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

### **Belgium**

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



## Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirty-eighth session from 3 to 14 May 2021. The review of Belgium was held at the 5th meeting, on 5 May 2021. The delegation of Belgium was headed by Vice-Première Ministre et Ministre des affaires étrangères, des affaires européennes et du commerce extérieur, et des institutions culturelles fédérales, Sophie Wilmès. At its 10th meeting, held on 7 May 2021, the Working Group adopted the report on Belgium.

2. On 12 January 2021, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Belgium: Austria, Indonesia and Togo.

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 Belgium:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a);<sup>1</sup>

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b);<sup>2</sup>

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c).<sup>3</sup>

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Austria, Canada, Germany, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Panama, Portugal, on behalf of the Group of Friends on national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, the Republic of Moldova, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Belgium 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. In her introductory statement, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade, and Federal Cultural Institutions stated that the universality of human rights was an essential pillar of the effective multilateralism that Belgium advocated, and that the universal periodic review was an important peer review exercise that helped to protect and strengthen the implementation of human rights in Belgium.

6. Since Belgium was a federal State, the protection of human rights was ensured by authorities at several different levels. The national report was therefore the result of close cooperation between the various constituent parts of Belgium, namely the federal Government, the Communities and the Regions. This institutional framework entailed responsibilities at different levels of government and shared responsibility in certain areas.

7. Human rights were effectively protected in Belgium by both the legislation in force and the rigorous application of that legislation. Belgium was among the small group of countries that were up to date with their periodic reporting to the United Nations treaty bodies. As of 2016, Belgium had ratified seven conventions and one protocol of the International Labour Organization, as well as the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Crime policy had been strengthened and three support centres for victims of sexual violence had been established in 2017 and 2020. The federated entities had also increased their capacities in that regard.

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/WG.6/38/BEL/1.

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/WG.6/38/BEL/2.

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/WG.6/38/BEL/3.

8. Belgium had undertaken to put in place a national human rights institution that covered all fundamental rights throughout the territory, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). The establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in 2019 was a step forward insofar as the Institute had federal jurisdiction and would gain interfederal status at a later stage, thus ensuring full coverage of human rights. It was also possible for the federated entities to set up their own institutions. The federated entities and the federal Government were to sign a cooperation agreement setting out a shared vision.

9. One major priority was the implementation of reforms to improve conditions of detention. Long-term structural changes were being made in three areas: work on buildings in order to reduce prison overcrowding by 15 per cent; the application of the law on the personal situation of prisoners; and the use of non-custodial measures in order to further reduce overcrowding. The Minister wished to stress that a comprehensive reform of psychiatric detention had been carried out.

10. Regarding respect for human rights in the context of law enforcement, the police regulations were based on the principles of impartiality, integrity and dignity. Under those regulations, all forms of discrimination were prohibited. Ethnic profiling was also banned in Belgium. Oversight was carried out by bodies in each of the three branches of government and within the police force. Police officers' compliance with the law, including the provisions designed to protect human rights, was effectively monitored by these bodies. Where necessary, criminal penalties or other sanctions were imposed.

11. The fight against all forms of discrimination was a matter of particular importance to Belgium. Various initiatives designed to strengthen the existing laws against racism were being or had been undertaken, including at the federal level. In June 2019, the Decade for People of African Descent had been proclaimed at the national level. Civil society consultations had been held in early October 2019 as part of the process of preparing a national plan against racism that was to be launched in 2021.

12. As a result of its efforts to close the gender pay gap, Belgium had one of the smallest such gaps in the world. Reducing the gender pension gap remained a priority. In 2011, Belgium had adopted binding quotas in various sectors, both public and private, which had had a tangible impact. The implementation of the 2014–2019 Federal Plan for Gender Mainstreaming had been evaluated and a plan for the period 2021–2025 was being prepared. Lastly, in response to the health crisis, an analysis of the gender dimension of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in Belgium had been carried out.

13. As of 2018, transgender persons no longer had to meet specific medical criteria to have their registered sex and given name officially amended. The Interfederal Action Plan to Combat Discrimination and Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons for the period 2018–2019 had been launched and a new plan was being prepared.

14. A large number of measures had been taken at different levels of government with regard to the employment of persons with disabilities. At the federal level, since 2018 labour inspectors had been able to make "mystery calls". In addition, the legislation on public procurement had been amended in order to promote the use of adapted work enterprises.

15. The objectives of the third Federal Anti-Poverty Plan (2016–2019) had included the reduction of child poverty. That remained a priority of the fourth plan. One approach involved tackling the structural causes of poverty at the local level. The Communities and the Regions had developed a number of plans with an impact on poverty.

16. Regarding asylum and migration, unaccompanied foreign minors were never detained in closed centres. Instead, they stayed in specialized centres. In 2020, Belgium had strengthened its procedures relating to the principle of non-refoulement.

17. Belgium, an open and democratic society that attached great importance to human rights, had not been spared from terrorist attacks. The Government remained firmly committed to protecting those values, having opted for a resolutely holistic approach to the fight against violent extremism and terrorism. Prevention, enforcement and due diligence

went hand in hand. Several laws had been passed to strengthen the fight against extremism and terrorism while ensuring respect for human rights.

18. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, respect for human rights had remained a core concern for the Belgian authorities. Measures had been adopted, on the basis of recommendations made by experts, to pursue a legitimate objective by means that were necessary, proportionate, non-discriminatory and transparent.

19. To conclude, the Minister mentioned a long tradition of collaboration with civil society. All Belgian authorities consulted and listened to civil society on a regular basis. The Government undertook to continue its dialogue with civil society as part of its follow-up to the universal periodic review.

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

20. During the interactive dialogue, 119 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

21. The Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, the State of Palestine, the Sudan, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Togo, Uganda and Uzbekistan made statements. The webcasts of the full statements are available online.<sup>4</sup>

22. In response to the statements made by member States, the Minister confirmed that Belgium was committed to ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment as soon as possible. The only reason for the delay was that it wished to establish a national preventive mechanism that would be operational as soon as possible after ratification.

23. There had been a marked decrease in prison overcrowding in Belgium since 2013: the average rate of overcrowding had fallen from 21.4 per cent for the period 2011–2012 to 11 per cent for the period 2015–2020. The Government was continuing its efforts in that area.

