



Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Colombia***

1. The Committee considered the seventh periodic report of Colombia¹ at its 36th and 37th meetings,² held on 10 and 12 September 2025, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 58th meeting, held on 26 September 2025.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the seventh periodic report and the additional information provided in the replies to the list of issues.³ The Committee also expresses its appreciation for the dialogue held with the delegation of the State Party and thanks the delegation for its oral replies and the supplementary information provided.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the ratification of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), the International Labour Organization (ILO) Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190); the establishment of agrarian and rural courts and the National Care System; the recognition of the rights of campesinos under Legislative Act No. 01 of 2023 and Act No. 2462 of 2025 and of the right of all persons to adequate food under Legislative Act No. 01 of 2025; the adoption of the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, including the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan; and all the matters referred to below.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations**Armed conflict and economic, social and cultural rights**

4. The Committee welcomes the State Party's commitment to implementing a policy of total peace through measures such as the strengthening of the Unit for Implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace (Peace Agreement), the consolidation of protection plans for signatories to the Peace Agreement and under the National Policy on Support and Comprehensive Reparation for Victims 2021–2031, and the inter-institutional coordination between the National System for Comprehensive Victim Support and Reparation and the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-eighth session (8–26 September 2025).

¹ [E/C.12/COL/7](#).

² See [E/C.12/2025/SR.36](#) and [E/C.12/2025/SR.37](#).

³ [E/C.12/COL/RQ/7](#).



and Non-Repetition in furtherance of their goals. However, the Committee is seriously concerned that the armed conflict continues in many regions of the country and that there is a lack of institutional presence in those regions, which restricts their inhabitants' enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights by, for example, limiting their access to basic services. The Committee is also concerned about ongoing delays in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, particularly in the implementation of the various territorial development plans.

5. **The Committee recalls the recommendation made in its previous concluding observations⁴ and recommends that the State Party increase its efforts to ensure the effective functioning of the mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Final Agreement and redouble its efforts to implement the various territorial development plans so as to guarantee the economic, social and cultural rights set out in the Covenant. It also urges the State Party to step up its efforts to ensure the active, open and transparent participation, in the implementation process, of the public, including civil society organizations and, particularly, the groups most affected and victims of the conflict, and to take all possible measures to keep a line of dialogue open with a view to achieving total peace.**

Access to and restitution of land

6. The Committee welcomes the work carried out by the Land Restitution Unit to broaden recognition of expropriated lands, with a view to their restitution, and the allocations that have already been made, as well as the significant increase in the Land Fund. However, the Committee is concerned about the persistent inequalities in access to land that continue to affect campesinos, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Colombians, the denial by the Land Restitution Unit of applications and the historical difficulties relating to inter-institutional coordination in fully implementing restitution decisions.

7. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Make progress in land titling and redistribution, in line with the commitments under the Peace Agreement, and set out a clear timetable for making final awards of property as a means of protecting the rights of the beneficiaries of the measures;**

(b) **Continue strengthening the capacity of the Land Restitution Unit and the Land Fund and expedite land redistribution, giving priority to victims of the armed conflict, rural women, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic communities;**

(c) **Provide guarantees with respect to security, sustainability and stay in the territory, including security measures to address violence, the intrusion of third parties onto Indigenous Peoples' lands and dispossession, and provide tools for building suitable life plans;**

(d) **Make progress in implementing the Comprehensive Rural Reform, particularly in relation to access to land for priority groups, in line with the Peace Agreement, in particular for the groups mentioned in paragraph 7 (b);**

(e) **Make progress in implementing Decree No. 1396 of 2024, which prioritizes and facilitates access to rural land ownership for women, and monitor its implementation;**

(f) **Make progress in the restitution of lands of Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation or initial contact or at risk of extinction, in accordance with international standards, particularly those that recognize and legally protect the right of Indigenous Peoples to own, use and control lands, territories and natural resources through the demarcation and granting of collective titles to property.**

⁴ See E/C.12/COL/CO/6, para. 8.

Population involved in the cultivation of illicit crops

8. The Committee is concerned about the limited implementation of the Comprehensive National Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops under the Peace Agreement, the unjustified exclusion of beneficiaries, and the forced eradication of crops carried out in communities that had joined the voluntary substitution programme, which has left many families without a livelihood. The Committee also notes that the information provided by the State Party reveals that significant progress has been made in only certain components of the programme (art. 11).

9. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation⁵ that the State Party continue its efforts to apply a human rights-based approach in implementing the terms of the Peace Agreement relating to the solution to the drugs problem, especially the production and sale of and trafficking in illicit drugs, and ensure that the Comprehensive National Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops under the Peace Agreement offers alternative productive activities that guarantee the campesinos concerned and their families an adequate standard of living, ensuring their effective participation in both the design and the conduct of those activities, as well as real opportunities to market their produce. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Redouble its efforts to eliminate and redress any irregularities in the exclusion of beneficiaries and to prohibit the use of glyphosate in the forced eradication of crops;**

(b) **Make progress in the implementation of the components still pending of the Comprehensive National Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops under the Peace Agreement, especially the provision of comprehensive technical assistance and the roll-out of short- and long-cycle crop projects intended to bring about sustainable, holistic progress for programme beneficiaries.**

Right to consultation and free, prior and informed consent

10. The Committee welcomes the large number of prior consultations carried out during the period in question. However, it is concerned about the lack of legal certainty and clear regulations with respect to the obligation to consult for the purpose of obtaining free, prior and informed consent when the rights of Indigenous Peoples and ethnic communities may be affected by projects carried out in their traditional territories or by the adoption or application of legislative or administrative measures that affect them, which has led to allegations that the consultations have not met all the legal requirements (arts. 1, 11 and 15).

11. **The Committee urges the State Party to:**

(a) **Prepare legislation and administrative regulations to ensure that the purpose of consultations is to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and ethnic groups, in accordance with the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), particularly article 6 (2) thereof, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and ensure that the legislation and regulations meet the relevant international standards, including with respect to the right to give or withhold free, prior and informed consent and the opportunity to establish mechanisms for dialogue, negotiation and agreement, in accordance with the decision-making process of Indigenous Peoples;**

(b) **Guarantee the autonomy and independence of the Directorate of the National Authority for Prior Consultation;**

(c) **Follow up on the Committee's previous recommendations⁶ regarding the weight given to public consultations and the preparation of social and environmental impact studies on natural resource exploitation activities.**

⁵ E/C.12/COL/CO/6, para. 54.

⁶ E/C.12/COL/CO/6, para. 16.

Indigenous Peoples

12. The Committee notes with concern the delays in the implementation of judicial decisions safeguarding economic, social and cultural rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular judgment No. T-302 of the Constitutional Court, which found an unconstitutional state of affairs with respect to the situation of the Wayúu Indigenous community in La Guajira, owing in particular to the serious humanitarian crisis in the areas of water, health and food affecting the children of the community.

13. The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure the full implementation of judgment No. T-302 of 2017 through:

(a) **The elimination of structural gaps disproportionately affecting the Wayúu community, particularly the children;**

(b) **The strengthening and operationalization of the special mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of public policies, ensuring intergovernmental coordination;**

(c) **The effective participation of the Wayúu community in accordance with their own forms of organization;**

(d) **The implementation of a culturally relevant monitoring and evaluation system based on human rights indicators that measure the real impact on the effective enjoyment of rights, disaggregated by community, age and gender.**

Human rights defenders

14. The Committee takes note of the measures adopted by the State Party, in particular the establishment of an intersectoral commission for the implementation of protections for environmental defenders under the Escazú Agreement, the use of early warning systems, the strengthening of the regional committees on safeguards and the introduction of a comprehensive programme for women leaders and human rights defenders. The Committee also welcomes the information on the bill to introduce a status for human rights defenders. However, the Committee notes with concern that threats and attacks against human rights defenders, particularly those who defend land restitution or engage in the defence of the environment, continue and have increased. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that the number of convictions remains low compared to the high number of offences committed against human rights defenders.

15. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the bill on the status of human rights defenders, which is currently before the legislature, in order to establish a clear normative framework specifically for the protection of human rights defenders, in line with international standards, ensuring that civil society and human rights defenders themselves are involved in its development and implementation;**

(b) **Allocate the necessary financial, technical and human resources for the protection of human rights defenders;**

(c) **Promptly, impartially and thoroughly investigate attacks against human rights defenders and ensure that those responsible are identified and tried and receive sentences commensurate with the gravity of their acts, with a view to ending impunity;**

(d) **Continue strengthening the regional committees on safeguards with tripartite participation, with a view to creating collective protection plans in the most affected departments and regions, and the use of early warnings;**

