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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Armenia

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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-fifth session from 20 to 31 January 2020. The review of Armenia was held at the 7th meeting, on 23 January 2020. The delegation of Armenia was headed by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Artak Apitonian. At its 13th meeting, held on 28 January 2020, the Working Group adopted the report on Armenia.
2. On 14 January 2020, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Armenia: Nepal, Poland 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 Armenia:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/35/ARM/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.6/35/ARM/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/35/ARM/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Azerbaijan, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, on behalf of the Group of Friends on national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay was transmitted to Armenia 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 of Armenia stated that Armenia had supported the universal periodic review process and would continue the practice of submitting midterm reports covering the implementation of recommendations.
6. Armenia, as a newly elected member of the Human Rights Council, reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to enhance the protection and promotion of human rights according to its voluntary pledges, including by building peaceful and inclusive societies, addressing the issues of preventing genocide and mass atrocities, countering hate crimes against ethnic and religious groups, and protecting the rights of women and refugees.
7. In 2018, a popular non-violent velvet revolution had taken place in Armenia, giving a new impetus to legal, judicial, economic and social reforms in the country and to radical transformations in the fields of good governance, the rule of law and human rights. The new Government was empowered by the very strong mandate and public support of the people.
8. Another significant development had been the constitutional reform, which had led to a transition from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary republic and shaped a more democratic system of governance with a clear separation of and balance between its branches.
9. The new National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and its Action Plan had been drafted with the full engagement and active participation of all stakeholders, government institutions, civil society and international partners. In November 2019, Armenia celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of the Human Rights Defender's Office, which had been reaccredited with A status.

10. Armenia was implementing a wide range of reforms. One of the pillars was the judicial reform aimed at ensuring independence of the judiciary and restoring public trust in the system. The fight against corruption was another important priority for the Government. The Anti-Corruption Strategy had introduced an institutional framework focused on prevention, examination and education. The ongoing reform of the police aimed at transforming it into a more prevention-oriented body, and included the planned creation of a new specialized unit for witness protection.

11. The velvet revolution had contributed to the strengthening of freedom of the media and freedom of expression in Armenia. Nevertheless, there were several issues and challenges that Armenia faced regarding freedom of the media, including the issues of transparency of media outlets ownership, dissemination of misinformation, fake news and hate speech.

12. The unhindered exercise of the right to freedom of assembly was of crucial importance for the Government, which had taken major steps in bringing law enforcement agencies into compliance with international standards.

13. The Women's Affairs Council under the Prime Minister's Office would focus particularly on the elimination of violence against women and girls, their economic empowerment, and the implementation of gender mainstreaming laws and policies.

14. Armenia highly valued the involvement of women in building peace and security. It had adopted the first National Action Plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Armenia attached special importance to ensuring the active participation of women in all stages of the conflict cycle and protecting the human rights of women affected by conflict.

15. The information technologies sector had registered a participation rate of 32 per cent for women. However, the level of representation of women in parliament and senior executive positions remained low.

16. The law on prevention of domestic violence had been adopted. Armenia had signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), and a public awareness campaign was under way.

17. The principle of non-discrimination was a key element within the Government's human rights policy. Armenia had elaborated a comprehensive and stand-alone draft law on ensuring equality, which envisaged the creation of a specialized body within the Human Rights Defender's Office, empowering it to assist victims of discrimination and launch investigations regarding alleged cases.

18. Regarding persons with disabilities, the Government had undertaken a gradual approach in transitioning to an inclusive education system and had developed legislation to promote deinstitutionalization programmes. The number of children placed in care institutions had been reduced in recent years, in line with the policy of ensuring the right of the child to live in a family.

19. The constitutional amendments of 2015 guaranteed seats to the representatives of the four largest national minority groups in the National Assembly, namely the Yazidi, Russian, Assyrian and Kurdish minorities.

20. The Government considered the Sustainable Development Goals as one of the most important tools for implementing comprehensive internal reforms. Armenia had been among the first countries to present its voluntary national review summarizing the progress on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Armenia had adopted creative approaches, particularly the establishment of the National Sustainable Development Goals Innovation Lab.

21. Armenia still faced a number of challenges and obstacles for the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights due to the imposition of unilateral coercive measures in the form of land and economic blockades and the adverse consequences thereof impeding the full achievement of economic and social development.

22. Armenia reiterated the necessity to protect national, racial, ethnic and religious minorities from the threats to their existence, and continued its contribution to the fight

against discrimination, racism and intolerance against these minorities, inter alia, by raising the problem at the international level.

23. With regard to the OHCHR compilation, the head of the delegation pointed to the lack of references to the positive changes in Armenia, which enjoyed strong support from international organizations.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

24. During the interactive dialogue, 93 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

25. Germany expressed its concern about persisting restrictions on the rights of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

26. Greece commended Armenia for the significant achievements in areas such as the conduct of free and fair elections and the freedoms of assembly and expression since the velvet revolution.

27. The Holy See welcomed the different initiatives taken to bring domestic legislation on fundamental human rights more into line with international standards.

28. Honduras welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

29. Iceland welcomed the commitment of the Government to create favourable conditions for the exercise of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men.

30. India made recommendations.

31. Indonesia commended the continued commitment to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly in the context of deinstitutionalization.

32. The Islamic Republic of Iran appreciated efforts to promote and protect children's rights, in particular by eliminating the online sexual exploitation of children.

33. Iraq commended efforts aimed at promoting and protecting human rights and efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. Ireland remained concerned at the alleged targeting of non-governmental organizations and human rights defenders seeking to address discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and religious affiliation.

35. Israel took note of efforts to curtail inequalities and combat different types of discrimination, including the strategy on gender policy and the plan for social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

36. Italy appreciated the adoption of the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and the law on domestic violence.

37. Japan commended the adoption of the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection. It noted the increasing numbers of women involved in political decision-making processes.

38. Kuwait commended the progress made in the protection of children, particularly victims of trafficking in persons.

39. Kyrgyzstan welcomed the steps taken towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.

40. The Lao People's Democratic Republic noted the commitment of Armenia to further promote and protect human rights, in particular those of children and persons with disabilities.

41. Lebanon commended the promotion of the mandate of the Human Rights Defender, especially in the light of the constitutional amendments of 2015.

