



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Committee against Torture

Concluding observations on the initial report of Botswana*

1. The Committee against Torture considered the initial report of Botswana¹ at its 1923rd and 1926th meetings,² held on 20 and 21 July 2022, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 1934th meeting, held on 28 July 2022.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for accepting the simplified reporting procedure and submitting its initial report thereunder, as this allows for a more focused dialogue between the State party and the Committee. It regrets, however, that the report was submitted over 20 years late.

3. The Committee appreciates having had the opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue with the State party's delegation, and the responses provided to the questions and concerns raised during the consideration of the initial report.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the ratification of or accession to the following international instruments by the State party:

- (a) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in 2000;
- (b) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in 1974;
- (c) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in 1996;
- (d) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in 2007;
- (e) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in 2021;
- (f) The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, in 2017;
- (g) The Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1995;
- (h) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, in 2004;
- (i) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in 2003;

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-fourth session (12–29 July 2022).

¹ [CAT/C/BWA/1](#).

² [CAT/C/SR.1923](#) and [CAT/C/SR.1926](#).



- (j) The United Nations Convention against Corruption, in 2011;
 - (k) The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in 2002.
5. The Committee also welcomes the State party's initiatives to revise its legislation in areas of relevance to the Convention, including:
- (a) The enactment in 2014 of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act;
 - (b) The recent signature of the Ombudsman Act No. 22 of 2021;
 - (c) The enactment in 2013 of the Legal Aid Act;
 - (d) The enactment in 2009 of the Children's Act;
 - (e) The enactment in 2008 of the Domestic Violence Act;
 - (f) The enactment in 2021 of the Sexual Offenders Registry Act No. 7.
6. The Committee commends the State party for its initiatives to amend its policies and procedures in order to afford greater protection for human rights and to apply the Convention, including:
- (a) The de-linking of justice issues from the former Ministry of Defence, Justice and Security through the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Justice;
 - (b) The formation of a constitutional review committee in January 2022, with a view to submission of its final report in September 2022;
 - (c) The establishment in 2019 of a human rights unit, and the establishment in 2020 of the national human rights committee;
 - (d) The establishment in 2002 of the standing interministerial committee on treaties, conventions and protocols, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - (e) The adoption of a national strategy towards ending gender-based violence in Botswana for the period 2016–2020 and the national strategy for gender and development, in 2016;
 - (f) The efforts undertaken to strengthen structures in the State party that have resulted in the submission of reports by the State party to five of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies to which it is a party;
 - (g) The adoption of the national action plan to combat trafficking in persons for the period 2017–2018.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

Domestication process

7. The Committee welcomes the commitment made by the State party, during the universal periodic review in 2018, to domesticate all human rights treaties to which it is a party, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It appreciates the explanations provided by the State party of the steps that need to be completed under its national law and in practice to bring legislation to domesticate these treaties into force, including the need for public consultation.³ At the same time, the Committee regrets that the State party has not yet been able to complete the process of domestication into its national law, with respect to both the Convention and other human rights treaties to which it is a party.

8. **The Committee urges the State party to accelerate the process of domestication of the human rights treaties to which it is a party, including the Convention, with a view to ensuring that necessary legislation to align its domestic law with its international legal obligations is brought into force as soon as possible.**

³ Regarding the process of domestication, see [CAT/C/BWA/1](#), para. 7.

Definition and criminalization of torture

9. The Committee appreciates the information provided by the State party regarding various pieces of its general legislation that could be relied upon, in certain circumstances, to investigate and prosecute conduct that would come within the meaning of the word “torture” as defined in article 1 of the Convention. Nevertheless, the Committee is seriously concerned that the State party has yet to establish a definition of torture as a specific offence, and about the significant gaps between the conduct that is criminalized under these pieces of general legislation about which the State party has provided information and the definition of torture under article 1 of the Convention. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 2 (2007), which makes clear that discrepancies between the Convention’s definition and the domestic legislation of a State can create actual or potential loopholes for impunity (arts. 1, 2 (2) and 4).