(e) **In consultation with civil society and human rights defenders themselves, develop a public policy on collective protection, taking account of ethnic, territorial and gender perspectives;**

(f) **Bear in mind the Committee's statement on human rights defenders and economic, social and cultural rights.**⁷

Economic, social and cultural rights and businesses

16. The Committee welcomes the legislative and regulatory initiatives announced, in particular bill No. 410 of 2024, on the criminal responsibility of legal persons, and bill No. 153, which would bolster human rights due diligence. However, the Committee is concerned that the existing oversight and accountability mechanisms remain largely voluntary and non-binding, that there are still no comprehensive reparation mechanisms specifically for and accessible to victims of human rights violations in business settings and that high-risk sectors such as mining, energy, agriculture and ranching continue to operate without clear and enforceable due diligence obligations that adequately protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Colombians, campesinos and other communities in vulnerable situations.

17. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Take appropriate legislative and administrative measures, including through the incorporation of human rights and environmental due diligence, to ensure that businesses operating in the State Party do not adversely affect the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the course of their work;**

(b) **Establish effective mechanisms to ensure that businesses carry out human rights due diligence;**

(c) **Strengthen existing mechanisms for the investigation of complaints against businesses and take effective steps to ensure victims' access to effective remedies and to appropriate reparation or compensation;**

(d) **Expedite the adoption of appropriate legislation providing, inter alia, for the possibility of suspending or revoking the permits or licences of businesses that there is a well-founded reason to believe have promoted, facilitated or tolerated serious human rights violations or participated in them, of disqualifying them from contracting with the State, of temporarily prohibiting their activities and of lifting the corporate veil;**

(e) **Take account of the Committee's general comment No. 24 (2017) on States' obligations to prevent, regulate and punish.**

Maximum available resources

18. The Committee welcomes the adoption of Act No. 2277 of 2022, on tax reforms that promote equality and social justice and make the tax system more progressive. However, the Committee is concerned about the continued high level of dependence on indirect taxes such as value added tax and about the declaration of unenforceability made by the Constitutional Court in judgment No. C-489 of 2023 with respect to the provision that prevented businesses from deducting royalty payments. The Committee is also concerned about the failure to fully implement the Government's social budget and the high levels of corruption that limit the availability of resources (art. 2).

19. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations⁸ and recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Take the necessary steps to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the tax reforms in terms of reducing poverty and inequality and make the adjustments needed to ensure that they are redistributive, socially fair and intended to combat the high levels of inequality and increase the resources available for the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights;**

⁷ E/C.12/2016/2.

⁸ E/C.12/COL/CO/6, paras. 20 and 22.

(b) **Properly tax the profits of large businesses, particularly multinational corporations, and high-net-worth individuals, including by appropriately taxing extractive companies through the elimination of the income tax deduction for royalties and increasing the inheritance tax;**

(c) **Adopt all necessary measures to strengthen institutional and administrative efforts to combat tax evasion and avoidance, including through the expansion of automatic information exchange networks with other countries;**

(d) **Address, as a matter of priority, the root causes of corruption, expedite the adoption of the legislative and administrative measures needed to effectively combat corruption and the adoption of the bill on whistle-blower protection (the Jorge Pizano Act), and carry out independent and thorough investigations of all cases of corruption.**

Equality between men and women

20. The Committee takes note of the measures under Act No. 2466 of 2025, on labour reforms for decent and dignified work, that are intended to protect women's labour rights, including with respect to the prevention of discrimination and sexual or gender-based violence in the workplace, and other differentiated measures. The Committee also welcomes Act No. 2297 of 2023, which sets out effective measures to ensure access to the services of carers or personal assistants, which has a positive impact on women, who disproportionately bear the burden of care. However, it is concerned that inequality between men and women persists, in particular with respect to the wage gap, horizontal and vertical segregation and the higher rates of unemployment or of employment in the informal sector and the incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in the workplace faced by women (arts. 3 and 7).

21. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Take effective measures to increase women's participation in the labour market, especially in rural areas, and accelerate women's transition to formal work;**

(b) **Expedite efforts to close the gender pay gap;**

(c) **Strengthen the elite group established to carry out gender equity-focused labour inspections and provide the appropriate institutional and financial resources;**

(d) **Make progress in the implementation and expansion of the National Care System by adopting a statutory law covering the three dimensions of the right to care – the right to provide care, the right to receive care and the right to self-care – and by implementing support measures and policies for persons with disabilities, which should be developed through participatory processes and consultations supported by relevant data;**

(e) **Strengthen the “Equipares Empresarial” programme, which is intended to close gender gaps in the labour market;**

(f) **Establish a special register of cases of discrimination in the workplace to facilitate monitoring and accountability;**

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

Informal sector

22. The Committee takes note of the adoption of Act No. 2466 of 2025, on labour reforms for decent and dignified work, and Decree No. 533 of 2024, on the incentive for creating and keeping new jobs in the formal sector, which encourages the formalization of employment and the cumulative effect of which has been an increase in the formalization of traditionally informal jobs, such as domestic jobs. However, the Committee is concerned that there are sectors and regions where informal employment remains widespread, particularly among domestic workers, among campesinos and in rural and remote areas and areas affected by the armed conflict (arts. 6, 7 and 9).

23. **The Committee recommends that the State Party continue and step up its efforts, through legislation and incentives, to facilitate the transition of workers from the informal to the formal sector, paying special attention to women, young persons and persons with disabilities and taking into consideration the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204).**

Conditions of work

24. The Committee again welcomes the adoption of Act No. 2466 of 2025, on labour reforms for decent and dignified work, and the increase in the number of labour inspectors to monitor it by 1,000. However, the Committee is concerned about reports of unsafe working conditions in the mining sector, forced subcontracting and the lack of transition measures for workers affected by mine closures. This situation is aggravated in areas affected by the conflict and other rural and remote areas where the presence of authorities, including those involved in labour inspections, is limited (arts. 6 and 7).

25. **The Committee recommends that the State Party increase its efforts to provide the labour inspection mechanism with sufficient human, technical and financial resources for it to adequately monitor compliance with labour legislation and provide adequate protection to all workers, including those in the informal sector and, in particular, those working in rural and remote areas and in the mining sector.**

Persons with disabilities

26. The Committee welcomes the steps taken by the State Party to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market, including the implementation of Decree No. 533 of 2024. It also commends the State Party on its adoption of a labour inclusion strategy, the national quotas for public employers and the National Development Plan 2022–2026. However, the Committee remains concerned that only 2.5 per cent of persons with disabilities are formally employed or have an income equal to the minimum wage. It is also concerned about the lack of structured, institutionalized consultations with representative organizations of workers and persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of key measures (arts. 2, 6, 7 and 8).

27. **The Committee also recommends that the State Party institutionalize inclusive consultations with organizations of persons with disabilities and step up the enforcement of quotas and anti-discrimination regulations, especially in the private sector. In this regard, the Committee also urges the State Party to update the National Policy on Disability and Social Inclusion.**

Trade union rights

28. The Committee welcomes the support for the Colombian Trade Union Movement under Resolution No. 31247 of 2023 and takes note of the efforts made with respect to awareness-raising, training and technical support. The Committee notes the commitments under the Strategy for a Fair Workforce Transition regarding genuine social dialogue and the measures to protect more than 240 trade union members at risk. The Committee is concerned about anti-union practices, including forms of retaliation against unionized workers such as threats, violence and dismissals, and the lack of accountability, which particularly affect subcontracted and/or non-unionized workers in, for example, the port and agriculture sectors, as well as the lack of transition measures for workers affected by mine closures. The Committee also notes the lack of accountability for the killings that took place during the national strike of 2021. The Committee is also concerned that the exercise of the rights to form and join trade unions, bargain collectively and strike is limited by excessive legal requirements.

29. **The Committee urges the State Party to protect the right to engage in trade union activity, protect trade union members and ensure that all reported acts of violence or harassment against, threats against or attempts against the lives of trade union leaders or members are investigated, with the perpetrators being duly punished. In addition, the Committee encourages the State Party to take a stand against widespread**

anti-union practices, such as threats, violence and dismissals, by private companies, especially in the agriculture and port sectors.

Social security

30. The Committee welcomes the ambitious structural reform of the pension system under Act No. 2381 of 2025, the purpose of which is to ensure comprehensive, universal protection covering old age, disability and death. At the same time, the Committee remains deeply concerned about the low rate of social security coverage, particularly among informal workers, women, Afro-Colombians, Indigenous Peoples, rural populations, persons with disabilities and LGBTQI+ persons, as well as the uncertainty in processing with respect to Act No. 2381 (art. 9).

