

Draft Arab Charter on Human Rights
Text adopted by the Arab Standing Committee for Human Rights
5-14 January 2004

(Translation from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)

Proceeding from the faith of the Arab nation in the dignity of the human person whom God has exalted since the Creation and that the Arab nation is the cradle of religions and the homeland of civilizations with lofty human values that affirm the human right to a life of dignity based on freedom, justice and equality,

In implementation of the eternal principles of fraternity, equality and tolerance among human beings imparted by the noble Islamic religion and by the other divine religions,

Being proud of the humanitarian values and principles that it has firmly established throughout its long history and that have played a key role in spreading centres of knowledge in the East and the West, making them destinations for the people of the earth and for those searching for knowledge and wisdom,

Believing in the unity of the Arab nation as it struggles for its freedom, defends the right of nations to self-determination and to the protection of their wealth and development, and believing in the sovereignty of the law and its role in the protection of human rights in the most comprehensive sense of the term, and believing also that the individual's enjoyment of freedom, justice and equality of opportunity is a fundamental measure of any society,

Rejecting all forms of racism and Zionism, which constitute a violation of human rights and a threat to international peace and security, recognizing the close link between human rights and international peace and security, reaffirming the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the provisions of the two International Covenants on civil and political rights and on economic, social and cultural rights, and having regard to the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.

Now therefore, the States parties to the Charter have agreed as follows:

Article I

The present Charter seeks in the context of the national identity of the Arab States and their sense of belonging to a common civilization, to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) To place human rights at the centre of the key national concerns of the Arab States so as to make them lofty and fundamental ideals that shape the will of individuals in the Arab States and enable them to improve their lives in accordance with noble human values;
- (b) To inculcate in human beings in the Arab States a sense of pride in their identity and attachment to the land, history and common interests of their homeland and to imbue them with the culture of human brotherhood, tolerance and openness towards others, in accordance with universal principles and values and with those proclaimed in international human rights instruments;
- (c) To prepare the new generations in the Arab States for a free and responsible life in a civil society that is characterized by solidarity and founded on the interdependence between awareness of rights and commitment to duties and governed by the values of equality, tolerance and moderation;
- (d) To entrench the principle that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

Article 2

- (a) All peoples have the right of self-determination and to control over their natural wealth and

resources, and the right to freely choose their political system and to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

(b) All peoples have the right to national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(c) All forms of racism, Zionism and foreign occupation and domination constitute an impediment to human dignity and a major barrier to the exercise of the fundamental rights of peoples; all such practices must be condemned and efforts must be deployed for their elimination.

(d) All peoples have the right to resist foreign occupation.

Article 3

(a) Each State party to the present Charter undertakes to ensure to all individuals subject to its jurisdiction the right to enjoy the rights and freedoms set forth herein, without distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religious belief, opinion, thought, national or social origin, wealth, birth or physical or mental disability.

(b) The States parties to the present Charter shall take the requisite measures to guarantee effective equality in the enjoyment of all the rights and freedoms enunciated in the present Charter so as to ensure protection against all forms of discrimination on any of the grounds mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

(c) Men and women have equal human dignity and equal rights and obligations in the framework of the positive discrimination established in favour of women by the Islamic Shariah and other divine laws and by applicable laws and international instruments. Accordingly, each State party pledges to take all the requisite measures to guarantee equal opportunities and effective equality between men and women in the enjoyment of all the rights set out in this Charter.

Article 4

(a) In exceptional situations of emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed, the States parties to the present Charter may take measures derogating from their obligations under the present Charter, to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with their other obligations under international law and do not involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin.

(b) In exceptional situations of emergency, no derogation shall be made from the following articles: article 5, article 8, article 9, article 10, article 13, article 14 (h), article 15, article 18, article 19, article 31, article 20, article 22, article 27, article 28 and article 29. Likewise, the judicial guarantees required for the protection of the aforementioned rights may not be suspended.

