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Universal periodic review

Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Central African Republic

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirty-first session from 5 to 16 November 2018. The review of the Central African Republic was held at the 9th meeting, on 9 November 2018. The delegation of the Central African Republic was headed by the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Protection, Jean-Christophe Nguinza. At its 14th meeting, held on 13 November 2018, the Working Group adopted the report on the Central African Republic.
2. On 10 January 2018, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of the Central African Republic: Angola, Pakistan and Slovenia.
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 the Central African Republic:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/31/CAF/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.6/31/CAF/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/31/CAF/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal, on behalf of the Group of Friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up), Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to the Central African Republic through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation thanked the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic for its support in preparing for the third universal periodic review.
6. Since 2013, the military and political crises faced by the Central African Republic had adversely affected its capacity to respond to challenges related to human rights and international humanitarian law. There had been a resurgence of serious crime and mass human rights violations by armed groups, primarily targeting the most vulnerable groups of the population. The conflict had resulted in thousands of deaths and internally displaced persons and refugees.
7. The absence of State authority, particularly in the judicial system, in the areas controlled by rebel groups had given rise to countless abuses and acts of violence and the application of vigilante justice. The Government had taken a number of measures to address the situation as soon as constitutional legality had been restored.
8. The Special Criminal Court had been established under Act No. 15.003 of 3 June 2015 in order to prosecute the perpetrators, co-perpetrators and accomplices of the serious human rights violations committed in the country since 2003. There had been a number of significant advances, including the appointment in 2017 and 2018 of national and international judges, court clerks and secretaries and members of the Court's Special Unit of the Judicial Police, as well as the adoption by the National Assembly on 29 May 2018 of the Act on the rules of evidence and procedure of the Court, which had been immediately

promulgated by the President of the Republic. The Court's inaugural session had taken place on 22 October 2018.

9. Despite the challenging security context, the Ministry of Justice had been working for several months, with the support of MINUSCA, to redeploy all judges and others working in the justice system in their home jurisdictions throughout the national territory. Furthermore, judicial activities had gradually resumed in the country's three courts of appeal with the organization of various criminal sessions. For example, four successive criminal sessions had been held at Bangui Court of Appeal in 2015, 2017 and 2018. During the first session of 2018, the leaders of different rebel groups appearing before the Court on charges of unlawful association and murder had been sentenced to heavy penalties. In addition, the Code of Military Justice had been adopted in 2017.

10. Following the drafting of the Global Strategy for National Reconciliation by the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Reconciliation in November 2014, the public consultations held in 2015 and the recommendations of the National Forum of Bangui made in May 2015, the National Truth, Justice Reparation and Reconciliation Commission had been established. The Steering Committee, created by decree of 11 February 2017, was working on the organization of national consultations and the operationalization of the Commission. In parallel with that mechanism, the Government, with support from the MINUSCA Human Rights Division, had developed a strategy for vetting members of the defence and security forces for prior human rights violations. Accordingly, through an interministerial order of 28 September 2017 issued by the ministers for public security and national defence, a procedure had been introduced for conducting character checks and security screening for members of armed groups applying to re-enter or join the Central African Armed Forces.

11. Human rights were one of the pillars of the new Constitution enacted on 30 March 2016, and a national human rights policy was under development. At the institutional level, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had been established in 2017 and its executive office was now operational.

12. A reform of the public prison service had been under way for several years and aimed to introduce a demilitarized, professional prison system under civilian authority that was in compliance with international standards and human rights and focused on the social reintegration of detainees. As a result of the new legislation, it had been possible to progressively bring prison infrastructure up to standard and humanize conditions of detention by renovating and fitting out prisons. A national prison health policy and a national reintegration strategy for detainees had also been developed.

13. With regard to children's rights, the Central African Republic had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict on 21 September 2017. In so doing, the Government had committed, *inter alia*, to taking all the necessary legislative and regulatory measures to prohibit and criminalize the recruitment and use of children in hostilities; to consider children who committed offences while under the influence of armed groups as victims rather than perpetrators, in accordance with the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups; to establish a procedure for the protection and release of children brought before the courts, in accordance with the Principles and other international instruments; and to ensure that children released from armed groups received the necessary support to facilitate their reintegration into their communities. With that in mind, a committee of national experts was working on drafting a specific bill, in parallel with the Child Protection Code that was being finalized.

14. The Government had designed a disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme as well as a strategy for the reform of the security sector. The signature of the agreement of 10 May 2015 between the Transitional Government and the armed groups on the principles of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation and entry into the Central African uniformed services had marked an important step in the peace process and the stabilization of the country. The agreement set out the programme's eligibility criteria and the modalities for joining the Central African Armed Forces.

15. As part of the implementation of the programme, a number of noteworthy measures had been taken, including: the validation of the paper for the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation strategy and the national programme by the Strategic Committee chaired by the head of State; the signature of the financing agreement for the reintegration of former combatants with the World Bank in June 2017; the official adherence of 14 groups to the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme; the official launch of the pilot disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation project on 30 August 2017, which had achieved its objectives; and the development of the reform strategy for the security sector.

16. The reform of the security sector being undertaken by the Central African authorities was a process of analysis, examination, application, monitoring and evaluation that aimed to build an effective and responsible security system for the State and its citizens, without discrimination and while ensuring full respect for human rights and the rule of law. It had thus been designed as an inclusive political process based on national ownership and a holistic approach to security.

17. Taking account of the lessons learned and failures of previous attempts to reform the security sector, the Government had developed a new approach, with support from international partners. Three major areas for action had been selected: capacity-building in the security sector; enhancing the security of people and property and restoring the authority of the State; and stabilizing democratic governance and the rule of law. The reforms identified on the basis of those strategic areas were being carried out in the short- and medium-term through plans of action drawn up by the various ministerial departments concerned. The reform of the security sector had thus been one of the key priorities for achieving peace and security presented by the Government to its partners through the plan for restoring and consolidating peace in the Central African Republic – the main instrument used in mobilizing resources. The Government of the Central African Republic had also committed to making available the budgetary allocations provided for in the Finance Act to allow for the implementation of steering mechanisms and ensure the viability of activities.