31. The Committee recommends that the State Party expedite the full adoption of the structural reform of the pension system, continue its efforts to guarantee universal social protection coverage, ensuring adequate benefits for all persons, especially those belonging to the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, with a view to ensuring that they have a decent standard of living. Coverage must extend to workers in the informal sector and, in particular, groups with persistently low rates of social security coverage, including Afro-Colombians, Indigenous Peoples, the rural population and older persons. The Committee draws the State Party's attention to its general comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security and its statement on social protection floors as an essential element of the right to social security and of the Sustainable Development Goals.⁹

Child labour and exploitation

32. The Committee recognizes the State Party's commitment to combating child labour, including through legislative and policy measures, but remains deeply concerned about the continued recruitment and use of children by armed groups for purposes such as combat, assistance in combat or sexual exploitation. The Committee is also concerned that, while several strategies are in place, implementation, coordination and monitoring mechanisms remain weak in practice and the lack of access to basic services and poverty in some regions have led to an increase in child labour, exploitation, trafficking and punitive responses, with risk increasing and safe spaces being lost (art. 10).

33. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Take all necessary measures, including budgetary measures, to strengthen existing policies, institutions and mechanisms for the protection of children and adolescents currently at risk of forced recruitment and exploitation, paying special attention to the Indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations, and ensure rights-based support for victims of forced recruitment and exploitation, including psychosocial care, family reintegration and education, and prioritizing school retention for Indigenous, Afro-Colombian and rural children and children in street situations;**

(b) **Take steps to ensure that all cases of economic exploitation of children and adolescents or recruitment by illegal armed groups are thoroughly investigated and that the perpetrators are duly punished;**

(c) **Take all necessary measures to strengthen inspection mechanisms for combating child labour, particularly in agriculture, domestic work and mining, and policies for families living in poverty in order to ensure that children and adolescents attend school, including specific measures to address the high number of girls engaged in domestic labour and unpaid care work.**

Trafficking in persons

34. The Committee notes with concern that Colombia continues to be a country of origin, transit and destination for trafficking in persons, including for purposes of sexual and labour exploitation, which particularly affects women and girls, Venezuelan migrants, Indigenous

⁹ [E/C.12/2015/1](#).

and Afro-Colombian communities and LGBTQI+ persons, many of whom are at high risk because of multiple, intersecting vulnerabilities (arts. 2, 7 and 10).

35. The Committee recommends that the State Party step up and expand campaigns for the prevention of trafficking in persons, with a specific focus on migrant workers, women, girls, boys and persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. It also recommends that the State Party establish and adequately fund shelters and crisis centres, particularly for women and girls, in both urban and rural areas.

Poverty

36. While the Committee recognizes the reduction in monetary and multidimensional poverty between 2024 and 2025, it is concerned that the figures remain high, that there continues to be a deep divide between urban and rural areas, which is especially pronounced in certain regions of the country, and that extreme poverty particularly affects families headed by women, Indigenous persons, Afro-Colombians and persons with disabilities. In addition, while it recognizes that cash transfer programmes play a crucial role as a necessary tool for tackling poverty, the Committee is concerned that such programmes are not linked to long-term, sustainable strategies (art. 11).

37. The Committee notes the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights¹⁰ and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Adopt a comprehensive policy that includes clear, measurable goals and combines cash transfers with sustainable poverty eradication strategies that are aimed, in particular, at Indigenous, ethnic and campesino communities, female-headed households, persons with disabilities, migrants and victims of the armed conflict and establish effective mechanisms for coordination between federal and local governments;

(b) Take all positive measures necessary to benefit the areas that have the highest poverty rates and are underserved by public services, including by increasing budgetary commitments and other redistributive measures and strengthening the administrative, fiscal and operational capacities of local governments;

(c) Facilitate access to certification for persons with disabilities and move towards universal design for inclusive service provision in areas such as transportation, access to public spaces and public buildings, and digital services;

(d) Produce and systematize disaggregated, periodic and updated data on child poverty and on the living conditions of LGBTQI+ persons and persons with disabilities;

(e) Improve the measurement of social mobility and wealth inequality trends, abandoning the stratification system and replacing it with a universal income registry that would allow support to be directed to low-income households;

(f) Implement the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, in connection with which the Committee recalls its statement on poverty and the Covenant.¹¹

Right to food

38. The Committee welcomes the efforts to discourage the consumption of ultraprocessed foods through health taxes and labelling and notes that food insecurity in the country decreased in 2024. It is highly concerned, however, that food insecurity has increased in rural areas and that the National Nutritional Status Survey has been postponed since 2020. It is also concerned about reports that traditional and native seeds, essential for food sovereignty, are at risk because of the impact of the use of transgenic crops and glyphosate and the lack of regulatory protection for such seeds, as indicated in Constitutional Court judgment No. T-247 of 2023 (art. 11).

