



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

### Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Tajikistan\*

1. The Committee considered the fourth periodic report of Tajikistan<sup>1</sup> at its 45th and 46th meetings,<sup>2</sup> held on 5 October 2022, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 60th meeting, held on 14 October 2022.

#### A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission by the State party of the fourth periodic report and the supplementary information provided in the written replies<sup>3</sup> to the list of issues.<sup>4</sup> The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue that it held with the State party's delegation.

#### B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the legislative, institutional and policy measures taken to increase the protection of economic, social and cultural rights in the State party, such as the National Development Strategy for the period 2016–2030, the Constitutional Act on Nationality (2015), the Amnesty Act (2019) and the measures mentioned in the present concluding observations.

#### C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

##### Domestic application of the Covenant

4. While the Committee notes the information provided by the State party that training seminars on international human rights standards are held for lawyers, State officials and the judiciary, including judges of the Supreme Court, the Committee is concerned that these seminars do not include training on the provisions of the Covenant. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of court decisions invoking provisions of the Covenant.

**5. The Committee recommends that the State party provide training on a regular basis concerning the rights enshrined in the Covenant and their enforceability in the courts and provide rights holders with the information necessary to assert these rights. It also recommends that the State party ensure that economic, social and cultural rights can be invoked at all levels of the judicial system and that it include in its next periodic report information on decisions taken by national courts that invoke the Covenant. In**

\* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-second session (26 September–14 October 2022).

<sup>1</sup> E/C.12/TJK/4.

<sup>2</sup> See E/C.12/2022/SR.45 and E/C.12/2022/SR.46.

<sup>3</sup> E/C.12/TJK/RQ/4.

<sup>4</sup> E/C.12/TJK/Q/4 and E/C.12/TJK/Q/4/Corr.1.



**this regard, the Committee refers to its general comment No. 9 (1998) on the domestic application of the Covenant.**

#### **Independence of the judiciary**

6. The Committee remains concerned that the independence and impartiality of the judiciary lack effective guarantees, including that the Qualification Commission of the Union of Lawyers, which grants access to practice law, is still chaired by the Ministry of Justice.

**7. Reiterating its previous recommendation in this regard,<sup>5</sup> the Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full independence of the judiciary, including by granting independent status to the Qualification Commission of the Union of Lawyers and by ensuring appropriate legal guarantees.**

#### **National human rights institution**

8. While the Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to strengthen the mandate of the Commissioner for Human Rights, it is concerned about the limited progress made towards achieving its full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

**9. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to bring the Commissioner for Human Rights into full compliance with the Paris Principles, including by further strengthening its independence and by providing it with adequate financial and human resources to effectively and independently carry out its mandate, including the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights.**

#### **Civil society**

10. The Committee is concerned about excessive restrictions, both in law and in practice, on non-governmental organizations concerning their registration and their reporting obligations regarding external grants, particularly on organizations working for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. The Committee notes that such restrictions hinder operations by these organizations engaged in the protection and promotion of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights.

**11. The Committee recommends that the State party repeal any legal provisions that unduly restrict the activities of non-governmental organizations, including in relation to their registration and access to grants. It also recommends that the State party guarantee an enabling environment for all non-governmental and non-profit organizations engaged in the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights.**

#### **Human rights defenders**

12. The Committee is seriously concerned about reports of arrests, detention and trials without due process of human rights defenders, including those working to defend economic, social and cultural rights, in the context of the protests in the Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region in November 2021 and May 2022. The Committee is particularly concerned about reports of a lack of transparency regarding their detention and trials, and their lack of access to lawyers during the proceedings.

**13. The Committee recommends that the State party immediately provide all due process guarantees during arrests, detention and trials of human rights defenders, including those working to protect economic, social and cultural rights, and including access to independent and effective legal representation at every stage of the proceedings. The Committee refers the State party to its statement on human rights defenders and economic, social and cultural rights, adopted in 2016.<sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> E/C.12/TJK/CO/2-3 para. 8.

