

Local

Kuwaiti watchdog demands incorporating international law in making local rulings

Kuwait Society for Human Rights' report makes recommendations on various topics

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Society for Human Rights (KSHR) released a report on Tuesday in which it discussed the most significant observations and recommendations in the country to enhance awareness of international human rights conventions, and defend individuals whose rights are violated. The report was submitted to the Human Rights Committee for the adoption of the list of issues for Kuwait during its 136th session, which will be in October.

The report highlighted nine issues: KSHR finds that the Kuwaiti judiciary relies in most of its rulings on the local laws, excluding international agreements ratified by the State of Kuwait, affirming that the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights should be within the framework of national legislation.

KSHR urged the Committee to ask the Kuwaiti government to explain the procedures recently taken to activate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in courts and within the administrative actions, and to provide the steps that it has taken to intensify the training programs and courses aimed at raising the awareness of judges, the members of Public Prosecution and judicial officials about the international human rights law.



Women in Kuwait still suffer from discrimination

(15/1959) and its amendments, and what is the government's vision for those who are not entitled to hold Kuwaiti citizenship.

In addition, KSHR asked the government to clarify the reasons behind the Central Agency's renewing the security identifications that the Bedoons hold only after they sign a document stating that they hold the citizenship of other countries, and they sign written acknowledgments to waive any claim to Kuwaiti citizenship, and to clarify the consequences of refusing to sign a permit of subordination to another country and waiving the right to demand the Kuwaiti citizenship. Also, KSHR asked about the government's intention regarding the possibility of creating an effective mechanism other than the Central Agency for the remedy of the Bedoons' situation.

Discrimination against women

Meanwhile, KSHR saw that women in Kuwait suffer from discrimination in several laws and regulations, and there is low participation of women in politics and in public, adding that there are a lot of women who are being abused despite Kuwait's adoption of Law No. (16) of 2020 concerning protection from domestic violence.

KSHR asked the Human Committee to request to the Kuwaiti government to clarify the procedures taken towards amending laws that still discriminate against women and provide information on awareness campaigns and actions taken regarding women's civil and political rights to encourage their participation in the political and public life, in addition to indicating the measures taken to overcome the entrenched discriminatory stereotype against women in society, and clarifying reasons behind not activating the work of the shelters, the mechanism used to receive complaints from abused women and provide updated data on reported cases.

Concerning torture cases, KSHR appealed for the Committee to request to the Kuwaiti government to provide information on cases of torture and the reason behind their increase recently and



to indicate the mechanism followed to receive complaints against security men at the Monitoring and Inspection Department within the Ministry of Interior.

Administrative deportation

As for administrative deportation, the Society for Human Rights saw that deporting people needed to be studied and activating the role of the judiciary, calling the government to provide statistics regarding the number of administrative deportees during the years 2019-2020-2021, and the number of detainees held for more than 30 days in the deportation center.

Human Trafficking in Kuwait is considered a huge issue: KSHR affirmed that the Kuwaiti government did not meet the minimum standards for combating human trafficking, requesting to be provided with information on the progress made in the national referral system, the number of awareness and training programs, mechanisms and oversight measures on foreign labor recruitment companies, and statistics on the number of reported cases of human trafficking crimes.

Regarding the domestic workers, KSHR revealed that there is an increase in the number of complaints received from home workers and employers via the hotline, asking the government to provide information on efforts to repeal the sponsorship system, and on the progress made in the possibility of amending Law No. 68/2015 by adding an article, in addition, to explaining the measures taken against the recruitment agencies that did not adhere to the regulations and laws, and what are the steps taken to harmonize Domestic Workers Law No. 68 of 2015 in line with the international standards.

Over the past years, freedom of opinion and expression has declined, KSHR notes, adding that there is a wide space for interpreting what may constitute a crime when expressing opinion. KSHR also appealed to the Human Committee to get information on the steps taken to review all laws that contain provisions restricting the freedom of opinion and expression right, aiming to make them consistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as same as the issue of freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Govt, residents urged to encourage local farmers

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: President of the Kuwait Union of Farmers Abdullah Al-Damak told Kuwait Times that the Council of Ministers has passed a law obligating cooperative societies to purchase at least 75 percent of Kuwait agricultural products directly from farmers. Damak pointed out that this ministerial decision indicates the government's awareness of the importance of supporting Kuwait's farmers, especially with the acute shortage of workers in the agricultural sector.

Damak stated that large numbers of agricultural workers are needed to raise the production rate. "The next season, local products will be available in abundance in the markets after raising the percentage of agricultural labor in order to increase production. We expect this season to be different for the previous ones that were affected by several factors - especially the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

Damak called on all parties including cooperative societies, the private sector and the government to support and promote Kuwait products. "Farmers have lost a lot over the years, and were unable to cover their costs. The problem is that - there are lots of imported products. The amount of produc-

tion is considered good - but not much. Local farmers need support in order to increase production. We urge government to open more marketing outlets in residential areas, especially the new areas such as Al-Mutlaa, South Al-Abdullah, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak, South Sabah Al-Ahmad and all other areas," he added.



Abdullah Al-Damak

Regarding the demand for local Kuwaiti products, Kuwait Times interviewed a number of consumers in cooperative societies and asked them about their preferences. Om Yousef said "the prices of local agricultural products are good and appropriate, but the prices of imported fruits are very high and exaggerated. We are forced to buy the imported ones in the absence of the local varieties. We hope to have more local products in the markets."

Umm Hamed said, "the imported products are much more expensive than the local one, but the quality differs. However, local fruits are very few in the markets, so we have to buy the imported ones at high prices." Omar, an employee at a co-op, said that the imported products are of better quality than the local ones. "The packaging is better and distinctive in a way that preserves the product for longer time. As for the customers, they prefer the local product, especially since its price is cheaper than the imported ones."

Kuwait will never forget UN role during liberation: Envoy

NEW YORK: The State of Kuwait will never forget the role of the United Nations and the UN Security Council (UNSC) during the liberation of Kuwait from the invasion of Kuwait, said its new permanent representative on Wednesday. Tareq Al-Banai made the remark in a statement to KUNA following his meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to whom he presented his credentials as Kuwait's new permanent representative at the UN. The Kuwaiti diplomat cited the UNSC's landmark resolution 660 adopted on August 2, 1990, condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and supporting Kuwait until its legitimacy was reinstated and the country was liberated. In this context, Banai underlined the significant role played by the UN in promoting international law and international humanitarian law, along with other international and legal mechanisms purposed to deter any aggression and ensure self-defense. He also stressed the importance of the goals and principles of the UN Charter that regulates relations between states, especially respecting the sovereignty of countries and prohibiting Member States from using force directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of another state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. The Kuwaiti diplomat vowed that he would continue efforts to promote the close partnership



NEW YORK: Kuwait's new permanent representative at the UN Tareq Al-Banai (left) and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. —KUNA

between the State of Kuwait and the UN and to upgrade it to broader vistas in all fields. He added that during the meeting he had conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah to the UN secretary general. Meanwhile, the UN chief lauded the close relationship between Kuwait and the UN, and appreciated Kuwait's support for the organization in various fields, mainly peace, security, humanitarian activities and development. Guterres asked the Kuwaiti diplomat to convey his greetings to His Highness the Amir and the political leadership. —KUNA

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