¹⁰ [A/HRC/59/51/Add.1](#).

¹¹ [E/C.12/2001/10](#).

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

- (a) **Urgently adopt a statutory law on the right to adequate food in order to properly implement the constitutional right to food;**
- (b) **Bring, as a matter of urgency, the National Nutritional Status Survey up to date;**
- (c) **Redouble its efforts to improve the productivity of smallholder farmers and promote the food sovereignty of communities and the participation of civil society in governance models;**
- (d) **Implement judgment No. T-247 of 2023, creating an enabling and participatory regulatory and public policy framework for the protection, conservation and production of native and traditional seeds;**
- (e) **Take account of the Committee's general comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food and the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.**

Right to water and sanitation

40. The Committee is concerned that many households, especially in rural areas, still lack access to drinking water, and the situation is even worse with respect to sanitation. The Committee is also concerned about the increasing water scarcity in several regions, which is aggravating socioenvironmental conflicts in the mining sector (art. 11).

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

- (a) **Drive forward the National Rural Drinking Water Supply and Basic Sanitation Plan as an instrument for overcoming the long-standing insufficiencies in rural and ethnic areas;**
- (b) **Recognize and support community water management models and eliminate the regulatory, technical and financial barriers that hinder their development;**
- (c) **Prioritize human and domestic consumption in water allocation and use, especially in contexts of scarcity, extractive pressure or environmental risk;**
- (d) **Assess and monitor, on a pre-emptive basis, water vulnerability indicators and extractive, energy or agro-industrial projects that may affect equitable, safe, and sustainable access to water, including projects related to energy transition and renovation;**
- (e) **Ensure the effective participation of rural, Indigenous, Afro-Colombian and campesino communities in water management;**
- (f) **Refer to the Committee's general comment No. 15 (2002) on the right to water.**

Right to adequate housing

42. The Committee welcomes the figures indicating that the overall housing shortage decreased between 2019 and 2024. However, it is concerned that significant disparities remain between urban and rural areas and that one of the goals on which the least progress has been made under the Peace Agreement is related to ensuring this right.

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

- (a) **Adopt all necessary measures to gradually increase public investment in housing and to meet, on an expedited basis, the relevant goals under the Framework Plan for Implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially in rural areas and in municipalities with limited resources, through interventions that ensure habitability, access to drinking water, essential services and protection from natural hazards, as well as access for persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Strengthen physical planning processes and processes to update land management plans, with a focus on climate and human rights, and address issues such as biodiversity, sustainability and adaptation to climate change in the instruments so as to allow for proper land management and access to dignified housing solutions;**

(c) **Ensure that evictions, when unavoidable, are carried out in accordance with due process, are preceded by consultations with the persons concerned and by a review of alternatives, are subject to appeal and result in adequate compensation or the provision of adequate alternative housing, and be guided by the Committee's general comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.**

Right to health

44. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Indigenous and Intercultural Health System and the reform initiatives intended to tackle the drug policy through an approach based on human rights and harm reduction. However, the Committee is concerned about the continued lack of access by large segments of the population to the most basic primary care services and the wide disparity in the accessibility, availability, affordability and quality of health services between rural and urban areas and between the different health insurance systems – contributory and subsidized. In this context, the high prevalence of mental health conditions in Indigenous, Afro-Colombian and campesino communities and communities affected by the armed conflict is of particular concern (arts. 2 (2) and 12).

45. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation¹² and recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Adopt the necessary measures to ensure comprehensive, evidence-based reform of the health system, with explicit guarantees of sufficient budget allocations, non-regression and equal and non-discriminatory access to health services for the entire population, focusing on the subsidized system and addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged groups, including Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ persons, in particular transgender and non-binary persons;**

(b) **Step up its investment in health and redouble its efforts to ensure the accessibility, availability, affordability and quality of healthcare, paying special attention to the needs of the most disadvantaged groups, including Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Colombians, and to the geographical characteristics of rural areas;**

(c) **Adopt an effective monitoring and oversight strategy to ensure proper implementation of the measures adopted to discourage the consumption of ultraprocessed foods and beverages, particularly the laws on health taxes and labelling, and take any other measures effective in reducing the risk factors associated with noncommunicable diseases;**