<sup>6</sup> E/C.12/2016/2.

### Management of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic

14. Regarding the Government's response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Committee is concerned about the lack of transparency and factual information conveyed to the public about the development of the pandemic, and about the tight control of non-governmental reports on the pandemic through the imposition of fines and criminal penalties for reports that are deemed inaccurate. The Committee is also concerned about reports indicating a lack of transparency in the distribution of funds allocated to the COVID-19 response, failure to take adequate measures to protect medical professionals and patients, including insufficient provision of personal protective equipment, and to allocate sufficient resources to diagnose and treat COVID-19 cases.

15. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure transparency and timely dissemination of accurate information shared with the public, based on science and evidence, while respecting freedom of expression, in particular by repealing the provisions regarding sanctions in relation to COVID-19;**

(b) **Ensure accountability and transparency in the management of funds allocated to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic;**

(c) **Take adequate measures to protect medical professionals and patients, and provide sufficient resources for the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 cases;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 25 (2020) on science and economic, social and cultural rights, and its statement on the COVID-19 pandemic and economic, social and cultural rights, adopted in April 2020.<sup>7</sup>**

### Corruption

16. The Committee notes the measures taken by the State party to address corruption, including the adoption of the Anti-Corruption Act (2020), the Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period 2021–2030 and the Strategy's action plan. However, the Committee is concerned about reports that corruption is still widespread in all sectors of society, including in the judiciary and the health and education sectors. The Committee is also concerned that there have been no significant improvements to the national legislation to fully criminalize corruption, in accordance with international standards (art. 2 (1)).

17. **The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to prevent and eradicate corruption at all levels and address the problem of impunity, including through the criminalization of all corruption offences and all elements of bribery offences. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that its legislation is in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.**

### Non-discrimination

18. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Act on Equality and Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, which came into force on 22 July 2022. However, while the Committee notes that this Act prohibits discrimination based on "other circumstances", it is concerned about its ineffective implementation when it comes to discrimination not expressly included in the Act, such as discrimination based on criminal records or on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (art. 2 (2)).

19. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the effective implementation of the Act on Equality and Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination for all persons facing discrimination. The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.**

<sup>7</sup> E/C.12/2020/1.

### **Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons**

20. The Committee is concerned about the stigmatization and discrimination affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, which hinder their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, and the lack of government policies, programmes or initiatives aimed at counteracting such stigmatization and discrimination or at promoting tolerance of sexual and gender minorities (art. 2 (2)).

**21. The Committee recommends that the State party provide effective protection against all forms of discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, which hinders the enjoyment by victims of their economic, social and cultural rights. It also recommends that the State party take all the measures necessary to combat stigmatization and discrimination affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, including through awareness-raising campaigns.**

### **Refugees and asylum-seekers**

22. The Committee is concerned that refugees and asylum-seekers face legal restrictions and have difficulties finding accommodation locally, have restricted access to certain urban areas and are prohibited from residing in the major urban centres, which limits their access to the labour market, health care, education, housing and other services. Moreover, the Committee is concerned about reports that Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers and other Afghan nationals have been deported from Tajikistan, which puts them at risk of irreparable harm upon their return on account of torture, ill-treatment or other violations of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. The Committee is further concerned that, as a result of these deportations, families have been separated, which constitutes a violation of their right to a family unit and negatively affects their ability to enjoy several economic, social and cultural rights (arts. 2 (2) and 10 (1)).

