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Universal periodic review

## Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review\*

### Iceland

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\* The annex is being circulated without formal editing, in the language of submission only.

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## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction .....	3
I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process .....	3
A. Presentation by the State under review .....	3
B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review .....	5
II. Conclusions and/or recommendations.....	14
Annex	
Composition of the delegation .....	26

## Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-sixth session from 31 October to 11 November 2016. The review of Iceland was held at the 4th meeting, on 1 November 2016. The delegation of Iceland was headed by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Ragnhildur Hjaltadóttir. At its 10th meeting, held on 4 November 2016, the Working Group adopted the report on Iceland.

2. On 12 January 2016, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Iceland: Algeria, Philippines and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Iceland:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Czechia, Germany, Mexico, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Iceland through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

## I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

### A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation of Iceland reported that following the recent parliamentary elections 48 per cent of the members of parliament were women.

6. The universal periodic review provided a unique opportunity to address States' achievements and challenges.

7. The delegation explained that Icelandic law was based on a dualistic system. It was not sufficient to incorporate a convention as a whole into domestic law, because that did not allow for its effective implementation. Consequently, the ratification process could be lengthy, which had elicited criticism.

8. Iceland had a long tradition of democracy and a robust institutional framework for protecting human rights, including a well-functioning judicial system and parliamentary ombudsman.

9. Civil society in Iceland actively scrutinized the actions of authorities and held them accountable, and it played an indispensable role in protecting human rights.

10. For seven consecutive years, Iceland had topped the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index and had topped the Global Peace Index since its launch in 2007.

11. The first universal periodic review of Iceland, in 2011, had resulted in 84 recommendations, most of which had been accepted by the Icelandic authorities. An interministerial working group had consulted civil society in preparing the report for the current review; a draft report was published on the Ministry of the Interior website. Civil society had also submitted its own reports for the current review.

12. The strongest domestic criticism during preparations for the universal periodic review concerned the slow process of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Following the adoption of a parliamentary resolution, the Government ratified the Convention on 24 September 2016.

13. Since Iceland had submitted its report, there had been further developments, mostly as a direct result of the universal periodic review process.

14. Following recent changes to the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men (Gender Equality Act), a wage equality standard had been introduced in the form of equal pay certification for companies and institutions. A recent action plan on gender equality provided for mainstreaming gender, within four years, in all policymaking and decision-making efforts, gender budgeting and reviewing the Gender Equality Act. The action plan covered the labour market and equal pay, gender-based violence, education, health and international cooperation. It provided for measures to increase the role of men in achieving gender equality. The maximum payment for parental leave had recently increased significantly, to enable both parents to take parental leave.

15. The proposed revision of the Social Security Act, to simplify the benefit system and increase the flexibility of voluntary retirement, had been approved by Parliament in October 2016. The minimum pension had been increased to ensure an adequate standard of living for those with the lowest incomes.

16. In June 2016, Parliament had adopted a new Act on Foreigners, to provide increased safety for people seeking international protection, focusing on the best interests of the child, vulnerability and the situation of stateless persons. The act set a time limit of 18 months for reviewing applications for international protection and residency and provided for a reception and screening centre where asylum seekers' needs and health conditions would be assessed upon arrival. The number of asylum seekers was predicted to reach 1,000 in 2016.

17. An action plan on integration, adopted in September 2016, aimed to draw upon the diverse cultural backgrounds, knowledge and skills of immigrants to enrich Icelandic society. Steps would be taken to ensure easy access for immigrants to public services and encourage their active participation in society. The authorities would seek broad consensus with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the media and the private sector in implementing the action plan.

18. The delegation emphasized the importance given to education in Iceland, which was egalitarian and homogenous, based on values of democracy, inclusion and equal opportunities. Conscious of the dangers of hate speech, the Ministry of Education had been involved in the No Hate Speech Movement since 2014, with the active participation of young people.

19. For the first time, in 2016 the Minister of the Interior had submitted a human rights report to Parliament outlining, as an important step, the establishment of an interministerial human rights steering committee tasked with enhancing and coordinating the implementation of human rights commitments and following up on the outcome of the universal periodic review.

## **B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review**

20. During the interactive dialogue, 66 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

21. Togo welcomed the progress made by Iceland towards the implementation of the recommendations accepted during the second cycle of the universal periodic review. Togo noted with satisfaction the inclusive participatory process that had led to the preparation of the report and welcomed the accession by Iceland to various international human rights instruments.

22. Tunisia commended the efforts to protect the rights of women and asked about measures taken to combat discrimination and violence against women and to achieve gender equality in the labour market, especially wage parity. Tunisia inquired about measures taken to establish a national human rights institution and to stop students from dropping out of school early.

23. Turkey welcomed the high percentage of women in Parliament, measures taken to increase women's representation, including in the police, and the approach to equal pay standards. Turkey supported the recommendations made by treaty bodies regarding cases of violence against women and preventing child sexual abuse.

24. Ukraine commended the promotion of gender equality as a road map to follow, including the support given by Iceland to the HeForShe campaign and "barbershop" conferences. Ukraine commended the progress in ratifying instruments for the rights of persons with disabilities and the humanitarian aid contributions to Syrian refugees.

25. The United Kingdom noted the legislative developments on gender equality and the rights of immigrants, asylum seekers and elderly persons. It requested an update on levels of racial and ethnic discrimination, on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and on progress in establishing a national human rights institution and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

26. The United States of America commended Iceland for its commitment to tolerance, gender equality and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and the reception of Syrian refugees for resettlement. It welcomed the establishment of a reception centre for asylum seekers and human trafficking victims and the opening of a new prison. It expressed concern at ongoing incidents of gender-based violence, violence against children, discrimination against immigrants and the non-prosecution and non-conviction of perpetrators of human trafficking offences.

