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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Second periodic report submitted by Cabo Verde under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, due in 2023*

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. As a democratic country and member of the United Nations, Cabo Verde has ratified almost all of the human rights treaties and their respective optional protocols, thereby assuming a series of commitments, including a commitment to prepare and submit initial and periodic reports on the implementation of these treaties in the country.
2. Cabo Verde ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1993. Having submitted its initial report in 2018, this year it is submitting its second report to the United Nations, pursuant to the provisions of article 16 of the Covenant.
3. The aim of this report, which covers the period 2018–2023, is to describe the situation in the country since the submission of its initial report to the Committee and assess the extent to which the recommendations made following the last review have been implemented. The report highlights the advances achieved and efforts made to progressively and incrementally fulfil these recommendations, focusing on the legislative, administrative and political measures taken by the Government of Cabo Verde and the progress it has made in the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.
4. The report was prepared by the Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of National Reports on Human Rights and is structured in line with the recommendations received.
5. As the drafting process necessitated the cooperation and input of public institutions, various forums for gathering contributions were established with a view to maximizing engagement in the process.

II. Implementation of recommendations

National human rights institutions

6. The Government of Cabo Verde has accorded particular attention to human rights, making a firm commitment to promote and respect them and to strengthen the democratic rule of law and the fundamental freedoms of its people.
7. The Government is developing a new model for the composition of the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship that is in line with international best practices, aligns the Commission's statutes with the country's aims and applies human rights principles without undermining any of the Government's commitments. As this is a very specific initiative requiring a broad consensus nationwide, the aim is to develop an institutional framework capable of satisfying constitutional requirements in terms of respect for and the protection and promotion of human rights to the greatest possible degree.
8. The National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship has translated all recommendations issued by the various human rights treaty bodies and mechanisms, has posted them on its website and has shared them with various public and civil society organizations. The recommendations have served as a benchmark for the formulation of public policies and have provided the National Commission with a tool for guiding Government action taken in response.
9. The Interministerial Commission for the Preparation of National Human Rights Reports involved the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship, public sector institutions and civil society organizations in the report drafting process from the information-gathering phase through to the dissemination and adoption phase.

Domestic application of the Covenant

10. As a democratic country, Cabo Verde adheres to the highest possible values and respects international law and human rights. Accordingly, the Government has favoured the automatic integration of international legal instruments into national legislation following

their entry into force within the international legal system and consequent adoption or ratification for entry into force in the national legal system.

11. To consolidate knowledge and ensure greater efficiency in the practical application of international standards at the national level, through the intermediary of the judiciary's management bodies, the Government of Cabo Verde has carried out a series of training programmes in recent years, including training on trafficking in persons and workshops on the implementation of international human rights conventions and the preparation of international human rights reports.

12. Over the years, the national police force has invested heavily in human rights and citizenship education for its personnel, with human rights being included in the initial training curriculum for police officers.

13. In addition, prison officers have received training on humanization and human rights as well as on social reintegration, in line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).

14. With the aim of verifying the extent to which human rights conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, are known and applied by judges, lawyers and parliamentarians, having previously published a compendium of human rights conventions containing the texts of all international conventions, in 2020 the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship prepared and published a report examining levels of knowledge and application of international human rights conventions.

Climate change and natural disaster risk reduction

15. As a small island State vulnerable to extreme weather and climate phenomena such as hurricanes, floods and droughts, the Government of Cabo Verde has focused its efforts in this area on taking steps to prevent and mitigate their effects. This it has done through actions aimed at mobilizing and diversifying sources of water for agriculture, including, specifically, the desalination of brackish water and seawater, safe reuse of treated wastewater and use of surface and groundwater; improved irrigation water management, through the widespread use of efficient irrigation systems and promotion of hydroponic cultivation; and reductions in the cost of water through the use of renewable energies to pump water for irrigation and livestock farming and the construction of hydraulic and production support infrastructures.

16. Strengthening climate change resilience and adaptation in the agrarian sector is one of the main lines of action envisaged under the Agricultural Transformation Programme forming part of the country's second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, covering the period 2022–2026. To this end, the country has invested in strengthening and improving the agro-sylvo-pastoral system and protecting the terrestrial ecosystem through the sustainable management of forage resources and introduction of new species, varieties and production technologies and by making pesticides available to farmers to enable them to control pests in rainfed areas, running animal deworming campaigns and maintaining wooded areas conducive to increased infiltration and reduced soil erosion.

17. Contingency plans are drawn up to address specific situations, based on the results of the crop year.

18. The Government of Cabo Verde has taken significant steps to incorporate the issue of climate resilience into its goals for the period 2020–2030. Since having ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, it has submitted three national communications and greenhouse gas inventories and two nationally determined contributions containing ambitious plans for mitigating and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

19. The Government presented its first national adaptation plan in 2021. Its aim is to foster change throughout the planning and budgeting process for environmental, social and economic practices and thus to increase the country's capacity to absorb climate shocks.

20. In addition, the Government has launched climate action and resilience and environment, biodiversity and geodiversity programmes designed with the following

objectives in mind: guaranteeing public access to seismological and volcanological information; increasing the proportion of the population that has access to weather information and warnings; ensuring that seismological and volcanological information is available in all parts of the country; implementing 80 per cent of the geodiversity conservation and recovery plan; and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 13 per cent across the entire economy, through implementation of the nationally determined contributions.

21. Thanks to these actions, the country has been able to optimize its network of automatic weather stations, establishing 15 new stations in 2022, with plans to install 5 more in 2023, giving a total of 32, and to have automatic weather stations on all of the islands, the main aim being to collect credible local data in real time that can be used to prepare local weather and climate information for dissemination to the local community.

22. Currently, the country's weather and climate monitoring facilities cover around 40 per cent of its territory, producing data in real time, and its weather and climate modelling centre is being updated and modernized.

23. Renovation of the national volcanological and seismological monitoring network, which comprises 20 seismometer and three inclinometer stations and covers around 67 per cent of the inhabited islands, is under way, with particular attention being accorded to the seven stations located on the Fogo islands, six stations on Brava and four stations on Santo Antão. The network also includes seismological stations in Madeiral (São Vicente) and the islands of Sal and Santiago and a geophysics laboratory in São Vicente, where network data is analysed and communications and alerts are issued whenever necessary.