(c) Any State party to the present Charter availing itself of the right of derogation shall immediately inform the other States parties, through the intermediary of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, of the provisions from which it has derogated and of the reasons by which it was actuated. A further communication shall be made, through the same intermediary, on the date on which it terminates such derogation.

Article 5

(a) Every human being has the inherent right to life.

(b) This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

Article 6

Sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the laws in force at the time of commission of the crime and pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court. Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence.

Article 7

(a) Sentence of death shall not be imposed on persons under 18 years of age, unless otherwise stipulated in the laws in force at the time of the commission of the crime.

(b) The death penalty shall not be inflicted on a pregnant woman prior to her delivery or on a nursing mother within two years from the date of her delivery; in all cases, the best interests of

the infant shall be the primary consideration.

Article 8

(a) No one shall be subjected to physical or psychological torture or to cruel, inhuman, degrading or humiliating treatment.

(b) Each State party shall protect every individual subject to its jurisdiction from such practices and shall take effective measures to prevent them. The commission of or participation in such acts shall be regarded as crimes that are punishable by law and not subject to any statute of limitations. Each State party shall guarantee in its legal system redress for any victim of torture and the right to rehabilitation and compensation.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to medical or scientific experimentation or to the use of his organs without his free consent and full awareness of the consequences and provided that ethical, humanitarian and professional rules are followed and medical procedures are observed to ensure his personal safety pursuant to the relevant domestic laws in force in each State party. Trafficking in human organs is prohibited in all circumstances.

Article 10

(a) All forms of slavery and trafficking in human beings are prohibited and are punishable by law. No one shall be held in slavery and servitude under any circumstances.

(b) Forced labour, trafficking in human beings for the purposes of prostitution or sexual exploitation, the exploitation of the prostitution of others and all other forms of exploitation or the exploitation of children in armed conflict are prohibited.

Article 11

All persons are equal before the law and have the right to enjoy its protection without discrimination.

Article 12

All persons are equal before the courts and tribunals. The States parties shall guarantee the independence of the judiciary and protect magistrates against any interference, pressure or threats. They shall also guarantee every person subject to their jurisdiction the right to bring proceedings before all courts of law.

Article 13

(a) Everyone has the right to a fair trial that affords adequate guarantees before a competent, independent and impartial court that has been constituted by law to hear any criminal charge against him or to decide on his rights or his obligations. Each State party shall guarantee to those without the requisite resources legal aid to enable them to defend their rights.

(b) Trials shall be public, except in exceptional cases that may be warranted by the interests of justice in a society that respects human freedoms and rights.

Article 14

(a) Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, search or detention without a legal warrant.

(b) No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in such circumstances as are determined by law and in accordance with such procedure as is established thereby.

(c) Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, in a language that he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him. He shall be entitled to contact his family members.

(d) Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall have the right to request a medical examination and must be informed of that right.

(e) Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a

reasonable time or to release. His release may be subject to guarantees to appear for trial. It shall not be the general rule that persons awaiting trial shall be detained in custody.

(f) Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before a competent court in order that it may decide without delay on the lawfulness of his arrest or detention and order his release if the arrest or detention is not lawful.

(g) Anyone who has been the victim of arbitrary or unlawful arrest or detention shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

Article 15

No crime and no penalty can be established without a prior provision of the law. In all circumstances, the law most favourable to the defendant shall be applied.

Article 16

Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty by a final judgement rendered according to law. In the course of prosecution and trial, he shall enjoy the following minimum guarantees:

(a) To be informed promptly, in detail and in a language which he understands, of the nature and cause of the charge against him;

(b) To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence and to communicate with his family;

(c) To be tried in his presence before an ordinary court and to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing and to communicate with his legal counsel freely and in confidence;

(d) To have the free legal assistance of a defence lawyer, if he cannot defend himself or if the interests of justice so require, and to have the right to the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court;

(e) To examine, or have examined, the witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;

(f) Not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt;

(g) To have the right, if convicted of a crime, to file an appeal according to law before a higher tribunal;

(h) To have the right to respect for his person and his privacy in all circumstances.

