**Statement of**

**H.E Ambassador /Nadia Gofoun**

**Member of the Arab Human Rights Committee**

**In the Annual Meeting of the Focal Points for Regional Human Rights Mechanisms**

**Geneva, October 2019**

**Ladies and Gentlemen the representatives of regional human rights mechanisms,**

**And the representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**It is my pleasure as a member of the Arab Human Rights Committee to participate in the annual meeting of the focal points for regional human rights mechanisms in Geneva.**

**I would like to seize this opportunity to express the Committee’s appreciation of the important role played by the OHCHR in coordinating and organizing the different meetings and activities of the regional human rights mechanisms, as well as among the latter and the international human rights mechanisms, with the aim of enhancing cooperation among those different mechanisms.**

**Distinguished Participants,**

**The Arab Human Rights Committee is, relatively, a new member in the network of regional human rights mechanisms. It was established by the Arab Human Rights Charter, which entered into force in 2008, with the mandate to review the periodic reports of states parties to the Charter on the measures they undertake to respect the rights and freedoms incorporated therein. The Committee has actually started examining the reports of states parties in 2012. Accordingly, members of the Arab Human Rights Committee as well as its technical secretariat pay special attention to benefiting from the experiences of other regional human rights mechanisms that have been practicing their mandates for a longer period of time.**

**The tradition of convening, on an annual basis, a meeting for the focal points of the regional human rights mechanisms, is indeed very useful. This commended tradition provides the opportunity to exchange information, experiences and best practices, based on the actual experiences of the regional mechanisms. Examples of important aspects of the work of those mechanisms include; the review of states’ periodic reports, drafting concluding observations and recommendations as well as the follow-up to their implementation, drafting general comments, setting regional human rights standards and criteria, and the cooperation with national human rights institutions as well as civil society organizations. Furthermore, the annual meetings of the focal points of regional human rights mechanisms provide the opportunity to discuss the challenges that they face in conducting their work related to the promotion and protection of human rights as well as the best approaches to address such challenges. Those annual meetings also provide a forum to discuss the possible forms of cooperation among regional human rights mechanisms.**

**Ladies and gentlemen participants in the meeting,**

**The Arab Human Rights Committee has undertaken several important activities during 2019. It held its 15th session in January 2019 that witnessed the interactive dialogue with official delegation from Kingdom of Bahrain to discuss the State Party’s first periodic report to the Committee on its implementation of its obligations under the Arab Charter on Human Rights. The Committee issued its final observations and recommendations on the first periodic report of the Kingdom of Bahrain in 2019 .It took part in the conference on “The Arab Human Rights Court in light of experiences of regional and international human rights courts” that was held in Cairo in February 2019. It also participated in the 45th and 46th sessions of the Arab Permanent Human Rights Committee that was held in Cairo in February and July 2019. The Committee also took part in a conference on “the regional and international standards applied during detention” that was held in April 2019 in Sharm ElSheikh. Moreover, the Committee participated in the international conference on “the role of national human rights institutions in implementing sustainable development goals” that was held in June 2019 in Sharm ElSheikh. The Committee was also keen to take part in the third Arab regional conference on the protection and promotion of human rights that concentrated on the topic of “the impact of occupation and armed conflicts on human rights” that was held in Cairo in July 2019. The Committee took part in the 5th annual conference for the human rights officials in the ministries of interior in the Arab countries that was held in Tunisia in August 2019. The Committee participated in the second regional conference on “the Arab strategies on combatting violence against women” that was held in UAE in October 2019. Most recently on the 14th and 15th of October, the Committee held its 16th session that witnessed an interactive dialogue with the official delegation of the UAE on its first periodic report submitted to the Committee on its implementation of its obligations under the Arab Charter on Human Rights.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Committee has also provided its contribution to the OHCHR in the context of preparing draft general recommendation No. 36 on Preventing and Combating Racial Profiling in July 2019. Moreover, the Committee provided its contribution to the OHCHR on draft legally binding instrument on the right to development in July 2019.** |  |

**Distinguished Participants,**

**Finally, I hope, on behalf of the Arab Human Rights Committee, that our meeting witnesses fruitful and useful discussions that contribute to developing the work of regional human rights mechanisms.**