24. The national action plan against racism was being actively prepared and would include measures covering all aspects of society.

25. With regard to Islamophobia, religion was a protected characteristic under Belgian anti-discrimination legislation. Religious or philosophical belief was one of the discriminatory criteria that had been taken into account during the collection of data relating to equality in Belgium. The fight against Islamophobia was the subject of many measures taken by the federated entities and would also be an integral part of the national action plan against racism.

26. Regarding the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Belgium attached great importance to ensuring respect for the rights of migrant workers. However, the approach set out in the Convention that consisted of conferring equal rights on all migrant workers,

<sup>4</sup> See <http://webtv.un.org/search>.

whether they were in a regular or irregular situation, was not compatible with European Union regulations.

27. In 2017, the first National Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights had been adopted at the various levels of government. In March 2021, an external evaluation had been carried out to assess the progress made and the need for additional measures. A second national plan of action was being prepared. Belgium also supported the work on due diligence that was being done at the European Union level.

28. The future national action plan against racism would include measures to counter antisemitism. The antisemitism watchdog had been reactivated in early 2019. Belgium had participated in the “Turning Words into Action” project run by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In addition, the federated entities had taken several measures to create an environment that was conducive to the prevention of antisemitism.

29. Regarding asylum and migration, families with minor children were not, in principle, placed in detention unless the place of detention was adapted to the needs of such families. Only those families who continued to refuse to cooperate under the voluntary departure scheme could be transferred to an open family unit, where their liberty was restricted to a certain degree.

30. Trafficking in persons and the exploitation of prostitution were severely punished under the Belgian Criminal Code. The existing action plan had been updated for 2020 and 2021, and a new plan for the period 2021–2025 was to be adopted in 2021.

31. With respect to climate and environmental issues, the Minister referred to the legislation that transposed into national law the European directive on the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. The principles of the Convention were therefore consistently applied by all Belgian authorities.

32. Regarding foreign terrorist fighters, in March 2021 the Government had finalized the changes to its policy on the repatriation of Belgian mothers and children who were in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic and in Iraq. Belgium was actively continuing to repatriate Belgian minors in line with the best interests of the child. Belgian children under the age of 12 years – that is, all the Belgian minors concerned – were automatically eligible for repatriation, with follow-up at the community level. Belgian mothers wishing to return to Belgium would be repatriated if it was established, on a case-by-case basis, that their return did not constitute a threat to national security. When it came to other foreign terrorist fighters, whether men or women, Belgium continued to seek to have them tried in the region where the crimes had been committed.

33. Concerning hate speech, in order to ensure that all press offences motivated by hatred towards a protected group were handled in the same way and that no press offence went unpunished, article 150 of the Constitution had been declared subject to review and a proposed amendment was being prepared. The 2013 joint circular of the Minister of Justice, the Minister of the Interior and the College of Prosecutors General, which dealt with the policy regarding online hate speech (cyberhate), would be amended to improve the recording of hate crimes.

34. The Minister concluded by thanking the delegations for their questions and recommendations and by noting that Belgium had always supported the principles that formed the basis for the universal periodic review.

## II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

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

35.1 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Australia) (Denmark) (Finland) (France) (Greece) (Iceland) (Luxembourg) (Maldives) (Mauritius) (Montenegro) (Poland) (Portugal);**

- 35.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, signed in 2005 (Italy);**
- 35.3 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as soon as possible (Switzerland);**
- 35.4 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, without further delays and without any reservations (Cyprus) (Czechia);**
- 35.5 **Finalize the process of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Georgia);**
- 35.6 **Expedite the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Malawi);**
- 35.7 **Continue its efforts to promptly accede to the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Ghana);**
- 35.8 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish an effective national preventive mechanism (Lithuania);**
- 35.9 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish a national preventive mechanism to ensure the monitoring of all places where people are deprived of their liberty (Netherlands);**
- 35.10 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish a preventive mechanism in accordance with the Optional Protocol (Norway);**
- 35.11 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 16 and establish a national mechanism for the prevention of torture that reflects the realities of the country (Paraguay);**
- 35.12 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and take forward consultations to establish a national preventive mechanism (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 35.13 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and establish a national preventive mechanism with sufficient resources to ensure independent, impartial and external monitoring, in line with the principles of the Convention (Costa Rica);**
- 35.14 **Finalize the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Romania); Finalize the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and set up an effective national preventive mechanism (Ukraine);**
- 35.15 **Accelerate efforts for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish a national preventive mechanism (North Macedonia);**
- 35.16 **Continue efforts towards the establishment of an effective national preventive mechanism for the prevention of torture, in accordance with the standards set forth in the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Chile);**
- 35.17 **Establish a national preventive mechanism to prevent torture with a view to ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Albania);**

- 35.18 Establish a national preventive mechanism that reflects the country's specific institutional arrangements (Kazakhstan);
- 35.19 Establish a national preventive mechanism that can monitor all places where people are deprived of their liberty (Croatia);
- 35.20 Consider taking additional steps to increase its official development assistance (ODA) to achieve the international commitment of 0.7 per cent of its gross national income (Cambodia);
- 35.21 Recognize its commitment to an ODA contribution (Ethiopia);
- 35.22 Step up the process of establishing a national human rights institution that is fully compliant with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), by ensuring comprehensive human rights mandates and the necessary resources (Republic of Korea);
- 35.23 Step up efforts to establish the national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Nepal);
- 35.24 Accelerate the creation of a national institute that is in line with the Paris Principles (Qatar);
- 35.25 Establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (Denmark) (Rwanda) (Spain) (Ukraine);
- 35.26 Establish a national human rights institution that is compliant with the Paris Principles (Jordan);
- 35.27 Enhance its ongoing efforts for establishing a fully functioning independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Turkmenistan);
- 35.28 Take the final steps towards the establishment of the national human rights institution based on the Paris Principles (Costa Rica);
- 35.29 Complete the process of having a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Bangladesh);
- 35.30 Complete the process of putting in place a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Greece);
- 35.31 Expedite the process of establishing a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (India);
- 35.32 Provide a comprehensive mandate for its national human rights commission in compliance with the Paris Principles (Indonesia);
- 35.33 Continue efforts to establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Iraq);
- 35.34 Accelerate the implementation of a national human rights institution (A status) (Canada);
- 35.35 Pursue A status accreditation under the Paris Principles for its national human rights institution (Australia);
- 35.36 Speed up the establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, in accordance with the Paris Principles, providing it with a comprehensive mandate and with sufficient resources (Slovenia);
- 35.37 Speed up the establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, in accordance with the Paris Principles (Senegal) (Mongolia);

