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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*


Niger

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-fourth session from 18 to 29 January 2016. The review of Niger was held at the 2nd meeting, on 18 January 2016. The delegation of Niger was headed by Amadou Morou, Minister of Justice. At its 10th meeting, held on 22 January 2016, the Working Group adopted the report on Niger.

2. On 12 January 2016, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Niger: Bangladesh, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Switzerland.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Niger:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/24/NER/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/24/NER/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/24/NER/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Niger through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The representative of Niger thanked the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review for preparing the session and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for its commitment to, and day-to-day work in, promoting and protecting human rights around the world. The representative then assured the Human Rights Council of the delegation's full cooperation.

6. The representative recalled that 112 recommendations had been made during the country's first universal periodic review cycle. Niger had drawn up an action plan for implementing those recommendations, which had been validated by all stakeholders in 2012. The plan had been evaluated in a 2014 midterm report which had taken stock of the progress achieved.

7. The national report had been prepared with the support of several partners, including international organizations, the National Human Rights Commission and civil society partners.

8. The recommendations made during the first universal periodic review had been given very careful consideration. Overall, the majority of recommendations had been acted upon.

9. Several pieces of legislation had been enacted with a view to improving the authorities' ability to intervene in all sectors.
10. With regard to democratic governance, Niger had established the institutions of the Republic provided for by the Constitution of 25 November 2010. Furthermore, all those institutions had withstood the internal and external difficulties that Niger had faced, including the latest attempted coup d'état.
11. In addition, the National Human Rights Commission had been established; it now met the criteria for "A" status accreditation by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.
12. Significant progress had been made since 2011 in promoting transparency and good governance. The main developments in that regard were the establishment of a high authority to combat corruption and related offences and the regular publication of Court of Audit reports.
13. There had also been significant developments in the field of civil and political rights since 2011, including, in particular, the creation of a counter-terrorism institutional framework, composed of a national security council, a counter-terrorist judicial unit and a central counter-terrorism office. Other notable developments in that connection included improved access to justice, the development of press freedom and the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework for combating slavery and trafficking in persons.
14. Regarding access to justice, Niger had adopted a national policy on justice and human rights, together with a 10-year action plan for 2016-2025; it had also carried out several reforms, including the establishment of the National Agency for Legal and Judicial Assistance with a view to ensuring access to justice for vulnerable persons. An office had also been established, together with a helpline, in order to fight corruption and influence peddling in the judiciary.
15. Niger had established a national commission to coordinate the fight against trafficking in persons and a national agency for combating trafficking in persons.
16. During her visit to the country in 2014, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and its consequences had acknowledged the efforts made by Niger to implement the universal periodic review recommendations.
17. With respect to press freedom, press offences had been decriminalized, the capacities of the privately-owned media had been strengthened thanks to an increase in the budget of the press support fund, and the President of the Republic had signed the Declaration of Table Mountain, which sought to abolish the imprisonment of journalists for performing their professional duties.
18. Regarding economic, social and cultural rights, Niger had implemented the 3N Initiative (The people of Niger feed the people of Niger), which had led to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 1 on reducing malnutrition. Noteworthy measures also included the implementation of a free health-care policy, which had led to an improvement in mother and child health; the 2012 revision of the Labour Code, which had been undertaken with a view to enhancing protection of the right to work; and the creation of a national employment observatory.
19. With regard to the promotion and protection of the rights of specific groups, the representative of Niger referred to the 2014 amendment of the Nationality Act, which sought to eliminate discrimination against women in the transmission of their nationality to foreign husbands; the 2014 amendment which had raised from 10 to 15 per cent the quota for both sexes in elected posts; the establishment of a national gender observatory; the adoption of national policy on the comprehensive development of young children and a

framework document for child protection; the adoption of a national social protection policy; and the creation of councils of older persons.

20. In terms of cooperation with special procedures, Niger had received a visit by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery in November 2014 and was ready to welcome the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.

21. Concerning cooperation with treaty bodies, Niger was continuing its efforts to submit overdue reports. For example, its report on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had been considered in August 2015. Niger had also submitted reports under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had been approved in December 2015. In addition, in early 2016, Niger had submitted its report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its updated common core document.

22. Despite the progress made since 2011, significant challenges remained. They related mainly to terrorist threats, trafficking, including the trafficking of migrants, high population growth, desertification, the silting of the Niger River and the shrinking of Lake Chad.

23. The most worrying and pressing of those challenges was terrorism, in particular attacks by Boko Haram, with its costs in terms of killings, arson attacks, destruction of property, population displacement and refugees. The situation in the West African region was especially disturbing because of the challenges posed by terrorism, in particular in terms of dealing with hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and refugees, ensuring their reinsertion and the socioeconomic development of the affected areas.

24. Despite such threats, Niger, with the assistance of its partners, continued to preserve its territorial integrity and ensure the security of people and their property. It had also cared for the displaced persons, refugees and returnees arriving at its borders.

25. Niger had called on the international community to support all efforts to restore peace and security in the Sahel and the Sahara, as well as its fight against terrorism, which was a threat for all.

26. Against that background, Niger was actively preparing the general elections scheduled for 21 February 2016. The Government was committed to organizing free, transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic.

27. Niger had carried out an internal audit of the electoral register — in response to a request by the opposition political parties — which had been endorsed across the political spectrum. In addition, the Independent National Electoral Commission had requested the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) to commission an external audit by its experts. The Government had fully agreed to implement the recommendations of the OIF auditors. The electoral list had been approved by all of the country's political class.