27. Uruguay welcomed the efforts of Iceland to promote gender equality, advance the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in the areas of marriage and adoption and address domestic violence through a multisectoral approach, but noted that the national plan of action to combat sexual and gender-based violence had not been renewed.

28. Afghanistan welcomed the amendments made to the Gender Equality Act to accelerate progress on gender equality and equal opportunity. It also appreciated the establishment of an equal opportunity fund aimed at financing programmes and research on gender equality nationally and internationally.

29. Albania applauded Iceland for its record of supporting a rules-based system for the promotion and protection of human rights, consistent with the aims of the main human rights institutions. Albania invited the Government to further strengthen its national efforts and human rights mechanisms.

30. Algeria welcomed the measures taken by Iceland since 2011 to fight gender inequality and, in particular, to achieve wage equality and set a minimum quota for women serving on public committees and company boards. Algeria also welcomed steps taken with respect to the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly through law and policy.

31. Argentina congratulated Iceland for its endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration and its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Argentina noted the adoption of normative and institutional initiatives to protect and improve the situation of women.

32. Armenia commended Iceland for its exemplary human rights record, particularly on gender equality and women's rights, the inclusion of human rights in curricula and efforts to provide inclusive education. Armenia welcomed legislative and administrative measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and encouraged Iceland to continue ratifying human rights instruments.

33. Australia commended Iceland on the progress made while noting that the Icelandic Human Rights Centre had no ongoing funding or statutory standing as a national human rights institution. Australia noted the lack of comprehensive legislation to protect the rights of intersex people and called on Iceland to strengthen protection for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Australia called on Iceland to strengthen protection for the elderly.

34. Bangladesh noted the concerns of treaty bodies regarding crucial areas of inequality affecting women, especially those expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women about the difficulties encountered by migrant women in accessing employment and health care and about their exposure to violence. It noted that the Committee on the Rights of the Child was concerned that the best interests principle was not being applied in ensuring parents' access to children.

35. Brazil shared the concern of the Committee on the Rights of the Child about the possibility of migrant children not receiving health-care coverage. It urged Iceland to improve access by children and adolescents to educational materials and general information about health services. Brazil commended the amendment to the Gender Equality Act aimed at accelerating progress on gender equality.

36. Canada congratulated Iceland for topping the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index and encouraged it to continue to make efforts to close the gender pay gap by 2022. Canada commended Iceland for resettling refugees referred by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It appreciated the ongoing exchanges between Canada and Iceland on best practices on integration and the high participation rate of migrants in the labour market.

37. Chile highlighted the initiatives undertaken by Iceland aimed at countering gender-based discrimination, in particular the establishment of a 40 per cent quota in governmental committees and public businesses' councils and boards. It acknowledged the progress made in the areas of migration and refugee status determination, as well as the legislative measures taken to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

38. China expressed concern about racial discrimination and xenophobia, the lack of improvement in overcoming gender inequality and women often suffering from violence. The rights of children, older persons and persons with disabilities were yet to be fully guaranteed. Migrants were subject to discrimination in employment, education and health care. China urged Iceland to take effective measures to resolve those problems.

39. Colombia highlighted the leadership shown by Iceland in the areas of gender equality and women's rights. It highlighted the adoption of the national action plan against

trafficking in persons, as well as the decision to accept more refugees in the context of the ongoing crisis.

40. Czechia appreciated the information presented, particularly on the final stages of the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

41. Denmark welcomed the fact that Iceland expected to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture before the end of 2016. Denmark commended Iceland for its intention to establish a national human rights institution based on the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). Denmark wished to learn how Iceland addressed the trafficking-related challenges linked to the great increase in tourism.

42. Ecuador welcomed the amendment to the Gender Equality Act and the enactment of the Act on Foreigners and the Act on Immigration Issues. Given the challenge of implementation, Ecuador hoped that initiatives such as the adoption of a human rights national action plan and the establishment of a national human rights institution would be achieved in the near future.

43. Egypt was deeply concerned by the increasing number of hate crimes, incidents of racist discourse and xenophobia and the existence of discriminatory policies in Iceland. It was concerned about the existing gender pay gap and by discrimination against persons with disabilities in numerous fields.

44. Estonia commended Iceland for taking additional steps in dealing with cases of domestic violence and paying attention to violence against persons with disabilities, especially women. Estonia welcomed the greater attention paid to human trafficking and encouraged Iceland to involve civil society further in the development, implementation and evaluation of anti-trafficking policies. Estonia appreciated the active participation of Iceland in the global Freedom Online Coalition and its excellent results in ensuring a free and open Internet.

45. Finland was pleased that civil society had been consulted and given the opportunity to give its views on the national report; that Iceland had amended the Penal Code to criminalize domestic violence in compliance with the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention); and that a legislative proposal on establishing a national human rights institution was under public consultation. Finland encouraged Iceland to continue its important work in improving Barnahus services for children with disabilities and in promoting the Barnahus model regionally.

46. France welcomed measures to promote gender equality and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

47. Georgia highlighted the progress made by Iceland since its first review, particularly the adoption of the Act on Foreigners and the Act on Immigration Issues, and the initiatives implemented to combat gender inequality, including the equal pay standard. Georgia welcomed the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

48. Germany commended Iceland for its commitment to upholding and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms but noted that Iceland had not yet ratified the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as indicated during the first review.

49. Ghana commended Iceland on the high percentage of women in Parliament and welcomed the action plan aimed at enhancing the representation and professional development of women within the police.

50. Replying to questions about the establishment of a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, the representative of Iceland, Ragna Bjarnadóttir, said that a legislative proposal had been drafted by the Ministry of the Interior following open consultations, including for a new body based on the existing Icelandic Human Rights Centre. The proposed national institution would take on activities required under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A new national action plan for human rights would be presented to Parliament in 2017.