42. Liechtenstein welcomed that Armenia joined the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

43. Lithuania made recommendations.
44. Luxembourg made recommendations.
45. Maldives welcomed the priority given to implementing the National Action Plan for Human Rights Protection.
46. Malta took positive note of steps taken to ensure the rights of persons belonging to special groups.
47. Mexico hoped for the swift ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.
48. Montenegro noted the concerns of several United Nations bodies regarding the large number of children with disabilities in institutions and segregated education settings.
49. Myanmar noted the introduction of electronic tools for public awareness-raising and participation.
50. Namibia was pleased to note that Armenia was a State party to eight of the nine core international human rights treaties.
51. Nepal noted the signature of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.
52. The Netherlands stated that Armenia had demonstrated its commitment to human rights with progressive changes in the areas of freedom of expression and the media.
53. Nicaragua made recommendations.
54. North Macedonia commended the significant steps taken towards gender equality, but noted that domestic violence remained a concern.
55. Norway remained concerned about the situation of human rights defenders, violence against women and discrimination against vulnerable groups.
56. The delegation of Armenia stated that Armenia was proceeding with the process of ratifying the Istanbul Convention. Armenia was amending national law on domestic violence to bring it into full compliance with the Convention.
57. Armenia had developed a stand-alone and comprehensive anti-discrimination law, following long-standing and inclusive public consultations with all relevant stakeholders. The law provided for the right to bring complaints to the Human Rights Defender and the Equality Body. The Human Rights Defender would have full litigation powers and provide amicus briefs to the Constitutional Court.
58. The Government had developed a stand-alone law on national minorities to regulate and guarantee unhindered exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, define the responsibilities of the State and local authorities and re-establish the Council on National Minorities under the Prime Minister.
59. Armenia was continuously fighting against hate speech, particularly against women, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, and human rights activists. The new draft Criminal Code provided for criminal responsibility for instigating national, ethnic, racial, political, ideological or religious hostility, hatred or intolerance.
60. Judicial reform was the top priority of the Government. In 2019, it had launched a comprehensive and far-reaching Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reforms and its Action Plans aimed at improving and strengthening the independence, impartiality and effectiveness of the justice system. A special focus was increasing the efficiency of courts through alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.
61. Another priority remained the fight against corruption. Armenia had initiated large-scale and ambitious anti-corruption reforms and had adopted a comprehensive Anti-Corruption Strategy and a three-year Implementation Action Plan. The Strategy had set the architecture of the national anti-corruption institutional framework, conceptualizing the effective exercise and synergy of preventive, investigative and punitive powers.

62. Armenia was in the final phase of ratifying the Istanbul Convention. The draft Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes were already in full compliance with that Convention.

63. A separate chapter of the new Criminal Code was devoted to crimes against the interests of the family and child. Within that framework, *corpus delicti* for the sale of a child was envisaged. The National Strategy for Human Rights Protection provided concrete actions for child protection. The Government was enhancing the juvenile justice system through a permanently functioning multi-agency Council for Juvenile Justice.

64. In 2019, the Government had approved the Penitentiary Reform Strategy aimed at enhancing material, sanitary, health and other conditions, as well as providing programmes for activities, vocational training and employment possibilities for inmates.

65. Investigations into cases of torture and ill-treatment were carried out in close cooperation with the relevant State agencies and had the potential to increase. The efforts by the National Preventive Mechanism within the Human Rights Defender's Office were noteworthy in that respect.

66. According to the new regulations regarding cases of domestic violence, the Prosecutor General would trigger criminal proceedings irrespective of the existence of a complaint by a victim.

67. As regards the crimes against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, all allegations were thoroughly examined and law enforcement bodies gave due account to the investigation of the motives of such criminal actions.

68. In order to prevent torture and ill-treatment, the police had taken a number of legislative and practical measures. The law on the police regulated the use of audio and video recordings by the police, and training regarding their use was conducted for law enforcement personnel. Armenia also continued to improve detention conditions and the recommendations of the Human Rights Defender and public observers were taken into account.

69. The reform of the electoral legislation had resulted in the adoption of a new Electoral Code in 2016. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Commission for Democracy through Law had positively evaluated the Code. Following the 2018 extraordinary parliamentary elections, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights had concluded that the elections had been conducted in compliance with fundamental rights and enjoyed the trust of society. For the first time in the history of independent Armenia, the elections had not been contested in court.

70. The Philippines appreciated efforts to reduce poverty and ensure inclusive development.

71. Poland welcomed achievements aimed at strengthening the protection of the rights of the child, including child victims of trafficking in persons, and at promoting the empowerment of women. It invited Armenia to devote more attention to the rights of persons with disabilities.

72. Portugal was concerned about reports of the prevalence of domestic violence against women.

73. The Republic of Moldova made recommendations.

74. Romania acknowledged the positive results in the conduct of free and fair elections and regarding the freedoms of assembly, expression and the media.

75. The Russian Federation positively assessed the implementation of programmes to ensure the rule of law, the development of democratic institutions, the fight against corruption and economic development.

76. Senegal welcomed efforts to transpose all international legal norms in the field of human rights into the Constitution.

77. Serbia commended the adoption of the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and its action plans.

78. Singapore commended Armenia for the Staged Poverty Reduction Programme and the Comprehensive Plan on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.
79. Slovakia appreciated the prioritization by Armenia of the implementation of recommendations made by treaty bodies and special procedures.
80. Slovenia congratulated Armenia on its democratic progress and reforms in the field of the rule of law and the fight against corruption.
81. Spain welcomed the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.
82. Sri Lanka welcomed progress in reducing infant mortality and the adoption of the National Action Plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.
83. The State of Palestine acknowledged steps to improve the quality of education.
84. Switzerland encouraged Armenia to pursue its fight against all forms of violence against women in line with target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
85. The Syrian Arab Republic commended Armenia for adopting the Comprehensive Plan on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and its efforts to promote children's rights.
86. Timor-Leste encouraged Armenia to continue elaborating a strategy for comprehensive judicial and legal reforms.
87. Togo welcomed the strengthening of the mandate of the Human Rights Defender's Office and the strengthening of anti-torture legislation.
88. Tunisia applauded the ratification of various treaties and the adoption of legislation safeguarding human rights, including the law on freedom of assembly and legislation on trafficking in persons.
89. Turkey was concerned about the exploitation of and trafficking in children in Armenia.
90. Armenia made a point of order during the statement of Turkey. The President of the Human Rights Council recalled that the Council was not a forum for discussing political questions and asked speakers to use United Nations terminology.
91. Turkey made recommendations.
92. Turkmenistan acknowledged the signature of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
93. The United Arab Emirates congratulated Armenia on the progress in the field of social, economic and cultural rights.
94. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomed advances in media freedom but remained concerned about reported incidents of hate speech and attacks against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons.
95. The United States of America applauded the reinstatement of the labour inspection functions of the Health and Labour Inspectorate and urged the Government to provide the Inspectorate with the resources needed to realize its new functions.
96. Uruguay congratulated Armenia on the measures taken to combat domestic violence and promote gender equity.
97. Uzbekistan noted the cooperation of Armenia with the United Nations special procedures and the standing invitation issued to them by the Government.
98. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela appreciated the strengthening of the mandate of the national human rights institution in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).
99. Viet Nam welcomed measures to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and the rights of the child and other vulnerable groups.