28. As to comments received about the freedom of journalists and statements made concerning certain politicians, the representative of Niger replied that, since 2011, no politician or journalist had been imprisoned because of their views. Furthermore, press offences, such as defamation, insults and spreading false news, had been decriminalized. However, when the Criminal Code was violated, the law was applied; accordingly, one journalist had been imprisoned, for forgery and use of forgery.

29. Two human rights defenders had also been held for questioning concerning statements they had made that were intended to demoralize troops involved in counter-terrorism operations; they had been released the following day. The representative of Niger stated that the country's stability had to be ensured and that some human rights activists acted on behalf of opposition parties in order to destabilize the Government and State institutions. Niger encouraged the proper use of freedom of expression because it strengthened the democratic system.

30. A bill on the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty was before the National Assembly. It should be noted, however, that the Government had systematically commuted death sentences to life imprisonment since 2012 and that no executions had been carried out since 1977. Although the Government was committed to abolishing the death penalty, most of the population were currently opposed to abolition. Niger had therefore chosen to conduct awareness campaigns on the issue, with the assistance of international partners, until the conditions for abolition were met. However, the Boko Haram question had delayed awareness-raising activities. Niger had asked the international community to continue to support its efforts in that regard.

31. Niger acknowledged the need to submit its report to the Committee against Torture. The Government took a firm stand against all forms of torture and trafficking in persons. A bill on torture had been drafted and was under consideration for adoption. Reporting of such acts was consistently encouraged with a view to prosecuting those responsible.

32. Of the country's 38 prisons, only Niamey prison had a problem of overcrowding. The Government was planning to build a new facility there capable of holding 1,500 inmates.

33. An independent mechanism to monitor conditions of detention had not yet been set up; however, steps had been taken at the national level to that end.

34. With regard to efforts to eliminate gender-based discrimination, Niger had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and a committee had been established to look into withdrawing the reservations that had been made. A three-year plan for the period 2015-2017 had also been drawn up. It was planned to raise awareness of the issue by means of a travelling exhibition and to conduct advocacy work among members of parliament, religious leaders and traditional leaders.

35. In accordance with a 10-year policy for the advancement of women, women's rights were mainstreamed as cross-cutting issues in the sectoral policies of the various ministries.

36. As to the issue of the Wahaya and the question of female genital mutilation, the Government was carrying out information campaigns in order to ensure that all persons responsible for such practices were reported to the authorities. The public prosecutor's department had been instructed to prosecute the perpetrators of such acts. Furthermore, a consultation framework had been established, and it was planned to adopt a holistic strategy to develop pilot projects with a view to ensuring that medical expenses were reimbursed and that victims were helped to reintegrate into society and provided with legal assistance.

37. Following the implementation of a national strategy, the rate of female genital mutilation had fallen from 5 per cent in 2005 to 2 per cent in 2013.

38. Niger was also committed to ending child marriage. An African Union campaign had been launched to that end in 2014.

39. With regard to the right to education, the Government's efforts were unprecedented in the country's history. Within the space of 5 years, 15,000 classrooms had been built, as compared to 20,000 in the previous 50 years. Furthermore, the proportion of children

enrolled in school had risen from 8 per cent in 2010 to 25 per cent in 2014. Steps had also been taken to improve, and make more accessible, technical and vocational education, including through such measures as the establishment of the Directorate of Civic Education and Citizenship Training, the National Observatory for Employment and Vocational Training and the opening of eight centres to support continuing training and apprenticeships. The representative of Niger also drew attention to the efforts made to improve the school enrolment of girls, the school completion rate and examination pass rates, as well as the introduction of compulsory education until the age of 16.

40. Child mothers who were attending school were allowed to continue their studies after giving birth.

41. With regard to women in decision-making positions and elective posts, in 2010, for the first time ever, a woman had been among the 10 candidates standing for President. At the legislative elections, women had accounted for 15 of the 113 deputies elected, 639 of the 3,477 councillors and 8 of the 270 mayors. Out of a total of 36 ministers, 7 were women. In addition, the President of the Constitutional Court was a woman, as was the President of the High Court of Justice.

42. The representative of Niger also referred to the amendment of the Quota Act, which had raised quotas, and the establishment of the National Gender Observatory.

43. With regard to commitments under international law, Niger had signed the core international human rights instruments and had pledged to continue its ongoing ratification efforts.

44. A standing invitation had been extended to special procedures in 2012.

45. Niger had adopted a national plan on food, safe drinking water and sanitation for the period 2011-2015 and a national strategy on livestock water in 2014, which had led to increased access to water in rural and urban areas.

46. Steps had also been taken with regard to the right to health, in particular maternal and reproductive health, including the provision of free-of-charge services for caesarean sections, under-5 childcare, antenatal care, family planning and the treatment of female cancers. Those measures had helped reduce maternal mortality and neonatal mortality.

47. With regard to the rights of persons with disabilities, the recommendations of the 2015 Forum would be incorporated into an action plan. In addition, a social protection law had been adopted in 2011, and, following the national forum on social protection, it was expected that a definition of a social protection floor would be established.

48. In conclusion, the representative of Niger expressed appreciation for the statements of support for the efforts made and progress achieved since the first universal periodic review. Niger reaffirmed its commitment to pursuing its efforts to promote and protect human rights, in particular women's and children's rights.

49. Niger was also committed to further strengthening freedom of expression and its efforts to combat terrorism, corruption and impunity by enhancing its institutional and legal framework.

50. Niger was grateful to all its bilateral and multilateral partners for their unwavering support for its efforts to build a democratic, peaceful and prosperous State.