- 35.38 Establish and operationalize the federal human rights institute in accordance with Belgium's intention for a high-performance institute that is fully compliant with the Paris Principles (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 35.39 Establish the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in accordance with the Paris Principles with a mandate and all the necessary resources to carry out its functions (Kazakhstan);
- 35.40 Undertake further steps for the full compliance of the federal human rights institute with the Paris Principles (North Macedonia);
- 35.41 Redouble efforts so that the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights can serve as an independent human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);
- 35.42 Step up efforts to effectively launch the work of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, the law establishing which was adopted back in 2019 (Russian Federation);
- 35.43 Accelerate the establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights so as to bring it into full compliance with the Paris Principles (Djibouti);
- 35.44 Accelerate the establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in line with the Paris Principles, give it a comprehensive mandate and the resources necessary to enable it to carry out its mandate (Luxembourg);
- 35.45 Concretize the functioning of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, with a broad mandate and resources to fulfil its objectives, including the possibility of receiving individual complaints (Ecuador);
- 35.46 Expedite the establishment of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, in compliance with the Paris Principles (Ireland);
- 35.47 Establish a permanent national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up regarding human rights recommendations, and consider the possibility of receiving cooperation for this purpose in the framework of Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17 (Paraguay);
- 35.48 Regularly cooperate with civil society on follow-up to the recommendations from the universal periodic review (Malaysia);
- 35.49 Collaborate actively and regularly with civil society (Albania);
- 35.50 Strengthen efforts to address the rise of intolerance and hate speech and ensure that the ban on wearing religious symbols in educational establishments does not negatively affect access to education for all (Afghanistan);
- 35.51 Strengthen measures to root out racism and hate crimes, including through investigation of those crimes to bring the perpetrators to justice (Bangladesh);
- 35.52 Seek the measures necessary to prevent and combat hate crimes, and protect the groups most vulnerable to racial discrimination (Nicaragua);
- 35.53 Enhance efforts to eliminate hate crimes and discrimination based on religion (Uganda);
- 35.54 Adopt the measures necessary to bring perpetrators of hate speech and violence to account (Portugal);
- 35.55 Take measures to combat hate crimes and incitement to violence in line with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Pakistan);



- 35.56 Take judicial and administrative measures to effectively combat discrimination and hate crimes against Asian people and people of Asian descent and other ethnic minorities (China);
- 35.57 Step up measures to combat all forms of discrimination, particularly racial discrimination, with a particular focus on combating hate speech and racist and xenophobic rhetoric (Djibouti);
- 35.58 Intensify its efforts to combat hate crimes, investigate these cases and bring the perpetrators to justice (Ghana);
- 35.59 Take further measures to prevent hate crimes and hate speech, especially COVID-19-related hate incidents, as well as hate speech and hate crimes against people with migrant backgrounds, including through investigation of allegations of police violence against migrants (Japan);
- 35.60 Ensure that all complaints of police violence against immigrants are duly investigated and punished (Mexico);
- 35.61 Continue the ongoing efforts to prevent and tackle discrimination on any ground, including by improving data disaggregation (Republic of Korea);
- 35.62 Continue measures to combat discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, ethnicity, sex and physical condition and ensure inclusion in political and public life (Nepal);
- 35.63 Continue efforts in combating all forms of discrimination and ensure that corrective disciplinary and other accountability measures are in place to combat racial profiling and incidents of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (State of Palestine);
- 35.64 Continue strengthening the implementation of policies to combat racism and discrimination as envisaged by the interfederal anti-racism plan (Dominican Republic);
- 35.65 Continue its efforts to raise awareness among the public, judicial authorities and social workers to promote tolerance and respect for cultural diversity and to combat discrimination, racism and xenophobia (Turkmenistan);
- 35.66 Strengthen efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in order to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by all (Nigeria);
- 35.67 Redouble its efforts in combating racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia by expediting the assessment process of respective laws and continuing training for law enforcement officers (Thailand);
- 35.68 Enhance efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance with a view to promoting social integration and cohesion (Viet Nam);
- 35.69 Intensify the efforts carried out in order to confront all manifestations of racism and discrimination (Argentina);
- 35.70 Take all steps to eliminate discrimination based on racial stereotypes (Togo);
- 35.71 Take effective measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity and religion (Malaysia);
- 35.72 Take further steps to ensure a simplified and accessible mechanism for reporting acts of discrimination and intolerance (Botswana);
- 35.73 Take all measures necessary to prevent xenophobia, racism and hate crimes in society, and investigate incidents, including those experienced by the Asian community in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic (Indonesia);

- 35.74 Take the awareness-raising measures necessary to enhance respect for cultural diversity and to combat stereotyping, discrimination and Islamophobia (Saudi Arabia);
- 35.75 Urge political leaders not to use racism and xenophobia in the exercise of their functions (Congo);
- 35.76 Strengthen non-discrimination and equality measures, guaranteeing that the appropriate mechanisms for citizen participation are in place (Costa Rica);
- 35.77 Enhance efforts aiming at preventing and combating racism, racial discrimination and all other forms of discrimination (Italy);
- 35.78 Pursue the adoption and implementation of any measure aimed at the elimination of persistent racism (Mauritius);
- 35.79 Work with civil society to finalize and implement the national action plan against racism and related forms of discrimination (Australia);
- 35.80 Adopt a comprehensive national action plan against racial discrimination and related intolerance, in cooperation with civil society, including action to eliminate discriminatory practices (Portugal)
- 35.81 Adopt a comprehensive national action plan against racism (Burkina Faso);
- 35.82 Adopt and implement a national anti-racism plan, including measures to prevent ethnic profiling by law enforcement and online hate speech (Canada);
- 35.83 Continue to make progress towards the drafting of a comprehensive plan of action against racism and related intolerance and discrimination (Chile);
- 35.84 Draw up, adopt and implement a plan of action against racism, discrimination and related forms of intolerance, ensure that this process involves the participation of civil society (Cuba);
- 35.85 Pursue efforts to combat racism, xenophobia and hate speech by, inter alia, adopting a comprehensive national action plan against racism by its next universal periodic review (Czechia);
- 35.86 Elaborate, adopt and implement a national action plan against racism and related forms of discrimination as soon as possible (Finland);
- 35.87 Develop and implement a national anti-racism plan (France);
- 35.88 Implement fully and expeditiously the national plan against racism (Singapore);
- 35.89 Report transparently on the progress made towards achieving the strategic objectives of the national plan against racism (Singapore);
- 35.90 Finalize without delay the interfederal plan to combat racism (Singapore);
- 35.91 Expedite the development of an interfederal plan to combat racism and ensure its effective implementation in close consultation with civil society and other stakeholders (Malaysia);
- 35.92 Prepare and execute a national action plan against racism, in line with the commitment made at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Brazil);
- 35.93 Adopt a national plan to combat racism in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 35.94 Adopt a comprehensive national action plan against racism in keeping with commitments made at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Guyana);