10. The Committee urges the State party to review and amend its legislation to ensure that all forms of torture are prohibited in line with the definition set out in the Convention. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that the prohibition of torture is established as absolute and non-derogable in national legislation, and that no exceptional circumstances, including a state of emergency or threat of war, can be used to justify the use of torture;**

(b) **Ensure that penalties for the crime of torture are commensurate with the gravity of the crime, as set out in article 4 (2) of the Convention;**

(c) **Ensure that, since the prohibition of torture is absolute, there is no statute of limitations for acts of torture, so that persons who commit or are complicit in such crimes can be effectively investigated, prosecuted and punished;**

(d) **Ensure the application of the criminal penalties not just to officials who directly perpetrate torture but also to those who “consent to” or “acquiesce in” it.**

Definition in particular legislation

11. The Committee is concerned that there are significant gaps, even in instances in which specific pieces of legislation do contain a definition of torture that applies in a particular area, most notably the definition of torture contained in section 66 of the Botswana Defence Force Act No. 3 of 2018. Among other things, this definition provides that conduct that would otherwise qualify as torture shall be exempted from the definition if it involves what it calls “reasonable activities undertaken for purposes of training and discipline”; and provides for punishment that can consist simply of a modest fine. This is inconsistent with the obligations of the State party under the Convention (arts. 1 and 4).

12. The State party should adopt amendments that would bring the definition contained in section 66 of the Botswana Defence Force Act No. 3 of 2018 into conformity with the obligations of the State party under the Convention.

Other requirements related to torture

13. The Committee notes that in addition to establishing an obligation for States to criminalize torture, the Convention establishes a series of other elements that States parties are required to address in order to be in conformity with the Convention. These elements include the following requirements: to establish jurisdiction over the offence of torture in any situation in which the alleged offender is present in its territory, even if the conduct in question occurred outside the territory of the State party and neither the perpetrator nor any of the victims were nationals of the State party; to treat torture as a crime for which an order from a superior officer or a public authority may not be invoked as justification; to ensure that attempts to commit torture that constitute complicity or participation are likewise offences under the criminal law of the State party; and to ensure that legislation is in place under which a State party in whose territory a person alleged to have committed torture is found, can and will, if it does not extradite the person, submit the case to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution. General legislation of the type that the State party indicated to be available to prosecute acts of torture – such as the ability to prosecute unnecessary violence committed against detainees under the Police Act, or to prosecute

assault under the Penal Code – will not fulfil these other requirements. Reliance on the kinds of general pieces of legislation identified by the State party thus leaves significant gaps between the law of the State party and the requirements incumbent upon it under the Convention (arts. 1, 2 (3) and 5–9).

14. The Committee urges the State party to review its national legislation to ensure that, in addition to conformity with the definition in article 1, its treatment of the crime of torture in all respects conforms to the requirements of the Convention under articles 2 (3) and 5 to 9.

Reservation to the Convention

15. The Committee is seriously concerned with the State party's reservation to the Convention, with regard to which the State party stated that it considered itself bound by the definition contained in article 1 of the Convention only insofar as it reflected conduct that was prohibited under section 7 of the Constitution of the State party. Section 7 of the Constitution is comprised of two paragraphs. Insofar as the reservation applies to the first paragraph of section 7, it appears to purport to limit the international legal obligation of the State party to conduct that is prohibited under its interpretation of the word "torture" under its own national law, rather than to torture as defined in the Convention. Insofar as the reservation applies to the second paragraph of article 7, it appears to purport to enable the State party to engage in acts defined as torture under the Convention, or even torture as that word is interpreted under the State party's own national law, if such conduct was lawful as punishment in the State party at the time its Constitution was adopted in 1966. The Committee also views as problematic the State party's explanation indicating that it needs to maintain its reservation as necessary to accommodate the second paragraph of section 7 of the Constitution, yet its reservation applies to both the first and second paragraphs. The Committee further views as particularly problematic the view expressed by the State party that the language contained in its reservation limits the State party's obligation to prohibit torture not only under the Convention, but also under customary international law (art. 1).