18. In order to ensure respect for the rule of law and legality in the prefectures outside Bangui, it was necessary to restore the authority of the State by redeploying police commissioners, judges and members of the defence and security forces to their respective areas of jurisdiction. The Government had been working on that for several months despite the increasingly difficult security context.

19. Concerning violence against women and harmful traditional practices, an order prohibiting female genital mutilation had been adopted by the Government in 1966. In a similar vein, Act No. 06.032 of 27 December 2006 on the protection of women against violence in the Central African Republic had been adopted and had served as the basis for the creation of the joint unit for rapid intervention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children in 2015.

20. The adoption of the Code of Military Justice in 2017 had marked the first step towards abolishing the death penalty. The moratorium that had been observed for several years was still in place and no death sentences had been handed down by the criminal courts. Furthermore, the issue was under discussion by a working group led by civil society and with the participation of the Government.

21. As to the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up, for several years the existing entity had only drafted reports but had not dealt with follow-up of recommendations arising from the reporting process. In order to remedy that situation, the Minister of Human Rights had launched a reform that would take effect in the coming weeks.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

22. During the interactive dialogue, 84 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

23. Ethiopia welcomed the ratification of treaties by the Central African Republic and a number of the legislative measures it had taken, including those prohibiting the use of children in armed conflict and reforming the health sector.
24. France highlighted progress on children's rights and the establishment of the Special Criminal Court. It was concerned about the high level of insecurity.
25. Gabon welcomed the 2016 Constitution and the creation of the Special Criminal Court. However, it encouraged the Central African Republic to redouble its efforts to combat poverty, child labour, forced marriage and sexual violence against women.
26. Georgia welcomed actions taken to implement previous recommendations and the fact that for several years judges had no longer imposed the death penalty in criminal trials; it also welcomed the 2016 Constitution and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
27. Germany commended the Central African Republic for the establishment of institutions for the protection of vulnerable groups. However, it remained concerned about the fact that the death penalty had not been abolished and about the security situation. It urged the Government to step up efforts to prevent attacks on humanitarian actors.
28. Ghana welcomed the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II (2011–2015), the National Education Sector Strategy 2008–2020 and the National Social Protection Policy.
29. Honduras welcomed the 2016 Constitution and the ratification of treaties. It expressed concern, however, about the widespread instability and insecurity, which had led to serious and systematic violations by armed groups and the collapse of the State, and about the humanitarian situation.
30. Hungary welcomed the 2016 Constitution and steps taken to prosecute perpetrators of serious human rights violations, in particular the creation of the Special Criminal Court. It was concerned, however, about the widespread instability and insecurity in the country.
31. Iceland expressed concern about the increasing number of rapes, sexual slavery, forced marriage and other forms of violence against women perpetrated by armed groups and civilians.
32. India appreciated the efforts that had been made to prevent violence against women and children, promote the right to education and implement the right to health, including the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality rates. It welcomed the National Programme to Prevent Parent-to-Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS.
33. Indonesia welcomed the Constitution adopted in 2016, which established numerous institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights, and the country's engagement with United Nations agencies and other stakeholders.
34. Iraq expressed approval of the ratification of international and regional instruments and the adoption of national legislation and strategies for the promotion and protection of human rights.
35. Ireland expressed concern about reports of harassment and intimidation of journalists and human rights defenders and about sexual and gender-based violence, reports of rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage and abduction of women and girls by armed groups and civilians in particular.
36. Italy welcomed the ratification of several United Nations human rights instruments.
37. Latvia expressed concern about increasing conflict-related sexual violence, as highlighted by the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic and the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence.
38. Lesotho applauded the adoption of the Constitution and the national elections held in 2015. It expressed the hope that the establishment of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and National Reconciliation Commission and the Special Criminal Court would contribute to improving the human rights situation.

39. Lithuania congratulated the Central African Republic on the ratification of several important United Nations human rights treaties since the previous review in 2013 and looked forward to further improvements to the human rights situation in the country.
40. Luxembourg welcomed the adoption of the new Constitution and the new law on gender parity. However, it remained concerned about the security and humanitarian situation.
41. Madagascar welcomed the ratification of treaties as well as the establishment of the Special Criminal Court in 2015 and the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 2017.
42. Maldives welcomed the policy measures taken in various sectors, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Social Protection Policy and the National Strategic Plan for Housing.
43. Mali commended the Central African Republic for its ratification of treaties and for its establishment of a system of transitional justice by creating the Truth, Justice, Reparation and National Reconciliation Commission and appointing its members.
44. Mauritius noted several legislative amendments, initiatives and programmes that had been implemented in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, with the aim of improving literacy, alleviating poverty and improving infrastructure and basic services.
45. Mexico noted the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
46. Montenegro welcomed the new Constitution, the enhanced cooperation among national institutions and efforts to establish institutional and normative human rights frameworks. It urged the country to investigate sexual violence and the forced recruitment of women and girls and to support victims.
47. Morocco welcomed the establishment of institutions, including the National Mediation Council, the Special Criminal Court, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the health policy.
48. Mozambique expressed appreciation for the contributions to peace and stability made by MINUSCA, the ratification of human rights treaties, the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan and the steps taken to abolish the death penalty. It noted the negative impact of attacks from armed groups on people's rights.
49. Nepal welcomed the 2016 Constitution, the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan 2017–2021, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the ratification of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
50. The Netherlands expressed approval of the engagement with the Independent Expert. It remained concerned about sexual violence against women and internal displacement, urging the country to ensure accountability for human rights violations.
51. The Niger welcomed the ratification of treaties and the adoption of two acts, one ensuring employment gender parity and the other establishing the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It encouraged implementation of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan 2017–2021.
52. Nigeria welcomed the country's cooperation with human rights mechanisms, the ratification of treaties, the strengthening of the human rights framework and efforts to promote peace and reconciliation.
53. Norway welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and commitments to abolish the death penalty. It was concerned about increasing sexual and gender-based violence.
54. The Philippines commended the country for the 2016 Constitution and the legal measures it had taken with regard to sexual violence and gender equality in employment. It acknowledged the ratification of treaties, including a protocol on children's rights.