51. Lastly, Niger was aware of the scale of the challenges facing it and its obligation to meet its human rights commitments. It called on the international community to support it in its determination to promote better governance and balanced social and economic development. The representative of Niger expressed appreciation to the delegations who

had invited United Nations bodies to provide Niger with the technical support it needed to ensure a better future for its people.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

52. During the interactive dialogue, 68 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

53. Chad noted the efforts of Niger to implement recommendations accepted during its first universal periodic review and its voluntary commitments. Chad encouraged Niger to continue to deal with a large number of challenges it faced and called for significant support from partner countries to assist Niger.

54. China commended Niger for the development of its 2012-2015 Action Plan and for conscientiously implementing the recommendations of the first cycle of the universal periodic review. China welcomed the efforts of Niger to combat slavery and improve people's health, education, employment and other economic, social and cultural rights. China called on the international community to support Niger in moving forward with its sustainable development.

55. The Congo noted the efforts of Niger to improve its human rights situation through its plan of action for 2012-2015. It noted the creation of national institutions between 2011 and 2013. However, it also noted the persistence of challenges, particularly regarding social rights and rights of women. It expressed appreciation for the decision of Niger to abolish the death penalty.

56. Costa Rica acknowledged the efforts of Niger regarding the ratification of human rights instruments and the establishment of institutions to ensure democracy and the rule of law. However, it noted with concern challenges related to gender equality, the security situation and internal displacements. It regretted the lack of laws and standards to effectively abolish the death penalty and criminalize torture.

57. Côte d'Ivoire welcomed in particular the accession of Niger to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Côte d'Ivoire welcomed the setting up of the Programme for Economic and Social Development 2012-2015, and encouraged the continuation of such efforts for combating poverty.

58. France welcomed measures taken by Niger in the area of human rights since its first universal periodic review, in particular the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

59. The Democratic Republic of Congo noted with satisfaction the ratification by Niger of core human rights instruments and that Niger was the first country to sign the Optional Protocol to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) aiming at combating modern slavery. Furthermore, it welcomed the fact that Niger voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 65/206 on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

60. Denmark commended Niger for its ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and its efforts to promote the rights of women and girls. However, it expressed concern at reports of arrests of journalists and politicians, persistence of discrimination against women and girls, and the practice of land grabbing. Denmark urged Niger to respect freedom of speech and assembly, as well as democratic principles.

61. Djibouti welcomed the participative and inclusive approach to the preparation of the national report of Niger. Djibouti expressed appreciation for the efforts underscoring the political willingness of the Government to improve the human rights situation in Niger.
62. Egypt noted the progress of Niger on human rights through the establishment of a national human rights institution, its action plan to implement recommendations from the first universal periodic review, and measures to fight against contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons. It encouraged Niger to pay great attention to protecting economic and social rights in the context of sustainable development.
63. Ethiopia commended the significant advances of Niger in its ratifications and the follow-up framework in place for the implementation of the recommendations of the first cycle of the universal periodic review. Ethiopia expressed appreciation for the establishment of a counter-terrorism institutional framework to better contain the terrorist threat. Ethiopia encouraged Niger to continue working towards socioeconomic development to sustain and support vulnerable groups.
64. Cuba welcomed the fact that Niger had adopted important legislation further to its first universal periodic review, such as the laws on juvenile courts and trafficking, and the adoption of the justice and human rights action plan. Cuba praised the policy of early childhood development and the improvements in the areas of health, education, employment and food.
65. Georgia noted with appreciation the ratification of international human rights instruments, particularly the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and adoption of legislative provisions since the first universal periodic review cycle. It welcomed the standing invitation issued to special procedures and highlighted efforts to combat slavery, including the adoption of a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons. Georgia acknowledged steps taken to enhance the protection of women and children.
66. Germany recognized the efforts of Niger to cooperate with the United Nations human rights system, particularly the standing invitation issued to special procedures. Germany remained, however, concerned at the high rate of early, child and forced marriages and insufficient protection of migrants and refugees from smugglers and human traffickers.
67. Ghana expressed appreciation for the 2012-2015 Action Plan, aimed at implementing the recommendations of the first cycle of the universal periodic review. Ghana shared the concerns of Niger of the threat posed by terrorists. It expressed concern about alleged reports of intimidation and ill-treatment by security agencies of human rights defenders, journalists and other civilians exercising their rights to free speech, peaceful assembly and freedom of religion.
68. Indonesia welcomed the establishment of the national human rights institution, the Ombudsman's office and institutions to combat trafficking in persons and corruption. Indonesia welcomed the national policy on justice and human rights and its 10-year plan of action for 2016-2025, including the increase of women's participation in politics and the national policies implemented for children and youth, as well as for social welfare.
69. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted progress, particularly in reducing neonatal and maternal mortality rates and the implementation of different programmes for children to access education. It applauded the adoption of the national action plan on combatting human trafficking in 2014.
70. Iraq expressed appreciation for the ratification of international instruments and the role played by Niger in combatting terrorism and consolidating human rights within

society. Iraq applauded the cooperation of Niger with the international human rights community.

71. Italy commended the commitment of Niger to eradicate poverty, the attention it attributed to economic, social and cultural rights, and the adoption of the health development plan. Italy also expressed appreciation for the de facto abolitionist position of Niger regarding the death penalty.

72. Libya commended Niger on important legislation it adopted, including the act of May 2015 on migrant smuggling, and the establishment of national institutions such as the national agency for combatting trafficking in persons.

73. Luxembourg welcomed progress made in the sector of nutrition through the 3N (“Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens”) initiative, efforts made to promote women’s rights, and measures to combat slavery. However, it regretted that women and girls remained extremely vulnerable regarding harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and early marriage. Luxembourg hoped that the forthcoming elections would be carried out in conformity with human rights.