- 35.95 **Adopt new policy measures to encourage enterprises headquartered in Belgium to respect human rights and carry out human rights due diligence throughout their global operations and supply chains (Netherlands);**
- 35.96 **Strengthen efforts to further promote business and human rights, including through the drafting of its second plan of action (Japan);**
- 35.97 **Continue implementing the national action plan on business and human rights (Luxembourg);**
- 35.98 **Take concrete action to address the negative impacts of climate change, both at home and abroad (Haiti);**
- 35.99 **Pursue the efforts made in the fight against terrorism by strengthening security mechanisms while respecting human rights (Morocco);**
- 35.100 **Ensure that all counter-terrorism operations are in compliance with international law (Pakistan);**
- 35.101 **Continue to ensure that the Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis respects human rights and international human rights law in advancing its mandate to implement counter-terrorism measures (Fiji);**
- 35.102 **Redouble efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism (Lebanon);**
- 35.103 **Refrain from transferring arms when there is a risk that they could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law (Panama);**
- 35.104 **Refrain from transferring weapons when there is a risk that they could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations or abuses of human rights or international humanitarian law (Mexico);**
- 35.105 **Investigate promptly and thoroughly all cases of police abuse and brutality and hold accountable all perpetrators of crimes (Slovakia);**
- 35.106 **Investigate the reports of unlawful use of force and racially motivated violence by law enforcement officials and bring those responsible to justice (Azerbaijan);**
- 35.107 **Raise awareness, in particular, against racial profiling by law enforcement bodies and maintain police training in order to address the issues of excessive use of force (Turkey);**
- 35.108 **Continue to eliminate persistent barriers to the full respect of human rights standards within the police, including through enhanced transparency on misconduct by police services (Austria);**
- 35.109 **Prevent ethnic profiling for identity checks by the police and provide responses to discriminatory practices (Bahrain);**
- 35.110 **Ensure that all allegations of police violence are independently and thoroughly investigated (Czechia);**
- 35.111 **Take further policy steps and provide appropriate training to police to combat racial and ethnic profiling (Croatia);**
- 35.112 **Prohibit ethnic profiling in identity checks and strengthen human rights training for police officers (Ecuador);**
- 35.113 **Conduct investigations by impartial and independent entities into the excessive violence committed by the security forces during demonstrations, and bring those responsible to justice (Egypt);**
- 35.114 **Ensure that the legal definition of torture is consistent with the Convention against Torture (Egypt);**

- 35.115 Incorporate human rights-based training and apply sanction mechanisms for law enforcement authorities who use racial profiling and excessive violence in the performance of their duties (Indonesia);
- 35.116 Take measures to ensure impartial investigations into all allegations of racist incidents caused by or involving the police (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 35.117 Continue efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, strengthen the mechanism for monitoring and follow-up of police services, and increase the effectiveness and enforcement of legislation (Libya);
- 35.118 Continue various measures to stop ethnic profiling by the police and other law enforcement agencies (Malawi);
- 35.119 Ensure adequate training for police, judicial and health-care actors involved in the fight against gender-based violence (Malta);
- 35.120 Intensify capacity-building programmes on racial and gender-based violence for duty bearers to ensure systematic reporting of and response on all cases (Philippines);
- 35.121 Take action against overcrowding and serious prison conditions and put an end to the violation of inmates' human rights (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 35.122 Take additional measures to improve conditions in prisons and detention facilities, including overcrowding (Republic of Korea);
- 35.123 Continue working to reduce overcrowding in prisons and improve living conditions in places of detention (Iraq);
- 35.124 Continue efforts to reduce prison overcrowding and improve conditions in places of detention (Uzbekistan);
- 35.125 Continue efforts to reduce prison overcrowding and to ensure that detention conditions are in line with international norms and standards (Austria);
- 35.126 Further implement further reforms aimed at improving conditions of detention, by reducing overcrowding and offering adequate physical, sanitary and psychological conditions to all prisoners (Brazil);
- 35.127 Enhance efforts to alleviate prison overcrowding and ensure that all prison facilities and detention conditions are in line with international standards (Czechia);
- 35.128 Effectively address the problem of hate speech in schools and ensure that the prohibition of religious symbols does not hinder access to education (Poland);
- 35.129 Take further measures to prevent religious intolerance and combat all manifestations of hatred (Qatar);
- 35.130 Take effective measures in combating all manifestations of religious intolerance and in promoting intercultural dialogue (Azerbaijan);
- 35.131 Adopt legislation to prohibit the manifestation of sympathies with and use of symbols of extremist ideologies (Slovakia);
- 35.132 Effectively combat all manifestations of Islamophobia (Israel);
- 35.133 Strengthen efforts to combat antisemitism and promote religious tolerance through policies and practices in education and policing (United States of America);
- 35.134 Adopt further measures in combating human trafficking and ensure the protection of the rights of victims, as well as the rights of migrants (Nigeria);