(d) **Ensure access to healthcare for migrants in an irregular situation in the country and LGBTIQ+ persons, particularly transgender and non-binary persons, and, to this end, adopt clinical practice guidelines to provide such persons with integrated healthcare in accordance with Constitutional Court judgment No. T-218 of 2022;**

(e) **Ensure the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of mental healthcare and professional mental health services, including in remote and rural areas, with a focus on victims of the armed conflict, particularly Afro-Colombian youth;**

(f) **Ensure appropriate conditions in prisons and, in particular, provide sexual and reproductive healthcare services and ensure access to water for women deprived of liberty in prisons and detention centres;**

(g) **Make steady progress in the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities, especially persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities and persons with autism spectrum disorder, and expand community-based care services;**

¹² E/C.12/COL/CO/6, para. 62.

(h) **Adopt, under its drug policies, the necessary measures to maintain and strengthen a human rights-based approach, carrying out prevention and awareness-raising activities on the serious health risks associated with drug use, particularly among adolescents and young people; guarantee universal access to treatment for substance use disorders, providing health services, psychological support, rehabilitation services and harm reduction programmes for persons who use substances; and ensure that healthcare services for Indigenous persons who use psychoactive substances are ethnically, culturally and linguistically appropriate.**

Sexual and reproductive rights

46. The Committee is concerned about the obstacles that women face in obtaining safe abortions, particularly women experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination. It is also concerned about structural barriers such as delays, insufficient staff, the failure to provide adequate and timely information, conscientious objection and breaches of confidentiality, as well as a lack of access to appropriate sexual and reproductive health services and information in rural and remote areas (art. 12).

47. **The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure access to abortion at all levels of healthcare, with a special emphasis on rural and remote areas; take the necessary measures to eliminate structural barriers, especially in rural areas, such as delays, insufficient staff, the failure to provide adequate and timely information and conscientious objection; and, additionally, implement pregnancy prevention and planning and comprehensive sexuality education programmes, in particular for adolescents.**

Right to education

48. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State Party on the establishment of the Indigenous Education System, the adoption of the Special Plan on Rural Education and the increase in funding for the education sector. However, it remains seriously concerned about disparities in school enrolment and retention rates between urban and rural areas and between different socioeconomic groups or groups of different ethnic origin; the worsening of educational outcomes; and the high dropout rates, particularly in secondary education, among the same groups. The Committee is also concerned about the difficulties and obstacles that displaced and migrant children and adolescents continue to face in beginning or continuing their education at different levels owing to a lack of documentation, transportation services or available seats. Finally, the Committee reiterates its concern about the lack of adequate access to inclusive education for children and adolescents with disabilities (arts. 2 (2) and 13).

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

(a) **Sustain its efforts to allocate financial, human and technical resources to the education sector in order to ensure universal and equal access to high-quality pre-primary, primary and secondary education;**

(b) **Increase its efforts to eliminate disparities in access to education between urban and rural areas and ensure adequate access to education for children and adolescents, particularly Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, internally displaced, non-national and migrant children and adolescents, including by supporting and increasing investment in infrastructure and connectivity, especially in rural and remote areas;**

(c) **Take appropriate measures to ensure safety in schools and reduce school dropout rates, particularly among Indigenous and Afro-Colombian children and adolescents in rural areas and among non-national and migrant children;**

(d) **Continue strengthening community participation and differentiated policies such as those reflected in the Indigenous Education System and the Special Plan on Rural Education;**

(e) **Step up its efforts to guarantee that children and adolescents with disabilities, including those who are members of Indigenous or ethnic communities,**

have access to inclusive education, ensuring that schools are equipped with adapted infrastructure, accessible materials and trained personnel to meet their needs;

(f) **Refer to the Committee's general comment No. 13 (1999) on the right to education.**

Access to education and safe schools in the context of the armed conflict

50. The Committee is also seriously concerned about the impact of the armed conflict on the right to education both of displaced persons who, despite the adoption of the Victims and Land Restitution Act, which recognizes the right to education as a measure of reparation, and the Policy for Comprehensive School Risk Management, continue to face obstacles and challenges in gaining access to an education in line with their needs, and of the many children and adolescents in regions affected by the conflict who face the danger of being forcibly recruited by armed groups in school facilities. In this regard, the Committee also expresses its deep concern regarding the increase in the forced recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups in schools and notes the need to promote measures for the protection of children and adolescents in, and for their sustained reintegration into, the school system (arts. 2 (2), 10 and 13).