55. Portugal welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
56. The Republic of Korea acknowledged the 2016 Constitution, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Special Criminal Court and the ratification of a protocol on children's rights.
57. The Republic of Moldova welcomed the establishment of the Special Criminal Court and the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and progress in investigating serious crimes.
58. The Russian Federation noted efforts to rebuild the country, ensure that the judiciary functioned and create a human rights framework. It encouraged promoting human rights education.
59. Rwanda welcomed the ratification of treaties, including the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the establishment of the Special Criminal Court and the adoption of an act on gender parity in employment. Rwanda remained ready to support the peace, security and human rights process.
60. Senegal welcomed the new Constitution and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Truth, Justice, Reparation and National Reconciliation Commission and the Monitoring Committee for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It invited the international community to support the country.
61. Serbia encouraged the country to continue cooperating with United Nations human rights mechanisms and welcomed action in that regard.
62. Sierra Leone welcomed the 2016 Constitution and the efforts that had been made to combat gender-based violence and forced marriage and build stability. The establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was also welcome. The international community was invited to support the country.
63. Slovenia welcomed the ratification of treaties by the Central African Republic. However, it remained concerned about persisting and unpunished human rights violations, the situation of children, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices.
64. South Africa welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children. The ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance was also welcome.
65. Spain was concerned about the serious human rights situation in the country, including the human rights violations by all parties to the ongoing conflict, and the general climate of impunity. It acknowledged the creation of the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children.
66. The Sudan praised the efforts that had been made to overcome the conflict, including the approval of the African initiatives and the ratification of a number of international human rights treaties.
67. Sweden congratulated the Central African Republic on the recent appointment of the Special Prosecutor and several magistrates to its Special Criminal Court and encouraged the country to take further steps to secure financial support for and political commitment to the Court.
68. Togo welcomed the ratification of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the adoption of the 2016 Constitution and the establishment of institutions. It encouraged the country to take further measures to protect vulnerable groups and victims.

69. Tunisia expressed appreciation for the efforts made to promote and protect human rights in spite of the challenging situation in the country.

70. Ukraine welcomed the adoption of the Constitution and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. However, it expressed concern about the escalation of violence and human rights abuses. It expressed the hope that perpetrators would be brought to justice.

71. The United Kingdom welcomed the inaugural session of the Special Criminal Court. However, it remained concerned about reports of sexual exploitation of children, including through trafficking, prostitution and early and forced marriages, and the continued existence of the death penalty.

72. The United States of America acknowledged the country's efforts to strengthen justice, accountability and the rule of law. However, it was concerned about reports of widespread abuses by armed groups and urged the Government to step up efforts to hold accountable both government and non-government actors responsible for human rights abuses and violations.

73. The delegation of the Central African Republic said that the Government was striving to make respect for human rights a reality. To that end, the Special Criminal Court and the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had been established and a policy of zero tolerance for impunity was being pursued.

74. In keeping with the Government's desire to abolish the death penalty, a Code of Military Justice that did not provide for the death penalty had been adopted. In parallel, action had been taken in recent months by a working group – led by civil society – with a view to amending the Criminal Code and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

75. With regard to the issue of sexual violence, particularly against women, the Act against Sexual Violence had been adopted and the joint intervention unit had been made operational with support from the international community.

76. As to the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, a committee had been set up to discuss options for accessing international assistance. In addition, the Commission had been allocated premises and the Finance Act – currently being discussed in the National Assembly – provided for a budget for the Commission.

77. Concerning the serious human rights violations and crimes committed by rebel groups, the Government intended to combat impunity through the establishment of the Special Criminal Court and the redeployment of members of the justice system, particularly judges, to their respective jurisdictions.

78. When it came to child soldiers, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified and a working group was engaged in discussions with a view to drafting a specific law to protect children against forced recruitment by armed groups and to punish the leaders of armed groups who recruited child soldiers.

79. Uruguay welcomed the country's accession to a large number of international human rights instruments in the previous two years and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

80. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed the efforts to give effect to recommendations made as part of the review, measures taken to abolish the death penalty, efforts made in education and the fight against poverty and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

81. Viet Nam welcomed the adoption of legislation and the establishment of new institutions designed to consolidate the rule of law and strengthen the general framework for the promotion and protection of human rights.

82. Zimbabwe noted the adoption of laws and a number of policy measures, such as the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan and the National Education Sector Strategy, and

the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

83. Algeria welcomed measures to promote the right to justice and combat impunity. It praised the adoption of the Gender Parity Act establishing a quota of at least 35 per cent female representation as well as the measures taken to promote birth registration.

84. Angola took note of the efforts made to ensure respect for human rights in a national context that, marked by public insecurity, threatened the authority of the State and compromised the well-being of its population.

85. Argentina expressed concern about the political, humanitarian and security situation of the country, as it affected the enjoyment of human rights.

86. Armenia welcomed the ratification of treaties by the Central African Republic and, with the adoption of the Code of Military Justice, its progress towards the abolition of the death penalty. However, it remained concerned about the challenges in the area.

87. Australia welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and was pleased by the Special Criminal Court initiative. It regretted, however, that the death penalty applied to certain crimes despite progress towards its abolition.

88. Belgium noted the country's engagement and progress made regarding transitional justice, while stating that further actions should be taken. Despite a number of measures, there were still concerns about the protection of the rights of children in armed conflicts.

89. Benin praised the country's ratification of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and its human rights initiatives in a difficult context.

90. Botswana commended the Central African Republic for adopting a new constitution, holding presidential and parliamentary elections and establishing the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It also welcomed other institutional steps.

91. Brazil congratulated the Central African Republic for its cooperation with the United Nations in consolidating peace, especially with regard to the work of MINUSCA and the Independent Expert on the human rights situation in the country.

92. Burkina Faso welcomed the return to constitutional order implied by the holding of presidential and legislative elections and the adoption of the new Constitution in March 2016.