**23. The Committee urges that the State party:**

(a) **Implement the Committee's previous recommendation in this regard by taking all the necessary steps to lift the restrictions under presidential resolutions No. 325 (2000) and No. 328 (2004), in order to ensure the enjoyment by refugees and asylum-seekers of the economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in the Covenant;<sup>8</sup>**

(b) **Operationalize as soon as possible the anticipated temporary accommodation centre and ensure that it is accessible to vulnerable asylum-seekers;**

(c) **Ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement, abstaining from any removal or transfer of persons, regardless of their status, when there are substantial grounds for believing that the returnee would be at risk of irreparable harm upon return on account of torture, ill-treatment or other serious breaches of human rights obligations, including of economic, social and cultural rights; and end all forms of refoulement and deportation that affect the rights of the families of refugees and asylum-seekers;**

(d) **Take account of the Committee's statement on the duties of States towards refugees and migrants under the Covenant.<sup>9</sup>**

### **Persons with disabilities**

24. The Committee welcomes the adoption of a national action plan (2020), the National Programme on an Accessible Environment for the period 2021–2025 and other measures aimed at ratifying and implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, the Committee remains concerned that persons with disabilities face barriers hindering their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights owing to the lack of effective implementation of reasonable accommodation, particularly in educational and medical facilities (art. 2 (2)).

<sup>8</sup> E/C.12/TJK/CO/2-3 para. 15.

<sup>9</sup> E/C.12/2017/1.

25. **The Committee recommends that the State party accelerate its efforts towards ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as soon as possible. The Committee also recommends that the State party ensure the accessibility of all institutions and services and impose a duty to provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in both the public and the private sectors.**

#### **Persons living with HIV/AIDS**

26. The Committee commends the State party for its efforts in HIV prevention, including the National Programme to Combat the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Tajikistan for the period 2021–2025. However, the Committee is concerned about various discriminatory legal provisions, including the prohibition of persons infected with HIV from entering medical universities and from being eligible for child adoption, and mandatory HIV testing before marriage, which promote HIV-related stigmatization and discrimination and pose major barriers for persons living with HIV/AIDS or at risk of infection to seek prevention, treatment, and support. The Committee is particularly concerned about the criminalization of HIV exposure and transmission under article 125 of the Criminal Code. The Committee is also concerned that information on HIV status is not kept confidential (arts. 2 and 12).

27. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take the appropriate measures to repeal article 125 of the Criminal Code, with the effect of decriminalizing HIV exposure and transmission;**

(b) **Take the appropriate measures to repeal or amend all laws that discriminate against people living with HIV in the context of child adoption, marriage, labour relations, access to health services and education;**

(c) **Guarantee informed consent and medical confidentiality with respect to the HIV status of individuals when handled by the judiciary, medical personnel, social workers and school authorities;**

(d) **Take into account the Committee's general comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health.**

#### **Equal rights of men and women**

28. The Committee notes the legal and policy measures taken by the State party to achieve gender equality, including the National Strategy to Enhance the Role of Women for the period 2021–2030. However, the Committee remains concerned about the entrenched gender stereotypes that prevent girls from continuing secondary education and taking an active part in society. The Committee is also concerned about reports that women continue to earn less than men in the labour market, particularly in the agricultural sector, are concentrated in the informal sector and in occupations which require few or no qualifications, and are underrepresented in decision-making positions and the civil service (art. 3).

29. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take concrete measures to ensure the effective implementation of its legislative and policy framework on gender equality and to guarantee equal enjoyment by women and girls of economic, social and cultural rights while eliminating gender stereotypes;**

(b) **Address the low enrolment of women and girls in secondary and higher education, including through awareness-raising campaigns targeted at the general public, with a view to facilitating the full participation of women and girls in the labour market, education and other areas of social and cultural life;**

(c) **Strengthen its efforts to reduce the gender pay gap, particularly in the agricultural sector, and provide training and capacity-building for women in non-traditional fields of employment and in areas that will provide them with equal career opportunities;**

(d) **Strengthen measures to tackle the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions and the civil service, including by adopting temporary special measures such as quotas;**

(e) **Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the level of implementation and results of the legal and policy measures aimed at achieving gender equality, in consultation with the Commissioner for Human Rights and civil society organizations, as appropriate;**

(f) **Take into account the Committee's general comment No. 16 (2005) on the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.**

#### **Violence against women**

30. While recognizing the State party's efforts to address gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, the Committee remains concerned that various forms of gender-based violence against women, including domestic violence, are still prevalent in the country. The Committee is concerned about impunity, protection gaps in legislation, weakness in the criminal justice system and the failure of the authorities to address the situation in a systematic manner (art. 3).

31. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt comprehensive legislation to criminalize all forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, marital rape and sexual assault within and outside marriage;**

(b) **Ensure that all reports of gender-based violence against women are investigated and that those responsible are prosecuted and punished;**

(c) **Provide the necessary training and capacity-building programmes to law enforcement officials and run awareness-raising campaigns for the general public;**

(d) **Ensure that victims have access to all the services necessary, such as shelters, medical and psychosocial care, legal assistance and socioeconomic support.**

#### **Right to work**

32. While the Committee notes the measures taken by the State party to strengthen vocational education and training in order to promote employment, the Committee remains concerned about the overall lack of employment opportunities in the State party, resulting in a large number of Tajik nationals migrating to other countries in search of jobs. The Committee is particularly concerned about the high rate of unemployment, particularly among young people, women, and persons with disabilities (art. 6).

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Create employment opportunities by restructuring its industries and the labour market;**

(b) **Retain its professional labour force by raising salaries;**

(c) **Reform its national system of technical and vocational education and training to ensure that qualifications and skills are aligned with the needs of the labour market;**

(d) **Continue to take positive measures to assist the groups most affected by unemployment, particularly young people, women, and persons with disabilities.**

#### **Wage arrears**

34. The Committee is concerned about wage arrears concerning workers in a variety of sectors, including mining and manufacturing (art. 7).

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure the effective monitoring of the payment of wages and provide for appropriate and dissuasive sanctions in case of violations;**

(b) **Ensure that a wage-guarantee institution is in place for workers to secure payment of their wages when such payment cannot be made by the employer owing to insolvency;**

(c) **Ensure that mechanisms of redress provide not only for the full payment of the overdue wages but also for fair compensation for the losses incurred on account of delayed payment.**

#### **Labour inspection**

36. The Committee is concerned about the impact on the human rights of workers of legislation providing for a moratorium on inspections of business entities, as it envisages the suspension of labour inspections, which are important mechanisms for the protection of workers' rights and for ensuring appropriate conditions of work (art. 7).

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that a moratorium on inspections does not apply to labour inspections, that labour inspections are carried out as frequently and as thoroughly as necessary, and that labour inspectors have the authority to conduct visits without prior notice, particularly when investigating occupational health and safety issues.**

#### **Informal economy**

38. While the Committee notes the State programme to reduce unregistered, informal employment for the period 2019–2023, and the programme's implementation plan, it is concerned that the programme does not include specific and measurable indicators or specify the financial resources allocated to its objectives and activities. The Committee is also concerned about the exclusion of workers in the informal economy and non-traditional forms of employment from the scope of application of the Labour Code, which restricts their access to labour rights, and the lack of statistical data on the informal economy (arts. 6–8).

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all the necessary measures to effectively implement the State programme to reduce unregistered, informal employment for the period 2019–2023;**

(b) **Ensure that workers in the informal economy are included within the scope of the Labour Code and other labour legislation and the social protection system;**

(c) **Collect information on the informal economy, including its scale and the working conditions therein, on a regular basis;**

(d) **Take into account the Committee's general comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work.**

#### **Trade union rights**

40. The Committee is concerned about reports of interference from government authorities in the formation and functioning of independent trade unions. The Committee is also concerned: (a) that section 323 (2) of the Labour Code requires a two-thirds majority to call a strike, which may preclude a strike from being called as the quorum of two thirds of those present in the meeting may be difficult to achieve; and (b) that sections 1, 290, 291, 301, 306 and 307 of the same instrument envisage that workers may be represented, including for the purpose of collective bargaining, by representatives other than trade unions, irrespective of whether there is a trade union at the enterprise or at a higher level (art. 8).

41. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all the measures necessary to guarantee the right of all persons to form and join trade unions freely and to prevent arbitrary interference in the functioning of trade unions;**

(b) **Amend section 323 (2) of the Labour Code to lower the majority required to call a strike;**

(c) **Amend sections 1, 290, 291, 301, 306 and 307 of the Labour Code so that the right to bargain collectively is conferred on the workers' representatives only in the absence of a representative trade union at the relevant level.**

#### **Right to social security**

42. While the Committee notes that legislation and policy goals broadly correspond to international social security standards, it is concerned about the gaps in terms of effective coverage of the population by social protection and about the adequacy of benefits (art. 9).

43. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a social security system that ensures universal coverage and provides adequate benefits to all workers, and expand the coverage of the system to workers employed in the informal economy;**

(b) **Conduct an evaluation of the social insurance contributions system to determine its effectiveness and efficiency;**

(c) **Improve coverage by increasing social insurance benefits, such as by promoting a culture of social insurance and ensuring that contributions are made by both employers and employees;**

(d) **Establish a non-contributory social security system for those not in the labour market, such as older persons, persons with disabilities and others belonging to marginalized and disadvantaged groups;**

(e) **Consider the Committee's general comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security.**

#### **Protection of the family and children**

44. The Committee welcomes the first round of amendments, in July 2019, to the civil registration legislation – which introduced several positive changes, including the free registration of births within three months of the birth date – and commends the State party for its efforts in addressing statelessness. However, the Committee is concerned about the lack of access to birth registration certificates, which increases the risks of statelessness and creates barriers for undocumented children to have access free medical services, including mandatory vaccinations and education (art. 10).

45. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that all children born on the territory of Tajikistan have access to registration and birth certificates regardless of the legal or documentation status of their parents, including through the adoption of further amendments to the civil registration legislation and the instructions for it;**

(b) **Accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954) and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961) to help ensure: (i) minimum standards of treatment of stateless persons in respect of several economic, social and cultural rights, including the rights to education, housing, public relief, identification and travel documents, and of administrative assistance; and (ii) safeguards to prevent statelessness at birth and later in life.**

#### **Right to housing**

46. While noting the adoption of a new Housing Code in March 2022, the Committee is concerned about reports that forced evictions remain a serious problem in the country and are mainly carried out without consultations, without the provision of alternative housing, without adequate compensation and at late notice (art. 11 (1)).

47. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that evictions are carried out as a last resort only;**



(b) **Where evictions do take place, ensure that procedural protections and safeguards are respected, such as conducting genuine consultations, guaranteeing adequate and reasonable notice, ensuring the availability of alternative accommodation within a reasonable time, and the provision of legal remedies;**

(c) **Ensure the availability and accessibility of affordable legal aid for the residents affected;**

(d) **Prevent homelessness in cases of eviction by ensuring the availability of adequate alternative housing;**

(e) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.**

#### **Rights to water and to sanitation**

48. The Committee remains concerned about the large regional and socioeconomic disparities in the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation (art. 11 (1)).

49. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take measures to reduce disparities in access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups;**

(b) **Invest in water and sanitation services to guarantee good and affordable services to the whole population.**

#### **Climate change**

50. The Committee is concerned about the potential significant impact of climate change on, inter alia, water availability, health, agricultural production, and pastoralists (art. 11).

51. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a national adaptation plan focusing on the most significant effects of climate change;**

(b) **Develop diagnostic capacity regarding the impact of climate change on groups and individuals who may be particularly affected;**

(c) **Ensure that adaptation measures respect economic, social and cultural rights;**

(d) **Take account of the Committee's statement on climate change and the Covenant, adopted in October 2018.<sup>10</sup>**

#### **Right to physical and mental health**

52. The Committee is concerned about restrictions on access to health care, particularly for disadvantaged groups, owing to budgetary constraints, a shortage of medical professionals and poor infrastructure of medical facilities. The Committee is particularly concerned about the increase in the prices of medical services owing to the privatization of medical services (art. 12).