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

(a) **Take appropriate measures to ensure safety in schools and reduce school dropout rates resulting, in particular, from the forced recruitment of students by armed groups;**

(b) **Take appropriate measures to ensure the protection of children and adolescents and the sustained reintegration into the school system of those forcibly recruited;**

(c) **Expand the implementation and ensure the financial sustainability of the Victims and Land Restitution Act to allow displaced students to have access to education;**

(d) **Refer to the Committee's general comment No. 13 (1999) on the right to education.**

Cultural rights

52. The Committee notes the adoption of the National Culture Plan, which involved a participatory process and reflects the willingness of the State Party to include and enhance all forms of culture within the State Party, as evidenced by Constitutional Court judgment No. T-622 of 2016, on the cultural and environmental rights of the Atrato River. However, the Committee is concerned that challenges remain in supporting the cultural rights of Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, Palenquero, Raizal and Roma communities, particularly in the context of the armed conflict. The Committee is also concerned that there is still no clear regulatory framework for the use and cultivation of coca leaf by Indigenous Peoples and that stigmatization persists (art. 15).

53. **The Committee recommends that the State Party maintain and reinforce measures to protect cultural rights and promote respect for cultural diversity and that it allocate the necessary resources for such measures. It also recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Create an enabling environment in which Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Colombian, Palenquero, Raizal and Roma communities may preserve, develop, express and disseminate their identity, history, culture, languages, traditions and customs;**

(b) **Strengthen support for artists, transmitters of wisdom and protectors of tangible and intangible heritage, particularly that of ethnic peoples;**

(c) **Regulate the use and cultivation of coca leaf by Indigenous Peoples, ensuring that the regulations protect and benefit their culture and are prepared with their involvement;**

(d) **Maintain and strengthen measures to protect the tangible and intangible heritage of Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Colombian, Palenquero, Raizal and Roma communities;**

(e) **Continue to promote a culture of peace as an essential tool for resolving the armed conflict.**

D. Other recommendations

54. **The Committee encourages the State Party to accede to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.**

55. **The Committee recommends that the State Party consider acceding to the core human rights instruments to which it is not yet a Party, namely the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.**

56. **The Committee recommends that the State Party take fully into account its obligations under the Covenant and ensure the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined therein in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level, with international assistance and cooperation when needed. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would be significantly facilitated by the State Party establishing independent mechanisms to monitor progress and treating beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements. Implementing the Goals on the basis of the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind.**

57. **The Committee recommends that the State Party take steps to progressively develop and apply appropriate indicators on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights¹³ in order to facilitate the assessment of progress achieved by the State Party in complying with its obligations under the Covenant for various segments of the population. In that context, the Committee refers the State Party to, inter alia, the conceptual and methodological framework on human rights indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.**

58. **The Committee requests that the State Party disseminate the present concluding observations widely at all levels of society, including at the national and departmental levels, in particular among parliamentarians, public officials and judicial authorities, and that it inform the Committee in its next periodic report about the steps taken to implement them. The Committee emphasizes the crucial role that parliament plays in implementing the present concluding observations and encourages the State Party to ensure its involvement in future reporting and follow-up procedures. The Committee encourages the State Party to continue engaging with the Ombudsman's Office, non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society in the follow-up to the present concluding observations and in the process of consultation at the national level prior to the submission of its next periodic report. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State Party consider establishing a national mechanism to coordinate and follow up, on an ongoing basis, on the implementation of the recommendations, with the participation of national human rights institutions and civil society organizations.**

59. **In accordance with the procedure on follow-up to concluding observations adopted by the Committee, the State Party is requested to provide, within 24 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations (31 September 2027), information**

¹³ As it did, for example, for the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador). See <https://www.oas.org/en/sare/social-inclusion/protocol-ssv/>.

on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 7 (a) (land restitution), 9 (b) (population involved in the cultivation of illicit crops) and 15 (a) (human rights defenders).

60. The Committee requests the State Party to submit its eighth periodic report in accordance with article 16 of the Covenant by 31 September 2030, unless otherwise notified as a result of a change in the review cycle. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/268, the word limit for the report is 21,200 words. In addition, it invites the State Party to update its common core document, in accordance with the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties.¹⁴

¹⁴ [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I.