93. Burundi welcomed the adoption of the new Constitution and the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan, the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and efforts to combat impunity, particularly the establishment of the Special Criminal Court and the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children and the adoption of the Code on Military Justice.

94. Cameroon expressed its admiration for the resilience of the people of the Central African Republic and welcomed the country's political determination to strengthen institutions and facilitate enjoyment of human rights.

95. Canada congratulated the Central African Republic for successfully holding elections in 2015/16 and underscored the efforts it had made to restore peace and security and fight impunity by establishing the Special Criminal Court.

96. Chile congratulated the country for its efforts in a climate of insecurity. However, it was concerned about impunity for sexual and gender-based violence and the recruitment of children by armed groups.

97. China welcomed the efforts made by the country to promote peace, reconciliation and disarmament through dialogue and reduce poverty, improve education and health, promote gender equality and protect the rights of vulnerable groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities.

98. The Comoros recognized the country's capacity to overcome challenges. It also recognized the country's adoption of a new constitution and organization of presidential elections in 2016 in particular.

99. The Congo, while noting the obstacles to implementing human rights faced by the Central African Republic, welcomed the adoption of the new Constitution and the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Special Criminal Court.

100. Costa Rica welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It was nonetheless concerned about serious violations of the human rights of children and sexual violence against women by armed groups.

101. Côte d'Ivoire welcomed the establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It encouraged the Central African Republic to continue making reforms to promote reconciliation, security and peace.

102. Croatia welcomed the country's ratification of human rights treaties and achievements in consolidating institutions and reforming security arrangements. It was concerned, however, by violations of fundamental rights, corruption, impunity and violence by armed groups.

103. Cuba recognized the actions taken by the Central African Republic to give effect to the recommendations made as part of the universal periodic review and the progress it had made in overhauling its institutional and regulatory framework.

104. Cyprus commended the Central African Republic for the measures it had taken to fulfil its international human rights obligations and for ratifying the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

105. Czechia welcomed the country's support for recommendations it had been given during the second review cycle and its holding of general elections in 2016.

106. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea noted that the Central African Republic had made efforts to implement the recommendations made during the second review cycle, despite challenges and difficulties during the period under review.

107. The Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomed the ratification of treaties, including the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

108. Denmark considered the country's use of the death penalty to be a cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and a violation of the right to life. Miscarriages of justice were inevitable in all legal systems, and it strongly opposed the use of that irreversible punishment under all circumstances.

109. Djibouti welcomed the adoption of the 2016 Constitution and the establishment of institutions such as the Constitutional Court, the Court of Auditors, the High Court of Justice and, with particular relevance to human rights, the Special Criminal Court.

110. Egypt welcomed the country's efforts to promote peace and national reconciliation, restore security, fight impunity, implement second-cycle recommendations and ratify international human rights instruments.

111. Estonia welcomed the ratification of treaties by the Central African Republic and encouraged it to honour those commitments. It recognized the country's commitment to the international criminal justice system and encouraged it to launch the operations of the Special Criminal Court, provide it with the necessary resources and fight sexual and gender-based violence.

112. The Lao People's Democratic Republic commended the Government for adopting numerous national laws and policies on the promotion and protection of human rights. The Government was also to be commended for making the protection of women a priority.

113. The delegation of the Central African Republic said that, despite the difficult sociopolitical situation in the country, efforts were being made to ensure compliance with obligations under international instruments, as was illustrated by the establishment of the

Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. However, the country needed continued technical support from the international community.

114. The Government's commitment to combating impunity was reflected in its full cooperation with the International Criminal Court. Furthermore, the protection and promotion of human rights were central to its entire national policy strategy. Through the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation, all those who had taken the wrong path had the opportunity to return to constitutional legality.

115. In order to promote the right to health, a national policy paper had been adopted. Furthermore, a national operational plan had been launched, resulting in a reduction in the maternal, neonatal and infant mortality rates. Under the plan, free health care had been introduced for children under the age of 5, pregnant and breastfeeding women and children over the age of 5 in cases of emergency, and awareness-raising activities were being carried out. The budget allocated to the health sector had also been increased.

116. With regard to the right to education, the sociopolitical crisis in the country had adversely affected the education and information sectors.

117. As a result, some of the positive trends that had previously been observed had unfortunately reversed. In response, a transition plan for the period 2015–2019 had been introduced with a view to ensuring the gradual return to normal school activities, especially in the first cycle. Furthermore, armed groups had agreed to stop occupying schools in the hinterland. Despite the very challenging sociopolitical situation and budgetary problems, the budget allocated for education was increasing.

118. The acts of violence committed by armed groups against humanitarian organizations were a matter of particular concern. To address the situation, the Government was progressively redeploying defence and security forces across the country to protect humanitarian workers.

119. In order to foster dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the Government was participating in the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and continued to be very open to inclusive dialogue with all Central Africans.

120. With regard to the right to work, following the conclusion of an agreement, 10 vocational training centres had been set up and made operational – 4 in Bangui and 6 in the hinterland.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

121. **The following recommendations will be examined by the Central African Republic, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the fortieth session of the Human Rights Council:**

121.1 **Continue the steps in the legislative sphere in order to bring it into full compliance with the country's international obligations in the area of human rights (Russian Federation);**

121.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Croatia) (Montenegro);**

121.3 **Fully implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Portugal);**

121.4 **Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Sierra Leone);**

121.5 **Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Burundi) (Sudan);**

121.6 **Finalize the process of ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Democratic Republic of the Congo);**

