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Ref: الوفد الدائم لدولة قطر / جنيف

The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations Office in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the latter's note dated 17 March 2023, transmitting the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on Foreign Debt and Human Rights.

The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar is pleased to attach herewith the information as received from the competent authorities in the State of Qatar.

The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurances of its highest considerations.

Geneva, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023



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TÉLÉCOPIE · FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

DATE: 17 March 2023

A/TO: All Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva

DE/FROM: Beatriz Balbin  
Chief  
Special Procedures Branch

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Beatriz Balbin", written over the printed name and title.

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PAGES: 5

OBJET/SUBJECT: **Call for inputs – Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights –  
Questionnaire to inform the thematic report on “Multiple crises, fiscal systems and  
human rights”**

Please find attached a call for input from the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights.



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**Mandate of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights**

17 March 2023

Excellency,

I have the honour to address you in my capacity as Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, pursuant to resolution 43/10 of the Human Rights Council.

In preparation of my upcoming thematic report focusing on “*Multiple crises, fiscal systems and human rights*”, I would like to invite your Excellency’s Government to submit any relevant information through the questionnaire annexed to this letter. The report will be presented at the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, in October 2023. I would be grateful if this letter and the accompanying questionnaire could be transmitted to relevant authorities, inviting all submissions by **no later than 8 May 2023**.

I kindly request that written contributions be sent in Word or pdf format to [hrc-ie-foreigndebt@un.org](mailto:hrc-ie-foreigndebt@un.org). Please indicate “Submission for GA 78 Report” in the email subject line; limit your contribution to a maximum of 2,500 words and if necessary, provide links to relevant documents or attach annexes. We would be grateful if you can send your contributions in English, French or Spanish. Responses to the questionnaire can also be addressed to:

Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights  
Special Procedures Branch  
UNOG-OHCHR  
CH-1211 Geneva 10,  
Switzerland

Fax: +41 22 917 9006

**All submissions will be posted on the [webpage](#) of my mandate.**

Should you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Mr. Gotzon Onandia Zarrabe, Human Rights Officer supporting my mandate at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva ([gotzon.onandiazarrabe@un.org](mailto:gotzon.onandiazarrabe@un.org)).

All Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Attiya Waris', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Attiya Waris

Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights



## Questionnaire “multiple crises, fiscal systems and human rights”

### QFFD inputs for MOFA

#### General

1. What crises are affecting your country and region? What is their nature, scope and impact?

Crises in MENA are manifold: protracted crisis in/around Syria (refugees, IDPs); protracted crisis in Yemen (dire humanitarian needs, food insecurity/malnutrition, IDPs); armed conflict/humanitarian crisis in the making in Sudan; earthquake in Turkey/Syria; overall slow economic post-pandemic recovery (World Bank: growth in MENA 3.0% in 2023, 3.1% in 2024, compared to 5.8% in 2022); severe economic crisis (declared bankruptcy) in Lebanon; high youth unemployment in MENA (highest region worldwide); food price inflation affecting food security (effects of war in Ukraine on food, fuel, fertilizers, plus climate change impacts, water scarcity, natural hazards) – conservative estimate: 8m children in MENA are severely food insecure; overall environmental challenges/climate change/water stress; inflation-devaluation of currencies-debt distress

2. What are the challenges being faced by your country in managing these crises, including on their differential and multi-dimensional impacts on disadvantaged groups and communities?

Crises in the MENA region (and in other QFFD priority contexts such as Sub-Saharan Africa) are increasing in numbers, intensity, and impacts on most vulnerable populations. Available ODA needs to be prioritized based on greatest needs (e.g., related to food security); available ODA needs to be spent effectively (based on development effectiveness principles) to ensure greatest possible value for money, and it needs to be spent increasingly in a catalytic way (aimed to crowd in additional private sector funds/blended finance). Additional development finance modalities need to be considered (e.g., debt swaps/Debt to Health, sovereign guarantees, etc.) → ODA will more likely not be “more” (also considering the predicted decline in oil prices) but needs to be spent more “wisely” (highest needs, most impact, catalytic function).