- 35.135 Continue efforts to combat human trafficking, and protect and ensure the rights of all victims of trafficking (Qatar);
- 35.136 Provide further training to first responders to identify victims of trafficking, particularly minors, and provide the necessary financial and human resources to first-line actors, specialized shelters and the judiciary (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 35.137 Strengthen the fight against human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, including through awareness-raising campaigns (Croatia);
- 35.138 Strengthen the prevention of new forms of violence, such as online harassment (Lithuania);
- 35.139 Intensify the fight against discriminatory practices in the field of employment (Angola);
- 35.140 Continue efforts to address the gender pay gap (Mozambique);
- 35.141 Continue efforts aimed at reducing the gender pay gap (Romania);
- 35.142 Maintain activities that contribute effectively to the fight against the wage gap between men and women (Peru);
- 35.143 Intensify measures to advance equality between men and women, particularly with regard to equal pay (Spain);
- 35.144 Effectively implement the Act of 22 April 2012 aimed at reducing the wage gap between men and women (Iceland);
- 35.145 Ensure that the public health system is adequately funded and staffed, and that care homes have sufficient specialized and trained staff, who are adequately equipped to guarantee respect for the rights of older persons living in care homes (Malta);
- 35.146 Ensure that patients receive high-quality palliative care (Haiti);
- 35.147 Ensure equitable access to health services, including COVID-19 vaccines, for all vulnerable groups, including migrant workers regardless of migration status (Philippines);
- 35.148 Follow up on the efforts made to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 epidemic (Lebanon);
- 35.149 Implement the commitment made at the Nairobi Summit on the International Conference on Population and Development to support programmes focused on reducing maternal mortality, promoting family planning and sexual and reproductive health for adolescents, and combating sexual violence and gender-based violence, including prevention and care of survivors (Panama);
- 35.150 Take further measures to address school dropout rates (Timor-Leste);
- 35.151 Take the steps necessary to reverse school dropout rates, particularly amongst marginalized communities, and take proactive measures in that regard to promote education and upward social mobility (Botswana);
- 35.152 Take further steps to address school dropout rates, particularly with regard to socially disadvantaged and marginalized children, and develop appropriate measures to ensure that those children remain in the education system (Bulgaria);
- 35.153 Take specific measures to ensure access to quality education for vulnerable children (Angola);
- 35.154 Accelerate the process of generalizing its inclusive education policy by integrating children with disabilities into the mainstream education system (Mozambique);

- 35.155 Ensure inclusive education for all children with disabilities (Slovenia);
- 35.156 Adopt systemic measures in the sphere of education and training with the aim of suppressing hate speech (Slovakia);
- 35.157 Continue efforts to address inequalities in education, and combat intolerance and hate speech among children, especially that targeting migrant and refugee children (Sudan);
- 35.158 Continue efforts to reduce education inequalities, particularly those faced by migrant children and refugee children (Peru);
- 35.159 Continue to take necessary measures in curbing structural discrimination against persons of foreign origin in the field of employment (India);
- 35.160 Ensure provision of adequate protection, remuneration and support services for domestic workers (Philippines);
- 35.161 Improve mechanisms to protect domestic workers from all forms of exploitation and abuse (Togo);
- 35.162 Continue its efforts in addressing the issue of youth unemployment (Bhutan);
- 35.163 Consider intensifying efforts to further increase the employment rates among young people, who are likely to be particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis (Cambodia);
- 35.164 Step up efforts to combat racism and all forms of discrimination, including in the areas of housing, education and employment (Qatar);
- 35.165 Enhance national responses to discriminatory practices, including in the areas of housing, education and employment (Sri Lanka);
- 35.166 Take steps to improve the situation of persons experiencing homelessness (Bahamas);
- 35.167 Ensure equitable access to housing and other social benefits (Bahrain);
- 35.168 Scale up efforts in combating the structural causes of family poverty with increased public participation (Ethiopia);
- 35.169 Continue implementing its measures and national plans to combat poverty, particularly the impoverishment resulting from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and continue to build a tolerant society and combat police violence (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 35.170 In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, mainstream the gender dimension and adopt inclusive measures to better protect the rights of vulnerable persons disproportionately affected by the crisis (Viet Nam);
- 35.171 Continue its efforts in promoting gender equality by tackling the underrepresentation of women in management and strategic positions, as well as promoting the rights of the child and the rights of persons with disabilities (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 35.172 Continue to promote increased representation of women at all levels of the public administration, particularly in decision-making positions (Iceland);
- 35.173 Continue efforts exerted to strengthen national policies and strategies aimed at reducing the manifestations of discrimination against women and achieving de facto gender equality in wages and access to strategic and administrative positions (Tunisia);
- 35.174 Continue to promote increased representation of women at all levels of the public administration, particularly in decision-making positions, and facilitate their participation in management roles in the private sector (Bulgaria);

- 35.175 Effectively eliminate violence against women and guarantee women's rights (China);
- 35.176 Ensure that combating gender-based violence remains a key priority (Cyprus);
- 35.177 Strengthen national coordination in order to fight domestic violence even more effectively (Mauritius);
- 35.178 Strengthen efforts to combat violence against women and domestic violence, including by ensuring adequate funding and increased coordination between state and federal actors and civil society (Norway);
- 35.179 Strengthen accountability for the sexual exploitation of women and children and the involvement of adolescents in prostitution and ensure that such crimes are effectively investigated (Belarus);
- 35.180 Strengthen the prevention of new forms of gender-based violence, such as online harassment (Greece);
- 35.181 Strengthen efforts to combat domestic violence and work with civil society to build an environment that enables greater reporting of such incidents to the authorities (Singapore);
- 35.182 Take action against the increase in sexual and domestic violence and protect the numerous children affected (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 35.183 Take legislative and administrative measures to combat all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination against women in economic and social spheres (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);
- 35.184 Adopt a national action plan against gender-based violence with adequate financial resources and an efficient system to collect disaggregated data (Spain);
- 35.185 Continue efforts to combat all forms of gender-based violence (France);
- 35.186 Continue efforts to eliminate the practice of female genital mutilation (Burkina Faso);
- 35.187 Continue its efforts to raise awareness among the public, the police, the judicial authorities and social workers at support centres on all forms of violence against women and on the mechanisms available for victims (Iceland);
- 35.188 Continue financing of centres to provide care for victims and strengthen the prevention of new forms of gender-based violence, such as cyberharassment (Luxembourg);
- 35.189 Ensure the establishment of care centres for survivors of sexual violence and their accessibility all over the country (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 35.190 Ensure the establishment of care centres for victims of sexual violence in places that are easily accessible from all over the country and ensure that all such centres receive structural support and sufficient financing (Bulgaria);
- 35.191 Ensure adequate training of the authorities involved in addressing gender-based violence and stricter punishment for perpetrators (Malaysia);
- 35.192 Improve the systematic collection and analysis of data on violence against women and ensure low-threshold access for victims to justice and specialized support centres (Austria);
- 35.193 Collect and publish disaggregated data on gender-based violence, and fully implement the Istanbul Convention through a sufficiently funded and detailed national action plan on gender-based violence (Finland);