- 121.7 **Ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Togo);**
- 121.8 **Ratify and fully implement the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Estonia);**
- 121.9 **Strengthen cooperation with international and regional bodies in the area of human rights (Democratic Republic of the Congo);**
- 121.10 **Strengthen cooperation with international and human rights bodies (Botswana);**
- 121.11 **Ensure that national candidates to United Nations human rights treaty body elections are selected through an open and merit-based process (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 121.12 **Continue to strengthen its administrative and legal capacities and all other pertinent mechanisms aimed at facilitating national cohesion and reconciliation (Comoros);**
- 121.13 **Pursue efforts to disseminate a culture of human rights and build institutional capacities in human rights fields (Tunisia);**
- 121.14 **Continue to mobilize resources and seek necessary international assistance to enhance its capacity to promote and protect human rights (Nigeria);**
- 121.15 **Redouble efforts to restore State authority across all its territory (Congo);**
- 121.16 **Ascertain the needs for technical assistance in order to seek increased assistance from its bilateral and multilateral partners (Congo);**
- 121.17 **Continue efforts to engage international and regional partners in capacity-building activities towards effective delivery of its national priorities, policy measures and plans related to improving the human rights situation (Philippines);**
- 121.18 **Strengthen the commitment of the implementation of human rights policies and national legislation (Ethiopia);**
- 121.19 **Continue efforts to strengthen the role of human rights institutions to consolidate peace and inclusive development (Nepal);**
- 121.20 **Ensure quick adoption and implementation of the National Policy for the Protection of Children and the National Strategic Plan for Housing (Ghana);**
- 121.21 **Restore the normal functioning of State institutions by firmly engaging in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict, giving priority to the collaboration with the African Union Mediation Support Unit, in order to fully honour its commitments to human rights (Angola);**
- 121.22 **Continue to ensure the effectiveness of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which was established in 2017 (Indonesia);**
- 121.23 **Provide the National Commission on Human and Fundamental Freedoms with a central office with the necessary human and financial resources for its functioning, and promote the establishment of offices throughout the country (Mexico);**
- 121.24 **Comply with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) to ensure the class A status of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in particular through the allocation of adequate resources and powers of investigation (Netherlands);**

- 121.25 **Provide the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with substantial means to comply with the Paris Principles (Niger);**
- 121.26 **Enable the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms to function effectively (Senegal);**
- 121.27 **Fully capacitate the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and ensure its functioning according to the Paris Principles (South Africa);**
- 121.28 **Guarantee the investigation capacity of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms related to individual complaints of human rights violations (Spain);**
- 121.29 **Allocate a substantial budget to the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and provide it with the personnel and equipment necessary for its adequate functioning (Togo);**
- 121.30 **Allocate the necessary funding for the effective functioning of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Special Criminal Court (Ukraine);**
- 121.31 **Provide the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with sufficient resources and take measures to harmonize it with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);**
- 121.32 **Ensure that the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is properly resourced to ensure that it can independently implement its action plan (Australia);**
- 121.33 **Allocate an adequate budget to the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in order to allow it to better achieve its mandate (Canada);**
- 121.34 **Harmonize the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with the Paris Principles and give it headquarters and enough resources (Costa Rica);**
- 121.35 **Improve the human rights status of minority groups and decriminalize homosexuality (Germany);**
- 121.36 **Abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Cyprus) (Lithuania) (Mexico) (Portugal) (Spain)**
- 121.37 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Croatia);**
- 121.38 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and take the necessary legislative measures to abolish the death penalty (Denmark) (Estonia) (Ukraine)**
- 121.39 **Abolish the death penalty still contained in the Criminal Code of 2010 and accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Germany); Abolish the death penalty and accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Republic of Moldova); Abolish the death penalty for all crimes and accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Iceland); Definitively abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Luxembourg); Formally abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Australia);**
- 121.40 **Intensify efforts aimed at abolishing the death penalty (Georgia);**

- 121.41 Expedite efforts aimed at the abolition of the death penalty, including the process of revision of the provisions of the Criminal Code (Rwanda);
- 121.42 Restart the process to abolish the death penalty through the revision of the provisions of the Criminal Code (Armenia);
- 121.43 Abolish the death penalty within the current cycle of the universal periodic review (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 121.44 Consider expediting the process leading to the effective abolishment of death penalty (Mozambique);
- 121.45 Abolish the death penalty from its laws (Costa Rica);
- 121.46 Take steps to support initiatives to achieve peace and security, to rebuild State institutions, including the national security forces and the judiciary, and to fulfil the urgent humanitarian needs of the population (Armenia);
- 121.47 Continue to strengthen efforts to terminate hostilities; and strengthen disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration of armed groups, as a precondition for strengthening the rule of law, justice and recovery (Honduras);
- 121.48 Further advance disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration of the armed groups to achieve peace and security (Lesotho);
- 121.49 Continue efforts with a view to achieving the disarmament and demobilization of armed groups operating in the territory in order to restore security in the country (Senegal);
- 121.50 Prioritize implementation of the Security Sector Reform Strategy and National Programme for Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation and Reintegration (South Africa);
- 121.51 Continuously strive towards enhancing State capacity to consolidate the gains of peace and disarmament through the dismantling and suppression of mercenaries and foreign-armed actors in all parts of the country (Botswana);
- 121.52 Multiply efforts to ensure sustainable security in the country (Burundi);
- 121.53 Continue efforts to strengthen security by rehabilitating administrations in charge of sovereign areas of government (Cameroon);
- 121.54 Put an immediate end to the current sectarian violence in the country (Sierra Leone);
- 121.55 Strengthen the reconciliation process in the country (Sudan);
- 121.56 Continue to take effective measures to promote the peace, reconciliation and disarmament process (China);
- 121.57 Continue initiatives aimed at restoring peace and security, restoring the State apparatus, notably the national security forces and the judiciary (Côte d'Ivoire);
- 121.58 Continue to promote reconciliation and coexistence among the various communities as well as human rights education and a culture of peace throughout the country (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 121.59 Develop public policies and awareness-raising campaigns to prevent incitement to violence, among other causes for ethnic or religious reasons, and to investigate and sanction persons or entities that incite violence (Argentina);
- 121.60 Take all appropriate measures to prevent abuse, torture and other degrading treatment committed by the security forces, and carry out effective investigations in order that those responsible for these crimes are brought to justice (Spain);

