The United Arab Emirates (“UAE”)

Philip Punwar* and Maria Musika**

1 INTRODUCTION

The United Arab Emirates is a federal state made up of the Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah. The capital city is Abu Dhabi. Each Emirate has a degree of legislative autonomy. This Country Survey will address legal developments between late 2008 and mid 2010 under five headings: (A) International, (B) Federal, (C) Dubai (D) the Dubai International Financial Center (“DIFC”), (E) Abu Dhabi and (F) Draft Laws.

2 INTERNATIONAL

Noteworthy developments include the following:

Human Trafficking:

• The UAE Ministry of Labour launched an Anti-Human Trafficking Unit in March 2010. The unit will operate under the inspection division of the Ministry and is responsible for developing criteria to help identify potential labour-trafficking activity, as well as a specialised inspection capability.
• In April 2010, the UAE Ministry of Interior established an Anti-Human Trafficking Panel charged with coordinating victim care between competent authorities, and to assist in updating legislation.

* B.A. (Hons) (Birmingham), Dip Law (City), M.A. (SOAS), Barrister (Inner Temple), Dip ICArb, FCIArb, Chartered Arbitrator, CEDR Accredited Mediator, Registered Advocate and Practitioner (DIFC Courts), Solicitor Advocate (England & Wales). Partner, Fulbright & Jaworski LLP, Dubai.
** Mag. Phil (Innsbruck), Dip Law (College of Law), LPC (College of Law), ACIS. Chartered Secretary.
Discrimination:

- On 26 January 2010, the UAE presented its initial report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in accordance with its obligations thereunder. The Convention has direct effect in domestic law, as does the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (and its Protocol to Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children), the 1957 Equal Remuneration Convention, the 1958 Convention on the Prevention of Discrimination in Employment and Occupation and the 1948 Revised Night Work Convention.

- In February 2010, the UAE Ministry of Interior issued a multilingual booklet ‘The Worker: Rights and Duties’ in six languages: Arabic, English, Filipino (Tagalog), Persian, Chinese and Urdu. The booklet aims to explain the rights and responsibilities of workers under UAE law.

- In March 2010, the UAE deposited with the United Nations its instruments of ratification regarding the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention obliges party states to take all legislative measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by people with disability, of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms, without any form of discrimination.

Corruption:

- 16 November 2009—the UAE deposited with the United Nations a notification in respect of the Convention against Corruption which it ratified in 2006. The notification identifies the Ministry of Justice and the State Audit Bureau as being authorised to provide assistance to party states in the implementation of measures for the prevention of corruption.

Conventional Weapons:

- 04 March 2009—the UAE acceded to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (Protocols I, II and III).

- 04 March 2009—the UAE lodged consent to be bound by the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (Protocol V).

Nuclear:

- Federal Decree No. 46 of 2009 on the Accession of the United Arab Emirates to the Amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities. [Federal Official Gazette No. 495, October 2009]