24. By the end of 2023, 70 per cent of Cabo Verde's main urban centres should be covered by air quality information. Decree-Law No. 5/2003, which defines the national protection system, is currently being updated to provide for air quality monitoring.

25. The authorities of Cabo Verde are drawing up an energy transition programme for the period 2021–2025 with the aim of developing socioeconomic policies and strategies for this sector.

26. Other climate-related plans and strategies implemented include the National Strategic Plan for Water and Sanitation, the National Strategy for Protected Areas, the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (resolution No. 114/2018) and the Electricity Mobility Political Charter (resolution No. 13/2019).

Social inequality

27. With a view to eradicating extreme poverty by 2026, pursuant to resolution No. 4/2023 of 26 January 2023 the Government adopted the 2022–2026 National Strategy for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty, which sets forth the strategic actions to be taken to combat extreme poverty within the framework of the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development. The aims pursued include strengthening the social security system, increasing the coverage of social welfare programmes, coordinating social policies and promoting comprehensive responses.

28. The centralized social register created by Regulatory Decree No. 7/2018 of 20 September is an important support tool for the social security system in that it is used to determine compliance with the eligibility criteria for the allocation of social support to families living in poverty in the form of reduced water and electricity tariffs, exemptions from health-care insurance contributions and access to emergency programmes, preschool scholarships and social housing and rehousing programmes.

29. As of May 2023, there were 307,689 people, corresponding to 96,229 households, 81,308 of which had been duly updated and classified under the targeting indicator, on the register. Of the latter figure, 24,965 people were classified as belonging to group 1, corresponding to households living in extreme poverty, 21,793 were classified as belonging to group 2, corresponding to those living in moderate poverty, 18,181 were classified as group 3, corresponding to those vulnerable to poverty, and 16,017 were classified as group 4, corresponding to households not in situations of poverty.

30. A social tariff for energy was created as part of the “Decent Access to Electricity and Water” programme intended to benefit families classified in groups 1 and 2 in the centralized social register and efforts have been made to increase connections to the grid so as to afford these families access to essential services that have a positive impact on their health and education and help to create conditions conducive to the development of income-generating economic activities.

31. A social inclusion income was introduced pursuant to Decree-Law No. 41/2020 of 2 April 2020 with a view to achieving sustainable, balanced and inclusive development. The allowance is an important tool in that, by increasing household incomes and access to basic services such as health care, education and social welfare, it serves to reduce inequalities and foster social rights.

32. To give effect to the country’s rural development strategies, two major plans funded from the State budget have been launched namely the 2017–2021 National Plan for Agricultural Investment, Food Security and Nutrition and the 2017–2026 Strategic Plan for the Rural Extension System. Both these plans were designed to contribute to the achievement of national goals by increasing farm yields and sales and thus improving food and nutritional security.

33. A decentralization fund has been set up to help the country’s 22 municipalities and local associations carry out initiatives that serve to combat poverty and improve the quality of people’s lives, promote economic and social development and reduce poverty at the local level, particularly in rural areas.

34. Activities benefiting 385 persons, and with a particular focus on empowering women and young persons in rural areas, were organized in 2022 within the framework of the Programme for the Promotion of Rural Socioeconomic Opportunities. The target for this Programme, which was to train 8,000 women, has already been surpassed, with 9,600 women, equivalent to 120 per cent of the target, having benefited to date.

35. Gender and human rights perspectives, including clear objectives to be achieved by 2026, have been incorporated into the 28 programmes forming part of the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, thus ensuring their integration in all governance sectors.

Maximum available resources

36. The Government budget guarantees an adequate allocation of funds for social spending benefiting the most disadvantaged groups, the aim being to reduce the number of people living in poverty as far as possible and eradicate extreme poverty by 2026.

37. In 2023, 3.2 million Cabo Verde escudos (CVEsc) from the Government budget were allocated to cover the minimum social security pension, now paid to around 26,000 pensioners, payments under the non-contributory social security scheme and the budget of the “Mobilization for Accelerated Social Inclusion” (MAIS) programme. The latter’s budget is due to be increased, including the amounts allocated to the promotion of gender equality and equity, to the support fund for victims of gender-based violence, to the development of human capital and a flexible and inclusive labour market, and for the integration of migrants.

38. A MAIS Fund has also been created to finance targeted actions in favour of persons living in extreme poverty and primarily encompassing target groups such as poor households in communities without adequate basic social services, families experiencing a deterioration in their living conditions due to drought, food shortages, pandemics, natural disasters and other crises and those headed by women, with priority being given to those residing in rural areas and with children under 15 years old. Also benefiting from such actions are migrants, households with dependent children aged up to 5 years old, older persons, persons living in situations of dependency, persons with disabilities living alone, the chronically ill, victims of domestic and gender-based violence, former drug addicts, former prisoners, persons who have been repatriated forcibly or voluntarily, and persons in street situations.

39. Through the “Care for Inclusion” initiative providing support for women working in the informal economy and student mothers, funding for social facilities and the renovation and equipping of municipal crèches has been granted under the relevant finance agreement.

40. The agreement with the Global Fund administered by the Coordinating Committee for the Fight against AIDS has been renewed for a further year with the aim of ensuring the continued operation of the six day-care centres, payment of the salaries of six facilitators and one psychologist and the purchase of educational materials and snacks for 228 children and teenagers.

41. The country’s partnership agreement with SOS Children’s Villages International, which entails the development of actions serving to improve child protection, also remains in effect.

42. The 2022–2023 annual workplan agreed with representatives of the United Nations system in Cabo Verde prioritizes the provision of administrative and financial assistance for implementation of the protection plan, improvements at the Mindelo children’s emergency centre and support for the provision of psychological assistance for at-risk children and adolescents on the islands of Maio, Fogo and São Nicolau.

43. To prevent underutilization of budgetary resources, efforts are under way to strengthen the National Planning System, which must be sufficiently robust to meet the requirements of the four core, complementary system components, namely the legal, institutional, technical and information systems components. Work on the formulation of implementing regulations for the National Planning System Framework Act, the development of guides for conducting evaluations such as impact assessments and executive evaluations and the design of tools, programmes and logical frameworks is already under way.