Article 17

Each State party shall ensure in particular to any child at risk or any delinquent charged with an offence the right to a special legal system for minors in all stages of investigation, trial and implementation of sentence, as well as to special treatment that takes account of his age, protects his dignity, facilitates his rehabilitation and reintegration and enables him to play a constructive role in society.

Article 18

No one who is shown to be unable to pay a debt arising from a contractual obligation shall be imprisoned.

Article 19

(a) No one may be tried twice for the same offence. Anyone against whom such proceedings are brought shall have the right to challenge their legality and to demand his release.

(b) Anyone whose innocence is established by a final judgement shall be entitled to compensation for the damage suffered.

Article 20

(a) All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

(b) Accused persons shall be segregated from convicted persons and shall be subject to a treatment appropriate to their status as unconvicted persons.

(c) The penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the aim of which shall be their

reformation and social rehabilitation.

Article 21

(a) No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour or his reputation.

(b) Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 22

Everyone shall have the right to recognition as a person before the law.

Article 23

Each State party to the present Charter undertakes to ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.

Article 24

(a) Every citizen has the right to freely pursue a political activity.

(b) Every citizen has the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(c) Every citizen shall have the right to stand for election or to choose his representatives in free and impartial elections, on the basis of equality among all citizens and guaranteeing the free expression of his will.

(d) Every citizen has the right of equal access to public service in his country on the basis of equality of opportunity.

(e) Every citizen has the right to freely form and join associations with others.

(f) Every citizen has the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

(g) No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 25

Persons belonging to minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to use their own language and to practise their own religion. The exercise of these rights shall be governed by law.

Article 26

(a) Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State party shall, within that territory, have the right to freedom of movement and to freely choose his residence in any part of that territory in conformity with the laws in force.

(b) No State party may expel an alien lawfully in its territory, other than in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with law and after that person has been allowed to seek a review by the competent authority, unless compelling reasons of national security preclude it. Collective expulsion of aliens is prohibited under all circumstances.

Article 27

(a) No one may be arbitrarily or unlawfully prevented from leaving any country, including his own, nor prohibited from residing, or compelled to reside, in any part of that country.

(b) No one may be exiled from his country or prevented from returning thereto.

Article 28

Everyone has the right to seek political asylum in another country in order to escape persecution. This right may not be invoked by persons facing prosecution for an offence against public order under ordinary law. Political refugees may not be extradited.

Article 29

(a) Everyone has the right to nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily or unlawfully deprived of his nationality.

(b) States parties shall take such measures as they deem appropriate, in accordance with their domestic laws on nationality, to allow a child to acquire the mother's nationality, having due regard, in all cases, to the best interests of the child.

(c) No one shall be denied the right to acquire another nationality in accordance with the domestic legislation in his country.

Article 30

(a) Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. No restrictions may be imposed on the exercise of such freedoms except as provided for by law.

(b) The freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs or to perform religious observances, either alone or in community with others, shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a tolerant society that respects human rights and freedoms to protect public safety, public order, public health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

(c) Parents or guardians have the freedom to ensure the religious and moral education of their children.

Article 31

Everyone has a guaranteed right to own private property, and shall not under any circumstances be arbitrarily or unlawfully divested of all or any part of his property.

Article 32

(a) The present Charter guarantees the right to information and to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers.

(b) Such rights and freedoms shall be exercised in conformity with the fundamental values of society and shall be subject only to such limitations as are required to ensure respect for the rights or reputation of others or the protection of national security, public order and public health or morals.

Article 33

(a) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society; it is based on marriage between a man and a woman. Men and women of full age have the right to marry and to found a family according to the rules and conditions of marriage. No marriage can take place without the full and free consent of both parties. The laws in force regulate the rights and duties of the man and woman as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(b) The State and society shall ensure the protection of the family, the strengthening of family ties, the protection of its members and the prohibition of all forms of violence or abuse in the relations among its members, particularly against women and children. They shall also ensure the necessary protection and care for mothers, children, older persons and persons with special needs and shall provide adolescents and young persons the most ample opportunities for physical and mental development.