51. Concerning the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, a proposal drafted by the Ministry of the Interior provided for the Parliamentary Ombudsman to fulfil the functions of the national preventive mechanism required under the Optional Protocol. The Icelandic authorities were making every effort to ensure that the Ombudsman could take over that new function early in 2017.

52. The delegation provided an overview of current legislation to combat the use of torture, including legislation allowing prisoners to appeal against their conditions of detention to the Ministry of the Interior, which had to respond within four working days. Torture was not specifically defined in the Penal Code, but article 68 of the Constitution prohibited torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, in line with article 3 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights). Unlawful compulsion and wrongful arrest were prohibited under the Penal Code.

53. As for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, since 2014 work had been under way, in consultation with the public, to revise the act on legal capacity, the Act on the Affairs of Disabled Persons and the Municipalities' Social Services Act, to protect the legal capacity of such persons, prevent their forced hospitalization and provide for user-controlled personal assistance and independent living. The Ministry of Welfare was expected to make an action plan on matters of disability available online, for open review. Progress was being made on pensions for persons with disabilities. The Social Security Act adopted in October 2016 had increased pensions for those with the lowest incomes.

54. In response to a question from Bangladesh, the delegation stated that since 2011 official development assistance had increased by 74 per cent in real terms. The development strategy of Iceland for 2017-2021 would be decided upon by the new Government.

55. Concerning measures to combat trafficking, a national steering group was responsible, in line with a national action plan, for identifying victims of trafficking and of forced labour; devising an educational programme on trafficking for relevant professionals and the trade unions; and training labour inspectors to detect forced labour. Iceland was planning a comprehensive public awareness campaign on workers' rights.

56. Greece commended Iceland for its recent activities to promote gender equality, the amendments to the Gender Equality Act, including quotas, commitments to promote and protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, its comprehensive integration policy for refugees and migrants and the significant efforts made on behalf of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

57. Guatemala noted the progress made in the promotion and protection of human rights in Iceland, particularly with regard to refugees and asylum seekers. However, national refugee laws should be reviewed so that they were fully aligned with provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and relevant international standards.

58. Haiti noted that improvements had been reported with respect to gender equality, ethnic discrimination and racism and the rights of people with disabilities, particularly



through the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Haiti praised Iceland as a model for all small island nations in many areas, including human rights.

59. Hungary complimented the efforts made to develop the equal pay standard, which might serve as a valuable example to other countries seeking to achieve gender equality. Hungary commended the multifaceted work and national institution functions of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre, but noted that its powers, independence and financing were not set out in a statute. Hungary asked about the intentions of Iceland in respect of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

60. Indonesia noted the many initiatives undertaken to combat gender inequality and the adoption of the Act on Foreigners, in June 2016, and the Act on Immigration Issues, in 2012. Indonesia also appreciated the adoption, in May 2016, of legislation on judicial reform.

61. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted the reports of sexual abuse of children and the reduced quality and availability of public health-care services, notably for families of children with disabilities. It noted the increasing number of cases of violence against women and the persisting attitudes and stereotypes leading to violence against women.

62. Iraq commended the follow-up action taken by Iceland to previous recommendations, to promote and protect human rights domestically. Iraq acknowledged the initiatives of Iceland to reinforce the rights of older persons by providing domestic assistance and nursing care.

63. Italy took note of the efforts of Iceland to combat domestic violence, particularly with regard to the “Keep the window open” model aimed at ensuring more safety and improving assistance services for victims of domestic violence.

64. Japan commended the measures taken to improve the status and participation of women in society. Japan asked Iceland to share information on measures to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Japan commended the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and asked about new legal systems or measures introduced in that connection. Japan inquired about progress made or difficulties encountered in preparing for the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

65. Lebanon noted that Iceland had rigorously followed up on the recommendations from the previous review, in 2011, in particular with respect to the amendments to anti-discrimination laws and to the achievement of gender equality.

66. Libya commended Iceland for the critical steps taken to ratify the European Agreement relating to Persons Participating in Proceedings of the European Court of Human Rights and harmonize national legislation with that agreement.

67. Maldives acknowledged the commitment of Iceland to ensuring strong representation of women in public institutions, including through the implementation of a quota. Maldives appreciated the measures taken to protect the rights of persons with disabilities through the 2011 Act on the Protection of the Rights of Disabled Persons.

68. Mexico acknowledged the progress made by Iceland in developing initiatives in the areas of disability, the rights of the child and migration. It congratulated Iceland for the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

69. Mongolia highlighted the policy actions taken by Iceland to balance gender equality and increase the number of women employees in public services. Mongolia commended Iceland for its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, its support for the rights of elderly people and its focus on the rights of the child and the

welfare of children. Mongolia commended Iceland for its continuous effort to combat domestic violence and sexual abuse through appropriate changes to legislation and practice.

70. Montenegro welcomed the high number of recommendations implemented and the determination of Iceland to further strengthen its national human rights institution by ensuring its alignment with the Paris Principles. Montenegro highlighted the gender equality policy and results achieved so far and encouraged Iceland to implement the recommendations of several treaty bodies to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation covering all grounds.

71. Mozambique commended Iceland for topping the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index for the previous seven years. Mozambique hailed the work of the Icelandic Integration Development Fund, which emphasized projects and research to combat ethnic discrimination and racism and to strengthen the role of NGOs working with immigrants.

72. Namibia appreciated the amendments to the Gender Equality Act and the introduction of the equal pay standard. Namibia welcomed the policy to grant immigrants equal access to the labour market and the initiatives to strengthen the position of refugees and asylum seekers.

73. The Netherlands encouraged Iceland to ratify the Istanbul Convention promptly, to continue its remarkable efforts on gender equality and to share its best practices. It remarked on the strong record held by Iceland in terms of gender equality, which served as a positive model. The Netherlands noted that there was room for improvement regarding the equal chances afforded to men and women in education and that the gender pay gap had not yet been fully eradicated. Netherlands encouraged Iceland to continue its remarkable efforts on gender equality and to share its best practices.