16. The Committee urges the State party to consider as a matter of urgency the withdrawal of its reservation, and to re-examine the view, which the Committee considers untenable, that the reservation limits the State party's obligation to prohibit torture not only under the Convention, but also under customary international law.

Fundamental legal safeguards

17. The Committee welcomes efforts by the State party to ensure that detained persons enjoy in practice all the fundamental legal safeguards from the very outset of their deprivation of liberty. All persons deprived of their liberty should be informed of the reason for their arrest and the nature of the charges against them. They should also be afforded the right to notify a family member, or other appropriate persons of their choice, of their arrest, detention or imprisonment, or of their transfer and of the place where they are being kept. They should further be afforded the right to request and receive an independent and confidential medical examination free of charge or by a doctor of their choice upon request; and the right to be assisted promptly by a lawyer and to receive free legal assistance in case of need at all stages of the process. The Committee is concerned that free legal assistance is provided by the State party only for capital crimes (art. 2).

18. The Committee urges the State party to proceed with the revision of the Legal Aid Act in order ensure that all persons are provided free legal assistance by the State party for all serious crimes.

Statutes of limitations

19. The Committee appreciates the information provided by the State party regarding the statute of limitations of 20 years that would apply to acts of torture in criminal proceedings and of three years that would apply in civil proceedings under the Prescriptions Act. The Committee is of the view that application of a statute of limitations is in principle inconsistent with the obligations of States parties under the Convention and risks creating situations of impunity. It is particularly concerned regarding the provision under the Prescriptions Act,

and its attendant risk, as described in the Committee's general comment No. 3 (2012), of depriving victims of torture of the redress, compensation and rehabilitation due them under article 14 of the Convention.

20. The State party should ensure that the crime of torture is not subject to any statute of limitation, in order to preclude any risk of impunity in relation to the investigation of acts of torture and the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators, and to ensure that victims of torture are not deprived of their rights to redress, compensation and rehabilitation.

National human rights institution

21. The Committee welcomes the amendments to establish the Ombudsman as a national human rights institution by broadening the mandate and capacities of the Ombudsman to promote and protect human rights, including rights protected under the Convention. While recognizing that it has not yet received a rating from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, the Committee is concerned about reports that the amended Ombudsman Act does not sufficiently ensure the participation of civil society in the appointment of the officials of the national human rights institution and does not fully meet the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). There have also been concerns that the expanded mandate and capacities provided for in the amendments have not yet been operationalized, including that the national human rights institution will not be in a position to carry out effective visits to all places in which persons are being held in detention (art. 2).

22. The State party should take immediate steps to ensure that the mandate and capacities of the national human rights institution fully reflect the Paris Principles, and to ensure the provision of sufficient financial and human resources to enable it to carry out its expanded mandate as a national human rights institution independently and effectively, including through the utilization of regional offices. In addition, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

(a) **The State party should ensure full consultation with and participation of civil society in the process of appointment related to national human rights institution officials;**

(b) **The national human rights institution's mandate should include clear authority to conduct unannounced visits to any places in the territory of the State party in which any persons are, or could be, deprived of their liberty;**

(c) **The State party should act promptly to operationalize the expanded mandates and capacities of the national human rights institution's office, including through the provision of all necessary funding and the utilization of regional offices, and should explicitly provide for a separate budget line, in order to ensure financial autonomy of the national human rights institution;**

(d) **The State party should seek technical and capacity-building support and advice, in particular from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.**

Death penalty

23. While appreciating information received from the State party indicating that the issue of the death penalty is the subject of ongoing debate and that further public discussions are anticipated, including in the context of the constitutional review, the Committee notes with concern that the State party continues to implement the death penalty, including the use of mandatory death penalties, which falls short of the requirement under international law to allow for individualized consideration of the circumstances surrounding any particular person, for certain offences. Beyond the continued reliance on the death penalty as such, the Committee expresses urgent concern regarding the manner in which death sentences have been carried out, which in and of itself constitutes cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The Committee notes that death sentences are carried out without providing advance notice of the date and time of executions either to the individuals on death row or to their families

or representatives, resulting in the individuals not knowing at any moment whether their execution is imminent, and the individuals and their families unable to have a final meeting. The fact that hanging is still being used as a method of execution and that the bodies of those executed are not handed over to their families for burial further exacerbates the cruelty of the situation. In this connection, the Committee notes that, in 2019, the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights found that the circumstances surrounding these executions and the fact that executions were still being carried out by hanging inevitably encroached upon dignity in respect to the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