100. Afghanistan congratulated Armenia on the adoption of a comprehensive national action plan for human rights.

101. The delegation of Armenia stated that one of the key priorities of Armenia was to overcome poverty using a human rights-based approach with the aim of eliminating extreme poverty by 2023. The level of minimum pensions had been increased based on the predicted extreme poverty line. During the previous four years, extreme child poverty had decreased by 40 per cent and the level of extreme poverty among elderly people had decreased by more than 50 per cent.

102. As of July 2021, the Health and Labour Inspectorate would oversee collective and labour contract requirements, in addition to overseeing the implementation of health and safety regulations. The Labour Code had been amended to introduce a prohibition on discrimination in labour relations.

103. From July 2020, all women living in rural areas would receive childcare support regardless of whether they held registered or unregistered jobs. In addition, the size of childcare support benefits for all employed women would be increased by 68 per cent.

104. Deinstitutionalization had been one of the priorities of the Government over the past few years in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The number of children in institutions had decreased significantly. Only about 600 children remained in State-run care institutions. Including special educational institutions, a total of about 2,000 children were in institutions. Specialized foster care was available for persons with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 23 years who had previously been engaged in specialized institutions, in order to ensure a family environment.

105. From 2017, State budget resources had been allocated for specific services aimed at facilitating access to published works for persons who were blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled, such as printing of Braille books and the recording of audiobooks.

106. People with disabilities had priority in participating in all State employment programmes. There were about 2,500 unemployed people with disabilities registered at the State Employment Agency, 42 per cent of whom were women.

107. The Government had introduced State financial assistance for victims of domestic violence, as well as established minimum standards for shelters. It had established the Council on Prevention of Domestic Violence with the involvement of the State and civil society organizations. Training and capacity-building were among the key components of the State policy to combat domestic violence.

108. With regard to health care, through the assistance of the World Bank, a significant number of medical facilities had been built, refurbished and equipped with medical equipment and furniture. All of those facilities were adapted for persons with disabilities.

109. In order to ensure access to health care, doctors had been delegated to regional hospitals on a short-term basis and the ambulance fleet had been re-equipped and refurbished. A comprehensive medical insurance had also been developed. Within the provision of free health care, the Government had ensured access to surgical care, radiation therapy, reproductive services, health care for children and the treatment of cardiovascular diseases. Amendments to the law on psychiatric care had regulated free and informed written consent by a patient or his legal representative.

110. Large-scale preventive measures had been taken at the community level to raise awareness of free medical services and swift HIV testing. In 2018, a free online course on stigma and discrimination had been designed and included in the continuing education of the National Institute of Health.

111. The law on reproductive health and rights had banned artificial termination of pregnancy based on the sex of a child. The draft Criminal Code included liability for the illegal termination of pregnancy.

112. With regard to education, in 2020 public funding of education had increased by 10 per cent. Twenty new schools had been constructed in remote areas. All public schools, including in remote areas, had been provided with Internet access and were equipped with computers. In 2019, a distance-learning centre had been created to provide e-learning for schools in remote areas.

113. As of 2018, Armenian language classes had been organized for children of asylum seekers and refugees with a view to ensuring their successful enrolment in schools. The low enrolment rate of Yazidi girls in high schools was an issue of concern. Awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of education for girls had been regularly organized among the representatives of the Yazidi community, with the participation of local non-governmental organizations.
114. In addition, over the coming two years, inclusive education would be introduced in all regions of the country. Currently, it was present in 7 of the 11 regions.
115. Albania commended Armenia on the signature of key international human rights instruments.
116. Algeria welcomed the signature of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.
117. Argentina encouraged the swift ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
118. Australia commended the reduction in instances of corruption, the increase in media freedom and the definition of torture in the Criminal Code in line with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
119. Austria commended Armenia on its increased efforts to combat domestic violence. It was concerned about reports of harassment, threats of violence, hate speech and intimidation against human rights defenders.
120. Azerbaijan strongly rejected references to Azerbaijan in the national report of Armenia. It stated that according to the relevant United Nations language reflected in Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, all references to “Nagorno-Karabakh” in the report should be read as “the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan”.
121. The Bahamas commended actions taken in the fight against trafficking in persons and welcomed the strengthening of the Human Rights Defender’s mandate.
122. Bahrain welcomed efforts to improve the constitutional mechanisms to protect human rights.
123. Belarus noted the reform of the judicial system and the creation of national structures for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
124. Belgium was encouraged by efforts and progress on freedom of expression, including freedom of the press. It remained concerned about the issue of violence against women.
125. Brazil made recommendations.
126. Brunei Darussalam noted the steps taken to ensure inclusive economic growth and job creation and to fight poverty.
127. Bulgaria acknowledged the steps taken towards equality between women and men and the empowerment of women, particularly in the information and communications technology sector.
128. Cambodia welcomed the priority that Armenia attached to the adoption of legislation to fight corruption.
129. Canada welcomed the significant increase in press freedom. Canada stressed the necessity to further strengthen the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.
130. Chile recognized the efforts made by Armenia to prevent domestic violence and cooperate with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.
131. China appreciated the efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, eliminate poverty, increase employment and develop health and education.
132. Croatia encouraged Armenia to create sustainable programmes that support families and parenting.