74. Norway noted significant improvements since the previous review, when Iceland was suffering from the consequences of the global financial crisis. Icelandic authorities had managed, through a targeted policy, to improve the conditions for vulnerable groups. Norway noted that the rapid growth in the economy could easily result in a larger unregulated labour market and a need for a comprehensive approach to tackling corruption and tax evasion. Norway encouraged Iceland to strengthen protection against discrimination and develop more tools to address the rights of persons subjected to human trafficking.

75. Pakistan commended the significant progress made in promoting gender equality and empowering women. Pakistan appreciated the laws and policies introduced for the protection of refugees, migrants, older persons and persons with disabilities.

76. Panama welcomed the ratification in 2014 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the measures adopted for its effective implementation.

77. Paraguay welcomed the decision of Iceland to double the number of female ambassadors as part of its gender equality policy and the adoption in 2016 of the Execution of Sentences Act and the Act on Foreigners. Paraguay wished Iceland success in the implementation of the national action plan 2016-2019.

78. The Philippines recognized that Iceland was a world leader in gender equality and urged Iceland to address concerns regarding the reportedly high number of cases of violence against women. The Philippines welcomed the respect for workers' rights in Iceland and the incorporation of provisions of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in Icelandic legislation. It remained concerned that Iceland had yet to establish a national human rights institution, with specific mandates on women and children's rights, and did not have a comprehensive national human rights action plan.

79. The Russian Federation noted that, despite progress in the area of human rights, there was a growing number of cases involving violence against women and that the acquittal rate in such cases was high. It expressed concern about the low number of judicial proceedings and convictions in cases involving the sexual abuse of children.

80. Senegal welcomed the reforms undertaken to implement the accepted recommendations from the previous review and noted with satisfaction the efforts of Iceland to enforce compliance with human rights standards, particularly in the areas of equality of opportunity, non-discrimination and the protection of persons with disabilities.

81. Serbia encouraged Iceland to continue providing support to human rights-oriented NGOs and to set up a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles. Serbia endorsed the recommendations of Council of Europe experts on the broader involvement of civil society in the development and implementation of policies against trafficking and labour exploitation.

82. Sierra Leone noted with interest the establishment by Iceland of a national action plan against trafficking in persons (2013-2016) and its active civil society. It encouraged Iceland to increase access to justice for women victims of sexual and domestic violence.

83. Replying to questions, the representative of Iceland, Ms. Bjarnadóttir, explained that, in accordance with the Constitution, everyone was equal before the law and all statutes and regulations had to be construed in line with that provision. The Ministry of Welfare was preparing legislation to prohibit all labour market discrimination. A legislative proposal banning all discrimination on the basis of national origin, race and colour had also been prepared and was subject to public consultation.

84. The delegation explained that immigration had increased. In 2016, 10 per cent of the population had an immigrant background. New legislation on foreigners would come into effect in January 2017. The action plan on integration for 2016-2019 aimed to secure protection and equal opportunities for migrants. Migrants coming from the European Economic Area enjoyed the same health-care provisions as nationals; those coming from elsewhere had to purchase health-care coverage for the first six months, after which time they had full access to the national health system.

85. Iceland had redeemed its pledge and expected to accept 100 Syrian refugees by the end of 2016, through UNHCR. Asylum seekers received free legal advice and could appeal the decisions made in their cases. Iceland was in the process of opening its first formal reception centre for refugees, which would improve the asylum process and the treatment of refugees and migrants.

86. Few unaccompanied minors sought asylum in Iceland, but in recent months 12 young people between the ages of 14 and 18 had done so and been placed in foster care. Their interviews had been conducted at Barnahus, which also provided support through a range of professionals.

87. All foreign workers (9 per cent of the labour market) were entitled to equal treatment. Collective wage agreements applied to all members of a workforce irrespective of nationality, as did the equal pay standard. The chief obstacle faced by foreign workers seeking employment was the lack of knowledge of the Icelandic language.

88. An action plan was being prepared to improve the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Draft legislation also included a proposal banning age-based discrimination in the labour market.

89. Iceland had only a few, very small extremist groups, none of which had electoral representation. The Penal Code provided for fines and imprisonment in serious cases of racial discrimination. Penalties for other offences could be increased if the offences

included an element of racial discrimination. Violations by the media of the prohibition against racial discrimination were also subject to investigation and prosecution.

90. The public authorities had designated a hate crime officer. Details were provided of the programmes and projects being implemented in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights against hate crimes, including for training on investigations and data collection. The Ministry of Education was working on reducing online hate speech. Reference was made to the important work of the Icelandic Safer Internet Centre.

91. One of the first tasks of the new interministerial human rights steering committee would be to examine the implications of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, before a formal decision was taken.

92. Iceland was preparing to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The new Act on Foreigners had been drafted with the help of UNHCR. There was a legislative proposal to amend the citizenship act, which, if adopted, would make way for ratification of the 1954 Convention.

93. Iceland was also preparing to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The delegation stated that, as domestic law was already in compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, there was no need for that Convention to be incorporated as a whole into domestic law.

94. Slovenia acknowledged the high human rights standards in Iceland and welcomed comprehensive information and activities on human rights education. Slovenia commended Iceland for its achievements and leading role on gender equality and women's rights. Slovenia noted that Iceland had not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

95. Spain welcomed the commitments of Iceland on gender equality and the rights of women, including those in the future national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. Spain also noted the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

96. The State of Palestine welcomed the efforts made by Iceland to combat and address discrimination and racism, including by preparing legislative proposals on anti-discrimination. It welcomed the positive steps taken to improve education, especially through the white paper on education reform.