44. In addition, two new legislative texts are currently being developed. The first relates to the National Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System and will set forth procedures for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating all public policies included in national strategic plans, the aim being to improve their efficiency and effectiveness, promote transparency as a core value of the public policymaking process and lay the bases for an evidence-based management system. The second text consists of a proposal to create a national public investment system with a view to optimizing use of public resources and improving the quality of public spending.

45. The introduction of online tax payment has allowed for faster communication and improved relations between the tax authorities and taxpayers besides encouraging voluntary compliance with the principal tax obligation. Similarly, the establishment of the Statistics Unit of the National Directorate for State Revenue has brought greater transparency to the management of public affairs, particularly since the start of publication of the VAT Bulletin.

46. The Government has adopted a tax reform programme designed to achieve the simple, modern, fair and efficient tax system essential for a competitive economy. To this end, it has identified two focuses for action – reinforcement of the country’s fiscal competitiveness and improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of its tax administration.

Corruption

47. In its efforts to combat corruption, the country has applied international practices, creating the Council for the Prevention of Corruption with an exclusive remit to identify and prevent risks of corruption and collect and process information with a view to identifying the areas most vulnerable and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of existing legislation.

48. The Court of Accounts has been guaranteed unrestricted access to the comprehensive budgeting and financial management system with a view to facilitating concurrent audits.

49. Act No. 18/X/2023 of 23 January amended the Criminal Code to extend the statute of limitations for active and passive corruption and bring it into line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

50. Internally, the Bank of Cabo Verde has implemented the Basel Principles for Internal Control Systems in Banking Institutions, with necessary adaptations, with a view to identifying, assessing, measuring and controlling any material risks that might adversely affect its operations.

51. For purposes of preventing money-laundering and combating the financing of terrorism, the Bank has a dedicated unit responsible for the identification, assessment and control of risks linked to these phenomena.

52. The Bank of Cabo Verde is also the authority responsible for regulating and verifying compliance, by entities subject to its oversight, with the obligations in respect of preventing money laundering and combating terrorism financing set forth in Act No. 38/VII/2009 of 27 April, as amended by Act No. 120/VIII/2016 of 24 March, and for coordination and cooperation with national and counterpart authorities in this area.

53. Accordingly, the Bank exercises various powers of oversight, as conferred upon it by the aforementioned legislation. These include the power to carry out periodic monitoring, in accordance with adopted plans, to examine reports received periodically from entities under its oversight, and to analyse the money-laundering/terrorism financing prevention measures incorporated in terms and conditions of access to the financial market, and particularly in authorization and registration procedures and procedures for assessing the suitability of members of legal entities and holders of qualifying holdings.

54. Furthermore, the Bank of Cabo Verde has recently been designated the national authority responsible for verifying compliance with the legal and regulatory provisions related to the prevention of money-laundering and fight against terrorism financing by entities planning to carry out activities with virtual assets (see Act No. 30/X/2023 of 21 June, regulating the provision of services with virtual assets and the creation of digital banks).

55. Recently, by resolution No. 24/2023 of 3 April, the authorities adopted the National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Money Laundering, the Financing of Terrorism and the Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

56. The remit of the Competition Authority is to ensure that rules governing the promotion and defence of competition in the private, public, cooperative and social sectors are applied, and thus that the markets operate efficiently, that resources are properly allocated and that the interests of consumers are protected.

57. The regulations governing access to and the reuse of documents containing information on and administrative information relating to activities carried out by public bodies and entities were adopted by Act No. 10/X/2022 of 16 May, regulating access mechanisms and responsibilities in the event of failure to provide the legally required information, including measures to ensure transparent, efficient and accountable public service provision in the country's national development strategy.

58. A payment consultation module based on QR codes has been developed in order to enhance the transparency of the payment process and decentralize the process of issuing/sending proof of payment.

59. Similarly, with a view to monitoring the execution, efficiency and effectiveness of the procurement system, and in order to digitize procurement and make the process more transparent, an electronic public procurement system, named eCOMPRAS.cv, has been created.

60. Policies designed to change practice in the private and public sectors and thus reduce the judicial and systemic factors that contribute to official secrecy and prevent the public disclosure of information have also been adopted.

61. The Public Finance Council was established to ensure independent assessment of the coherence, legality and sustainability of fiscal policy.

Non-discrimination

62. With the aim of preventing discrimination, the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship has submitted a special anti-discrimination bill to the National Assembly in which it proposes a general legal regime for preventing, prohibiting and combating all forms of public and private discrimination, in all areas. Outreach and awareness-raising events have also been organized with a view to preventing and combating discrimination and racism and disseminating information about the rights of migrants.

63. Article 15 (1) (a) of Legislative Decree No. 5/2007 of 16 October, enacting the Labour Code, as amended by Legislative Decree No. 5/16 of 16 June, recognizes the right to equality at work and prohibits discrimination. Similarly, article 12 (d) of the Organic Act on Public Sector Employment, enacted by Act No. 20/X/2023 of 24 March, recognizes equality as one of the principles guiding the actions of public sector employees and officials and prohibits any act of discrimination based on ancestry, sex, race, language, political, ideological or religious belief, economic situation or social status. Article 16 (5) (d) of the Act prohibits public servants from discriminating against citizens.

64. The Government of Cabo Verde has defined discrimination as an offence under article 161 of the Criminal Code, as adopted by Legislative Decree No. 4/2003 of 18 November and most recently amended by Act No. 117/IX/2021 of 11 February. This article establishes penalties of up to 2 years' imprisonment for discrimination based on origin, sex, family situation, state of health, habits and customs, political opinions, civic activity, membership or non-membership of an ethnic group, nation, race or religion and membership or non-membership of an organization.

65. In 2022, at the request of the Coordination Committee for the Fight against AIDS, the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship delivered training modules on human rights and health as part of a series of workshops for reproductive health professionals organized as part of the drive to eliminate HIV/AIDS in Cabo Verde.

66. Activities aimed at combating stereotypes affecting individuals and groups at risk of discrimination have included carrying out research and surveys, publishing informative materials, organizing interinstitutional meetings and running awareness-raising campaigns to prevent and combat racial discrimination, the last of which was launched in 2023, under the slogan "Diversity enriches us: whatever our nationality, origin or religion, we all contribute!".

67. Another important advance was the adoption of Act No. 26/X/2023 of 8 May, on the status of older persons, intended to provide greater protection for and uphold the dignity of older persons.