133. Cuba valued the constant reduction of the mortality rate among children under 1 year of age.
134. Cyprus commended Armenia for improvements in areas such as freedom of assembly and freedom of expression.
135. Czechia noted positive developments in some areas, in particular in the sphere of media freedom and electoral rights.
136. Denmark commended Armenia for the improvements in gender equality and combating violence against women. Denmark noted with concern reports and allegations of torture and ill-treatment perpetrated by law enforcement officials.
137. Djibouti welcomed legislation to strengthen the human rights institutions and the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and its Action Plan.
138. The Dominican Republic valued the signature of the Istanbul Convention and the strengthening of the Human Rights Defender's mandate.
139. Ecuador noted the adoption of the strategy to combat corruption and its action plan.
140. Egypt welcomed the cooperation of Armenia with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.
141. Estonia commended Armenia for the significant improvements in the conduct of free and fair elections and in safeguarding the freedom of association.
142. Ethiopia positively noted the measures taken with regard to trafficking in persons.
143. Fiji commended Armenia for its comprehensive plan for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities.
144. France welcomed efforts for the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law.
145. Georgia positively evaluated the steps taken towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.
146. Sweden noted harassment and incitement to hatred against human rights defenders and civil society, and stated that there was still no anti-discrimination legislation in place.
147. Rwanda welcomed the continuing efforts to prevent genocide and noted with appreciation the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
148. The delegation of Armenia stated that the universal periodic review was a strong success of the United Nations system for the promotion and protection of human rights. It thanked delegations who had acknowledged the success of Armenia in ensuring democratic developments. It reiterated that the recommendations issued would receive careful attention, and stated that it was confident that the outcome would contribute further to the strengthening of human rights protection and promotion in Armenia. It underlined that Armenia opposed the politicization of the universal periodic review process and referred to the statement by Azerbaijan.
149. The delegation of Azerbaijan made two points of order. It stated that in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, the universal periodic review should assess the human rights situation in the State under review, which was Armenia and not Azerbaijan. It stated that in Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) and General Assembly resolutions 60/285 and 62/243, there was no reference to "Nagorno-Karabakh". In line with its earlier statement during the interactive dialogue, the delegation of Azerbaijan mentioned that the language used in the body established by the General Assembly should be only United Nations language.
150. The President of the Human Rights Council recalled that the Council was not a forum for settling territorial, substantial, bilateral or political issues and invited all delegations to use United Nations terminology.
151. The delegation of Armenia stated that the attempts of a particular delegation to misinterpret Security Council resolutions constituted a bland manipulation of their content and were completely false. According to United Nations language, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was mediated by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, which on numerous

occasions had urged resolution of the conflict in line with the principles of international law, in particular the right to self-determination. The Co-Chairs had also urged that the expression of the free will of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh should have a legally binding nature.

152. During the period under review, Armenia had undergone profound changes, which the Secretary-General had qualified as an excellent example of a peaceful transition of power. Armenia had intensified its efforts to further promote human rights, including in the areas of gender equality and the rights of vulnerable groups. The Government had also prioritized judicial reform, the independence of the judiciary and equality before the law.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

153. **The following recommendations will be examined by Armenia, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the forty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council:**

153.1 **Consider ratifying core human rights treaties to which it is not yet a party (State of Palestine);**

153.2 **Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Senegal) (Sri Lanka);**

153.3 **Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Honduras) (Ecuador);**

153.4 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and expedite the ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Afghanistan);**

153.5 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Greece);**

153.6 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Portugal) (Estonia) (France);**

153.7 **Accelerate the process of ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Slovakia);**

153.8 **Expedite internal procedures necessary to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Georgia);**

153.9 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court with its amendments and fully implement them into national law (Liechtenstein);**

153.10 **Consider ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Senegal);**

153.11 **Ratify and fully align its national legislation with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Estonia);**

153.12 **Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and continue the efforts to prevent and combat domestic violence (Italy);**

153.13 **Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (North Macedonia) (Slovenia) (Belgium) (Canada) (Sweden);**

153.14 **Ratify the Istanbul Convention and adjust national legislation accordingly (Norway);**

- 153.15 Finalize the ratification process of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Romania);
- 153.16 Complete the internal procedures to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Spain);
- 153.17 Ratify, as soon as possible, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Switzerland);
- 153.18 Ensure the effective application of the existing legislation on domestic violence and gender equality, aligning it with the Istanbul Convention, and consider its ratification (Uruguay);
- 153.19 Expedite the process of ratifying the Istanbul Convention, without reservations, and ensure its rapid implementation (Albania);
- 153.20 Ratify without delay the Istanbul Convention and conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the Convention (Austria);
- 153.21 Step up the efforts for a rapid ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Croatia);
- 153.22 Promote the protection of women against violence by ratifying the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe and ensure a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of all allegations of domestic violence (Denmark);
- 153.23 Ratify the Istanbul Convention and fight the practice of selective abortions (France);
- 153.24 Consider ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) (Italy);
- 153.25 Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Liechtenstein);
- 153.26 Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and the Istanbul Convention (Turkey);
- 153.27 Ratify the 2014 Protocol to the International Labour Organization Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 153.28 Establish a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up (North Macedonia);
- 153.29 Continue submitting reports to various treaty bodies and pursue efforts to promote human rights (Lebanon);
- 153.30 Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for United Nations treaty body elections (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 153.31 Further cooperate with the United Nations human rights treaty bodies and special procedures (Kyrgyzstan);
- 153.32 Consider adopting a comprehensive national policy against all forms of exploitation of persons (Senegal);
- 153.33 Continue its ongoing efforts to promote human rights and thus present relevant reports (Turkmenistan);
- 153.34 Take due measures to effectively implement the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection for 2020–2022 (Turkmenistan);

- 153.35 Continue the positive steps to ensure the rule of law and development of the democratic institutions (Bahrain);
- 153.36 Further strengthen national capacities in the promotion and protection of human rights, taking into account the concluding observations of the treaty bodies and the recommendations of the universal periodic review (Belarus);
- 153.37 Ensure participation of civil society and international organizations in public discussions organized by the Coordinating Council (Georgia);
- 153.38 Enhance women's access to basic health care and sexual and reproductive health services (Estonia);
- 153.39 Seek to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for the national human rights office, including for the operation of its regional offices and prevention mechanisms (Serbia);
- 153.40 Provide sufficient and sustainable funding to the Human Rights Defender's Office (Timor-Leste);
- 153.41 Take effective measures to raise awareness of international human rights instruments and of the country's human rights obligations, including in the judicial and law enforcement sectors (Slovakia);
- 153.42 Continue the concerted efforts at the international level for the prevention of the crime of genocide (Greece);
- 153.43 Take prompt and resolute action against all instances of violence, hate speech and hate crime, online as well as offline, especially targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and women (Germany);
- 153.44 Implement the recent recommendation of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe by revising and clarifying the draft law on ensuring equality before the law and ensure credible and effective oversight of its enactment (Netherlands);
- 153.45 Continue to strengthen anti-discrimination policy and the protection of vulnerable groups (Romania);
- 153.46 Continue efforts to strengthen equality between men and women, to combat human trafficking, as well as to further protect the rights of national minorities (Russian Federation);
- 153.47 Ensure the effective and timely implementation of programmes supporting all socially vulnerable population groups (Uzbekistan);
- 153.48 Develop and adopt adequate legislative and administrative measures to combat discrimination against women, and discrimination and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and guarantee that victims have effective access to justice (Argentina);
- 153.49 Conduct broad public education and awareness with a view to combating hate speech, stereotypes and discrimination (Bahamas);
- 153.50 Better protect the rights of women, children and people with disabilities and further strengthen the social protection system (China);
- 153.51 Take specific measures to eliminate stereotypes and hate speech (Dominican Republic);
- 153.52 Adopt comprehensive legislation against discrimination, with definitions of all forms of discrimination in accordance with international standards, including the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Mexico);
- 153.53 Expedite the adoption of the law on anti-discrimination and enhance State efforts in order to ensure women's rights and gender equality (Republic of Moldova);