(c) The States parties shall take all necessary legislative, administrative and judicial measures to guarantee the protection, survival, development and well-being of the child in an atmosphere of freedom and dignity and shall ensure, in all cases, that the child's best interests are the basic criterion for all measures taken in his regard, whether the child is at risk of delinquency or is a juvenile offender.

(d) The States parties shall take all the necessary measures to guarantee, particularly to young persons, the right to pursue a sporting activity.

Article 34

(a) The right to work is a natural right of every citizen. The State shall endeavour to provide, to

the extent possible, a job for the largest number of those willing to work, while ensuring production, on the freedom to choose one's work and equal opportunities, without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, religion, language, political opinion, union affiliation, national or social origin, disability or other status.

(b) Every worker has the right to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure appropriate remuneration to meet his essential needs and those of his family, and regulate working hours, rest and holidays with pay, as well as the rules for the preservation of occupational health and safety and the protection of women, children and disabled persons in the place of work.

(c) The States parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States parties shall in particular:

1. Provide for a minimum age for admission to employment;
 2. Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 3. Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of these provisions.
- (d) There shall be no discrimination between men and women in their enjoyment of the right to effectively benefit from training, employment and job protection and the right to receive equal remuneration for equal work.
- (e) Each State party shall ensure to workers who migrate to its territory the requisite protection in accordance with the laws in force.

Article 35

(a) Every individual has the right to freely form trade unions or to join trade unions and to freely pursue trade union activity for the protection of his interests.

(b) No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights and freedoms except such as are prescribed by the laws in force and that are necessary for the maintenance of national security, public safety or order or for the protection of public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others.

(c) States parties to the present Charter guarantee the right to strike within the limits laid down by law in accordance with the international labour criteria.

Article 36

The States parties shall ensure the right of every citizen to social security, including social insurance.

Article 37

The right to development is a fundamental human right and all States are required to establish the development policies and the measures necessary to guarantee this right. They have a duty to implement the values of solidarity and cooperation among them and at the international level with a view to eradicating poverty and achieving economic, social, cultural and political development. Pursuant to this right, every citizen has the right to participate in the realization of development and to enjoy the benefits and fruits thereof.

Article 38

Every person has the right to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, that ensures their well-being and a decent life, including food, clothing, housing, services and the right to a healthy environment. The States parties shall take the necessary measures commensurate with their resources to guarantee these rights.

Article 39

(a) The States parties recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the right of the citizen to free basic health-care

services and to have access to medical facilities without discrimination of any kind.

(b) The measures taken by States parties shall include the following:

1. Development of basic health-care services and the guaranteeing of free and easy access to the centres that provide these services, regardless of geographical location or economic status;
2. Efforts to control disease by means of prevention and cure in order to reduce the mortality rate;
3. Promotion of health awareness and health education;
4. Suppression of traditional practices which are harmful to the health of the individual;
5. Provision of basic nutrition and safe drinking water for all;
6. Combating environmental pollution and providing proper sanitation systems;
7. Combating smoking and abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances.

Article 40

(a) The States parties undertake to ensure to persons with mental or physical disabilities a decent life that guarantees their dignity, and to enhance their self-reliance and facilitate their active participation in society.

(b) The States parties shall provide social services free of charge for all persons with disabilities, shall provide the material support needed by those persons, their families or the families caring for them, and shall also do whatever is needed to avoid placing those persons in institutions. They shall in all cases take account of the best interests of the disabled person.

(c) The States parties shall take all necessary measures to curtail the incidence of disabilities by all possible means, including preventive health programmes, awareness raising and education.

(d) The States parties shall provide full educational services suited to persons with disabilities, taking into account the importance of integrating these persons in the educational system and the importance of vocational training and apprenticeship and the creation of suitable job opportunities in the public or private sectors.