97. The Sudan commended the judicial reforms, in particular the adoption of legislation in 2016 to establish a court of third instance in the court system, for appeals, to enable a second hearing of the statements of witnesses and defendants. The Sudan commended the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the core conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

98. Sweden welcomed the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, while noting civil society criticism that proposed national legislation did not live up to the Convention. Sweden appreciated the importance of raising public awareness on domestic violence but noted that only a few suspected offenders had been prosecuted since the review in 2011 and relatively lenient sentences had been passed.

99. Tajikistan welcomed the comprehensive policy to establish a positive environment in schools for children and the fact that it was the responsibility of schools to establish a framework against physical, mental and social violence. It noted the gender equality policy and the initiatives to support the rights of older persons by providing them with assistance and home care.

100. Thailand applauded the plan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and welcomed the amendments to the Gender Equality Act and the Penal Code criminalizing domestic violence, but remained concerned about the persistent gender-based discrimination in the labour market and about the protection of the rights of migrant women. Thailand also welcomed efforts to ensure compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and encouraged Iceland to fully implement the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders.

101. Timor-Leste welcomed the adoption of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons and commended Iceland for taking the lead in promoting women's rights particularly to increase the representation of women in the police. Timor-Leste commended the willingness of Iceland to improve its asylum procedures.

102. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted with concern the significant wage gap between men and women and the insufficient representation of women in decision-making processes, particularly in foreign affairs, the judiciary and academia. Like the Human Rights Committee, it expressed alarm at the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of sexual abuse against children.

103. Portugal congratulated Iceland on the fortieth anniversary of its first gender equality legislation. It welcomed the new gender equality action plan for 2016-2019, which aimed at accelerating progress in the area of gender equality and equal opportunities for women. Portugal welcomed the public consultation process on the legislative proposal on establishing a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles.

104. The representative of Iceland, Ms. Bjarnadóttir, stated that a cross-sectoral action group had recently proposed a plan for bridging the gender wage gap. Among the proposals was concrete action to increase the number of men in health care and education and the number of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

105. Regarding gender-based violence, the delegation reported that increased awareness and the resulting change in attitudes had led to an increased number of cases being reported to the police. With more attention and a thorough review of working methods, improvements had been made by the police in responses to complaints and notifications of domestic violence, better follow-up measures, reforms of the justice system aimed at providing greater legal protection for victims, support for domestic violence victims and viable ways of helping those who use violence in intimate relationships.

106. Recent amendments to the Penal Code allowed for more severe punishment in cases of violence among family members and a new act on restraining and expulsion orders empowered the police to remove perpetrators from their homes in cases of domestic violence.

107. The delegation stated that one of the measures taken to increase the effectiveness of investigations included a pioneer policing model on dealing with domestic abuse called "Keep the window open". The model aimed at improving procedures for dealing with cases of domestic violence in order to ensure safety in the home, improve services for victims and offer treatment to offenders. It was also intended to help children in violent households and placed a special focus on providing services to immigrant women and victims with disabilities.

108. A multisectoral working group within the justice system dealing with sexual offences had been appointed in 2016 to research the root causes of sexual violence and improve related procedures. The group had recently put forward draft proposals for reforms in six areas: investigations, prosecutions, the courts, victims, suspects and perpetrators, and preventive and awareness-raising measures. Some of the proposals could be put into practice immediately, others during the next four years.

109. The delegation stated that the draft proposals emphasized citizens' security under the law, the thorough, efficient and just handling of cases, the building of confidence in the justice system, shorter processing times and clearer responsibilities and procedures within the justice system and among its component parts. It stressed the need for preventive and educational and awareness-raising programmes on a formal and permanent basis, as well as psychological assistance for perpetrators.

110. In March 2011, Iceland had been one of the first States to sign the Istanbul Convention. The Ministry of the Interior, in cooperation with other relevant ministries and NGOs, was currently working on the following outstanding issues: education, participation of the private sector, the media and telephone helplines. The work was expected to be completed by the end of 2017. The Convention would then be ready for ratification.

111. Iceland referred to measures to address violence and sexual abuse against children, including through amendments to the Penal Code, awareness-raising (including among children) and the training of professionals. Three ministries were currently cooperating on an action plan on violence against children. An action plan on child protection in general was currently being prepared by the Ministry of Welfare.

112. Human rights and equality education had been introduced in the school curriculum and provided to all stakeholders. Within the framework of that curriculum, some municipalities had organized plans for education on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in schools. The problem of children dropping out of school early had become more acute because of the financial crisis. Iceland had been working on reforms in that regard based on a white paper from 2014 and was continuously strengthening upper secondary education. It had also been investing in and improving pre-primary and compulsory education.

113. It was expected that the Sustainable Development Goals would be set out in the national action plan and thoroughly integrated into the draft policy of Iceland on international development cooperation 2017-2021.

114. In conclusion, the representative of Iceland, Ms. Hjaltadóttir, thanked all members and observers of the Human Rights Council for their constructive criticism and encouragement and for the valuable advice given, questions asked and recommendations received during the review. The Icelandic authorities would take the recommendations seriously and do their utmost to implement them wherever appropriate. There was always room for improvement and the dialogue was a welcome way of improving the human rights situation.

## **II. Conclusions and/or recommendations\*\***

**115. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Iceland and enjoy the support of Iceland:**

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\*\* The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited.