- 153.54 **Redouble its efforts towards the adoption of the comprehensive law on anti-discrimination (Slovakia);**
- 153.55 **Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that addresses direct and indirect discrimination and encompasses all the prohibited grounds of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity (Iceland);**
- 153.56 **Adopt a strong anti-discrimination law with robust enforcement mechanisms to protect members of all minorities (United States of America);**
- 153.57 **Adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law that includes specific references to the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (Uruguay);**
- 153.58 **Accelerate the adoption of the bill against discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and establish mechanisms to punish violations of rights in that area (Chile);**
- 153.59 **Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation (Czechia);**
- 153.60 **Adopt a law on anti-discrimination that includes sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds (Sweden);**
- 153.61 **Take all necessary measures to put an end to all forms of discrimination, including those based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Italy);**
- 153.62 **Take concrete steps to eliminate discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Malta);**
- 153.63 **Ensure prompt, thorough and effective investigations into all cases of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Malta);**
- 153.64 **Amend the Criminal Code to include homophobia and transphobia as aggravating criminal circumstances (Malta);**
- 153.65 **Explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds in the draft law on ensuring equality (Malta);**
- 153.66 **Include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds in the anti-discrimination legislation (Netherlands);**
- 153.67 **Take steps to combat violence, hate speech and crimes based on sexual orientation or gender identity (Uruguay);**
- 153.68 **Specifically include sexual orientation and gender identity as a protected ground within the 2018 draft law on ensuring equality and take immediate steps to pass the legislation through parliament (Australia);**
- 153.69 **Strengthen anti-discrimination laws to better protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (Austria);**
- 153.70 **Conduct prompt and thorough investigations into all cases of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and hold perpetrators to account (Canada);**
- 153.71 **Adopt a law punishing discrimination based on sexual orientation (France);**
- 153.72 **Combat hate speech and hate crimes, which includes adequate references to skin colour, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation or disability, by adopting necessary adjustments to legislation (Norway);**
- 153.73 **Introduce legislation criminalizing racist organizations and participation in such organizations (Afghanistan);**
- 153.74 **Develop and implement a common, unified policy for combating discrimination, including effective mechanisms to combat hate speech, hate crimes and other hate-motivated incidents, and preventing and properly**

investigating such cases, as well as responsibility mechanisms and effective legal remedies (Germany);

153.75 Continue with good practices aimed at establishing the necessary structures to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (Nicaragua);

153.76 Continue to strengthen its efforts in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals for the better enjoyment of the human rights of its people (Viet Nam);

153.77 Consolidate the progress made towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and in the improvement of human development indicators (India);

153.78 Continue efforts to promote economic growth, which in turn contributes to employment growth (Brunei Darussalam);

153.79 Continue to promote economic and social sustainable development in order to lay a solid foundation for its people to enjoy all human rights (China);

153.80 Ensure that a human rights approach is reflected in the Government's 2020 submission of the reviewed nationally determined contributions (Fiji);

153.81 Ensure that its 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);

153.82 Adopt a comprehensive, gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies (Fiji);

153.83 Introduce a de jure moratorium on capital executions, with a view to the complete abolition of the death penalty (Italy);

153.84 Close legislative gaps to ensure that all forms of torture and ill-treatment are fully criminalized and take steps to eradicate torture and ill-treatment, and effectively investigate, prosecute and punish such acts (Ireland);

153.85 Take measures to eradicate torture and ill-treatment during arrest, detention and questioning, and strengthen measures to effectively investigate such cases (Luxembourg);

153.86 Ensure that investigations are conducted by an independent mechanism into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment, particularly in prisons, and that perpetrators are punished (Switzerland);

153.87 Conduct credible investigations and prosecutions of individuals responsible for torture, sexual violence and abuse, and other egregious assaults (United States of America);

153.88 Cease the use of torture and introduce legislation to criminalize cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment in line with the obligations under the Convention against Torture (Australia);

153.89 Repeal the statute of limitations for the crime of torture and other equivalent acts under the Criminal Code (Chile);

153.90 Ensure effective investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment in accordance with international legal standards (Denmark);

153.91 Continue to build and strengthen the investigative capacity of the Special Investigation Service to ensure effective investigation, prosecution and punishment of acts of torture and ill-treatment (Fiji);

153.92 Define torture in accordance with the Convention against Torture (France);

- 153.93 Safeguard the full enjoyment of the procedural rights of detainees from the very outset of detention, including its notification, and prompt access to medical and legal assistance (Poland);
- 153.94 Continue implementing the government programme for social and psychological rehabilitation services for victims of human trafficking (Kuwait);
- 153.95 Continue its efforts to combat trafficking in human beings and protect victims of trafficking by speeding up the full implementation of the national action plan (Liechtenstein);
- 153.96 Continue its endeavours in the fight against trafficking of human beings and exploitation, and the protection and rehabilitation of the victims of trafficking (Myanmar);
- 153.97 Redouble efforts to tackle effectively trafficking in persons while assisting the reintegration of victims into society (Holy See);
- 153.98 Implement the Law on Identification of and Support to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings and Exploitation and commit to addressing the issue of trafficking in persons and exploitation of the prostitution of women and girls (Republic of Moldova);
- 153.99 Continue to strengthen its efforts to combat trafficking in persons, in particular women, girls and children, with regular monitoring (Sri Lanka);
- 153.100 Speed up the implementation of government programmes related to compensating the victims of human trafficking (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 153.101 Adopt a comprehensive State policy to address the issue of trafficking in persons and the exploitation of prostitution of women and girls (Timor-Leste);
- 153.102 Adopt a comprehensive national policy to combat human trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution of women and girls (Algeria);
- 153.103 Continue efforts to combat trafficking in persons by fully implementing its existing laws, plans and programmes to that effect (Bahamas);
- 153.104 Implement measures to address trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls, including a specific State policy to address the exploitation of women and girls through prostitution (Chile);
- 153.105 Continue the national efforts to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, and provide adequate care and support to the victims (Egypt);
- 153.106 Ensure that the implementation of its laws, policies and programmes on anti-human trafficking is gender-responsive and disability-inclusive (Fiji);
- 153.107 Consider adopting a comprehensive State policy to address the issue of trafficking in persons (Rwanda);
- 153.108 Intensify efforts in creating a safe and enabling environment for civil society, human rights defenders and journalists and ensure that threats and attacks against journalists and human rights defenders, notably those working in the field of anti-discrimination and women's rights, are duly investigated (Lithuania);
- 153.109 Sign the Global Pledge on Media Freedom, and commit to international efforts to create a safer environment for journalists worldwide as a member of the Media Freedom Coalition (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 153.110 Step up the efforts to enact comprehensive media regulations, including by adopting the legal measures to ensure media ownership transparency and independence of public broadcasters (Czechia);
- 153.111 Guarantee freedom of expression and freedom of the press by ensuring the protection of journalists and human rights defenders (France);

