



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

26 June 2024

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Uzbekistan by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 44th session in November 2023. As the final outcome report on the review of Uzbekistan was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 55th session, I have 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/uz-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. Bakhtiyor Saidov
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Uzbekistan



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

The endorsement of a road map by the Parliament to implement the High Commissioner's recommendations following his visit to Uzbekistan in March 2023 is a positive development.

The constitutional reform that incorporated the prohibition of the death penalty is welcomed. The criminalization of domestic violence is noted with appreciation, and the establishment of the Children's Ombudsman is another important development. The submission to the Government of a bill on accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is positively noted, as is the study into the accession to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

However, progress still needs to be made in some crucial areas. Uzbekistan is encouraged to adopt complex anti-discrimination legislation, lift the ban on consensual homosexual relationships, and repeal article 113 of the Penal Code to decriminalize HIV transmission. Further efforts are needed to take all necessary measures to guarantee the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and investigate all reports of torture and ill-treatment against persons deprived of liberty and bring perpetrators to justice.

Uzbekistan is also encouraged to ensure the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, and protect journalists and human rights defenders against intimidation and harassment. Another important step would be the introduction of a simplified and more transparent registration process for NGOs. Finally, Uzbekistan is encouraged to conduct a full review of national legislation to assess and ensure compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Uzbekistan is also encouraged to closely consult and cooperate with all stakeholders in the development of its roadmap on the implementation of all UPR recommendations, as announced during the adoption of the outcome, in particular the Oliy Majlis, the judiciary, the Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix 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 further strengthen the National Centre for Human Rights 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 in about two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, the announcement by Uzbekistan during the adoption of the universal periodic review outcome that it would submit a mid-term report in 2026 is welcomed. It is encouraged that the report details both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR
26 June 2024