(e) The States parties shall provide all health services appropriate for persons with disabilities, including the rehabilitation of these persons with a view to integrating them into society.

(f) The States parties shall endeavour to enable persons with disabilities to make use of all public and private services.

Article 41

(a) The eradication of illiteracy is a binding obligation upon the State and every person has the right to education.

(b) The States parties shall guarantee every citizen free education at least throughout the primary and fundamental levels. All types and levels of primary education shall be compulsory and accessible to all without discrimination of any kind.

(c) The States parties shall take appropriate measures in all domains to ensure partnership between men and women with a view to achieving national development goals.

(d) The States parties shall guarantee to provide education directed to the full development of the human person and strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

(e) The States parties shall endeavour to incorporate the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms into formal and informal education curricula and educational and training programmes.

(f) The States parties shall guarantee the establishment of the requisite mechanisms to provide ongoing education for every citizen and the creation of national plans for adult education.

Article 42

(a) Every person has the right to take part in cultural life and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application.

(b) The States parties undertake to respect the freedom of scientific research and creative activity, and to ensure the protection of moral and material interests resulting from scientific, literary and artistic production.

(c) The State parties shall work together and enhance cooperation among them at all levels, with

the full participation of intellectuals and creative artists and their organizations, with a view to developing and implementing recreational, cultural, artistic and scientific programmes.

Article 43

Nothing in this Charter may be construed or interpreted as impairing the rights and freedoms protected by the domestic laws of the States parties or those set forth in the international and regional human rights instruments which the States parties have adopted or ratified, including the rights of women, the rights of the child and the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

Article 44

When their existing legislative or non-legislative measures do not effectively ensure the implementation of the rights enunciated in this Charter, the States parties undertake to take, in conformity with their constitutional procedures and with the provisions of the present Charter, whatever legislative or non-legislative measures that may be necessary for the implementation of these rights.

Article 45

- (a) Pursuant to this Charter, an "Arab Human Rights Committee", hereinafter referred to as "The Committee", shall be established. This Committee shall consist of seven members who shall be elected by secret ballot by the States parties to this Charter.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of nationals of the States parties to the present Charter, who must be highly experienced and competent in the Committee's field of work. The members of the Committee shall serve in their personal capacity and with full independence and impartiality.
- (c) The Committee shall not include more than one member from a State party; such a member may only be re-elected once. Due regard shall be given to the rotation principle.
- (d) The members of the Committee shall be elected for a four-year term, although the mandate of three of the members elected during the first election and selected by lot, shall be for two years.
- (e) Six months prior to the date of the election, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States shall invite the States parties to submit their nominations within the following three months. He shall transmit the list of candidates to the States parties two months prior to the date of the election. The candidates who obtain the largest number of votes cast shall be elected to membership of the Committee. If, because various candidates have an equal number of votes, the number of candidates with the largest number of votes exceeds the number required, a second ballot will be held between the persons with equal numbers of votes. If the votes are again equal, the member or members shall be selected by lottery. The first election for membership of the Committee shall be held at least six months after the Charter enters into force.
- (f) The Secretary-General shall invite the States parties to a meeting at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in order to elect the members of the Committee. The presence of the majority of the States parties shall constitute a quorum. If there is no quorum, the Secretary-General shall call another meeting at which at least two-thirds of the States parties must be present. If there is still no quorum, the Secretary-General shall call a third meeting, which will be held regardless of the number of States parties present.
- (g) The Secretary-General shall convene the first meeting of the Committee, during the course of which the Committee shall elect its Chairman, from among its members, for a two-year term renewable only once and for a similar period. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure and methods of work and shall determine how often it shall meet. The Committee shall hold its meetings at the headquarters of the League of Arab States. It may also meet in any other State party to the present Charter at that party's invitation.