#### Interventions for a rights-based economy

1. Please share initiatives or emergency interventions that your country has considered on a national, regional or global level to tackle and manage the impacts of different crises?

The State of Qatar, mostly through QFFD, provides substantial development and humanitarian assistance to ODA-eligible countries (ODA 2019: 583m USD, 2020: 592m USD, 2021: 677m USD, 2022 (predicted): 820m USD. ODA/GNI ratio: 2019: 0.32%, 2020: 0.42%, 2021: 0.38%, 2022 (predicted): 0.46%). ODA is provided needs-based/country-driven, it comprises mostly grants, around 25% is spent via the multilateral system; focal areas are education, health, economic development (with emphasis on economic empowerment of most vulnerable groups), climate change, and humanitarian aid. For a further disaggregation of Qatar’s ODA, see:

[https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/2dcf1367-en/1/3/2/37/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/2dcf1367-en&\\_csp=177392f5df53d89c9678d0628e39a2c2&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/2dcf1367-en/1/3/2/37/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/2dcf1367-en&_csp=177392f5df53d89c9678d0628e39a2c2&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book)

QFFD reacts flexibly and quickly to new, emerging crises, e.g., it responded quickly in providing Covid-19 support to more than 35 countries worldwide, to acute food insecurity in the Horn of



Africa or Yemen, or to the earthquake in Turkey/Syria with emergency relief provided that exceeds 110m USD, and it engages in anticipatory action, risk reduction and preparedness. Furthermore, QFFD implements a 100m USD climate change pledge by HH, the Emir aimed at climate change mitigation and adaptation in LDCs and SIDS.

In providing its ODA, QFFD considers gender and environment/climate change-related aspects and possible impacts of its interventions, and its funding and support is non-discriminatory and aimed towards building resilience as a pre-requisite for individual and collective self-determination as stipulated by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

2. From a rights-based economy perspective, have recovery plans and policies contributed towards 'building back better'? Have human rights, gender, climate change, environment, food security, health and other related concerns been taken into consideration in these plans?

QFFD's development assistance is guided by the SDGs; QFFD's results frameworks in its thematic focal areas (education, health, economic development, climate change) are aligned with corresponding SDG indicators. Many of QFFD's SDG-aligned results indicators are in line with the targets outlined in Part III of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. QFFD started implementing a results-based approach where implementing partners are expected to plan and monitor projects for results which are aligned with QFFD's SDG-aligned results indicators. Partner reports show positive effects of QFFD's support on the targeted beneficiaries and, hence, of QFFD's contribution to the SDGs in its partner countries and "building back better" (understood as a sustainable, resilient recovery).

Climate change, health, and food security are thematic priorities of QFFD; hence, they are targeted with specific interventions. Gender is partly cross-cutting (data disaggregation, 50% of targeted beneficiaries are women or girls); gender, however, can also be targeted as stand-alone in interventions (economic empowerment of women, enrollment of out of school girls, State of Qatar's "Women in Conflict Zone Initiative"). The same is true for climate change: climate change mitigation and adaptation are targeted by specific interventions (implementing HH's 100m USD pledge); environmental sustainability and possible impacts of interventions on the climate are also cross-cutting (assessed at the planning stage of each project and followed-up throughout its implementation).

3. What measures have been put in place by your country to ensure that it is mobilising its maximum available resources for the realisation of its human rights obligations in this era of multiple crises? What measures and mechanisms have been adopted to protect the fiscal space required to respond to the exceptional needs of the population during these crises in areas such as health, education, gender, food, and social security?