74. Madagascar acknowledged the will of Niger to comply with international commitments despite a difficult regional environment marked by violence and terrorist acts. Madagascar welcomed the establishment of the Constitutional Court, the High Commissioner for the 3N initiative and the national commission for human rights.

75. Malaysia acknowledged the legislative measures, policies and programmes developed in Niger to promote economic and social rights, address the issue of trafficking in persons, and protect vulnerable groups, particularly women and children. Malaysia encouraged Niger to overcome the challenges in the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

76. Mauritania welcomed the adoption of the action plan for the implementation of the national policy on the justice system and human rights and the establishment of the national agency for legal and judicial assistance. Mauritania welcomed other reforms such as the Declaration of Table Mountain prohibiting prison sentences for journalists. Mauritania noted the concern of Niger with combating slavery and human trafficking, and continued to accord priority to the security challenges and fighting terrorism.

77. Mexico noted the establishment of the national human rights institution, the adoption of the national policy on justice and human rights and the amendment of the Quota Act, which fostered greater participation by women in political life. Similarly, Mexico welcomed the rise of birth registration, particularly in rural areas through mobile courts to issue birth certificates.

78. Slovenia commended the remarkable progress achieved since its previous review. It noted the human rights action plan, education programme, national institutions, and strengthened measures to combat female genital mutilation and Wahaya. It also noted that Niger had submitted overdue treaty body reports and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Slovenia considered that the first cycle recommendations it made had been mostly implemented.

79. Mozambique saluted the outstanding progress achieved by Niger since its first universal periodic review. It urged the Government to accelerate the process of abolishing the death penalty and appealed to the international community to be responsive to the request of Niger for technical support regarding attacks by Boko Haram.

80. Namibia commended the creation of the Office of the Ombudsman, the Constitutional Court, the Court of Audit and other courts and agencies to secure an

institutional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights. Namibia expressed appreciation for efforts to protect freedom of expression and encouraged Niger to build on these achievements and guard against any arbitrarily restriction in the fight against terrorism.

81. The Netherlands commended progress in creating national human rights institutions. It noted some limited progress regarding access to maternal health care and reducing female genital mutilation and early marriage. The Netherlands asked that particular attention be paid to human rights defenders working on corporate accountability and transparency issues, who might face arrest, arbitrary detention and spurious charges.

82. Nicaragua recognized the enactment of a new Constitution in 2010 that triggered a process to establish the rule of law and promote and protect human rights. Nicaragua commended the Government for improving the quality and access to education and health, and called for the rapid adoption of the justice and human rights policy.

83. Nigeria welcomed the justice national policy and the action plan for 2016-2025, as well as initiatives to prevent trafficking in persons. Nigeria urged Niger to promote human rights at all levels, and ensure political inclusion and free and fair elections. It also urged Niger to continue to provide the enabling environment for the protection of the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, in line with international standards.

84. Norway commended Niger for its efforts to enhance access to education and food security. It acknowledged the hospitality that Niger had demonstrated towards refugees from neighbouring countries and condemned the attacks on innocent civilians in the Diffa region. Norway recalled the responsibility of Niger to uphold fundamental rights even during a State of Emergency.

85. Pakistan noted that Niger had implemented a majority of the recommendations from the first cycle of the universal periodic review. Pakistan commended the passage of a number of laws and administrative reforms, and appreciated the ongoing cooperation with OHCHR, including the treaty bodies.

86. Panama welcomed progress made by Niger in implementing the recommendations accepted during its first universal periodic review, as well as the establishment of its national human rights institution.

87. The Philippines recognized the challenges faced by Niger regarding climate change and terrorism. It welcomed the ratification of international human rights instruments and the strengthening of a domestic legal and institutional framework. It expressed appreciation for efforts towards the abolition of the death penalty, and towards combating human trafficking and slavery. It commended Niger for measures taken to promote and protect the rights of refugees and migrant workers.

88. Portugal noted with appreciation the willingness of Niger to engage further with treaty bodies and welcomed, among other developments, the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee in charge of preparing human rights reports. Furthermore, it welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2014.

89. Senegal congratulated Niger for its efforts since its first universal periodic review, and for measures taken in the areas of education, health, agriculture and food self-sufficiency, as well as the ratification of human rights instruments. Senegal called on the international community to assist Niger in its efforts to combat terrorism.

90. Sierra Leone welcomed the policies undertaken by Niger since its first universal periodic review. It noted that Niger was targeted by Boko Haram and commended the Government for tackling this threat in a holistic manner and working with regional partners.

Sierra Leone encouraged Niger to implement a more comprehensive preventative strategy to combat gender-based violence.

91. Morocco expressed appreciation for the reforms Niger had undertaken to build a democratic society that respected human rights. It congratulated Niger for establishing a national human rights institution, decriminalizing press crimes, improving access to justice, and combatting slavery and human trafficking. Morocco supported the request of Niger for technical support to establish a specialized body dealing with prison administration and security.

92. South Africa recognized the establishment of the national human rights institution and the adoption of the economic and social development plan. However, it noted remaining challenges in the full realization of human rights exacerbated through the burden of external debt and the food crises. It encouraged Niger to continue all efforts towards the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development.

93. South Sudan expressed appreciation for the national action plan on justice and human rights (2016-2025) and applauded efforts to combat slavery and human trafficking, and the enshrining of the abolition of slavery in the Constitution. South Sudan also expressed appreciation for steps taken to prosecute perpetrators of the crime of female genital mutilation and bring them to justice.

94. Spain welcomed the accession of Niger to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the decision of the Government to accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In this respect, Spain commended the fact that the death penalty had not been applied since 1976.