- 153.112 Strengthen protections for the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, including revising the current Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations in line with recommendations of the Venice Commission (Ireland);
- 153.113 Ensure that the application of the law governing peaceful assembly and freedom of association is not discriminatory, in particular towards the most vulnerable groups such as national and religious minorities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community (Luxembourg);
- 153.114 Accelerate its efforts to reform the judiciary system in order to ensure independence of justice (Japan);
- 153.115 Implement the envisaged comprehensive reform of the justice sector with a view to establishing a genuinely independent judiciary and increasing public trust in it (Lithuania);
- 153.116 Take effective measures to protect the independence and integrity of the judicial branch of Government (Namibia);
- 153.117 Take measures to ensure non-interference in the affairs of the judiciary by members of the executive (Namibia);
- 153.118 Further focus on the reform of the judiciary (Romania);
- 153.119 Strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary in law and practice (Switzerland);
- 153.120 Take the necessary further steps for the judicial and legal reforms (Turkmenistan);
- 153.121 Establish transparent processes for the nomination, appointment and disciplining of judges and the termination of their powers based on international standards and distribute court cases in a proportional manner to ensure a balanced workload for judges (United States of America);
- 153.122 Ensure the independence of the justice system and access to a fair trial (France);
- 153.123 Effectively implement judicial reform, in close cooperation with the Council of Europe, to ensure an impartial and transparent judicial system (Sweden);
- 153.124 Continue the fight and strong commitment against corruption in full compliance with the legislation of Armenia (Nicaragua);
- 153.125 Continue to adopt government plans to fight corruption, such as the Anti-Corruption Strategy 2019–2022 (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 153.126 Fully implement the Anti-Corruption Strategy 2019–2022 (Bahamas);
- 153.127 Establish strong and independent anti-corruption institutions and ensure proper and transparent vetting procedures of judges, prosecutors, investigators and police officers (Czechia);
- 153.128 Continue the national efforts to combat corruption (Egypt);
- 153.129 Initiate a comprehensive electoral reform to adopt a new electoral code developed in close consultation with civil society organizations, taking into consideration the recommendations of international and local observation missions (Czechia);
- 153.130 Keep moving forward with the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection with a view to guaranteeing the exercise of the right to health and a decent living standard (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 153.131 Consider further institutional, legislative and policy measures targeted in particular at improving the well-being of children living in poverty (Singapore);

- 153.132 Continue to combat poverty and social inequality with the consolidation of social programmes to benefit the most vulnerable population groups (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 153.133 Continue its current programmes of social assistance, in particular to assist the extreme poor (Brunei Darussalam);
- 153.134 Continue the efforts to reduce poverty, as well as increase social programmes aimed at improving the living conditions of the population (Dominican Republic);
- 153.135 Enhance efforts in scaling up the successful implementation of programmes that ensure inclusive economic growth, job creation and fighting poverty (Ethiopia);
- 153.136 Continue its efforts to strengthen the health-care system by developing a national health insurance scheme (Maldives);
- 153.137 Adopt measures to tackle discrimination against HIV-positive individuals in the health-care system and take steps to make treatment more accessible in the regions (Norway);
- 153.138 Promote the health-care system and continue improving health services as well as the means so that they are available in all regions (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 153.139 Strengthen the health-care system and continue to improve the availability and accessibility of health services in all regions (Iceland);
- 153.140 Pursue efforts to implement a comprehensive medical and health insurance in line with Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (United Arab Emirates);
- 153.141 Continue to reinforce efforts to support inclusive growth and prioritize budgetary allocations in the health-care system in order to guarantee adequate, equitable and sustainable financing thereby augmenting the availability and accessibility of health services in all regions (India);
- 153.142 Strengthen public awareness of health services for people living in rural areas (Cambodia);
- 153.143 Continue the process of improving the infrastructure of primary health care in rural communities (Cuba);
- 153.144 Promote the right to health by facilitating people's access to health-care facilities (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 153.145 Continue the measures necessary to extend access to quality care to all components of society in order to meet their health needs (Djibouti);
- 153.146 Continue to invest in the activities reducing the infant mortality rate (Ethiopia);
- 153.147 Introduce comprehensive and evidence-based sexuality education in Armenian schools (Iceland);
- 153.148 Continue enhancing women's access to basic health care and sexual and reproductive health services, in particular for rural women (India);
- 153.149 Continue to strengthen its efforts to ensure education for all, paying special attention to children from economically disadvantaged families (Japan);
- 153.150 Ensure that the right to education is effectively offered to all, especially to girls and to children with disabilities, in particular to those in the most remote areas of the country (Holy See);
- 153.151 Strengthen its efforts to improve access to education for all, with special attention given to children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families (Sri Lanka);