- 115.1 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Turkey); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Estonia); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Georgia); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Lebanon); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Portugal);**
- 115.2 **Expedite action on the ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Ghana);**
- 115.3 **Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Greece);**
- 115.4 **Promptly ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Guatemala);**
- 115.5 **Ratify as soon as possible the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Germany); Ratify as soon as possible the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Slovenia);**
- 115.6 **Conclude its own procedures to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Italy);**
- 115.7 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish the national torture preventive mechanism (Ukraine);**
- 115.8 **Establish without delay an effective, well-resourced and staffed national preventive mechanism according to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Czechia);**
- 115.9 **Ratify and implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture at the earliest possible time (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 115.10 **Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Albania);**
- 115.11 **Make progress towards the ratification of pending human rights international instruments, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Chile);**
- 115.12 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Brazil);**
- 115.13 **Ratify without delay the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, signed in October 2008, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, signed in September 2003 (France);**
- 115.14 **Take appropriate measures for the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Togo);**
- 115.15 **Finalize the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Iraq);**

115.16 Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Sierra Leone);<sup>1</sup>

115.17 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Ukraine); Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Argentina);

115.18 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance as early as possible, which Iceland signed in 2008 (Japan);

115.19 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Mozambique);

115.20 Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Italy); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (Turkey); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (Finland); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Montenegro); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (Netherlands); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Slovenia);

115.21 Submit its overdue reports to the relevant treaty body mechanisms (Sierra Leone); Submit overdue reports to the human rights treaty bodies (Ghana);<sup>2</sup>

115.22 Implement an action plan on domestic violence and sexual violence against women, including immigrants and those from minority groups (Sierra Leone);

115.23 Continue to amend its national legislation in line with the international human rights instruments (Libya);

115.24 Implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Sierra Leone);<sup>3</sup>

115.25 Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and align national legislation and practice with it (Egypt);

115.26 Take measures aimed at establishing a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Georgia);

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<sup>1</sup> The recommendation, as read out during the interactive dialogue, was: “Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” (Sierra Leone).

<sup>2</sup> The recommendation, as read out during the interactive dialogue, was: “Decriminalize defamation within its civil code in accordance with international standards and submit overdue reports to the human rights treaty bodies.” (Ghana).

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1.



- 115.27 Continue with its efforts to establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Namibia);
- 115.28 Step up efforts to establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Philippines);
- 115.29 Develop an inclusive process with the objective of establishing a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);
- 115.30 Revise the status of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre with the goal of ensuring full compliance with the Paris Principles (Hungary);
- 115.31 Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, drawing on the experience of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre (Australia);
- 115.32 Strengthen the national human rights institution, in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Ukraine);
- 115.33 Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Turkey); Establish a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles (Algeria); Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Egypt);
- 115.34 Establish an independent national human rights institution aligned with the Paris Principles (France); Establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Mongolia);
- 115.35 Adopt the necessary measures to establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Panama);
- 115.36 Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and adequate resources, in line with the Paris Principles (Afghanistan);
- 115.37 Establish as soon as possible a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles, with a broad mandate and sufficient resources (Paraguay);
- 115.38 Swiftly conclude the process of establishing a national human rights institution based on the Paris Principles in order for that institution to be rapidly created (Portugal);
- 115.39 Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles and develop a comprehensive national human rights action plan (Indonesia);
- 115.40 Continue its efforts to adopt the national action plan on human rights and establish an independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Sudan);
- 115.41 Pursue the development and adoption of a comprehensive national human rights action plan to strengthen consistency and cooperation in the implementation of related policies and programmes (Canada);
- 115.42 Continue efforts to formulate a national human rights action plan (Philippines);

- 115.43 Advance its activities aimed at ensuring full realization of the rights of women, children, elderly people and persons with disabilities (Mongolia);
- 115.44 Enact legislation that includes protection from discrimination on the basis of intersex status (Australia);
- 115.45 Enact legislation that prohibits age-based discrimination (Australia);
- 115.46 Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation (Timor-Leste);
- 115.47 Adopt specific laws to eliminate other forms of discrimination to supplement existing legislation on gender discrimination in the country (Spain);
- 115.48 Adopt a comprehensive national legislation to combat all forms of discrimination and to pass national legislation that lives up to the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Sweden);
- 115.49 Consider enacting a comprehensive law against all forms of discrimination and adopt an action plan for its implementation (Serbia);
- 115.50 Complete the drafting of a law against discrimination and provide for its enactment as soon as possible (Russian Federation);
- 115.51 Continue efforts to fight against discrimination, racism and hate speech (Lebanon);
- 115.52 Continue to combat discrimination, hate speech and racism (Pakistan);
- 115.53 Continue to take measures to combat ethnic discrimination and racism as well as hate speech on grounds of ethnicity, colour, race and religion (Tajikistan);
- 115.54 Develop national policies to fight hate crimes and hate speech (Lebanon);
- 115.55 Combat effectively racial discrimination, xenophobic words and deeds, and strike down on hate crimes through legislation, law enforcement and administrative measures (China);
- 115.56 Consider introducing a criminal law provision that expressly considers the racist motivation of an offence as a specific aggravating circumstance (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 115.57 Take the necessary measures to combat all forms of intolerance and offences motivated by hatred or racial considerations (Algeria);
- 115.58 While continuing to protect freedom of opinion and expression consistent with article 73 of the Constitution, maintain article 233 (a) of the General Penal Code and article 27 of the Media Act, which explicitly prohibit hate speech and direct incitement to hatred (Canada);
- 115.59 Increase efforts to prosecute and convict human traffickers through the training of investigators, prosecutors and judges on detecting and prosecuting such crimes (United States of America);
- 115.60 Exert further efforts to implement the national plan to combat human trafficking (Sudan);