95. Switzerland welcomed the efforts of Niger to abolish the death penalty. However, it expressed concern at the persistent rate of child, forced and early marriages that led to human rights violations, in particular of the right to education and sexual and reproductive rights. Switzerland was also concerned that human rights defenders continued to face violations and restrictions of their rights. It stated that Niger should ensure that mining companies were aware of its obligation to respect human rights.

96. Togo welcomed the participative and inclusive approach in preparing the national report. Togo was particularly impressed with the work undertaken during the previous four years to promote and protect human rights. Togo welcomed the adoption of the decade-long action plan on justice and human rights (2016-2025) and the decriminalization of press crimes.

97. Tunisia welcomed the development of an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the universal periodic review and the presentation of a mid-term report in this regard. It noted the establishment of 15 institutions contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights. Tunisia encouraged Niger to fight all forms of violence against women and children, including female genital mutilation.

98. Ukraine noted the significant progress of Niger in the ratification of human rights instruments and the fact that Niger had strengthened its national legal and institutional framework to combat slavery and human trafficking. Ukraine welcomed the signature of Niger on the Optional Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) aiming at combating modern slavery. However, it noted remaining challenges to building a genuinely constitutional State.

99. The United Kingdom commended the progress of Niger regarding security and humanitarian challenges. It urged Niger to ensure human rights protections particularly for those who were seeking refuge. It welcomed the signing by Niger of the Declaration of Table Mountain and urged Niger to ensure that journalists and non-governmental

organizations were not unduly hindered, harassed or detained as a result of their work. It called on Niger to end traditional practices that discriminated against and targeted women and girls.

100. The United States of America commended the efforts of Niger to counter terrorist groups. It welcomed the audit of the electoral list of Niger in advance of the upcoming elections. It was concerned by reports that political space was narrowing. It remained concerned about the continued existence of slavery and noted that prison conditions were still a challenge.

101. Uruguay welcomed ratification by Niger of the Optional Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) aiming at combating modern slavery. It encouraged Niger to implement the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on Slavery. Uruguay was concerned at the high rate of early and forced marriage, and encouraged Niger to strengthen measures to eliminate those practices as well as female genital mutilation, and harmonize its domestic legislation with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

102. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela praised the progress achieved in the fields of health and education, such as the distribution of free books in the first and second basic cycles, the establishment of canteens in schools for the nomad population and the strategic plan for delivering food in schools for the most vulnerable population.

103. Zambia called upon Niger to consider withdrawing its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; domesticate the instruments it has ratified, particularly those concerning the rights of women and children; enact laws to combat slavery; and take the necessary steps to eliminate female genital mutilation. Furthermore, Zambia urged Niger to include a definition of discrimination in its legislation and harmonize the Criminal Code with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

104. Afghanistan commended the actions and commitments of Niger in promoting and protecting human rights in compliance with international obligations. Moreover, it welcomed significant progress in the area of freedom of expression and the Declaration of Table Mountain signed by the President of Niger, which allowed journalists to freely practice their professional duties.

105. Algeria congratulated Niger for the remarkable progress it had made in implementing its recommendations from the first universal periodic review cycle, of which it had accepted 110 of 112 recommendations. Algeria welcomed Niger as the first signatory to the Optional Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) aiming at combating modern slavery. Algeria encouraged Niger to continue its efforts to combat early marriage.

106. Angola noted with satisfaction that Niger continued its efforts to improve respect of human rights, particularly in its domestic legislation. Angola welcomed the action plan to implement recommendations from the first cycle. Angola also noted the adoption of constitutional provisions that prohibited all forms of slavery and human trafficking.

107. Argentina welcomed the fact that Niger had become a party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. It also noted the efforts of Niger to address the consequences of the clashes between the terrorist group Boko Haram and the defence and security forces.

108. Armenia expressed its appreciation for health development plans, strategies and programmes, and the commitment of Niger to maintaining an open-door policy for

refugees. Armenia noted challenges in combating trafficking in persons and addressing the high number of child marriages. Armenia encouraged Niger to reconsider its reservations to its many signed and ratified international human rights instruments.

109. Australia expressed concern about reports of torture and ill-treatment of detainees accused of terrorist activities. It noted the de facto moratorium on executions. However, it regretted that this penalty remained in the Penal Code. Australia was also concerned by reports of violence against women, including female genital mutilation, and by the persistence of slavery.

110. Azerbaijan welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and the adoption of the law against trafficking and of rural and water codes. Azerbaijan commended the cooperation of Niger with human rights mechanisms, highlighting the issuance of a standing invitation issued to special procedures, and welcomed quotas for women in elected office and public service.

111. Belgium welcomed the standing invitation extended by Niger to special procedures in 2012, recent ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the ratification of the Rome Statute and related amendments to the Penal Code. Belgium expressed appreciation for the moratorium on the death penalty and the decision of Niger to pass the bill to adhere to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Belgium was concerned at the deterioration of the security situation caused by terrorist groups' attacks. Belgium encouraged Niger to ensure the independence of the Judiciary.

112. Benin welcomed in particular the adoption of various laws covering areas such as political life, individual freedoms, child protection and the administration of justice. Benin welcomed the adoption of measures taken regarding the rights to education, food and health. Benin urged Niger to continue awareness-raising campaigns to ensure the completion of legislative processes for the abolition of the death penalty. Benin urged the international community to support the human rights and development efforts of Niger.

113. Botswana welcomed the adoption of the 2014-2019 action plan of the national commission to coordinate the fight against trafficking in persons, as well as legislative measures taken. It encouraged Niger to fully implement the Declaration of Table Mountain and ensure the enjoyment of freedom of expression. Botswana noted measures taken in the areas of violence against women and girls, and early and forced marriages.

