The Secretariat of the United Nations (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and has the honour to refer to the interstate communication ICERD-ISC-2018/1, submitted by the State party under article 11 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination concerning the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Secretary-General has the honour to inform the State party of a decision adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination during its 97th session held in Geneva from 26 November to 14 December 2018, as follows:

Noting that the State of Qatar sent an interstate communication concerning the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 8 March 2018, which was transmitted to the State concerned on 7 May 2018;

Noting that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia replied to that communication by a Note verbale dated 7 September 2018, and that this note was transmitted to the State of Qatar;

Being aware that the matter has not been adjusted to the satisfaction of both parties;

Acknowledging that on 29 October 2018, the State of Qatar has referred the matter again to the Committee, in accordance with article 11(2) of the Convention;

Decides

1. To request the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to inform the Committee whether it wishes - within a period of one month after receipt of this request - to supply any relevant information on issues of jurisdiction of the Committee or admissibility of the communication, including the exhaustion of all available domestic remedies;
2. That the Secretariat will immediately transmit any reply received to all members of the Committee and to the State of Qatar giving it the opportunity to provide its observations on that reply within one month of receiving it;

3. That both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar may decide to confine their respective replies to the information already contained in their previous notes in which those issues have been raised;

4. To give the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the opportunity to provide its comments on any observations that may be communicated by the State of Qatar pursuant to operative paragraph 2 above within one month of having received them, without raising any issue not previously raised by either of the States concerned;

5. To invite the States parties concerned to appoint one representative to take part in the proceedings before the Committee, without voting rights, while the matter is under consideration, and to inform the Chairperson of the Committee of that appointment no later than 1 March 2019;

6. To examine any preliminary question at its 98th session that will take place from 23 April to 10 May 2019;

7. To invite the appointed representative to present at that session the views of the State party concerned, for a maximum of 45 minutes, and in rebuttal for a further period of 15 minutes.

A copy of the decision has been transmitted to the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

The Secretariat avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar the assurances of its highest consideration.

14 December 2018