- 153.152 Continue its efforts to improve access to education for all, with special attention given to the children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families (State of Palestine);
- 153.153 Continue the efforts to promote universal access to education (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 153.154 Keep up efforts to reinforce the right to education and ensure equal opportunities for all (Tunisia);
- 153.155 Continue efforts to improve access to education for all, with special attention given to children from socioeconomically disadvantaged sections (India);
- 153.156 Further improve access to education for children, especially children with disabilities (Indonesia);
- 153.157 Organize campaigns and educational programmes to raise awareness of the importance of cultural heritage in all its diversity (Cyprus);
- 153.158 Leverage the relatively high percentage of women in the high-tech sector as a driver for further inclusion of women in the economy as a whole (Israel);
- 153.159 Effectively implement the government strategy on the gender policy implementation 2019–2023 in order to continue moving towards full equality and the empowerment of women (Kyrgyzstan);
- 153.160 Continue efforts towards the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (Greece);
- 153.161 Establish national programmes against gender-based violence and create an institution dedicated to promoting and guaranteeing women's rights (Mexico);
- 153.162 Consider further measures to promote the economic participation of women and young people (Philippines);
- 153.163 Pursue efforts to foster gender equality, particularly in the labour market (Tunisia);
- 153.164 Continue to promote gender equality and take the necessary measures to increase women's participation in political life (United Arab Emirates);
- 153.165 Accelerate the adoption of laws aimed at ensuring gender equality (Uzbekistan);
- 153.166 Enhance further endeavours to increase women's participation in public affairs and economic development (Cambodia);
- 153.167 Implement the National Action Plan on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security (Cyprus);
- 153.168 Raise awareness about the importance of equal participation of women and men in public and political life (Cyprus);
- 153.169 Continue implementing legislative reforms that guarantee transparency in electoral processes and greater representation of women in the legislative body (Dominican Republic);
- 153.170 Continue efforts to ensure the participation and representation of women and minorities in political and public life (Ecuador);
- 153.171 Guarantee equal rights and opportunities to men and women in the labour market (Iraq);
- 153.172 Continue steps towards ensuring the promotion and protection of women's rights (Georgia);

- 153.173 Foresee a regulatory framework for the informal sector and ensure that women working in this sector have access to social protection, maternity protection and childcare subsidies (Algeria);
- 153.174 Take measures to define, to prohibit and to penalize sexual harassment (Luxembourg);
- 153.175 Strengthen the capacity of the judiciary, law enforcement and social workers to enhance an effective response to cases of gender-based violence (Rwanda);
- 153.176 Ratify the Istanbul Convention and revise the Criminal Code to include domestic violence as a stand-alone criminal offence and an aggravating circumstance covering crimes committed within the family or domestic unit, and invest in the creation of shelters to ensure the effective protection of women and children survivors of domestic violence (Germany);
- 153.177. Adopt a law criminalizing domestic violence and ensuring its effective implementation (North Macedonia);
- 153.178 Adopt a law criminalizing domestic violence and ensure its effective implementation and introduce mandatory education on gender equality, women's rights and gender-based violence in schools (Portugal);
- 153.179 Specify domestic violence as an aggravated offence in penal legislation (Honduras);
- 153.180 Criminalize domestic violence as a stand-alone crime in the Criminal Code and ensure that there is swift and impartial investigations into such crimes and a wider network of reception centres and State services (Spain);
- 153.181 Continue to reform relevant legislation, including the Criminal Code, in order to fully criminalize domestic violence, in line with the Istanbul and Lanzarote Conventions, and move towards the ratification of these two instruments (Iceland);
- 153.182 Continue strengthening the legislative framework on the prevention of domestic violence and protection of persons affected by domestic violence (India);
- 153.183 Redouble efforts to prevent and combat domestic violence, in particular by criminalizing it (Albania);
- 153.184 Adapt the Criminal Code to ensure effective follow-up of domestic violence incidents and raise awareness among the public on how to file complaints (Belgium);
- 153.185 Intensify efforts to prevent violence against women, particularly domestic violence and sexual violence in the workplace (Montenegro);
- 153.186 Continue enforcing legislation to combat domestic violence and extend rehabilitation services for the victims (Nepal);
- 153.187 Take further steps to ensure the full implementation of its law on the prevention of domestic violence (Philippines);
- 153.188 Establish special procedures to investigate cases of domestic and sexual violence (Honduras);
- 153.189 Work to prevent and address gender-based violence and domestic violence, including by building upon existing legislation to effectively protect survivors and prosecute perpetrators of all forms of violence against women, offering appropriate support services to survivors and providing gender-sensitive training to law enforcement personnel (Australia);
- 153.190 Ensure the availability of shelter and services for survivors of domestic violence (Austria);
- 153.191 Strengthen efforts in curbing domestic violence and violence against women (Indonesia);

- 153.192 Strengthen efforts to curb all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, in law and practice, including by ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Brazil);
- 153.193 Ensure that all cases of domestic violence are thoroughly investigated and that victims have access to medical, social, legal and other support services (Estonia);
- 153.194 Continue its procedures for protecting the rights of the child, especially children facing difficult living situations (Kuwait);
- 153.195 Continue to allocate adequate budgets for the programmes related to children to further develop the system of protection of children's rights (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 153.196 Continue efforts to promote children's rights (Lebanon);
- 153.197 Take further steps in the promotion of the rights of the child and the elimination of discrimination against women (Bahrain);
- 153.198 Adopt legislative measures necessary to prohibit all forms of violence against children (Estonia);
- 153.199 Provide full support to the institution of the family (Russian Federation);
- 153.200 Continue efforts, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund and local non-governmental organizations, to address the abandonment of children born with health issues and disabilities at the level of maternity hospitals (Bulgaria);
- 153.201 Develop an oversight mechanism to monitor the situation of children placed in residential institutions, foster families or under guardianship or trusteeship (Croatia);
- 153.202 Adopt programmes that would help the promotion of the rights of families and children (Iraq);
- 153.203 Continue efforts to end online and offline child sexual exploitation and abuse (Greece);
- 153.204 Continue to enhance its programmes on combating online child sexual exploitation and abuse (Philippines);
- 153.205 Take urgent measures to strengthen the protection of children from violence and sexual exploitation (Togo);
- 153.206 Intensify measures to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention and consider its ratification (Uruguay);
- 153.207 Abolish the solitary confinement of juveniles as a disciplinary measure, both in law and in practice (Portugal);
- 153.208 Continue efforts to improve juvenile justice (Tunisia);
- 153.209 Consider putting in place an effective, functional and specialized juvenile justice system, in compliance with international standards (Albania);
- 153.210 Take measures to improve the accessibility of persons with disabilities to government buildings, as well as major cultural and recreational venues (Israel);
- 153.211 Take measures to remove all barriers preventing people with disabilities from participating fully in society, paying special attention to children with disabilities (Italy);
- 153.212 Further empower persons with disabilities by improving their employment opportunities and access to public buildings, including those providing health-care, educational and social welfare services (Japan);