114. Brazil expressed its appreciation that Niger had issued a standing invitation to special procedures in line with the universal periodic review recommendation of Brazil. Brazil was encouraged by progress registered in food security with the adoption and implementation of the 3N initiative. It considered that efforts to combat violence against women and girls needed to be further strengthened.

115. Burkina Faso acknowledged security and environmental challenges faced by Niger. It welcomed progress to accede to international human rights instruments. Burkina Faso called upon the international community to fully support Niger in the fight against terrorism.

116. Burundi applauded the issuance of a standing invitation for special procedures to visit Niger. Burundi congratulated Niger for the adoption of the national human rights action plan and a citizenship and human rights education programme. Burundi welcomed the establishment of a national human rights commission. Burundi noted the adoption of a national social protection policy and a regulatory framework to improve care for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

117. Canada commended Niger for actions to combat slavery taken since its first universal periodic review. It welcomed the signature of the Declaration of Table Mountain. However, it was concerned about reports of an increase in the arrests of journalists and activists. Canada urged Niger to adopt measures to protect freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association.

118. Montenegro commended Niger for its efforts to strengthen the institutional and strategic framework for human rights, in particular to prevent sexual violence and protect victims. Montenegro also noted progress in the areas of education and health. It was, however, concerned about trafficking in children and child labour. It posed questions about any action undertaken to ensure that perpetrators were prosecuted and punished.

119. Chile commended the adoption of regulations to strengthen the institutional framework of Niger, such as the adoption of the national plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the universal periodic review and the extension of an open invitation to special procedures. Chile noted remaining challenges in combatting poverty, protecting the environment, combating desertification and food safety.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

120. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Niger and enjoy the support of Niger:**

120.1 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Ghana);**

120.2 **Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Congo);**

120.3 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (Spain);**

120.4 **Sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Chile);**

120.5 **Sign and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to definitively abolish the death penalty in the country (Chile);**

120.6 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Montenegro) (Norway);**

120.7 **Accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at abolishing the death penalty (France);**

120.8 **Consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Italy);**

120.9 **Re-launch the process of ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with a view to the complete abolition of the death penalty (Luxembourg);**

120.10 **Complete the procedures for the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Spain);**

** The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited.

120.11 Complete the internal process to adhere to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on abolition of the death penalty, as early as possible (Uruguay);

120.12 Complete the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as early as possible; and take all necessary legislative measures to confirm the abolition of the death penalty, including in its domestic legislation (Belgium);

120.13 Harmonize its national legislation with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and accelerate the process to approve the draft law to adhere to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and thus eliminate the death penalty (Costa Rica);

120.14 Remove reservations to core human rights instruments including the Convention against Torture, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Sierra Leone);

120.15 Withdraw its reservations on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and incorporate all the provisions of that Convention into national law (Luxembourg);

120.16 Lift its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and ratify the Maputo Protocol to ensure women's rights (Norway);

120.17 Withdraw its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Canada);

120.18 Remove reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, as previously recommended (Slovenia);

120.19 Adopt all the necessary measures to lift reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Panama);

120.20 Undertake efforts to withdraw the country's reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (South Africa);

120.21 Make all the necessary efforts to remove the reservations from the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Togo);

120.22 Accelerate the process of withdrawal of reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Tunisia);

120.23 Accelerate the withdrawal of its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, to fully comply with the provisions of the Convention, and introduce plans and programs to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women (Chile);

120.24 Consider ratifying the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Côte d'Ivoire);

120.25 Accede to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Armenia);

- 120.26 **Accede to the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity (Ghana);**
- 120.27 **Consider ratifying the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) (Philippines);**
- 120.28 **Establish normative frameworks to help domesticate the human rights instruments it has ratified (Sierra Leone);**
- 120.29 **Take all necessary measures to fully align its legislation with the Rome Statute and particularly to allow full cooperation with the International Criminal Court (Belgium);**
- 120.30 **Proceed with the internal measures necessary to comply with the obligations arising from the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);**
- 120.31 **Ensure a rigorous implementation of its legislation in the main sectors that have an impact on the enjoyment of human rights such as education, health, rights of women and children, environment and access to justice (Burkina Faso);**
- 120.32 **Harmonize national laws with international regulations on rights of women and children (Ukraine);**
- 120.33 **Adopt a family law that ensures equal rights between men and women and which protects girls from early and forced marriage (Denmark);**
- 120.34 **Adopt a family code (Algeria);**
- 120.35 **Prevent early, child and forced marriages by passing into law and effectively enforcing a minimum age of 18 for marriage (Germany);**
- 120.36 **Increase the minimum legal age for marriage for girls and develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to eliminate child, early and forced marriage and to support already married children and adolescent girls (Italy);**
- 120.37 **Adopt national legislation prohibiting the recurring forced marriages of minors in the country (Spain);**
- 120.38 **Ban by law early and forced marriage as well as the practice of Wahaya (Ukraine);**
- 120.39 **Establish and enforce laws and policies that criminalize and help prevent child, early and forced marriages (Canada);**
- 120.40 **Adopt the law that will protect minors from early and forced marriages (Montenegro);**
- 120.41 **Continue its efforts to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission, in line with the Paris Principles and with full participation of the civil society (Indonesia);**
- 120.42 **Take the necessary measures to ensure that the National Human Rights Commission is in conformity with the Paris Principles (Chile);**
- 120.43 **Strengthen its internal human rights monitoring system by proceeding with the accreditation of the National Human Rights Commission with A category rating according to the Paris Principles (Portugal);**