Article 46

- (a) If, in the unanimous view of other members, a member of the Committee has ceased to perform his functions for any reason other than temporary absence, the Chairman of the Committee shall so inform the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States who, in turn, shall declare vacant the seat occupied by the member concerned.
- (b) In the event of the death or resignation of a Committee member, the Chairman shall immediately inform the Secretary-General, who shall then declare vacant the seat occupied by the member concerned as of the date of his death or that on which the resignation took effect.

(c) Whenever a member's seat is declared vacant pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) above and the term of office of the member to be replaced does not expire within six months from the date on which the vacancy was declared, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States shall refer the matter to the States parties to the present Charter which may, within two months, submit nominations, pursuant to article 45, in order to fill the vacant seat.

(d) The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States shall draw up an alphabetical list of all the duly nominated candidates, which he shall transmit to the States parties to the present Charter. The elections to fill the vacant seat shall be held in accordance with the relevant provisions.

(e) Any member of the Committee elected to fill a seat declared vacant in accordance with the provisions of (a) and (b) above shall remain a member of the Committee until the expiry of the remainder of the term of the member whose seat was declared vacant pursuant to the provisions of the two aforementioned paragraphs.

(f) The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States shall make provision within the budget of the League of Arab States for all the necessary financial and human resources and facilities that the Committee needs to discharge its functions effectively. The members of the Committee shall be afforded the same treatment as experts recruited by the secretariat of the League of Arab States with respect to remuneration and reimbursement of expenses.

Article 47

The States parties undertake to ensure that members of the Committee shall enjoy the requisite immunities for their protection against any form of harassment, moral or material pressure or prosecution on account of the positions or statements they express in the performance of their duties as members of the Committee.

Article 48

(a) The States parties undertake to submit reports to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on the measures they have taken to give effect to the rights and freedoms recognized in this Charter and on the progress made towards the enjoyment thereof. The Secretary-General shall transmit these reports to the Committee for its consideration.

(b) Each State party shall submit an initial report to the Committee within one year from the date on which the Charter enters into force and a periodic report every three years thereafter. The Committee may request the States parties to supply it with additional information relating to the implementation of the Charter.

(c) The Committee shall consider the reports submitted by the States parties pursuant to paragraph (b) of this article in the presence and with the participation in the deliberations of the representative of the State party concerned.

(d) In discussing the report, formulating its comments and submitting its recommendations for the necessary action, the Committee shall act in accordance with the objectives of the Charter.

(e) The Committee shall submit an annual report containing its comments and recommendations to the Council of the League, through the intermediary of the Secretary-General.

(f) The reports, final comments and recommendations of the Committee shall be public documents which the Committee shall disseminate widely.

Article 49

(a) The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States shall submit the present Charter, once it has been approved by the Council of the League, to the States parties for signature, ratification or accession.

(b) The present Charter shall enter into effect two months after the date on which the seventh instrument of ratification is deposited with the secretariat of the League of Arab States.

(c) After its entry into force, the present Charter shall become effective, for each State party, two months after it has deposited its instrument of ratification or accession with the secretariat.

(d) The Secretary-General shall notify the States parties of the deposit of each instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 50

Any State party may submit written proposals, through the Secretary-General, to amend the present Charter. After the States members have been notified of these proposals, the Secretary-General shall invite them to consider the proposed amendments before submitting them to the Council of the League for adoption.

Article 51

The amendments shall take effect, with regard to the States parties that have approved them, once they have been approved by two-thirds of the States parties.

Article 52

Any State party may propose additional optional protocols to the present Charter and they shall be adopted according to the same procedures followed for the adoption of amendments to the Charter.

Article 53

- (a) Any State party when signing this Charter, depositing the instruments of ratification or acceding hereto, may make a reservation to any article of the Charter, provided that such reservation does not conflict with the aims and purposes of the Charter.
- (b) Any State party that has made a reservation pursuant to paragraph (a) of this article may withdraw this reservation at any time by means of a notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.
- (c) The Secretary-General shall notify the States parties of reservations made and of requests for their withdrawal.