

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO SAUDI ARABIA

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Does the government of Saudi Arabia intend to accede to ICCPR and ICESCR and Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?
- Do judicial officials and law enforcement officers apply consistent definitions of crimes? Where can be found definitions of cognizable crimes?
- What is the current state of the law on NGOs and when will it come into force and be implemented?
- What is the current state of the new law that should delimit the age of criminal responsibility?
- For which activities needs an adult woman permission of her male guardian, how does this need comply with her freedom of movement, access to work, education and health care?
- What specific measures are available to protect the rights of children of detainees/prisoners?
- There are some Special Procedures' requests for a visit that have not yet been agreed on. Could you elaborate on whether and in what time frame will these special procedures be allowed to visit the country?

LATVIA

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 63 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering previous cooperation of Saudi Arabia with special procedures mandate holders (Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (20–27 October 2002), Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (4–13 February 2008)) and despite the pending requests by several Special Rapporteurs to visit Saudi Arabia - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

NETHERLANDS

- Saudi Arabia seems to have one of the highest rates of executions in the world. There are serious concerns that torture and other ill-treatment, including corporal punishment of flogging are systematically practised. Security forces have extensive powers to detain suspects, trials seem to be often held in secret whereas the suspect is denied legal assistance and representation during court hearings.

What measures is the government taking to safeguard the right to a fair trial and to prevent these violations?

- Saudi Arabia has no legal provision for freedom of religion. The government controls all religious practices and allows no independent religious authorities. There is serious concern about discrimination of certain groups of Muslims and Non-Muslims who do not adhere to certain interpretation of Islam, and face significant political, economic, legal, social, and religious discrimination, including employment and educational opportunities, under-representation in official institutions and restrictions on the practice of their faith. These practices are in contrast with the Kingdom's internationally recognized policy of promoting international peace and security and fostering a spirit of tolerance among all peoples.

What is the government of Saudi Arabia doing against cases of hate speech and the systematic discrimination?

- Although the Saudi Labour law (2005) provides good protection for migrant workers in general and doesn't differentiate between Saudi and non-Saudi workers, abuse and exploitation seem to be still widespread. Domestic workers are still excluded from the provisions of the Labour law. The implementation of the Labour law provisions and its monitoring require more attention to change attitudes on both sides (employer and employee).

What measures are being taken to improve the implementation of the Labour Law?

SWEDEN

- Civil society organisations have reported large-scale discrimination against migrant women who come to Saudi Arabia to serve as domestic workers. The women are often subject to discrimination and physical abuse in contravention of international human rights and labour law standards, with little or no possibility to seek remedy. Could the government of Saudi Arabia elaborate on measures it is taking to secure that these violations are acted upon and to otherwise ensure the full enjoyment of human rights of immigrant women in Saudi Arabia?

- In its resolutions 62/149 of 18 December 2007 and 63/168 of 18 December 2008, the General Assembly called on states to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty, and to respect international standards that provide safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty. Saudi Arabia continues to apply the death penalty. Could the government of Saudi Arabia elaborate on the status of the death penalty in relation to the resolutions of the General Assembly, including with regard to any plans to abolish the penalty or introduce a moratorium, as well as on measures it is taking to ensure that international standards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty today are met?
- The right to seek effective legal remedy is a crucial element to ending impunity for human rights violations. Could the government of Saudi Arabia elaborate on measures it is taking to combat impunity? What is the role of the National Commission of Human Rights in this context? Is it able to effectively entertain complaints, and does its mandate in accord with the Paris Principles on National Human Rights Institutions?