- 120.44 **Increase the human and financial resources of the National Human Rights Commission in order to allow it to obtain A status from the International Coordinating committee of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Senegal);**
- 120.45 **Provide the National Commission for Human Rights with adequate resources to enable it to conform to its mandate in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Tunisia);**
- 120.46 **Establish an independent and specialized institution to investigate any allegations of human rights violations (Afghanistan);**
- 120.47 **Develop a monitoring system to implement recommendations accepted at the previous universal periodic review cycle and ensure implementation (Costa Rica);**
- 120.48 **Consolidate the rule of law and human rights principles in the society (Iraq);**
- 120.49 **Continue to implement the National Policy on Justice and Human Rights (Pakistan);**
- 120.50 **Continue the cooperation with the international community to improve democracy and social development in accordance with human rights principles (Iraq);**
- 120.51 **Continue its efforts to promote and protect the rights of children and of persons with disabilities (Islamic Republic of Iran);**
- 120.52 **Better integrate the concerns of elderly persons and those with disabilities into public policies (Senegal);**
- 120.53 **Continue to uphold and respect human rights standards and obligations as it pursues counter-terrorist operations (Philippines);**
- 120.54 **Take the necessary measures to protect the victims of Boko Haram and the terrorist groups, in particular children (Egypt);**
- 120.55 **Further continue taking effective counter-terrorism measures as terrorism is a cause for serious human rights abuses in the country (Ethiopia);**
- 120.56 **Continue to strengthen the national efforts to control the borders and to fight against trafficking in persons and drug smuggling as well as terrorist activities of Boko Haram in the borders and to continue the effective coordination with neighbouring countries in that regard (Libya);**
- 120.57 **Implement existing laws and undertake concerted efforts to combat violent extremism and acts of terrorism (Malaysia);**
- 120.58 **Encourage the efforts displayed to combat terrorism (Iraq);**
- 120.59 **Continue with its commitment to fight terrorism, together with other countries in the region (Nicaragua);**
- 120.60 **Continue its engagement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights (Azerbaijan);**
- 120.61 **Continue to engage its regional and international partners with the view of seeking technical and other assistance towards its full compliance with its human rights treaty obligations (Philippines);**

- 120.62 **Submit overdue reports to the relevant United Nations treaty bodies (Sierra Leone);**
- 120.63 **Submit its initial report to the Committee against Torture without further delay (Denmark);**
- 120.64 **Take measures to effectively implement the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with special attention placed on the principle of non-discrimination (Namibia);**
- 120.65 **Actively promote women's rights and eliminate discrimination against women (China);**
- 120.66 **Further take measures in order to improve its legislation, policy and practice on gender equality and on prevention and response to gender-based violence (Portugal);**
- 120.67 **Step up measures through legislation, policies and programmes to promote the rights of women, and protect them from being victimized by any forms of slavery and abuse (Malaysia);**
- 120.68 **Review the legislation to eliminate provisions that may discriminate against women and girls and harmonize it with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Mexico);**
- 120.69 **Repeal all norms/standards that discriminate against women, remove all reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and promote gender equality by introducing public awareness-raising programmes (France);**
- 120.70 **Enhance its efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and withdraw its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Portugal);**
- 120.71 **Step up efforts to combat all forms of discrimination towards women, in particular by re-examining its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, with a view to withdrawing them (Brazil);**
- 120.72 **Conduct an awareness-raising and educational campaign among the populations with the view to eliminate all the socio-cultural barriers which impede the full enjoyment of the rights of women (Angola);**
- 120.73 **Strengthen the measures to combat discrimination against women and girls, in particular, by prohibiting early or forced marriages (Argentina);**
- 120.74 **Continue intensifying its efforts to promote women's empowerment through capacity-building, gender sensitivity training and public awareness-raising activities (Azerbaijan);**
- 120.75 **Strengthen the awareness-raising and training of women on leadership (Cuba);**
- 120.76 **Formally abolish the death penalty, as previously recommended (Slovenia);**
- 120.77 **Abolish the death penalty, despite obstacles (Djibouti);**
- 120.78 **Abolish the death penalty and ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Portugal);**

- 120.79 **Abolish the death penalty, through the accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and maintain the de facto moratorium on executions until ratification (Georgia);**
- 120.80 **Remove the death penalty from its Penal Code with a view to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Australia);**
- 120.81 **Consider taking measures aimed at affecting a de facto and de jure moratorium on the death penalty (Namibia);**
- 120.82 **Continue efforts towards the abolition of the death penalty (South Africa);**
- 120.83 **Accelerate the procedure relating to the abolition of the death penalty, as quickly as possible (Togo);**
- 120.84 **Enact the law on abolishment of the death penalty (Ukraine);**
- 120.85 **Criminalize acts of torture in the penal code and set up a national preventive mechanism in line with the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (France);**
- 120.86 **Include a definition of torture in the Penal Code (Australia);**
- 120.87 **Set up a specialized body on penitentiary administration (Togo);**
- 120.88 **Establish a national independent mechanism responsible for the inspection of detention centres (Ukraine);**
- 120.89 **Conduct a review of prison conditions in the country's various detention facilities and implement a plan for addressing overcrowding (United States of America);**
- 120.90 **Eliminate overcrowding in prisons (Ukraine);**
- 120.91 **Strengthen legislation and policy on gender equality and the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence (Côte d'Ivoire);**
- 120.92 **Increase efforts to prevent sexual and gender violence, especially regarding groups at risk, such as child girls refugees, and decrease gender inequality through urgently improving legislation and educational programmes (Costa Rica);**
- 120.93 **Strengthen efforts to protect women and girls from all forms of violence and implement a strategy to eliminate negative cultural practices that are harmful and discriminate against women (Australia);**
- 120.94 **Strengthen the laws on the protection of the rights of women with a view to effectively address violence against women, including sexual violence and female genital mutilation (Botswana);**
- 120.95 **Abolish the practice of female genital mutilation (Congo);**
- 120.96 **Conduct awareness-raising campaigns related to women's rights, in particular aimed at eradicating female genital mutilation (Georgia);**
- 120.97 **Intensify efforts to fully eradicate female genital mutilation, also by promoting awareness-raising and educational activities particularly targeted at local community leaders and health workers (Italy);**