- 35.194 Continue with measures aimed at the realization of children's rights, with a focus on children living in poverty and children with disabilities (Georgia);
- 35.195 Take steps to reduce rates of child poverty and discrimination against children, particularly those of migrant backgrounds (Bahamas);
- 35.196 Take effective measures to prevent discrimination against children living in poverty and children with disabilities in access to health care, education and housing (Uzbekistan);
- 35.197 Further promote the rights of children, including the improvement of the situation of children living in poverty and children with disabilities (Japan);
- 35.198 Step up measures to combat poverty, including child poverty among certain population groups (Sri Lanka);
- 35.199 Give priority to the eradication of child poverty, including through the early adoption of the plan to combat poverty, providing it with sufficient resources for its full implementation, and guarantee equal opportunities for all children in terms of access to inclusive quality education (Uruguay);
- 35.200 Ensure the development of programmes and policies to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, as well as the recovery and social reintegration of victims (Serbia);
- 35.201 Ensure the effective implementation of the national strategy for the integration of Roma people and develop programmes to fight discrimination against Roma people (Peru);
- 35.202 Intensify ongoing efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities (Cyprus);
- 35.203 Strengthen efforts to increase integration of persons with disabilities into public life, including by ensuring the accessibility of all educational facilities, public transport and health centres (Sudan);
- 35.204 Take steps to ensure the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in political and public decision-making processes (Philippines);
- 35.205 Take the measures necessary to facilitate access to employment for persons with disabilities (Zambia);
- 35.206 Take additional measures to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities (Marshall Islands);
- 35.207 Consider developing policies related to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, especially in public employment (India);
- 35.208 Facilitate greater access to employment for persons with disabilities and ensure access to social services, including education, for children with disabilities (Thailand);
- 35.209 Strengthen measures to identify all unaccompanied minors and improve the national system for the reception, guardianship, education and training of these minors (Togo);
- 35.210 Take the measures necessary to ensure that the rights of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum are protected in accordance with the best interests of the child (Uganda);
- 35.211 Intensify efforts so that the best interests of the child prevail in State decisions regarding migrant and refugee children (Argentina);
- 35.212 Place the best interests of the child as a priority in migration policies, including on family reunification (Indonesia);



- 35.213 Continue efforts to develop procedures for responding to immigrants who are minors and unaccompanied children, in order to achieve their best interests (Tunisia);
- 35.214 Strengthen efforts to protect the rights of migrant children, in line with recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Ireland);
- 35.215 Guarantee the protection of the human rights of migrant children, respecting their integrity and dignity (Nicaragua);
- 35.216 Adopt measures to ensure that an individual assessment is carried out for each case of asylum, deportation or expulsion, with full respect for the principle of non-refoulement (Afghanistan);
- 35.217 Take concrete action for the international legal protection of the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers (El Salvador);
- 35.218 Continue to strengthen and improve the processes for accommodating asylum seekers with an independent and thorough examination of their asylum applications and an effective appeal process (Fiji).
36. The following recommendations will be examined by Belgium, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the forty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council:
- 36.1 Ratify the core human rights treaties, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Kazakhstan);
- 36.2 Become a party to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Azerbaijan);
- 36.3 Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and establish a national preventive mechanism as a matter of priority (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 36.4 Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Argentina);
- 36.5 Ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Switzerland);
- 36.6 Ensure that the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights is allocated all competencies in line with the Paris Principles (Germany);
- 36.7 Reform the federal human rights institution so that it is fully compliant with the Paris Principles and all human rights issues are within its mandate, including regional competencies and cross-cutting issues (Lithuania);
- 36.8 Establish a national mechanism for accountability and reparations regarding the grave violations committed by Belgium in the colonial era (Syrian Arab Republic);
- 36.9 Strengthen protection against hate crimes by eliminating distinctions between types of hate speech online, standardizing the legal interpretation of hate as an aggravating factor for crime and strengthening the collection of disaggregated data on hate offences (Australia);
- 36.10 Devote additional resources to prosecuting hate crimes and countering discrimination against vulnerable groups, in particular Muslims, LGBTIQ+

persons, refugees and migrants, and persons of African origin (United States of America);

36.11 Avoid the instrumentalization of racism, xenophobia and hate speech by politicians in their pursuit of political office, and promote inclusion, solidarity and meaningful commitments to equality (Jordan);

36.12 Provide a structural response to discriminatory acts towards persons belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, such as ethnic profiling for identity checks by the police or obstacles in access to housing, employment or social benefits (Poland);

36.13 Make efforts to confront acts that involve discrimination against ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (Iraq);

36.14 Adopt clear measures to effectively combat discrimination based on racial, ethnic, national or religious stereotypes (Sierra Leone);

36.15 Amend laws and adopt a national action plan to combat racism and Islamophobia and ensure accountability for racially motivated acts (Pakistan);

36.16 Take the steps necessary for the development of a national strategy against racial discrimination, xenophobia and Islamophobia with a view to facilitating the protection of the human rights of migrants and refugees (Turkey);

36.17 Adopt and implement a comprehensive national action plan against racism and all related forms of discrimination based on racial, ethnic, national or religious stereotypes (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);

36.18 Adopt a national action plan against racism to combat the persistence of discriminatory acts against persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (Jordan);

36.19 Finalize the process of adoption of the national plan against racism to eradicate discriminatory acts against persons belonging to ethnic, religious, linguistic or sexual minorities, and combat xenophobia and hate speech, especially against migrant and refugee children (Ecuador);

36.20 Improve the effectiveness of anti-discrimination legislation, and fully implement the recommendations of the committee of experts, the national plan on racism and the horizontal plan for equal opportunities and integration (2020–2024) (Guyana);

36.21 Adopt a national action plan against racism, as well as a national strategy for the inclusion of people of African descent (Côte d'Ivoire);