- 121.61 Amend the Criminal Code to expressly define torture in conformity with the Convention against Torture (Portugal);
- 121.62 Establish the national preventive mechanism in accordance with the obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Ukraine);
- 121.63 Establish, in accordance with its obligations resulting from the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the national preventive mechanism to control rights of persons in all detention places and authorize access to all detention places, including to civil society organizations (Czechia);
- 121.64 Improve the conditions of detention and the prison system in general, and ensure the respect of the lawful period for custody (Luxembourg);
- 121.65 Facilitate the work of the Special Criminal Court (France);
- 121.66 Provide permanent work facilities for the Special Criminal Court investigators, magistrates and support staff (United States of America);
- 121.67 Continue to operationalize the Special Criminal Court, including by providing adequate resources and support to enable the Court to fulfil its mandate (Australia);
- 121.68 Strengthen efforts to combat impunity, guaranteeing that the Special Criminal Court and the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms have the necessary means in order to ensure effective functioning (Brazil);
- 121.69 Ensure the quick setting up of the Special Criminal Court, ensuring its independence and impartiality (Chile);
- 121.70 Continue efforts to restore and strengthen its judicial system and to end impunity for serious human rights violations, in particular by giving full support to the Special Criminal Court (Republic of Korea);
- 121.71 Fight impunity and better document human rights violations (France);
- 121.72 Facilitate a process of reconciliation of dialogue between all components of society (France);
- 121.73 Strengthen the judicial system in view of protecting, in particular, vulnerable people, especially children and women (France);
- 121.74 Support initiatives to achieve peace and security, restore and strengthen State institutions, including the justice system, and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need (Hungary);
- 121.75 Give higher priority to the justice sector, including the Special Criminal Court, through an increased allocation of State resources (Sweden);
- 121.76 Organize mobile court hearings in remote areas where court buildings have been destroyed (Sweden);
- 121.77 Develop and adopt legislation that obligates national courts to ensure the safety and the right to privacy for victims and witnesses and to establish an independent protection programme to ensure its implementation (Sweden);
- 121.78 Take special measures to monitor, identify and report serious human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, including through investigative missions to the western parts of the Central African Republic, to prevent and ensure accountability for crimes committed, as well as to exclude these crimes from impunity and amnesty processes (Sweden);
- 121.79 Train police, gendarmes, prosecutors, and judges on best practices for investigating and prosecuting cases of sexual and gender-based violence (United States of America);

- 121.80 Reinforce measures to strengthen the rule of law and good governance, ensuring strict and responsible management of financial resources from the mining sector (Angola);
- 121.81 Continue efforts to reform the legal and security systems in order to have a good rendering of justice, sustainable peace and strongly anchoring the culture of human rights (Burkina Faso);
- 121.82 Strengthen the judicial system, ensuring that it is independent and giving it enough financial and human resources, and guaranteeing access to justice for all in all of the territory (Costa Rica);
- 121.83 Continue ongoing efforts to promote and reform the judiciary (Egypt);
- 121.84 Refrain from appointing individuals suspected of human rights abuses and crimes under international law to positions where they may commit further abuses or crimes (Iceland);
- 121.85 Intensify measures to ensure the protection of human rights and international humanitarian law, by investigating and punishing perpetrators of crimes against the civilian population and humanitarian actors, as well as the perpetrators of other human rights violations and international humanitarian law (Argentina);
- 121.86 Fully capacitate and support the Truth, Justice, Reparation and National Reconciliation Commission (South Africa);
- 121.87 Continue and strengthen the fight against impunity, ensuring that those who have been found guilty of human rights violations are brought to justice (Luxembourg);
- 121.88 Refrain from granting amnesty to those responsible for serious crimes under international law or serious human rights violations (Hungary);
- 121.89 Reaffirm the rights of victims of human rights violations to know the truth as well as to obtain redress or reparation (Hungary);
- 121.90 Ensure a vetting mechanism of all security forces regarding possible human rights abuses and provide thorough training on compliance and promotion of human rights (Norway);
- 121.91 Take effective measures to combat impunity for perpetrators of serious human rights violations committed against women and children, including sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and the use of children as human shields during the conflict (Portugal);
- 121.92 Develop a transitional justice strategy, drawing inspiration from the recommendations of the mapping exercise 2017, in order to provide more coordination and more consistency in the range of judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and processes (Belgium);
- 121.93 Fight impunity and support national and international investigation of human rights violations, including the investigation by the Special Criminal Court of the Central African Republic (Czechia);
- 121.94 Ensure accountability for human rights violations, including within the armed forces and all parties to the peace process (Estonia);
- 121.95 Continue to promote the rule of law in order to ensure effective implementation of human rights (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 121.96 Strengthen the protection of human rights defenders (France);
- 121.97 Ensure a safe environment for human rights defenders, journalists and other civil society actors by investigating all allegations of ill-treatment and by adopting the Bill on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (Ireland);

- 121.98 Take measures to promptly and impartially investigate the recent deadly attacks against journalists and bring perpetrators to justice (Lithuania);
- 121.99 Adopt a law related to the freedom of information in line with international standards (Benin);
- 121.100 Take measures to protect human rights defenders (Canada);
- 121.101 Combat hate speech and extremism (Iraq);
- 121.102 Continue with determined efforts in promoting reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among the people irrespective of religious or any other differences (Nigeria);
- 121.103 Deploy sustained efforts to put an end to hate speech and incitement to violence, while preserving at the same time freedom of expression (Belgium);
- 121.104 Implement article 151 of the Criminal Code and prosecute all acts of human trafficking (Germany);
- 121.105 Adopt and implement in an effective manner legislation aimed at protecting indigenous populations against slavery (Benin);
- 121.106 Develop a national strategy of employment that would promote gender equality (Serbia);
- 121.107 Consider the setting up of a new strategy to combat poverty (Niger);
- 121.108 Review the national legal framework on the issue of housing, land and property, and develop and implement a national strategy in this respect (Serbia);
- 121.109 Prioritize government programmes to address poverty, particularly affecting women and children (South Africa);
- 121.110 Continue to strengthen social policies for a better quality of life of the people, in particular of the most vulnerable sectors of society (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 121.111 Improve access for humanitarian agencies and organizations to ensure affected people's immediate and critical needs are met (Australia);
- 121.112 Continue efforts to improve road infrastructures (Cameroon);
- 121.113 Continue to promote economic and social development, reduce poverty and better guarantee the rights of women, children and people with disabilities (China);
- 121.114 Continue to promote economic and social development with the goal of eradicating poverty and improving the standard of life of the population (Djibouti);
- 121.115 Continue working to improve health-care and education services for a better standard of living of its population, in particular to work on expanding literacy programmes (Cuba);
- 121.116 Increase health expenditure and ensure seamless access for women and girls to reproductive and sexual health care (India);
- 121.117 Continue strengthening efforts to ensure the physical and mental health of the family as part of constitutional mandate of the Central African Republic (Indonesia);
- 121.118 Continue efforts to improve access to health care for vulnerable groups (Maldives);
- 121.119 Continue efforts aimed at reinforcing the health sector, particularly through the formulation of the Third National Plan on Health-Care Development (Morocco);