Rights of persons with disabilities

68. By Decree-Law No. 20/2011 of 28 February, technical standards were adopted to guarantee accessibility, in full security and autonomy, for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, notably by eliminating urban and architectural barriers in public buildings, facilities and spaces, in street furniture, on public highways, in means of transport and elsewhere that restrict the mobility, autonomy and full participation of persons with disabilities in social life.

69. The legal regime for prevention, adaptation and the rehabilitation and participation of persons with disabilities is set forth in article 4 of Decree-Law No. 21/2019 of 24 May and article 127 (4) of the Organic Act on Public Sector Employment, enacted by Act No. 20/X/2023 of 24 March, which establish that, in all external competitions for the recruitment of public administration personnel, a quota of 5 per cent of the total number of positions to be filled should be filled by persons with disabilities provided it is proven that their disability does not prevent them from carrying out the tasks inherent to the function to be performed or the position to be filled.

70. The availability of grants for non-governmental organizations has been increased by broadening the field of potential beneficiaries. The aim is to promote a policy of autonomy

and full social inclusion for persons with disabilities by ensuring that all conditions necessary for the operation of organizations that work for their benefit are met.

Gender equality

71. The Government of Cabo Verde has formulated and launched the 2021–2025 National Plan for Gender Equality. The Plan defines the powers and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in the implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of gender-related policies with a view to ensuring a comprehensive, coordinated approach.

72. Furthermore, the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development provides for the implementation of a specific programme on gender equality and equity, the incorporation of a gender perspective into the other programmes envisaged under the Plan and the adoption of a human rights-based approach for most of the Plan's 28 programmes.

73. The Parity Act stipulates that political parties and their women's associations and youth wings must organize awareness-raising, sensitization and training activities for their activists, supporters, members and civil society more generally with a view to promoting effective parity in the composition of elected and decision-making bodies. In this context, various awareness-raising activities have been carried out with different target audiences in mind, the aim being to raise awareness of the Act, encourage the participation and inclusion of women in public decision-making, contribute to the promotion of gender equality and, as a consequence, ensure increasingly inclusive and participative democratic representation.

74. One of the lines of actions of the 2021–2025 National Plan for Gender Equality, namely autonomy in decision-making, provides for the implementation of actions that promote positive changes in the exercise of power in private and public spaces in response to the need, based on the provisions of the Parity Act, to promote the increased participation of women at the middle management level in general government, in decision-making in the private sector and in civil society organizations.

Youth unemployment

75. Vocational training, as an active employment policy, plays an essential role in creating opportunities for young graduates to enter the job market.

76. The Professional Internship Programme, in conjunction with the Integration Programme for the Long-Term Unemployed, is intended to enhance the employability of the long-term unemployed and foster the labour market integration of young persons by creating opportunities for professional internships in specific fields. The aim is to reduce the unemployment rate, particularly in the information and communications technology sector, management and related fields and food production and pastry-making, while at the same time addressing the shortage of professionals with extensive experience, in line with market needs.

77. NosiAkademia – a training programme designed to guarantee access to employment for all young graduates while simultaneously promoting meritocracy through two areas of activity, namely professional internships and certification – serves to jumpstart the professional development of young persons nationwide and prepare them for the national and international job market.

78. The legal regime governing the system of financing for vocational training was adopted by Decree-Law No. 38/2021, which specifies available sources of funding and sets forth the mechanisms, terms and conditions for financing training projects and activities benefitting both individuals and legal entities.

79. In the course of 2021, 22,149 young persons received support through the Training, Qualifications and Employability Programme.

80. Analysis of data for 2021 shows that 64.5 per cent of graduates had entered the labour market one year after completing their training.

81. Businesses and projects have benefited from and been supported by technical assistance and other initiatives as part of programmes to support entrepreneurship and job creation.

82. The Productive Inclusion Programme, which involves income-generating activities and the reinforcement of participants' technical and vocational skills, entrepreneurship, financial education and practical skills, was launched to promote opportunities primarily for women heads of households with children up to the age of 15 years old.

Employment of women

83. The Government of Cabo Verde is committed to adopting special measures to promote the participation of women in political and decision-making spheres on an equal footing with men.

84. Accordingly, the Parity Act (No. 68/IX/2019 of 28 November) provides for parity both in eligible political positions and in management positions in general government. Its aim is to ensure effective equality between men and women in terms of rights and responsibilities with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination and creating equal opportunities, particularly with regard to political participation and the occupancy of decision-making positions, and thus arriving at a more just and balanced situation.

85. In partnership with the local office of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Government has run awareness-raising sessions on the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), bringing together social partners, members of parliament, members of the Government and the diplomatic corps, representatives of public and private entities active in the field, artists and activists with a view to ratifying the aforementioned convention.

86. The new Organic Act on Public Sector Employment, adopted by Act No. 20/X/2023 of 24 March, guarantees the principle of equal pay, extends maternity leave from 60 to 90 days, introduces 10 days' parental leave and provides for teleworking and hybrid working arrangements.

87. The Labour Code has been aligned with the civil service regime, with the amendments introduced by Act No. 32/X/2023 of 4 August.

Minimum wage

88. The minimum wage for the private sector in Cabo Verde was increased from \$13,000 to \$14,000 in 2023 and is expected to rise to \$15,000 in 2024. In the public sector, the minimum wage rose from \$14,000 to \$15,000 and is forecast to be increased to \$16,000 in the State budget for 2024. As regards salary adjustments in the public administration, the lower professional grades, including retirees, received an increase of between 1 per cent and 3.5 per cent in 2023 and a 3 per cent rise is expected in 2024.

Just and favourable conditions of work

89. The State recognizes the right of all persons to benefit from just and favourable conditions of work, guaranteeing fair pay and equal pay for equal work without exception, in line with the Committee's general comment No. 23 (2016), which advocates the adoption of a minimum wage guaranteeing a decent living as well as just and favourable conditions of work for all.

90. Decree-Law No. 6/2014 of 29 January established the national minimum wage guaranteed to all employees subject to the Labour Code regime, including those working in public sector enterprises, mixed enterprises and public capital companies.

Domestic labour

91. The National Social Security Institute and the General Directorate of Labour have organized campaigns and meetings to encourage employers to register their workers with the social security system, drawing their attention to the importance of their obligations under Cabo Verdean legislation.