36.22 Adopt an inclusive national strategy on persons of African descent (Angola);

36.23 Adopt a national strategy for the inclusion of people of African descent in Belgium, including migrants (Rwanda);

36.24 Implement the recommendations of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, including adopting a comprehensive national action plan, that includes data disaggregated by race and clarifies the jurisdiction of anti-discrimination authorities (Sierra Leone);

36.25 Take further legislative steps to ensure that legal gender recognition happens through a quick, transparent and accessible procedure (Malta);

36.26 Ensure equality and non-discrimination based on sexual orientation by lifting restrictions imposed on homosexual men from donating blood, and adopt the least exclusionary approach taking into account current scientific studies (Israel);

36.27 Take more concrete steps to enact legislation specific to conflict-affected areas and to provide conflict-specific guidance and advice for business

enterprises on ensuring respect for human rights to prevent and address the heightened risk of corporate involvement in gross human right violations in conflict-affected areas, including in situations of foreign occupation (State of Palestine);

36.28 Strengthen the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including at the legislative level, by requiring companies to conduct human rights due diligence (France);

36.29 Develop a comprehensive national plan to combat climate change and address the negative impacts of climate change on health (Maldives);

36.30 Develop a national plan of action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Marshall Islands);

36.31 Ensure that women, children, persons with disabilities, minority groups and local communities are meaningfully engaged in the development and implementation of frameworks on climate change and disaster risk reduction (Fiji);

36.32 Establish clear human rights-based criteria to ensure that the Paris Agreement targets are implemented (Marshall Islands);

36.33 Take effective legal and organizational measures to prevent the emergence and operation of neo-fascist organizations on the territory of the State (Russian Federation);

36.34 Adopt a comprehensive strategy regarding its nationals recruited as terrorist fighters abroad and their families to repatriate them for trial or rehabilitation, according to international law (Syrian Arab Republic);

36.35 Revise the executive and legislative frameworks to prevent the flow of new waves of terrorist fighters to other countries, and prohibiting their financial support (Syrian Arab Republic);

36.36 Adopt a national plan to address the consequences of violating its obligations under Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017) regarding prevention of the movement of terrorists and terrorist networks (Syrian Arab Republic);

36.37 Establish mechanisms guaranteeing the human rights of prisoners and detainees at all times, as highlighted by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Norway);

36.38 Urgently allocate greater resources to create new detention facilities, upgrade existing ones, and prohibit the placement of persons not subject to criminal responsibility in psychiatric wings (Spain);

36.39 Avoid the incarceration of inmates with psychiatric conditions in prisons and simultaneously increase the number of places available in specialized care facilities (Canada);

36.40 Ensure that the prison population does not exceed prison capacity (Denmark);

36.41 Adopt a strategy based on a human rights and gender equality approach to fight the radicalization of children and hate speech, including with regard to children in vulnerable situations (Panama);

36.42 Respect the rights of members of all religious groups to worship as they choose, and respect choice of dress and the practice of ritual slaughter (United States of America);

36.43 Take all the measures necessary to affirm freedom of religion and belief and the freedom to practise rituals, to provide assistance to all without discrimination, and to enjoy the right to expression (Libya);

- 36.44 Guarantee freedom of religion or belief by allowing the peaceful expression of religious beliefs, including the wearing of religious symbols (Malaysia);
- 36.45 Combat Islamophobia by criminalizing racist and Islamophobic acts (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 36.46 Step up measures at the federal and regional levels to curb the increasing incidence of antisemitism, including banning antisemitic depictions at the annual Aalst Carnival (Israel);
- 36.47 Ensure, as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, that restrictions on citizens' rights and freedoms are imposed in exceptional cases only and are proportionate, and ensure that the health-care system is accessible to disadvantaged citizens and migrants and refugees (Belarus);
- 36.48 Protect and promote the right to life of all people until natural death, without discrimination on the basis of age, disability or any other grounds (Bangladesh);
- 36.49 Seek a legal framework that guarantees parity between men and women, especially in the public administration (Nicaragua);
- 36.50 Increase the representation of women at all levels and in decision-making positions (Bahrain);
- 36.51 Continue efforts to improve the data-gathering system, ensuring that data are disaggregated by complaints and later convictions involving all forms of violence against women (Dominican Republic);
- 36.52 Develop a national plan to combat child poverty, which specifically targets families at risk of poverty, and includes structural, sustainable and multidimensional responses aligned with the United Nations guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights (Canada);
- 36.53 Ensure the effective implementation of the national strategy for Roma integration, by adopting a plan that includes special measures for Roma women and children and creating a special and adequate budget for these purposes (Serbia);
- 36.54 Take effective measures to fully realize the cultural and linguistic rights of minorities, in particular the francophone minority in Flanders (Russian Federation);
- 36.55 Adopt specific measures to facilitate access for persons with disabilities to employment, respecting the established quotas (Spain);
- 36.56 Guarantee the right to employment of persons with disabilities by ensuring vocational training, adequate levels of accessibility and effective protection against discrimination (Cuba);
- 36.57 Further strengthen measures to facilitate access to employment for persons with disabilities, including by ensuring compliance with the quotas set by the public authorities (Montenegro);
- 36.58 Eliminate and prohibit the practice of detaining migrant families with children and develop less coercive measures (Paraguay);
- 36.59 Avoid the detention of families with children in the process of expulsion and establish by law the absolute prohibition of the detention of children for reasons related to migration (Mexico);
- 36.60 Continue its efforts to strengthen measures and strategies to improve detention procedures, including prohibiting the practice of immigration detention of families with children (Ghana);
- 36.61 Stop the detention of children for immigration-related reasons (Philippines);