- 153.213 Continue to take measures to implement its Comprehensive Plan for 2017–2021 on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 153.214 Continue efforts to promote the rights of persons with special needs (Lebanon);
- 153.215 Develop and implement a comprehensive education strategy to promote inclusive education in both urban and rural areas of the country (Maldives);
- 153.216 Ensure family support programmes, and access of children with disabilities to schools, health-care services and rehabilitation centres (Montenegro);
- 153.217 Continue its ongoing efforts in implementing new and equal approaches to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities and promote their inclusiveness (Myanmar);
- 153.218 Introduce policies and programmes raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities aiming at growing their participation in the open labour market, and remove obstacles to physical accessibility and access to information and communication (Poland);
- 153.219 Ensure the efficiency and adequacy of complaint systems concerning the work of institutions that provide treatment or care for persons with disabilities (Poland);
- 153.220 Raise the awareness of the key provisions of laws on disability issues, once enacted, among all relevant stakeholders to ensure their effective implementation (Singapore);
- 153.221 Adopt a law to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and reduce institutionalization of children with disabilities by preferring family care and community-based services (Spain);
- 153.222 Proceed to strengthen legislation to ensure better protection of orphans and children with disabilities (Togo);
- 153.223 Continue to deepen human rights policies to benefit women and persons with disabilities (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 153.224 Accelerate the drafting of those laws that further promote and protect the human rights of persons with disabilities (Viet Nam);
- 153.225 Adopt comprehensive legal and administrative measures aimed at combating discrimination against persons with disabilities and guarantee full access to health, education and employment (Argentina);
- 153.226 Consider developing a comprehensive policy to combat discrimination against persons with disabilities and promote their access to public services, public facilities and the labour market (Brazil);
- 153.227 Take further measures to provide early warning and care options for children with various types of disabilities in an inclusive setting (Bulgaria);
- 153.228 Promote employment policies and programmes for people with disabilities, complementing them with the use of quotas to allow their effective participation in the labour market (Chile);
- 153.229 Continue advancing in the effective implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for 2017–2021 on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, in order to guarantee the inclusion and promotion of the rights of these people in all areas (Cuba);
- 153.230 Continue the efforts to exercise the rights of persons with disabilities (Islamic Republic of Iran);

153.231 Continue to implement policies to support the integration of all persons with disabilities into society, as well as their active participation in the life of the community, and allocate sufficient resources to this end (Djibouti);

153.232 Continue adopting measures to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy their full rights to education, health, housing and employment (Ecuador);

153.233 Enhance the efforts to protect and guarantee the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including ethnic and religious minorities (Italy);

153.234 Continue to take measures of affirmative action for the political representation of minorities (Nepal);

153.235 Adopt the law on national minorities and take further steps to achieve greater representation of minorities in public and political life (Republic of Moldova);

153.236 Take all steps necessary to facilitate access by minorities to justice (Timor-Leste);

153.237 Prohibit and punish the detention of migrant children who have entered the country irregularly (Mexico);

153.238 Take further measures in the promotion and protection of the rights of migrants, including by considering the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as collaboration with the sending countries (Indonesia);

153.239 Design and adopt legislation with regard to stateless persons to register them and to provide them with identity documents (Togo);

153.240 Carry out prompt, independent and just investigations into attacks on human rights defenders in order to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice (Norway);

153.241 End the culture of impunity for attacks against human rights defenders by carrying out prompt, impartial and effective investigations and prosecutions of threats and violence against them (Australia);

153.242 Ensure immediate and effective investigation of all threats and attacks against human rights defenders (Austria);

153.243 Carry out an independent, prompt, effective and impartial investigation into attacks on human rights defenders to avoid a potential feeling of impunity among perpetrators of such attacks (Belgium);

153.244 Adopt specific laws that will prohibit hate speech and take concrete steps to end smear campaigns and threats against human rights defenders (Canada);

153.245 Support human rights defenders with official condemnation of attacks when they occur (Estonia);

153.246 Take measures to protect human rights defenders and civil society from harassment (Sweden).

154. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Armenia and have been noted by Armenia:

154.1 Reverse the ethnic cleansing of 350,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia by ensuring their return to places of origin and providing compensation for violations of their rights (Azerbaijan);

154.2 Tackle ethnic and racial intolerance and hate speech against Azerbaijanis at all levels in Armenia (Azerbaijan);

154.3 Take measures to reverse glorification of Nazi collaborators, convicted international terrorists and war criminals in Armenia responsible for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity (Azerbaijan);

154.4 **Stop violations of the right to property, freedom of movement and other human rights of ethnic Azerbaijanis expelled from Armenia (Azerbaijan);**

154.5 **Uphold its obligations under international law and allow the return of the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons to their places of origin in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan (Turkey);**

154.6 **Ensure respect for the rights of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons expelled from Armenia and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to return to their places of origin in safety and dignity, and provide the necessary compensation for violations of their rights (Turkey).**

155. **Armenia rejects the six recommendations above because it considers that they (a) are in violation of the main principles and objectives of Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, particularly paragraph 3 (g) of the annex on the non-confrontational and non-politicized manner in which the universal periodic review should be conducted; and (b) misinterpret the realities on the ground, as well as the essence, causes and settlement process of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, in which the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship is the only internationally agreed format of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution. Additionally, Armenia states that Azerbaijan repeatedly (a) rejected any cooperation with Armenia within the framework of the universal periodic review in violation of paragraphs 3 (b) and 27 of resolution 5/1, as well as (b) provided fabricated allegations and has been resorting to and encouraging bellicose rhetoric and hate propaganda against the Armenians on the State level.**

156. **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 Armenia was headed by H.E. Mr. Artak Apitonian, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and composed of the following members:

- H.E. Mr. Andranik Hovhannisyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to UNOG;
 - Ms. Zhanna Andreatsyan, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia;
 - Ms. Kristinne Grigoryan, Deputy Minister of Justice of Armenia;
 - Mr. David Melkonyan, Deputy Prosecutor General of Armenia;
 - Mr. Armen Ghukasyan, Head of the Police Headquarters of Armenia;
 - Mr. Tigran Mukuchyan, Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia;
 - Mr. Armen Ghazaryan, Head of the Migration Service of Armenia;
 - Ms. Karine Sujayan, Head of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia;
 - Mr. Robert Stepanyan, Head of the Development Projects and Monitoring Department of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia;
 - Ms. Anna Mkrtumyan, Head of the Legal Department of the Ministry of Health of Armenia;
 - Mr. Nairi Petrossian, Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia to UNOG;
 - Ms. Lusine Hakobyan, Head of the Division of Cooperation with monitoring Bodies of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia;
 - Mr. Arsen Kotanjyan, Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Armenia to UNOG;
 - Ms. Armine Petrosyan, Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Armenia to UNOG;
 - Mr. Pertch Boshnaghyan, Assistant to the Permanent Representative of Armenia to UNOG.
-