. What

happened if it was the husband who had committed adultery? Did he face punishment? The State party needed to intensify its efforts to find solutions for the Bidun.

33. **Mr. Heller Rouassant** recalled that the after-effects of the Gulf War of 1991 continued to be felt in Kuwait, and that the Arab Spring had also had an important impact. All the reports the Committee had received from NGOs expressed concern about the deterioration of the human rights situation in the country since 2011, highlighting that human rights defenders and dissidents were subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and unfair trials resulting in prison sentences on charges relating to freedom of expression, assembly and association. In that context, he stressed the importance of article 2 of the Convention, which provided that no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, could be invoked as a justification of torture. He invited the delegation to provide further details of the various reforms undertaken by the State party. Recalling that national human rights institutions must comply with the Paris Principles, he requested written information on the institution whose establishment had been approved in 2015.

34. NGOs had raised concerns that, in the context of the fight against terrorism, persons were being prosecuted on the basis of very vague charges relating to national security, and that many of the crimes carried the death penalty. He invited the delegation to comment on a number of high-profile cases of persons prosecuted on such charges who alleged they had been tortured, such as Twitter user Nasser Abdul, who had been accused of crimes against State security and national interests.

35. In view of the high number of refugees and asylum seekers and the current environment in the region, he wondered what was standing in the way of Kuwait acceding to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol, which would also help to institutionalize the State party's relationship with UNHCR. He invited the delegation to comment on reports of the expulsion of some 1,100 Syrian and Lebanese nationals because of ties to Hezbollah. The State party had mentioned that its torture policy was based on articles 31 and 34 of the Constitution, which were not sufficient to meet the standards of articles 1 and 4 of the Convention.

36. **Mr. Zhang** said that he would welcome further details of the amendments made to the Criminal Code of 1960. He commended the State party on a number of encouraging developments, such as the establishment of the national human rights institution and the human rights centre in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as cooperation with UNHCR. He agreed with Mr. Heller Rouassant that the State party should consider acceding to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol. The detention of illegal asylum seekers must be conducted in accordance with international standards in order to better fulfil obligations under articles 11, 12, 13 and 16 of the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 2. The State party should also consider acceding to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. With regard to training for prison personnel, he asked why such training was provided under the Ministry of the Interior rather than the Ministry of Justice. He would be interested to know how frequently training courses had been organized during the reporting period and details of their content. With regard to article 15, he wondered whether there were any updates on cases that had been dismissed by the courts due to the introduction of evidence or testimony obtained through torture or ill-treatment since submission of the State party report.

37. **Ms. Gaer** said she welcomed the fact that the delegation included five women. She hoped the delegation would be able to provide statistical data on domestic violence in the State party, as the Committee had requested in its previous concluding observations. While she appreciated the extensive information that the State party had provided in response to

many of the questions contained in the list of issues, she requested more detailed information about the punishments imposed on the persons responsible for the torture and death in police custody of Mohamed Ghazi Al-Maymuni Al-Matiri in 2011.

38. Noting the establishment of community policing as a positive development, she asked whether any members of the delegation were experts in community policing and could explain in detail how it worked in Kuwait. She asked whether the offence of torture was applicable to public officials, as she had not been able to find any cases in which it had been used against such officials. She requested clarification about what constituted “abuse of power” in the State party’s legislative framework. Regarding in particular the three members of the police force who had been dismissed for abuse of power, she wished to know their personal details, such as their age, ethnic origin or nationality, and whether that abuse of power had involved torture or any other violation of the Convention.

39. Given that the women’s shelters in the country housed about 200 women in an average month, she found it difficult to believe that there had been only five complaints of gender-based violence, two of which had been amicably resolved. She requested further information about those cases and asked whether the State party planned to adopt a law prohibiting domestic violence. The Committee continued to receive reports of female prisoners being guarded by male prison officers. She requested further information about prison visits by NGOs, including the names of those NGOs and the number of visits they had conducted.

40. She hoped to receive further disaggregated data on victims of human trafficking. Noting that the Department of State of the United States of America had recently reclassified Kuwait in its Trafficking in Persons Report, upgrading Kuwait from a tier-three country to a tier-two country in response to the investigation of a number of trafficking cases, she requested further information about any prosecutions relating to human trafficking. It was unclear whether victims who fled from abusive employers might be subject to prosecution. She wished to know in particular whether any government officials had been investigated, prosecuted or convicted under the new anti-trafficking legislation.

41. She asked whether any foreign workers from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, who had been sent abroad by the military or the Government of that country, were stationed in Kuwait. She also asked whether the State party was proactively conducting inspections of worksites where foreign workers were employed.

42. Lastly, the Committee had received reports that the State party was planning to address the issue of statelessness among the Bidun by arranging for them to be granted “economic citizenship” of the Comoros. The delegation should comment on that matter and provide further information on measures being taken to address the issue of statelessness.

43. **The Chair** said that doctors played a key role in identifying cases of torture and that the right to a medical examination upon arrival at a place of detention was a basic safeguard. It ensured not only that detainees would be given medical treatment but also that their injuries would be documented at an early stage. The doctors who conducted such examinations should therefore be independent of the law enforcement authorities.

44. With that in mind, he asked which ministry the Police Health Affairs Department was part of, and whether forensic doctors were still employed by the Ministry of the Interior. If so, they should be placed under the aegis of a more neutral authority, such as a university. He also wished to know whether the doctors working in the Police Health Affairs Department were able to report potential cases of torture to the competent authorities. According to information before the Committee, doctors were prohibited from reporting potential cases of torture on the ground that it violated medical confidentiality. The delegation should comment on that matter.

45. While victims of trafficking had access to various forms of social support, victims of torture did not. He therefore asked the delegation to explain how Kuwait was fulfilling its obligation to provide victims of torture with the means for as full rehabilitation as possible.

46. **Mr. Alghunaim** (Kuwait) said it was not true that Kuwait was making arrangements for the Bidun to be granted Comorian citizenship. In the light of the volatile situation in the region, Kuwait had taken precautionary measures to prevent terrorism and to implement the rule of law. However, those measures had not resulted in an increase in human rights violations, as reported by certain NGOs. The State would prosecute anyone who committed a criminal offence; those persons should not call themselves human rights defenders.

47. Regarding the case against members of the “Abdali cell”, the allegations made by certain NGOs based in southern Lebanon were politically motivated. The individuals in question had been acquitted just two days earlier, which showed that the allegations were baseless.

48. Since the establishment of the moratorium on the death penalty, there had been only three cases in which that penalty had been used. In one case, the offender had tortured and breached the honour of about 25 young children. The fact that he was of Egyptian nationality was irrelevant; the reason he had been executed was the heinous nature of his crime.

49. His Government had already addressed the case of Abdullah Fairouz Abdullah Abd Al-Kareem in a memorandum dated 11 February 2016. The Kuwaiti man who was allegedly the father of the accused had denied any blood relationship, and the courts had decided that, indeed, the man was not Al-Kareem’s father. The latter was therefore not eligible for Kuwaiti citizenship.

50. His Government was doing its utmost to uphold human rights principles in Kuwait. The human rights situation in the country was, in fact, quite positive, despite a difficult geopolitical environment.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.