



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

17 July 2023

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of the Kingdom of the Netherlands by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 41st session in November 2022. The constructive engagement between your Government, my Office, and the UPR mechanism is warmly welcome. As the final outcome report on the review of the Kingdom of the Netherlands was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 52nd session, I have also taken note of the efforts of your Government to implement specific recommendations since the previous review.

A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations, starting with those supported by your Government, is available at OHCHR's website (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/nl-index>), and should be considered as part of this letter. The matrix indicates the recommending State and links each recommendation to relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In annex, I have also attached my Office's observations in light of the outcome of the fourth cycle of the UPR. In line with previous practice, I will be sending similar observations to all Member States once their fourth cycle UPR outcome is adopted by the Human Rights Council, with a view to follow-up action in close cooperation with national entities and other stakeholders.

I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the support available through the Voluntary Fund for UPR Implementation, which may be activated at the request and with the consent of a concerned State, along with tools such as the "[UPR practical guidance](#)" and the "[UN good practices](#)" repository on how the UPR process supports sustainable development, with a view to facilitating efforts to implement UPR recommendations in line with the SDGs.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'V. Türk'.

Volker Türk

His Excellency
Mr. Wopke B. Hoekstra
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Observations in light of the outcome of the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review

Among several important measures that were discussed during the review, of note are the adoption by the Government of Aruba of its first gender equality policy and action plan, the establishment of the Children's Ombudsman by the Government of Curaçao to improve the protection of the rights of children and the adoption of the National Development Vision by the Government of Sint Maarten to, inter alia, strengthen the protection of human rights, including the rights of children and youth.

Further, the adoption of the second National Human Rights Action Plan (2020) by the Kingdom of the Netherlands with the aim, inter alia, of incorporating the recommendations received from the UPR as requested by the House of Representatives is also welcome. In this respect, the Governments of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten are encouraged to adopt and implement similar action plans.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is encouraged to ensure necessary funding to allow the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, which maintained its A-status during its re-accreditation in 2020, to address a broader range of priorities in line with the observations made by the Sub-Committee of Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. The plan by Aruba to appoint its first Ombudsman in 2023, based on newly adopted legislation, and to call for the establishment of national human rights institutions in Curaçao and Sint Maarten, are well noted.

It is important to implement a recommendation put forward by several human rights mechanisms that the Kingdom of the Netherlands intensify its efforts to ensure the protection of human rights in the Caribbean constituent countries, including by harmonizing human rights protection standards across all countries and municipalities with a view to addressing existing protection gaps.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is also encouraged to implement national action plans for the follow-up of the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, national human rights institutions, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix may be of use in the development of such implementation plans. Authorities are encouraged explicitly to link each UPR recommendation to corresponding recommendations of other international or regional human rights mechanisms and to the relevant SDG and its targets. This will, in turn, facilitate the creation of synergies between UPR implementation and SDG related actions and reporting within the context of the Voluntary National Review (VNR).

Authorities are encouraged to continue strengthening or to establish national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up in all four constituent parts of the Kingdom, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated, effective approach to reporting to the



international human rights mechanisms, and to implementing the recommendations, in line with the guidance provided by OHCHR following regional consultations and the High Commissioner's report to the Human Rights Council ([A/HRC/50/64](#)).

Further, an important measure that can positively contribute to follow-up action is voluntary mid-term UPR reporting. All Member States are encouraged to submit a voluntary mid-term UPR report some two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, the authorities of the Kingdom of the Netherlands are encouraged to continue with the practice of submitting mid-term reports on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2025, detailing both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR
17 July 2023