- 115.61 Increase focus on supervisory and control mechanisms in the labour market. Develop a wider scope of protection against discrimination and more tools to address the rights of persons who are subject to human trafficking (Norway);
- 115.62 Carry out the adoption of the action plan for the prevention of all forms of violence with a view to strengthening the framework for the protection of all victims, in particular those belonging to vulnerable groups (Mexico);
- 115.63 Promote the political participation of women in public positions of power (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 115.64 Continue its policies and efforts to further promote and protect women's rights (Armenia);
- 115.65 Intensify the efforts to raise awareness among women and girls about their rights under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and on the individual communication procedures contemplated in its Optional Protocol (Panama);
- 115.66 Take general measures to eliminate gender stereotypes on the role and obligations of women and men, in particular through awareness-raising campaigns and education (Ecuador);
- 115.67 Accelerate tackling gender inequality, effectively protect women's rights and strike down at violence against women (China);
- 115.68 Continue active measures and initiatives to minimize the gender gap (Japan);
- 115.69 Increase its efforts to close the economic gender gap in order to bring about greater gender equality (Thailand);
- 115.70 Continue its proactive efforts in order to ensure full gender equality in education and the labour market (Netherlands);
- 115.71 Address gender pay disparity effectively through the full implementation of the equal pay system standard (Maldives);
- 115.72 Adopt and implement measures that ensure equal remuneration for work of equal value in an effort towards fulfilling the Government's commitment to eliminate the gender pay gap before 2022 (Namibia);
- 115.73 Continue strengthening the role of women in the professional and labour market spheres (Argentina);
- 115.74 Adopt a new action plan to fully implement the equal pay standard to eradicate the gender pay gap for work (Egypt);
- 115.75 Step up measures aimed at elimination of violence against women (Ukraine);
- 115.76 Deepen the measures taken to combat gender-based violence, sexual abuses and violations suffered by women with a special focus on migrant women and women with disabilities (Chile);
- 115.77 Strengthen awareness-raising plans and programmes on violence against women, including training programmes aimed at increasing sensitivity towards victims and their vulnerabilities (Chile);
- 115.78 Intensify measures to raise awareness of domestic violence (Timor-Leste);

- 115.79 Put into practice a new action plan to combat sexual violence (Uruguay);
- 115.80 Adopt a national plan against sexual and domestic violence that takes into account the specific needs and vulnerabilities of migrant women and women with disabilities (Bangladesh);
- 115.81 Adopt a national plan of action on the prevention and protection from all forms of violence, including domestic violence (Estonia);
- 115.82 Update the Plan against Domestic and Sexual Violence that, despite expiring in 2011, has not been renewed (Spain);
- 115.83 Pay special attention to combating domestic and sexual violence by implementing a new national action plan and ensure that it reinforces the provision of services to women and girl victims of sexual violence (France);
- 115.84 Conduct follow-up activities related to the implementation of national legislation and awareness campaigns aimed at reducing the number of cases of domestic violence (Sweden);
- 115.85 Address the causes of the high number of acquittals in sexual violence cases against women (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 115.86 Intensify measures to raise awareness of domestic violence, including through training for judges, prosecutors, police and health officers (Turkey);
- 115.87 Closely monitor the investigation and prosecution of cases of domestic and sexual violence and their effectiveness, improve access to justice for victims of such violence and provide training in the field of domestic and sexual violence for judges, police, prosecutors and other relevant professionals (Czechia);
- 115.88 Ensure that sentencing laws are appropriate and adequate to address domestic and sexual violence (United States of America);
- 115.89 Improve access to justice for women victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence (Maldives);
- 115.90 Support comprehensively increased efficiency in fighting violence against children (Tajikistan);
- 115.91 Establish government-coordinated measures aimed at prevention of sexual abuse of children (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 115.92 Adopt a new national plan of action on children with adequate follow-up mechanisms for full implementation (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 115.93 Ensure that the new national plan of action is equipped with an evaluation mechanism (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 115.94 Take further steps to protect the rights of the child, prevent child abuse, exploitation and violence (Ukraine);
- 115.95 Increase professional and effective working procedures in addressing child sexual abuse cases (Maldives);
- 115.96 Intensify steps to combat and prevent discrimination, especially against persons with disabilities, particularly with respect to the rights to education, housing and social assistance (Ghana);

- 115.97 Continue its efforts in combating and preventing discrimination, especially against persons with disabilities, particularly with respect to the rights to education and social assistance (State of Palestine);
- 115.98 Improve the integration of children of migrants into the national health system (Brazil);
- 115.99 Strengthen migration policies based on respect for the human rights of all migrants (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 115.100 Take measures for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrants and their families (Togo);
- 115.101 Develop targeted programmes and strategies to increase the awareness of migrant women of their rights and provide free legal aid and effective remedies if and when their rights are violated (Bangladesh);
- 115.102 Adopt a comprehensive national integration strategy that ensures the proper integration of migrants and increases the awareness of migrant women of their rights and protection thereof (Thailand);
- 115.103 Continue efforts to host refugees and migrants (Algeria);
- 115.104 Strengthen the measures for the effective implementation of the regulatory framework in the field of immigration, asylum and refugees, in particular by training public officials involved, as well as by accelerating efforts towards the adoption of the action plan 2016-2019, in order to ensure that migrants can be fully involved in society on an equal basis with citizens (Mexico).
116. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Iceland, which considers that they are already implemented or in the process of implementation.
- 116.1 Finalize the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Greece); Finalize the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Iraq);
- 116.2 Accelerate the process of ratification as the concerned groups require the imminent protection of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Hungary);
- 116.3 Make progress towards the ratification of pending human rights international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Chile);
- 116.4 Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Albania);
- 116.5 Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Senegal);
- 116.6 Adopt a new action plan on gender equality to ensure continuity, as the previous plan expired in 2014 (Spain);
- 116.7 Adopt the new plan of action on gender equality (Timor-Leste);
- 116.8 Speed up efforts towards the adoption of a new national action plan in the area of disability, in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Mexico).

117. The following recommendations will be examined by Iceland, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council.

117.1 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Finland); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);

117.2 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Montenegro); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Portugal);

117.3 Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Albania);

117.4 Ratify as soon as possible the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Germany);

117.5 Ratify and effectively implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Czechia);

117.6 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Spain);

117.7 Conclude its own procedures to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (Italy);

117.8 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims and other States parties (Germany);

117.9 Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) (Philippines);

117.10 Ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Iraq);

117.11 Proceed with the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Ecuador);

117.12 Reassess the reasons behind the reservations made to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with the aim of withdrawing them (Panama);

117.13 Withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Sierra Leone);<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1.