- 121.120 **Strengthen efforts to ensure the right to education and health services (Norway);**
- 121.121 **Enhance programmes for health care (Tunisia);**
- 121.122 **Take measures to improve the functioning of health-care centres, ensure the availability of medicines and psychological support adapted to the victims (Algeria);**
- 121.123 **Take into consideration the good practices and experiences of other countries in the design and implementation of the Strategic Human Resources Development Plan for Health 2017–2021 (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea);**
- 121.124 **Take all necessary measures to reduce preventable neonatal and maternal mortality (Estonia);**
- 121.125 **Continue to prioritize the reform of the education system in the initiatives of reconciliation, including concrete measures to that effect (Honduras);**
- 121.126 **Implement the right to education to its fullest possible extent by improving the school infrastructure and recruiting trained teaching staff (India);**
- 121.127 **Undertake all efforts to rebuild schools and protect them (Portugal);**
- 121.128 **Take measures to prevent parties to conflicts from requisitioning schools, notably on the basis of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict (Côte d’Ivoire);**
- 121.129 **Enhance measures to ensure universal access to quality education, particularly for the most marginalized and deprived populations, including by rebuilding school infrastructure and carrying out a teacher recruitment and training programme (Republic of Moldova);**
- 121.130 **Continue efforts to ensure general primary education and eradicate illiteracy (Russian Federation);**
- 121.131 **Continue efforts to promote human rights education and international programmes in this area (Sudan);**
- 121.132 **Continue the necessary measures to increase the gross schooling enrolment rate, with special attention to girls (Viet Nam);**
- 121.132 **Consolidate the education system through, inter alia, early childhood development and provision of universal primary schooling (Zimbabwe);**
- 121.134 **Raise awareness among the population on the right to education for all and take into account the specific needs of children with disabilities by setting up specialized centres for their education (Algeria);**
- 121.135 **Improve the rate of schooling (Cameroon);**
- 121.136 **Further strengthen efforts to provide full access to education for all children and to reduce illiteracy in cooperation with relevant United Nations agencies and other partners (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea);**
- 121.137 **Continue the concerted efforts to improve and strengthen the mechanisms put in place to combat harmful sociocultural practices against women and children (Ethiopia);**
- 121.138 **Step up efforts to achieve gender equality by ensuring effective implementation of the Gender Parity Act (Lithuania);**
- 121.139 **Set the minimum age of marriage to 18 years for both men and women (Mexico);**

- 121.140 Continue the work to ensure the equal rights and opportunities for women (Russian Federation);
- 121.141 Continue efforts to fight gender violence, especially violence against women (Tunisia);
- 121.142 Increase efforts in favour of gender equality and combat discrimination against women, addressing issues such as sexual violence, early and forced marriages, women's participation in public administration and women's access to education (Uruguay);
- 121.143 Guarantee the participation and inclusion of women, youth, members of civil society and traditional and religious leaders in the negotiations for peace (Argentina);
- 121.144 Continue efforts to increase the presence of women in the decision-making process (Cameroon);
- 121.145 Establish a warning mechanism to combat forced and early marriages (France);
- 121.146 Continue ongoing efforts to promote the rights of women (Egypt);
- 121.147 Continue efforts to combat female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices (Morocco);
- 121.148 Continue to combat violence against women and combat the practice of harmful surgeries regarding female genital organs that occurs in the country (Russian Federation);
- 121.149 Adopt legal provisions criminalizing marital rape (Iceland);
- 121.150 Continue efforts regarding the fight against gender-based violence (Cameroon);
- 121.151 Take steps to eradicate female genital mutilation and to raise awareness against this harmful practice among the different ethnic groups (Croatia);
- 121.152 Strengthen measures to combat the phenomenon of female genital mutilation (Cyprus);
- 121.153 Thoroughly investigate and prosecute all cases of sexual violence committed against women and girls (Sierra Leone);
- 121.154 Intensify the efforts to prosecute acts of violence and provide with additional means the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children so that it can offer support services to the victims (Spain);
- 121.155 Ensure implementation of and ongoing funding for the National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, thereby guaranteeing, in particular, medical, psychological and legal services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and assuring participation of women at every stage of the political processes (Netherlands);
- 121.156 Take further effective measures to address all forms of sexual violence against women and girls (Nepal);
- 121.157 Intensify efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence by ensuring that the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children has the necessary capacity to perform its tasks (Lithuania);
- 121.158 Intensify measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, with a victim-centred approach; and increasing human and financial resources for implementation (Honduras);

