



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

19 January 2024

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Barbados by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 43<sup>rd</sup> session in May 2023. The constructive engagement between your Government, my Office, and the UPR mechanism is warmly welcome. As the final outcome report on the review of Barbados was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 54<sup>th</sup> 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/bb-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, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-main>, with a view to facilitating efforts to implement UPR recommendations in line with the SDGs.

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

Volker Türk

His Excellency  
Mr. Kerrie D. Symmonds  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
and Foreign Trade of Barbados



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

The commitment of Barbados to ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is welcome, as is the intention to look into the establishment of a national human rights institution fully compliant with the Paris Principles.

Also commendable are the measures adopted by Barbados to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, including to ensure their access to education, housing, and healthcare. Barbados' commitment to further strengthen the social security system is also very welcome.

Positive note is taken of measures adopted to combat gender-based discrimination and violence, including the passing, in 2020, of the Employment (Prevention of Discrimination) Act, banning discrimination in the workplace on various grounds, as well as the support of Barbados to recommendations to criminalize child marriage and ensure gender parity in wages. Nonetheless, concerns remain about high rates of violence against women and girls, as well as discrimination and violence against LGBTIQ+ persons.

While noting various measures with respect to the rights of children, including the introduction of the Child Justice Bill, which would increase the age of criminal responsibility, Barbados is encouraged to adopt the Child Protection Bill and to fully abolish child corporal punishment. Furthermore, Barbados is strongly encouraged to fully abolish the death sentence and to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

Barbados is also encouraged to develop an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the House of Assembly and the Senate, the judiciary, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix referred in the letter may be of use in the development of such an implementation plan. The Government is encouraged to explicitly link each UPR recommendation to corresponding recommendations from other international and 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).



The Government is further encouraged to establish a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to reporting to 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 could 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 Government of Barbados may wish to consider submitting a mid-term report 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  
19 January 2024