92. With regard to the ratification of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), the Government, in collaboration with its social partners, is examining whether the country currently has effective conditions for the implementation of all principles and articles contained therein.

Informal economy

93. The 2017–2021 Strategic Plan of the National Social Welfare Institute foresaw an increase in the proportion of the economically active population covered by the social security system, which did in fact materialize: the number of economically active persons covered by the system rose from 83,441 in 2016 to 104,851 in 2021, equivalent to 52.5 per cent of the economically active population. The 2022–2026 Strategic Plan foresees, as a strategic objective, a further increase in the percentage of the economically active population covered by compulsory social security, to around 66 per cent.

94. The 2022–2026 National Strategy for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty, in conjunction with the Plan for Accelerating the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, ensures that all households living in situations of extreme poverty that have informal production units will be targeted for formalization. Other entrepreneurs should be targeted by a programme to extend compulsory social security to hard-to-reach groups.

95. The strategy for implementing the 2021–2025 National Plan for Gender Equality involves fostering coordination between the various mechanisms through which social welfare benefits may be accessed with a view to improving women's access to financial resources, notably through the National Social Welfare Institute and the National Social Welfare Centre.

Right to unionization

96. The right to strike is enshrined in Cabo Verdean legislation and the Constitution, article 67 of which, forming part of the chapter establishing the rights, freedoms and guarantees of workers, guarantees workers' right to strike and prohibits lock-outs.

Right to social security

97. The social security system is governed by Act No. 131/V/2001 of 22 January, which lays the bases for a social security system built on a permanent structure consisting of three tiers: a social safety net, compulsory social security and complementary social security.

98. As the social security pension was last updated in 2019, a further update is expected next year, with coverage having been extended to 3,000 new beneficiaries in 2023, taking the total number of pensioners benefiting to 22,680.

99. The aim under the 2022–2026 National Strategy for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty is to extend the coverage of the social security pension in order to guarantee the right to an income, as well as assistance for the purchase of medicines and access to exemptions and social tariffs for energy and water, for all dependent persons, and specifically for older persons and persons, including children, with disabilities.

100. Cabo Verde ratified the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) in July 2019, and the Convention entered into force in January 2020. The country has accepted three of the nine forms of social benefit provided for therein and is thus bound

only to Part III on sickness benefits, Part V on old-age benefits and Part VII on family benefits.

101. With regard to domestic workers, Decree-Law No. 49/2009 of 23 November provided for the inclusion of domestic service professionals in the social security scheme for salaried workers, guaranteeing them cover in the event of verified illness, maternity, paternity, adoption, ageing, age-related illness, disability or death and compensation for any expenses incurred by their family.

102. Cabo Verde has signed social security agreements with France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden. Migrant workers and members of their families are subject to the social security laws of the country where they work and are entitled to benefits in respect of sickness, maternity, industrial accidents and occupational diseases, unemployment, disability, old age, death and family responsibilities.

Birth registration

103. Cabo Verde has rolled out a birth registration programme run by the Identification and Notarization Service, so creating modern and efficient birth registration mechanisms. Thanks to significant investment and synergies between the Government and certain partners, Cabo Verde's civil register has grown exponentially. Currently, all civil registrations are carried out electronically, which increases trust, reduces the margin of error, allows for the timely production of vital statistics and speeds up the response to requests.

104. The revision of the Civil Registry Code (Act No. 75/VIII/2014 of 9 December) has also enhanced the legal framework for registration in specifying that births occurring in hospital must be registered before discharge and that those occurring outside hospital must be declared within 15 days of the birth.

105. The Child and Adolescent Statute envisages the implementation of simple and rapid procedures for the prompt registration of children and establishes that no child should leave the hospital where he or she is born before being registered. It should be noted, in this connection, that 96 per cent of births in Cabo Verde take place in health-care facilities.

106. Health-care professionals and civil registrars can intervene unofficially if the parents fail to register their newborn, attributing a name to the child in order to uphold his or her right to a name from birth. The parents then have 30 days in which to change the name given by the professionals.

Gender-based violence

107. The Cabo Verdean authorities have taken the necessary steps to combat gender-based violence and protect victims and their families, investing in the reinforcement of offices providing assistance to victims and improving investigations in this field.

108. Support centres that provide assistance and follow-up care for victims of gender-based violence have been set up pursuant to Act No. 84/VII/2011 of 10 January in every municipality, ensuring effective support and the adoption of temporary measures to protect victims and their children. Free hotlines for reporting cases of gender-based violence are available 24 hours a day.

109. Four shelters have been set up in implementation of Decree-Law No. 8/2014 of 27 January – two on the island of Santiago, one in São Vicente and one in Fogo – and all four are now operational. Through Regulation No. 3/2023 of 17 April, enacting the statutes of the Autonomous Support Fund for Victims of Gender-based Violence, the State aims to guarantee resources for the effective implementation of measures to protect, support and assist victims, and also perpetrators, of such offences.

110. Act No. 55/IX/2019, laying the bases for the State budget, introduced a dedicated chapter on gender, determining that gender equality and equity must be taken into account in the budgeting process and to this end incorporating gender markers in the Integrated

Budgeting and Financial Management System, a tool that allows for projects and programmes to be classified based on their contribution to the promotion of gender equality.

111. The Commission to Combat and Prevent Violence created by Regulatory Decree No. 46/2022 of 24 November is an interministerial body responsible for fostering coordination and ensuring the provision of interdepartmental technical support in the design, formulation, definition, execution, follow-up, oversight and evaluation of policy measures to prevent and combat offences involving gender-based violence, including sexual violence, against minors.

112. The inclusion of gender-related policy measures in national strategic plans being guaranteed and such measures duly aligned with the Governance agenda, funding for their implementation has been assured from either internal or external resources. Funds have been allocated from the State budget to cover the operation of the 22 support centres around the country, including the salaries of their staff, the operation of the four existing shelters and the expansion of such facilities to other islands. Budget funds have also been allocated for the implementation of all active employment policies and other sector-specific measures designed to increase the participation of women in economic and political life.