- 117.14 Following the parliamentary elections held on 29 October 2016, implement the constitutional reforms approved by the people of Iceland at the 2012 referendum (Haiti);
- 117.15 Undertake measures to ensure that domestic courts are put in a position to apply the principles stemming from the European Convention on Human Rights (Denmark);
- 117.16 Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and adequate resources, in line with the Paris Principles, including specific mandates to ensure social, economic and cultural rights, and especially the rights of women (Albania);
- 117.17 Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and sufficient resources, in accordance with the Paris Principles, which includes concrete mandates regarding the rights of women and social, economic and cultural rights (Guatemala);
- 117.18 Accelerate the adoption of the national action plan on human rights which was presented to the Icelandic Parliament (Iraq);
- 117.19 Adopt the proposed national action plan for human rights (Pakistan);
- 117.20 Meet its official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of its gross national product (Bangladesh);
- 117.21 Launch the process to design and implement the national action plan on business and human rights in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Colombia);
- 117.22 Ensure that policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement measures effectively serve to prevent and address the heightened risk of business involvement in abuses in conflict situations, which includes situations of foreign occupation (State of Palestine);
- 117.23 Improve financial supervisory mechanisms to ensure better control and transparency in order to combat corruption and tax evasion (Norway);
- 117.24 Consider introducing anti-discriminatory legislation and establish a specialized body to combat racism and discrimination which could form part of a body with wider objectives in the field of human rights generally (Namibia);
- 117.25 Establish a special body to combat racism and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, language and religion (Russian Federation);
- 117.26 Eradicate racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination against foreigners (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 117.27 Complete the work on an anti-discrimination bill, and establish a specialized body to combat racism and discrimination and allowing victims to institute criminal proceedings on hate speech in fair trials and due process (Egypt);
- 117.28 Revise or make amendments to existing legislation and adopt all other necessary measures in order to fight all forms of incitement and agitation to hatred and violence (Sweden);

- 117.29 Issue a bill that criminalizes defamation of religious prophets and symbols as well as criminalizes hate speech in the media which creates incitement to hatred and xenophobia (Libya);
- 117.30 Revise its social benefit programmes for assisting vulnerable families (Bangladesh);
- 117.31 Take further steps to increase the budget for public education and continue to improve school facilities for children (State of Palestine);
- 117.32 Provide protection for the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society (Egypt);
- 117.33 Eradicate discriminatory practices in the labour market that detrimentally affect women (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 117.34 Ensure that victims of domestic, gender-based and sexual violence are able to report incidents and press charges without fear of adverse consequences in case of losing in court (United States of America);
- 117.35 Ensure that minors are separated from adults in places of detention (Russian Federation);
- 117.36 Guarantee adequate legal protection and rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence (Russian Federation);
- 117.37 Eradicate the crimes of sexual abuse and trafficking in children (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 117.38 Annul the provision of medical treatment without consent as laid down in Icelandic law (Spain);
- 117.39 Take additional measures to fully protect the human rights of all persons with disabilities, including to preclude involuntary hospitalization and coercive health-care approaches, to prioritize free and fully informed consent for medical treatment and to promote the involvement of persons with disabilities in decision-making related to their well-being (Canada);
- 117.40 Review its legislation to ensure that it fully complies with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and international standards on refugees and asylum seekers (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 117.41 Decriminalize defamation within its civil code in accordance with international standards (Ghana).<sup>5</sup>
118. The recommendations below did not enjoy the support of Iceland and would thus be noted:
- 118.1 Ratify all international human rights instruments that have already been signed (Uruguay);
- 118.2 Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia);
- 118.3 Sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Turkey);

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2.



- 118.4 **Ratify the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Egypt); Ratify the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Ghana); Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Senegal);**
- 118.5 **Accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Brazil);**
- 118.6 **Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Philippines);**
- 118.7 **Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Albania);**
- 118.8 **Promptly ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Guatemala);**
- 118.9 **Ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (Armenia);**
- 118.10 **Incorporate without delay the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in its national legislation and make it applicable in its judicial proceedings, as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Paraguay);**
- 118.11 **Follow up on the request of the Human Rights Committee suggesting the complete incorporation of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in its national legislation (Senegal);**
- 118.12 **Incorporate the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol into its national legislation (Mongolia);**
- 118.13 **Allow for complaints on grounds of discrimination to be taken up by existing mechanisms for the protection of human rights, consistent with procedures available for gender-based discrimination cases, until a national human rights institution compliant with the Paris Principles is established (Canada);**
- 118.14 **Investigate, in full consultation with stakeholders, the possibility of a universal basic income as a replacement of the existing social protection system (Haiti).**
119. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

## Annex

### Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Iceland was headed by Ms. Ragnhildur HJALTADÓTTIR, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, and composed of the following members:

- H.E. Mr. Högni S. KRISTJÁNSSON, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Iceland, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
  - Ms. Kristín HARALDSDÓTTIR, Political Advisor to the Minister of the Interior;
  - Ms. María Mjöll JÓNSDÓTTIR, Director, Ministry for Foreign Affairs;
  - Ms. Guðrídur THORSTEINSDÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Welfare;
  - Ms. Nína Björk JÓNSDÓTTIR, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
  - Mr. Guðni OLGEIRSSON, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture;
  - Ms. Ragna BJARNADÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of the Interior;
  - Mr. Thórdur SIGTRYGGSSON, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
  - Ms. Rún KNÚTSDÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Welfare;
  - Ms. Edda Björk RAGNARSDÓTTIR, Temporary Officer, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva.
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