24. The Committee urges the State party to take these concerns into consideration as a matter of priority. It further urges the State party to commute all death sentences already handed down and to establish a moratorium on the death penalty, with a view to its abolition, while ensuring that conditions of detention for condemned prisoners do not constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Corporal punishment

25. The Committee is concerned that corporal punishment remains lawful in a variety of settings in the territory of the State party. This includes its use against children in the home; as a form of discipline in the schools; in the administration of justice, including through sentences of caning as foreseen in section 28 of the Penal Code and section 305 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act; in the form of caning, as practised by customary courts; and on the basis of legal provisions under sections 27 and 61 of the Children's Act. The Committee also notes with concern that the revision of the Education Act of 1968 allows for corporal punishment at school under certain circumstances. In addition, the Prison Act establishes corporal punishment, such as caning, as a disciplinary measure. Furthermore, the law of the State party continues to allow for the use of reduced diet as a disciplinary measure in prison settings, notwithstanding rule 43 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) (arts. 11 and 16).

26. The Committee calls upon the State party to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings and to adopt any domestic legislation that is needed to prevent corporal punishment. The Committee recommends that the State party remove any reference to acceptable punishments in the revision of the Education and Training Bill, in order to ensure the prohibition of corporal punishment at school, without exception. The Committee also calls upon the State party to immediately suspend the use of reduced diet as a disciplinary measure in all circumstances.

Deaths in custody

27. While noting information provided by the State party indicating that all deaths in police custody are investigated in accordance with the State party's law on inquests, the Committee is nevertheless concerned about the high number of deaths in custody, a majority of which are reported to have occurred by self-hanging (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

28. The State party should ensure that all instances of deaths in custody are promptly and impartially investigated by an independent entity and, where appropriate, corresponding sanctions are applied. The State party should also review the effectiveness of strategies and programmes for the prevention of suicide and self-harm.

Customary courts

29. While the Committee notes the information provided by the State party indicating that the customary court system is regulated in a hierarchical manner with the magistrate court system, as established by the Constitution and the law, and that cases can be transferred from the customary courts to the magistrate courts, it is nevertheless concerned that customary courts do not operate in full compliance with international human rights standards, including by not envisaging the participation of lawyers, and by not automatically transferring cases that may involve serious sanctions to magistrate courts (art. 2).

30. The Committee urges the State party to take the measures necessary to ensure that, in all cases, the customary courts operate in a manner that is fully consistent with

the obligations of the State party under the Convention and that, if there are any cases in which there are questions about the ability of the customary courts to do so, those cases are transferred automatically to the magistrate court system.

Confessions obtained under torture or ill-treatment

31. The Committee notes that the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act states that confessions obtained by torture are inadmissible (sects. 228 and 231). It is concerned, however, about reports of excessive use of force by police against suspects to extract confessions. It also notes that sections 228 and 231 do not – at least on their face – appear to provide that statements not constituting confessions be automatically deemed inadmissible (art. 15).

32. **The Committee urges the State party to review its legislation in order to ensure that any statement – regardless of whether it constitutes a confession – that is made as a result of torture shall not be invoked as evidence in any proceedings, except against a person accused of torture as evidence that the statement was made. It also urges the State party to carefully consider the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering (the Méndez Principles), and to ensure the investigation and, as appropriate, prosecution of any person who uses torture in an effort to elicit a confession or other statement.**

Detention conditions

33. The Committee takes note of the measures taken by the State party to reduce the number of prisoners, including by providing for alternatives to pretrial detention. Nevertheless, overcrowding in prisons remains a serious concern and leads to a deterioration of prison conditions. The Committee is also concerned about the holding of sentenced prisoners alongside those on remand. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party indicating that vocational programmes and meaningful activities aimed at rehabilitation are implemented in the prisons, though there are reports of detained persons being locked up from around 4.30 p.m. until the next morning. The Committee is also concerned by the absence of programmes aimed at dealing with drug addiction in prison. Finally, the Committee is concerned about the limited contact of persons deprived of their liberty with the outside world, which allows for only 20 minutes of contact every four weeks (arts. 11 and 16).