113. Training on support for victims of gender-based violence has been provided for judges, public prosecutors and police officers by various institutions. A particular focus of this training were the second round-table consultations to develop a national action plan conducted as part of the participatory audit of the implementation of gender-based violence laws (the “Djuntu pa igualdadi” project).¹

114. The aim of the current legislation, specifically, the amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure, is to ensure conditions that guarantee victims a rapid, specialized and effective response and a recognition that all rights are to be guaranteed, without distinction, both to Cabo Verdeans and to foreign nationals present in the country, regardless of their legal status.

115. Police bodies, civil servants, doctors and health professionals who, in the course of their duties, become aware that an offence involving gender-based violence has been committed are required to report the offence within 48 hours, on pain of disciplinary liability.

116. The National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity is duly aligned with national strategic plans and international programmes aimed at promoting gender equality and equity in all sectors of governance. This Government plan has justified, and continues to justify, the mobilization of the necessary financial resources and the budget allocation necessary to ensure that the Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity can achieve the specific objectives pursued by the country.

117. As part of efforts to ensure the implementation of gender-based violence legislation nationwide, awareness-raising sessions have been organized in partnership with municipal chambers, local non-governmental organizations and other State institutions, including the Special Projects Unit, the National Directorate of Education, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Administration.

118. A gender equality module has been incorporated into vocational training courses and training for trainers in gender equality and gender-based violence has been provided in this connection. Additionally, an agreement has been concluded with the Psychological Support Centre to ensure psychotherapeutic, psychiatric and neurological support for victims of gender-based violence and their children throughout the country. A second agreement, for the provision of legal assistance, has been concluded with the Association of Women Lawyers and a third, for the establishment of a shelter, with the Chã de Matias Association.

Right to property

119. The Government Programme recognizes that the physical security of housing and the availability of sanitation services is of critical importance for the living conditions of families.

¹ Together for equality.

With this in mind, the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development envisages that, by 2026, the quantitative housing deficit will be reduced to 19,000 and the qualitative deficit to around 40,000 homes.

120. Set up within the framework of the 2021–2030 National Housing Plan, which is the main instrument for implementing national housing policy, the Housing Regeneration Programme is designed to help to reduce the qualitative deficit in residential housing for the most vulnerable families by 2026. The Programme's main target groups are women and young persons living in housing affected by problems such as flooding, water infiltration, a lack of or inadequate sanitary systems and a lack of adequate kitchens.

121. The Government and local authorities have rolled out social housing schemes through which land and building materials are made available as well as standard housing schemes.

122. The target population for these schemes consists of households classified as belonging to group 1 or 2 in the centralized social register, with priority given to single-parent households headed by women, households including at least one child under the age of 15 years old, households including a person with a disability, households including persons aged over 65 and households with a large number of members.

Right of access to water

123. The archipelago is increasingly dependent on desalinated water: in the main urban centres, around 80 per cent of the water used for domestic consumption and in industry, tourism and the service sector is desalinated, generating high energy costs that have a direct impact on water rates.

124. Despite consecutive years of severe drought, the Government of Cabo Verde has made considerable progress, with around 85.5 per cent of the country now covered by water supply systems (91.6 per cent in urban areas and 72.8 per cent in rural areas).

125. Thanks to ongoing investments, the percentage of the population with access to drinking water through public networks is set to rise to around 88 per cent. Average daily consumption per capita is also expected to increase, from the current 75.0 litres per person per day to close to 80 litres per person per day. The target consumption per capita set under the National Strategic Plan for Water and Sanitation is 90 litres per person per day.

126. A major investment drive to improve the transportation and supply of water and ensure safe processing and reuse of wastewater is under way. As a result, almost all of the resident population is expected to have access to a source of drinking water and no household should be spending more than 5 per cent of its income on water and sanitation services.

127. In order to minimize the adverse impact of the high cost of water production and distribution on the poorest sectors of society, the Government adopted a subsidized water rate in 2018. To ensure that subsidized rates can be maintained, it has invested in renewable energies in order to reduce the cost of producing desalinated water and transporting and distributing groundwaters.

Right to health

128. Act No. 7/X/2022 of May 16 enacted the legal regime for HIV/AIDS prevention and the comprehensive care of those affected. The provisions of the Act are aligned with the target set for infectious diseases under Sustainable Development Goal 3, which envisages an end to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030.

129. The implementation of the fourth Strategic Plan to Combat HIV/AIDS, covering the period 2016–2020, reduced new infections and HIV-related mortality, helped to improve the quality of life of persons living with HIV and, by ensuring a more effective national response, served to strengthen the fight against all forms of discrimination and enhance governance.

130. The country's fifth Strategic Plan to Combat HIV/AIDS, covering the period 2022–2026, envisages a concentrated epidemic, with an HIV prevalence of around

0.6 per cent among the population in general but a higher prevalence among sex workers (4.6 per cent) and homosexual men (6.1 per cent). Through the fifth Strategic Plan, the Government is aiming to monitor progress made and obstacles encountered in the fight against HIV/AIDS and to fulfil the commitments assumed at the “Cabo Verde: Ambition 2030” international forum and in the Government Programme for the period 2021–2026.

131. The 2022–2026 National Health Development Plan, which forms the basis of health policy in Cabo Verde and guides the strategic direction of the national health service, was presented in follow-up to the policies and strategies outlined in the National Health Development Plan 2016–2021 and is informed by the constitutional law principles of universality, accessibility and non-discrimination.

132. Similarly, the 2018–2022 Strategic Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health was adopted to guide policy in this area.

133. In the health sector, support for the purchase of medicines and for complementary diagnostic tests not available in the public health service has been made available. Support has also been made available for the purchase of compensating devices for persons with a disability and the chronically ill and for the transportation of haemodialysis patients. In addition, existing care centres for children and adults with disabilities have been upgraded and new ones have been fitted out and made operational.

134. Although the Government has not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it has adopted Decree-Law No. 21/2019 of 24 May, promoting the development of policies and programmes to ensure that persons with disabilities – a category of persons defined in law for the first time therein – have access to the broadest possible range of goods and services serving to enhance their autonomy, independence, quality of life and social inclusion. The Decree-Law lays the general foundations of the legal framework for disability prevention and the rehabilitation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. A booklet setting forth the regulations implementing the Decree-Law has been published to enhance awareness and understanding.