- 121.159 **Develop and implement a national strategy to combat and respond to sexual violence, including conflict-related sexual violence (Iceland);**
- 121.160 **Develop and implement a national strategy on sexual violence while also ensuring that all relevant State authorities are trained in how to respond to, investigate and prosecute cases of sexual violence against women (Ireland);**
- 121.161 **Continue action to condemn and prosecute all violations and abuse of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular against women, children and other vulnerable groups, and ensure the respect of international humanitarian and human rights law (Italy);**
- 121.162 **Devote primary attention to the protection of women's rights, also by combating all forms of discrimination and violence against them, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriages (Italy);**
- 121.163 **Prioritize the investigation and prosecution of cases of sexual violence, including the provision of adequate protection for victims and witnesses (Latvia);**
- 121.164 **Adopt more effective measures to end impunity related to sexual and gender-based violence, including by rehabilitating the judicial infrastructure outside the capital (Norway);**
- 121.165 **Continue to adopt and enhance inclusive prevention and protection measures to address sexual and gender-based violence and ensure adequate assistance for victims (Philippines);**
- 121.166 **Take urgent measures to stop the serious human rights violations committed against women and children, including sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and the use of children as human shields during the conflict (Portugal);**
- 121.167 **Take effective measures to prevent sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls and provide adequate assistance to victims of this crime (Republic of Korea);**
- 121.168 **Adopt a comprehensive strategy to ensure proper investigation of sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence with a view to ending impunity for such crimes and implement comprehensive support programmes for the victims (Republic of Moldova);**
- 121.169 **Strengthen efforts to combat violence against women and ensure the investigation, prosecution and punishment of all cases of violence against women and the full operationalization of the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (Rwanda);**
- 121.170 **Strengthen efforts to promote the integration of young people and women into the labour market, in particular through professional and vocational training (Viet Nam);**
- 121.171 **Guarantee the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons (Zimbabwe);**
- 121.172 **Take every measure necessary to prevent sexual violence perpetrated against girls and women by combatants and armed civilians and to increase efforts to put an end to the widespread impunity for these acts (Belgium);**
- 121.173 **Elaborate a strategy aimed at putting an end to sexual violence against women, with special attention given to internally displaced women in the country (Brazil);**
- 121.174 **Strengthen the capacities of the Joint Unit for Rapid Intervention and the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children in order to better meet the needs of these vulnerable groups (Canada);**

- 121.175 Overhaul article 294 of the Criminal Code to ensure full protection against discrimination based on sex and gender identity (Canada);
- 121.176 Establish and implement a strategic plan to combat sexual violence, ensuring psychosocial support to victims and accountability by those who commit such crimes (Chile);
- 121.177 Investigate all cases of torture against women and bring perpetrators to trial and impose the appropriate penalties upon the perpetrators (Costa Rica);
- 121.178 Continue to implement effective measures in the fight against violence against women, investigating allegations of violence and prosecuting perpetrators (Djibouti);
- 121.179 Develop a comprehensive policy and an implementing strategy to address children's rights (Armenia);
- 121.180 Adopt urgently a bill on the protection of childhood, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and redouble efforts to eradicate the recruitment of children in armed conflicts (Uruguay);
- 121.181 Investigate allegations of serious and systematic violations of the rights of children perpetrated by any of the belligerent parties (Costa Rica);
- 121.182 Increase efforts within the policy framework for the protection of children (Iraq);
- 121.183 Consider developing a comprehensive policy and an implementing strategy to address children's rights (Georgia);
- 121.184 Strengthen the protection of the rights of the child through State enforcement and monitoring of the existing legislative framework regarding child labour (Germany);
- 121.185 Continue efforts to promote the rights of the child by strengthening measures to protect their rights, including through the development of a comprehensive policy (Maldives);
- 121.186 Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings (Montenegro);
- 121.187 Investigate all reported cases of sexual exploitation against children, and develop a national action plan with measures to protect children against sexual violence (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 121.188 Prevent armed group members responsible for human rights abuses, including abuses against children, from being integrated into the armed forces, police or gendarmerie (United States of America);
- 121.189 Continue efforts to protect children from human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict, including killing, kidnapping, recruitment of child soldiers and denial of access to health and education services and to humanitarian assistance (Republic of Korea);
- 121.190 Ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to protect children in armed conflict (Philippines);
- 121.191 Criminalize the recruitment and use of children in hostilities, penalize perpetrators and ensure the reintegration of those children (Honduras);
- 121.192 Take all the necessary measures to ensure children's rights, notably by strengthening efforts to combat and prevent the recruitment of children and promote their rehabilitation and reintegration into society (Italy);

- 121.193 Step up efforts to ensure that demobilized child soldiers enjoy their right to education (Lesotho);
- 121.194 Strengthen the process of reintegration of demobilized child soldiers, in particular by facilitating their access to education (Luxembourg);
- 121.195 Take active measures to prevent the recruitment and use of children by armed groups (Rwanda);
- 121.196 Strengthen efforts on the protection of children, in particular prevention of recruitment and use of children by parties to the conflict and the rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict, including child victims of sexual violence (Slovenia);
- 121.197 Criminalize recruitment, sexual violence and the use of children in hostilities and intensify measures to provide psychological care and protection to boys and girls victims of such crimes (Argentina);
- 121.198 Fully implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict to address continuing recruitment of child soldiers and ensure their demobilization and reintegration into society (Australia);
- 121.199 Strengthen the international policy for the demobilization and social reinsertion of children recruited by armed groups and criminalize, through national legislation, the recruitment of children in armed conflicts (Chile);
- 121.200 Prevent and end the use and recruitment of child soldiers, and guarantee reintegration and access to education of former child soldiers (Djibouti);
- 121.201 Improve the conditions of persons with disabilities (Iraq);
- 121.202 Adopt the necessary laws to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Mauritius);
- 121.203 Strengthen policies and measures aimed at protecting children with disabilities and children with albinism from attacks and prosecute perpetrators (Sierra Leone);
- 121.204 Continue developing actions to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and their participation in the development of the country, in particular through the expansion of access of children with disabilities to education at all levels (Cuba);
- 121.205 Enhance the protection of rights of refugees and internally displaced persons (Czechia);
- 121.206 Ensure protection and assistance for displaced persons, in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Norway);
- 121.207 Continue efforts regarding the problem of internally displaced persons as well as refugees (Cameroon).
122. 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 the Central African Republic was headed by H.E. Mr. Jean Christophe NGUINZA, Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Protection and composed of the following members:

- H.E Mr. SAMBA Léopold Ismael, Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent, Monsieur NGBENG MOKOUE Firmin, Chargé de Mission en matière des droits de l’homme au Ministère de la Justice;
 - Monsieur SABORO Serge Hervé, Conseiller Juridique, près de la Mission Permanente Centrafricaine à Genève.
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