QFFD contributes to the economic, social and cultural rights as stipulated in Part III of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (with a focus on health, education and food security, among others). QFFD ensures that its ODA is implemented based on its national and international commitments and that it is effective (through applying a results-based approach and adhering to the development effectiveness agenda). Spending existing ODA effectively (impactful), i.e., the quality of spending is also of importance, not only spending "more" in terms of quantity. QFFD, furthermore, is engaging in blended finance modalities e.g., through the Lives and Livelihood Fund where QFFD grants are used to soften the conditions of IsDB loans aimed to support health and economic/agricultural development in IsDB member countries and lift the poorest out of poverty.



## On ensuring human rights

1. Are there practices, legislation or policies at national or regional level that could serve as positive case studies? Are there initiatives on international or regional cooperation that could be considered for this report, with specific reference where possible on climate emergency, health, debt, economy or other crises and human rights approaches to managing them? What is your Government's/ Institution's role on these initiatives and are these decisions consistent with human rights obligations?

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Art 12 (c) "The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases".

*Positive case study: [Global Covid response](#). Between 2020 and March 2023, QFFD provided urgent medical aid in the amount of 82m USD to 35 countries. This included a 10m USD contribution to GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance to ensure vaccine access of lower-income countries.*

Art 13 (a) "Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all".

*Positive case study: [Education Above All, supported by QFFD](#) with 806m USD since its inception, supports the hardest-to-reach out of school children (OOSC) around the world facing barriers to education including poverty, discrimination, conflict, challenging geographies and climate change. EAA through its program Educate A Child (EAC) has committed to reaching an additional 1 million children each year and implemented the forward-looking At-Risk Initiative to help prevent vulnerable children from dropping out of education. Furthermore, EAC's ZERO Strategy aims to work with countries that have a demonstrated commitment to UPE and bring their remaining primary OOSC populations into quality education.*

Art 13 (c) "Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education".

*Positive case study: [Qatar Scholarships \(QS\)](#): QS initiative is spearheaded by QFFD in cooperation with several prestigious and leading educational institutions in the State of Qatar and internationally. The program offers scholarships for undergraduate, masters, PhD degrees as well as Arabic language program and vocational and technical training to students from developing countries. Between 2019 and 2023, 3.3m USD have been disbursed on 665 scholarships provided for students (half of them females) from ODA-eligible countries.*

2. What are the gaps in the existing financial architecture and multilateral frameworks dealing with the scope and impact of the multiple crises?

Better coordination among multilateral agencies; more attention to the provision of global public goods, especially to climate action by MDBs; improving MDBs' leverage of private finance through innovative ways of de-risking; more concessional financing for middle-income countries in support of climate change programs; more risk taking by MDBs; more investments in climate change adaptation (compared to mitigation); foster debt sustainability (exchange short-term debt for longer-term instruments at lower interest rates, participation of private creditors in debt restructuring); boost liquidity for investments in the transformational areas required to achieve the SDGs: renewable energy, sustainable food systems and fourth industrial revolution; increased capital basis of MDBs; more contingency financing for LDCs in crises.

3. How should States address the arising needs and financial gaps exacerbated by the current crises while continuing to support the implementation of the development goals and ensure long-term growth? Could you highlight some good practices?

(1) provision of more ODA, (2) more effective spending of existing ODA, (3) better catalytic use of ODA (to de-risk and mobilize additional private sector finance e.g., via guarantees, outcome payments, grant/first loss capital etc.). More anticipatory action (such as emergency pool funds or micro insurance schemes), more disaster risk reduction and preparedness (resilience building) versus "mere" emergency relief (combatting the symptoms); more investment in climate change adaptation (not only "easier" mitigation); considering requirements of the triple nexus (continued, coordinated longer term approach, applying those instruments that are appropriate, and also considering peace building); pushing the multilateral (financial) system towards better coordination and reforms; improving debt sustainability and debt to SDG swaps.

4. What other issues ought to be addressed by the Independent Expert in this domain, both for her report to the General Assembly, 78th Session, and for other activities and initiatives that she may undertake in line with her mandate in the context of the multiple crises facing communities, nations, regions, and the world?