53. **The Committee recommends that the State party allocate sufficient resources to the health sector and ensure the availability, accessibility and quality of health services, including by securing a sufficient amount of qualified medical personnel and ensuring adequate medical equipment, infrastructure and facilities. It also recommends that the State party ensure that any public-private partnership has no negative impact on the affordability of medical services, particularly for the most disadvantaged persons.**

<sup>10</sup> [E/C.12/2018/1](#).

**Right to education**

54. The Committee commends the State party for the adoption of the National Education Development Strategy for the period 2021–2030. However, the Committee is concerned that equitable access to early childhood education services is hindered by regional disparities, since most preschool educational institutions are located in urban areas. The Committee is also concerned about the high dropout rate in secondary education, particularly among girls and children in rural areas (art. 13).

55. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all the measures necessary to establish new preschool educational institutions in rural areas to ensure equitable access to early childhood education;**

(b) **Ensure transition to upper secondary education, particularly for girls and children in rural areas.**

**Quality of education and inclusiveness**

56. The Committee is concerned about shortcomings in the quality of school infrastructure and equipment, access to water and sanitation facilities, the content of curricula and the training of teachers (art. 13).

57. **The Committee recommends that the State party enhance its efforts to achieve universal access to quality education at all levels, including by:**

(a) **Ensuring that all schools have adequate water supply and sanitation facilities based on the needs of all children;**

(b) **Providing teachers and educators with adequate training, including training specifically designed to address the needs of children with disabilities, and raising awareness among students in order to create a friendly environment for children with disabilities;**

(c) **Improving the educational infrastructure to ensure the accessibility of all schools and universities for persons with disabilities;**

(d) **Reviewing the curricula to make them more responsive to the development of society in general and the demands of the labour market in particular;**

(e) **Taking into account the Committee’s general comment No. 13 (1999) on the right to education.**

**Cultural rights**

58. The Committee is concerned about the insufficient number of teachers who are qualified to teach in minority languages, and the shortage of learning materials in these languages, at all levels of education (art. 15).

59. **The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to ensure an adequate number of teachers qualified to teach in minority languages and to increase the availability of learning materials in these languages at all levels of education, in consultation with representatives of the minorities concerned.**

**D. Other recommendations**

60. **The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.**

61. **The Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the core human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party, namely the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Second Optional Protocol to the**

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

62. The Committee recommends that the State party take fully into account its obligations under the Covenant and ensure the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined therein in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level, including in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would be significantly facilitated by the State party establishing independent mechanisms to monitor progress and treating beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party support the global commitment to the decade of action for sustainable development. Implementing the Goals on the basis of the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind. In this regard, the Committee draws the State party's attention to its statement on the pledge to leave no one behind.<sup>11</sup>

63. The Committee requests that the State party disseminate the present concluding observations widely at all levels of society, including at the regional level, in particular among parliamentarians, public officials and judicial authorities, and that it inform the Committee in its next periodic report about the steps taken to implement them. The Committee emphasizes the crucial role that parliament plays in implementing the present concluding observations and encourages the State party to ensure its involvement in future reporting and follow-up procedures. The Committee encourages the State party to engage with the Commissioner for Human Rights and with non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society in the follow-up to the present concluding observations and in the process of consultation at the national level prior to the submission of its next periodic report.

64. In accordance with the procedure on follow-up to concluding observations adopted by the Committee, the State party is requested to provide, within 24 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations, information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 13 (human rights defenders), 23 (a), (b) and (c) (refugees and asylum-seekers) and 47 (b) and (d) (right to housing) above.

65. The Committee requests the State party to submit its fifth periodic report in accordance with article 16 of the Covenant by 31 October 2027, unless otherwise notified as a result of a change in the review cycle. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/268, the word limit for the report is 21,200 words.

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<sup>11</sup> E/C.12/2019/1.