135. In accordance with Legislative Decree No. 63/2022 of 28 August, regulating service requirements for the establishment and operation of social welfare facilities, in Ordinance No. 56/2022 of 5 December the Government set out the technical requirements for the establishment and operation of care centres for persons with a disability living in situations of dependency. These care centres provide support and care services that cover day-to-day needs as well as medical assistance and leisure activities with a view to ensuring that persons with a disability are able to continue living in their community and family environment.

136. The medical evacuation (medevac) service available to non-contributing patients was restructured in 2016, with the National Social Security Centre assuming responsibility for its administrative and financial management. There has been a considerable improvement in the care provided for patients benefiting from non-contributory cover, and also in procedural coordination, following the establishment of external evacuation offices serving both the barlavento and sotavento islands, with particularly significant improvements in the standard of accommodation and support provided for evacuated patients undergoing medical treatment in Portugal.

137. The budget allocated to the external evacuation service available under the non-contributory scheme has been increased by 87 per cent, from CVEsc 181,540,670 in 2016 to CVEsc 339,754,750 CVE in 2022.

138. The National Strategic Plan for Mental Health adopted by the Government for the period 2021–2025 is focused on defining mental health policies that transcend mental illness and place patients at the centre of all action envisaged thereunder, according priority to the primary health-care services that are an integral part of the range of national health-care services while at the same time emphasizing the importance of secondary care based on preventive and diagnostic intervention and treatment during the acute phase of illness and tertiary care that includes psychological and social rehabilitation.

Right to education

139. The technical and vocational education programme gives young persons and adults outside the education system the opportunity to continue their studies and complete their secondary education with a joint academic and vocational diploma.

140. Decree-Law No. 13/2018 of 7 December, amending Decree-Law No. 2/2010 of 7 May, guarantees access to free basic and secondary education besides providing for the expansion of school meal services, a reinforcement of school transport services for students living in more remote areas and the award of student scholarships and subsidies, with an emphasis on students in technical and vocational education.

141. Enrolment in basic education is compulsory for children who reach the age of 6 years old by 31 December of the year of entry, pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 13/2018 of 7 December, amending Legislative Decree No. 2/2010 of 7 May, which sets forth the basic principles guiding the education system. Students may remain in compulsory basic education until they reach the age of 18 years old.

142. With a view to improving responses to students with special educational needs, in the 2018/19 school year, the authorities of Cabo Verde adopted the National Reporting System for Children and Young Persons with Special Educational Needs – a policy designed to identify the specific educational needs of each child or young person and to define, based on his or her abilities, the special measures to be taken in each case, which might entail, *inter alia*, changes to the enrolment process or classroom organization, individual curricular adjustments, personalized learning support, a specific individual programme, assistive technologies and special assessment conditions.

143. Through Ordinance No. 27/2018 of August 8, implementing regulations that establish the procedure for granting free enrolment and attendance in public and private pre-school, basic, secondary, higher education and vocational training establishments for persons with a disability were also adopted and have since been put into practice.

144. Through Decree-Law No. 47/2017 of 26 October, social and educational support measures were introduced that guarantee access to and continued inclusion in the education system for mothers and fathers, with special attention paid to pregnant teenagers at risk of school dropout, by allowing 60 days' postnatal leave pursuant to Act No. 20/X/2023 of 24 March and establishing a special regime for absences and follow-up during pregnancy.

145. In the same vein, article 47 (3) of the Child and Adolescent Statute states that suspension or cancellation of enrolment and voluntary withdrawal from school by a child, adolescent or pregnant mother do not count as failure.

146. As part of its educational activities, which include leading initiatives to raise awareness of and encourage respect for human rights, pursuant to art. 5 of its Statute the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship developed a human rights programme for children that was launched in April 2021 and continues to run.

147. As part of the same project, and in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, plans for the adoption of a national strategy for human rights education have been developed in accordance with the second National Action Plan for Human Rights and Citizenship covering the period 2017–2022, which was subsequently extended to 2025 by resolution No. 59/2023 of September 14.

148. Various educational materials have also been developed to teach human rights to children in the 5- to 10-year-old age bracket. These include reproductions of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, including a version printed in Braille and a version in audiovisual format with sign language translation, a TV and radio spot explaining the concept of human rights, also translated into sign language, a handbook of human rights education for teachers, two human rights education activity booklets and a human rights picture lotto game.

149. For the same purposes, 10 training courses were organized for a group of compulsory basic education teachers and preschool education professionals from all the country's municipalities to ensure correct and effective use of the materials produced for formal education.

150. Under the 2022–2026 Strategic Plan for Education and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the State has undertaken to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

Cultural rights

151. The Government has developed and implemented several measures and actions to ensure official recognition of the Cabo Verdean alphabet. Specifically, the unified alphabet for Cabo Verdean writing was officially recognized by Decree-Law No. 8/2009 of 16 March and has been disseminated on television and radio, through a programme entitled *Pa lê e skreve lingua kabuverdiano*,² and, in 2013, a pilot project for bilingual teaching in the Cabo Verdean language and Portuguese was launched in primary schools. In the same year, a parliamentary forum on effective social bilingualism and the official recognition of the Cape Verdean language was also organized.

152. In 2019, the Institute of Cultural Heritage published a pocket handbook intended to raise awareness of the grammar of the Cape Verdean language among citizens of Cabo Verde, entitled “Using the Cabo Verdean language – structural features”.

153. In addition, by resolution No. 102/09, published in Official Bulletin No. 87, series I, of August 9, the Cabo Verdean language was classified as intangible cultural heritage – an event constituting an important milestone in the history of the language.

154. In the 2022/23 school year, the Cabo Verdean language was introduced as an optional subject, on an experimental basis, in year 10.

155. As declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 February 1999, 21 February is celebrated as International Mother Language Day. On this day, various awareness-raising activities drawing attention to the importance of the Cabo Verdean language as a mother tongue are carried out both at school and in Cabo Verdean language writing workshops.

Right to development

156. The Cabo Verdean Strategic Agenda for Sustainable Development, implemented to date through the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, covering the period 2022–2026, and the Municipal Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development for the period 2020–2024, is the main tool for aligning the actions of political and social actors, the main long-term point of reference for the State as a whole and a key support for strategic dialogue on the country’s sustainable development. The Agenda serves as a guide for strengthening economic activity and diversifying the economy by promoting sustainable tourism, the blue economy, the digital economy, industry, intelligent agriculture, culture and creative industries, and thus, sustainable economic growth with decent jobs.