34. **The Committee calls upon the State party to:**

(a) **Intensify its efforts to bring conditions of detention into line with the Nelson Mandela Rules;**

(b) **Seek to eliminate overcrowding in penitentiary institutions and other detention facilities, including through the application of non-custodial measures. In that connection, the Committee draws the State party's attention to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules);**

(c) **Ensure the strict separation of pretrial detainees from convicted detainees in all detention facilities;**

(d) **Strengthen rehabilitation programmes, including specialized programmes for drug users, and allocate more time for meaningful activities;**

(e) **Ensure appropriate numbers of trained and qualified prison staff, including medical staff, to safeguard against the risk of interprisoner violence, including sexual violence;**

(f) **Increase the time allowed for visits to detainees by family members, taking into consideration the long distance travelled by their families and the role that visits play in processes of rehabilitation.**

Non-refoulement

35. The Committee is concerned that the provisions in the law of the State party that are designed to guard against the unlawful removal of persons do not appear to apply explicitly to persons with respect to whom substantial grounds exist indicating they would be in danger of being subjected to torture. It is also concerned about the lack of training for immigration and border officials on early identification of vulnerable persons and about whether information is proactively provided about their right to seek asylum, and is further concerned about the failure to recognize a right of legal representation during the refugee status application process, though this might be rectified under legislation that is currently pending. Furthermore, the Committee is also concerned about the inability of persons to participate meaningfully in the decision-making process of the Minister of Justice regarding the recommendations of the Refugee Advisory Committee or to appeal decisions to an independent authority (art. 3).

36. The State party should:

(a) **Prioritize the importance of the principle of non-refoulement in relation to extradition, asylum and expulsion of undocumented migrants, in accordance with article 3 of the Convention;**

(b) **Continue the training of border officials with the support of the international community, in particular with UNHCR;**

(c) **Guarantee that all foreign nationals at risk of deportation, including those from “safe” countries of origin, have access to fair procedures, including a detailed and thorough interview to assess the risk that they may be subjected to torture and ill-treatment in their country of origin in view of their personal circumstances, and guaranteed access to reliable interpretation services throughout the process;**

(d) **Ensure that all credibility assessments are undertaken by trained professionals in a non-arbitrary way, and also ensure the identification of torture victims;**

(e) **Ensure that all foreign nationals at risk of deportation are able to meaningfully participate in the consideration of their cases by both the Refugee Advisory Committee and the Minister of Justice;**

(f) **Eliminate the authority of the Minister of Justice under article 9 of the Refugee (Recognition and Control) Act to order removal if it is deemed desirable on grounds of national security or public order insofar as it relates to persons with respect to whom substantial grounds exist indicating they would be in danger of being subjected to torture.**

Treatment of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants

37. The Committee is concerned about the treatment and living conditions in refugee and deportation camps in the State party. It is particularly concerned about the long stays of people in the refugee camp at Dukwi, with little prospect to leave. The Committee is also concerned about the material conditions and security in the deportation camp at Francistown, particularly with regard to children (arts. 11 and 16).

38. The State party should:

(a) **Consider the withdrawal of its reservations to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees;**

(b) **Refrain from retaining asylum-seekers and irregular migrants for prolonged periods; use retention as a measure of last resort and only for as short a period as possible, by ensuring individualized assessments; and promote the application of non-custodial measures;**

(c) **Take the measures necessary to ensure appropriate reception conditions for asylum-seekers and irregular migrants, and strengthen its efforts to ensure adequate living conditions in all immigration centres;**

(d) **Ensure that unaccompanied and separated children and families with children are not retained solely because of their immigration status, and adopt security measures to protect the children that are placed in camps.**

Training

39. The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party indicating that it is planning to develop an educational and training programme on international human rights standards for public officials, including an e-learning platform, in the context of the national human rights strategy, as well as the assurances provided during the dialogue with the State party indicating that it agreed with the importance of human rights training for law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and judges. The Committee is, however, concerned about the lack of specific training regarding the State party's obligations under the Convention (art. 10).