- 36.62 Provide in its legislation for an absolute ban on the detention of children for migration-related reasons (Niger);
- 36.63 Prohibit the detention or imprisonment of minors for purely administrative reasons, and provide adequate and age-appropriate reception standards and conditions for all migrant children, both European and non-European (Cuba);
- 36.64 Prohibit, as a matter of absolute necessity, the detention or confinement of minors on purely administrative grounds (Zambia);
- 36.65 Prohibit by law the detention of children on the basis of their immigration status, using non-custodial solutions instead, and strengthen immediate protection measures for all unaccompanied children, guaranteeing their systematic and timely referral to the guardianship bodies (Uruguay);
- 36.66 Take all the measures necessary to facilitate administrative procedures related to family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection, including by reducing processing times for visa applications and by waiving conditions related to applicants' economic status, such as regular and sufficient means of subsistence, adequate housing and health insurance coverage (Somalia);
- 36.67 Ensure that foreign children benefit from an adequate reception that upholds their dignity and their rights (Costa Rica);
- 36.68 Implement effective integration policies for minorities, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups in combating discrimination against them (Azerbaijan);
- 36.69 Provide legislative guarantees for the effective protection of all migrant workers from various forms of discrimination, including in terms of working conditions and wages (Belarus).
37. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Belgium and have been noted by Belgium:
- 37.1 Consider ratifying the core human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Malawi);
- 37.2 Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Côte d'Ivoire) (Somalia) (Timor-Leste);
- 37.3 Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families to move forward with Sustainable Development Goals 5 (targets 5.4), 8, 10 and 16 (Paraguay);
- 37.4 Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Chile) (El Salvador) (Philippines) (Rwanda);
- 37.5 Sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Egypt);
- 37.6 Accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Congo) (Senegal);
- 37.7 Ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Rwanda);
- 37.8 Take effective steps to avoid contributing to gross violations of the human rights of populations targeted by unilateral coercive measures as a result of compliance with such measures (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 37.9 Cease arms supplies to countries that commit violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law (Islamic Republic of Iran);

- 37.10 Investigate effectively incidents of racism and police violence against the backdrop of growing mistrust of the police as a result of repeated deaths of migrants at the hands of police (Russian Federation);
- 37.11 Explicitly prohibit direct and indirect discrimination and ethnic profiling by the police, and impose exemplary punishments for hate speech and hate crimes (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 37.12 Amend the Police Act by including the explicit prohibition of discrimination and racial profiling (Saudi Arabia);
- 37.13 Make efforts to combat religious-based classification in interrogations, searches and other law enforcement measures (Saudi Arabia);
- 37.14 Promote policies for supporting the family, as it is the fundamental and natural unit of society (Egypt);
- 37.15 Provide support and protection for the family, as it is the basic and natural unit of society (Libya);
- 37.16 Take steps to ensure that the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men gives equal priority to the challenges faced by men and boys in Belgium (Haiti);
- 37.17 Adopt specific legislation on domestic violence and, in particular, violence against women, ensure that all migrant women can request protection against domestic violence and put an end to expulsion processes in this context (Argentina);
- 37.18 Establish mechanisms enabling migrant women in an irregular situation to report violence against them without fear of deportation (Zambia);
- 37.19 Strengthen protection for migrants, including through ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Sri Lanka);
- 37.20 Stop implementing policies and measures that violate the rights of migrants (China);
- 37.21 Stop implementing policies and administrative measures violating the rights of migrants, and effectively protect their fundamental rights (Democratic People's Republic of Korea).
38. 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 Belgium was headed by Her Excellency, Sophie WILMÈS, Vice-Première Ministre et Ministre des Etrangères, des Affaires européennes et du Commerce extérieur, et des Institutions culturelles fédérales and composed of the following members:

- H.E Marc PECSTEEN DE BUYTSWERVE, Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent de la Belgique auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève;
- M<sup>me</sup> Delphine DELIEUX, Cheffe de cabinet adjoint de la Cellule stratégique de la Vice-Première Ministre et Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, des Affaires européennes et du Commerce extérieur;
- M. Xavier BAERT, Conseiller diplomatique de la Cellule stratégique du Ministre de la Justice;
- M. Daan FONCK, Conseiller de la Cellule stratégique du Secrétaire d'Etat à la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, chargé de l'Urbanisme et du Patrimoine, des Relations européennes et internationales, du Commerce extérieur et de la Lutte contre l'incendie et l'aide médicale urgente;
- M<sup>me</sup> Hanne IMRE, Conseiller de la Cellule stratégique de la Ministre flamande de la Justice et de l'Application, de l'Environnement, de l'Energie et du Tourisme;
- M. Tom NEIJENS, Ministre conseiller, Représentant permanent adjoint de la Belgique auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève;
- M. David MAENAUT, Délégué du Gouvernement flamand auprès des Nations Unies à Genève;
- M<sup>me</sup> Fabienne REUTER, Déléguée générale, Délégation générale pour la Communauté française de Belgique et de la Région wallonne à Genève;
- M<sup>me</sup> Véronique JOOSTEN, Directrice Droits Humains, Service Public Fédéral Affaires Etrangères, des Affaires européennes et du Commerce extérieur;
- M. Philip WÉRY, Chef du Service des Droits Humains, Direction générale de la Législation et des Libertés et droits fondamentaux, Service Public Fédéral Justice;
- M<sup>me</sup> Tine CLAUS, Cheffe d'équipe Cellule Egalité des Chances, Service Public Fédéral Justice;
- M<sup>me</sup> Evie RUYMBEKE, Adjointe de la Directrice Droits Humains, Service Public Fédéral Affaires Etrangères, des Affaires européennes et du Commerce extérieur;
- M. Pieter LEENKNEGT, Conseiller, Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève;
- M<sup>me</sup> Sandrine ROCHEZ, Conseillère juridique, Police fédérale, Commissariat général, Direction de la coopération policière internationale;
- M<sup>me</sup> Yana GIOVANIS, Attachée, FPS Emploi, Travail et Dialogue Social;
- M<sup>me</sup> Sylvie KORMOSS, Attachée, Cellule internationale, Service Public Fédéral Intérieur;
- M<sup>me</sup> Isabelle LECLERCQ, Attachée, service Droits Humains, Service Public Fédéral Justice;
- M<sup>me</sup> Josée GORIS, Attachée, Cellule internationale, SPP Intégration sociale;
- M. Thomas PEETERS, Juriste en droits humains, Département de la Chancellerie et des Affaires étrangères du Gouvernement flamand;
- M<sup>me</sup> Audrey MONCAREY, Attachée pour la Communauté française de Belgique et de la Région wallonne à Genève;

- M. Marien FAURE, Attaché au Département Multilatéral mondial pour la Communauté française de Belgique;
  - M. Geert DE ROEP, Attaché, Service public régional de Bruxelles, Direction des relations extérieures, Ministère de la Région Bruxelles-Capitale;
  - M<sup>me</sup> Véronique DE BAETS, Attachée, Institut pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes.
-