Economic, social and cultural rights

157. The Government formulated the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, covering the period 2022–2026, in 2022. Subsequently, the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship identified a need to incorporate a human rights perspective and, to this end, appointed a consulting firm to support and assist the National Planning Department in the drive to mainstream human rights in all areas, in programmes launched under the second Strategic Plan and sector-specific strategic plans, with the Commission maintaining a coordinating role.

² How to read and write in Cabo Verdean Creole.

Child welfare

158. Government policies are being implemented in the field of social welfare, with a focus on children and adolescents from the most vulnerable households. The aim of such measures is to reduce poverty and increase family income, and thus to reduce children's exposure to exploitation and child labour. Priority measures adopted to support women heads of household – through social inclusion income, emergency social inclusion income and solidarity income – are particularly important in this context.

159. With a view to stepping up efforts to eliminate poverty, the National Strategy for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty has been brought into line with the second Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, covering the period 2022–2026, a resource mobilization and funding exercise financed from the State budget that is designed to achieve the complete elimination of extreme poverty by 2026.

160. Measures, facilities and instruments adopted with a view to facilitating access to financing for the private sector and thereby fostering employment and inclusive, sustainable economic growth include an economic financing ecosystem entailing the creation of new programmes to promote business and a variety of credit and financing lines. The business climate has improved, and incentives for investment and domestic production have been provided, in part through the incorporation of microfinance into the national financial system.

161. To improve access to credit, the Government has concluded an agreement with all municipal councils, chambers of commerce and commercial banks, and these financial initiatives have made direct contributions to increases in employment and household income.

162. The process whereby workers move from the informal to the formal sector of the economy, where they enjoy a set of rights conducive to greater inclusion, is gaining momentum.

163. The main aims of the National Policy for Territorial Cohesion, adopted by resolution No. 58/2022 of 22 May, are to reduce regional and municipal disparities through cross-cutting policies for the provision of public administrative, education and health services that serve to reduce poverty and create economic and social opportunities conducive to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all municipalities and islands.

164. The National Strategy for Regional and Local Development was adopted by resolution No. 87/2022 of 3 October and the National Decentralization Strategy by resolution No. 73/2022 of 30 June. The aim of the first strategy is to combat inter- and intra-regional economic disparities, while the second strategy is focused on improving efficiency in public administration in both local and central authorities and thus safeguarding the rights of citizens.

165. The 2017–2021 Strategic Plan of the National Social Welfare Institute foresaw an increase in the economically active population covered by the social security system, which did in fact materialize: the number of economically active persons covered by the system rose from 83,441 in 2016 to 104,851 in 2021, equivalent to 52.5 per cent of the total economically active population. The 2022–2026 Strategic Plan foresees, as a strategic objective, a further increase in the percentage of the economically active population covered by compulsory social security, to around 66 per cent.

166. A set of instruments has been adopted to provide an organizational structure for the system of protection from and action to prevent the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children. They include the fifth National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Violence against Children and Adolescents, adopted by resolution No. 102/2021 of 19 November and covering the period 2022–2024, the aim of which is to establish policies for combating the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescents.

167. As part of efforts to implement the 2017–2019 National Plan to Combat Sexual Violence, awareness-raising and training activities were organized for coordinators and teachers at the various levels of education. This programme of teacher training on the prevention of sexual violence is continuing under the new Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Violence against Children and Adolescents for the period 2022–2024.

168. Additionally, through Act No. 19/X/2023 of 31 January, the general legal framework for the protection of at-risk children and adolescents was adopted, the aim being to ensure the promotion and full and effective exercise of their rights and entitlements, their well-being and their comprehensive development. Furthermore, the Child and Adolescent Statute has been revised to ensure greater and better protection for children in Cabo Verde, in line with changes introduced in the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

169. A recent amendment to the Criminal Code increased the penalties for those who use minors between 10 and 18 years of age in sexual activities or engage in sexual activity with them in exchange for remuneration or other form of compensation (art. 145-A). The criminal penalties for all types of offences involving violence against and sexual abuse of children and adolescents have been stiffened to create a deterrent and ensure that perpetrators are punished severely.

170. As part of the “Justiça Amiga da Criança” initiative,³ special interview rooms have been established for hearings involving child victims of sexual abuse and violence in the cities of Praia and Mindelo and on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista.

171. The Cabo Verde Communication Plan for Children and Adolescents was adopted by resolution No. 100/2021 of 19 November and the National Communication Strategy for Preventing and Combating Sexual Violence by resolution No. 101/2021, also of 19 November.

172. The psychological services available through the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents have been expanded following the recruitment of psychologists for all branches and offices in all islands in 2021 and 2022. Reports of sexual abuse have been dealt with appropriately, and the victims have benefited from psychosocial assistance and support. Assistance and psychosocial follow-up of this kind is available through police stations and health centres as well as through the Institute for Children and Adolescents.

173. By resolution No. 38/IX/2017 of 3 June, the parliament of Cabo Verde unanimously agreed to establish 4 June each year as the National Day against Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, an initiative intended to promote reflection, deliberation and decision-making on a scourge that affects all parts of society.

174. Cabo Verde has ratified the various International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions that protect children – namely, the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, 1957 (No. 105), the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) – and has adopted a list of hazardous forms of child labour.

Rights of same-sex couples

175. A diagnostic study of the social and legal situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in Cabo Verde led by the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship was carried out in 2021 and the findings have been widely disseminated among representatives of civil society and those responsible for creating and implementing public policies. The study recommended that legislation on de facto unions should encompass same-sex couples and should guarantee the possibility of legal recognition of the situation of de facto union in which they live so as to give them access to the various benefits and advantages deriving from such unions, particularly in the areas of social security, finance and access to bank credit, and accord them the right to alimony and inheritance benefits in the event of the death of one of the partners.

III. Conclusion

176. This report sets out the main results achieved in the period under review, that is, 2018 to 2023, the period since the submission of the country’s initial report to this Committee.

³ Child-friendly justice.

177. The report demonstrates the Government of Cape Verde's unwavering commitment to implementing the recommendations received following the review of the initial report and the efforts that the country has made to respond to these recommendations.