40. **The State party should:**

(a) **Further develop mandatory initial and in-service training programmes to ensure that all public officials are well acquainted with the provisions of the Convention, especially the absolute prohibition of torture, and that they are fully aware that violations will not be tolerated and will be investigated and that those responsible will be prosecuted and, on conviction, appropriately punished;**

(b) **Ensure that all relevant staff, including medical personnel, are specifically trained to identify cases of torture and ill-treatment, in accordance with the revised version of the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol), and consider the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering (the Méndez Principles);**

(c) **Develop a methodology for assessing the effectiveness of training programmes in reducing the number of cases of torture and ill-treatment and in ensuring the identification, documentation and investigation of such acts, as well as the prosecution of those responsible.**

Redress

41. The Committee takes note of the psychosocial support and medical services provided by civil society organizations on the basis of several memorandums of understanding with the Government with respect to children. However, the Committee is concerned about the lack of a comprehensive policy on redress and rehabilitation for victims of torture (art. 14). The Committee notes that the rights of victims of torture under article 14 of the Convention should not be made dependent upon the identification, much less the conviction, of a perpetrator or perpetrators, or upon the initiation, much less the completion, of civil litigation (art. 14).

42. **The State party should take the necessary legislative and administrative measures to establish a comprehensive programme under which victims of acts of torture obtain redress, and have an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation, including the means for as full a rehabilitation as possible. In line with the Committee's general comment No. 3, this policy should include appropriate measures on redress, compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition. In addition, the State party should review and, as needed, revise its legislation to ensure that the rights of victims of torture under article 14 of the Convention are not dependent upon the identification, much less the conviction, of a perpetrator or perpetrators, or upon the initiation, much less the completion, of civil litigation.**

Data collection

43. While noting that some statistics have been provided, the Committee regrets the absence of comprehensive statistical and disaggregated data on cases of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including on cases related to

allegations of police brutality and excessive use of force. The Committee is concerned by the lack of a more focused and coordinated methodology for data collection by the State party and the allocation of sufficient resources for this effort, which is needed to monitor the effective implementation of the obligations of the State party under the Convention.

44. **The State party should intensify efforts to compile statistical data relevant to the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention in a focused and coordinated manner, including data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions and convictions in cases of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement and prison personnel, trafficking in persons and gender-based violence, including sexual violence, as well as on means of redress, including compensation and rehabilitation, provided to the victims.**

Follow-up procedure

45. **The Committee requests the State party to provide, by 29 July 2023, information on follow-up to the Committee's recommendations on reservation to the Convention; the national human rights institution; the death penalty; and the treatment of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants (see paras. 16, 22, 24 and 38 above). In that context, the State party is invited to inform the Committee about its plans for implementing, within the coming reporting period, some or all of the remaining recommendations in the concluding observations.**

Other issues

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment as soon as possible and making the declaration under article 22 of the Convention recognizing the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals subject to its jurisdiction who claim to be victims of a violation by the State party of the provisions of the Convention.**

47. **The State party is requested to widely disseminate the report submitted to the Committee and the present concluding observations, in appropriate languages, through official websites, the media and non-governmental organizations and to inform the Committee about its dissemination activities.**

48. **The State party is invited to submit a common core document in accordance with the requirements contained in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties.⁴**

49. **The Committee requests the State party to submit its next periodic report, which will be its second periodic report, by 29 July 2026. For that purpose, and in view of the fact that the State party has agreed to report to the Committee under the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee will, in due course, transmit to the State party a list of issues prior to reporting. The State party's replies to that list of issues will constitute its second periodic report under article 19 of the Convention, which the Committee urges the State party to submit in a timely fashion.**

⁴ [HRI/GEN.2/Rev.6](#).