- 120.98 Eradicate all harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early or forced marriages, and take the necessary measures to ensure the full protection of boys and girls (Mexico);
- 120.99 Continue taking further measures to eliminate female genital mutilation (South Sudan);
- 120.100 Prohibit the harmful practices such as the female genital mutilation and the Wahaya or practice of the fifth wife converted into sexual slave (Spain);
- 120.101 Intensify awareness-building among traditional and religious leaders to strictly observe the ban on female genital mutilation (Ukraine);
- 120.102 Create and implement a strategy to eliminate traditional harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, and “Wahaya”, and modify traditional stereotypes that are harmful to and discriminate against women (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 120.103 Continue with the education process, dissemination of information and awareness raising for families, local leaders, civil society and all relevant actors, in order to eradicate the practice known as “Wahaya” or 5th wife (Uruguay);
- 120.104 Set up a national strategy to combat all forms of slavery (Egypt);
- 120.105 Take more active measures to abolish all forms of slavery in practice (Georgia);
- 120.106 Review Law 2003-25 of 23 June 2003 with a view to giving itself the appropriate means to eventually eradicate all forms of slavery and promptly adopt national action plans to this end (Luxembourg);
- 120.107 Ensure effective implementation of existing legislation to eradicate all forms of slavery, prosecute perpetrators and ensure effective access to justice for victims of slavery (Italy);
- 120.108 Adopt and implement targeted measures to address the root causes of slavery, including poverty, inequality and customary norms (Italy);
- 120.109 Adopt a long-term national plan with local communities and civil society, in order to decrease the traditional practice of slavery among certain ethnic groups, avoid its continuity in future generations and eradicate it definitely (Uruguay);
- 120.110 Continue its efforts in the fight against slavery and human trafficking, promoting a culture of respect, equality and tolerance (Nicaragua);
- 120.111 Conduct a nationwide study on the prevalence of slavery and slavery-like practices in cooperation with national and international stakeholders (Norway);
- 120.112 Build law enforcement and labour inspection capacity to combat slavery practices, including sexual servitude, and forced child begging, and rehabilitate and integrate victims (United States of America);
- 120.113 Take concerted action to eradicate slavery including by enforcing the anti-slavery law and ensuring prosecution of perpetrators; taking measures to prevent slavery, protect and rehabilitate victims; and raising awareness of the criminalisation of slavery (Australia);

- 120.114 Take effective actions to prevent and eradicate all forms of slavery and discrimination (Panama);
- 120.115 Take the necessary measures to eliminate child labour, especially forced begging (Mexico);
- 120.116 Create and implement, in conjunction with all social partners, a holistic policy aimed at progressively eradicate child labour (Panama);
- 120.117 Prevent different forms of danger for children such as life on the streets, domestic violence, child trafficking, child labour, armed conflict, sexual exploitation (Ukraine);
- 120.118 Foster national strategies to combat child labour (Brazil);
- 120.119 Combat the trafficking of children, including the problem of combatting the forced begging of children (Djibouti);
- 120.120 Ensure effective implementation of the 2014 National Action Plan to combat trafficking in persons and related offences, including slavery (Italy);
- 120.121 Continue the implementation of the national action plan against human trafficking that was adopted in 2014 (France);
- 120.122 Further strengthen its efforts in implementing the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and related Offences, including Slavery of 2014-2019 (Indonesia);
- 120.123 Further strengthen its national legislation to combat trafficking in persons (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 120.124 Develop a national action plan to address the needs of victims of trafficking in human beings (Portugal);
- 120.125 Guarantee mechanisms of access to justice for the most vulnerable sectors of the population (Mexico);
- 120.126 Ensure that members of the security forces who are responsible for violations of human rights are prosecuted (France);
- 120.127 Open impartial and independent investigations into claims of torture and ill-treatment and bring perpetrators to justice (Australia);
- 120.128 Take steps to open prompt, impartial, thorough and effective investigations into alleged violations of international human rights law committed by law enforcement agencies in order to bring all the perpetrators to justice (Ghana);
- 120.129 Strengthen the measures aimed at ensuring the investigation and punishment of perpetrators of human rights violations, as well as the reparation of victims (Argentina);
- 120.130 Promote awareness-raising campaigns and adaptive policies aimed at eliminating child, early and forced marriage (Sierra Leone);
- 120.131 Take steps aimed at the elimination of child, early and forced marriage (Armenia);
- 120.132 Ensure full abolition of all forms of early and forced marriages (Botswana);
- 120.133 Advance in the eradication of forced and early marriages involving boys or girls (Chile);

120.134 **Respect and fully guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of assembly, in particular in the context of measures undertaken to respond to violent extremism and terrorism (Switzerland);**

120.135 **Ensures full respect for the right to freedom of expression and media freedom by preventing all harassment and undue detention of journalists and civil society activists (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

120.136 **Respect freedoms of expression and association, both online and offline, particularly leading up to this year's elections, and release political detainees (United States of America);**

120.137 **Protect human rights defenders and ensure that they are able to carry out their work free from harassment and intimidation (Germany);**

120.138 **Take steps to halt all intimidations and harassment by law enforcement officials against human rights defenders (Ghana);**

120.139 **Take firm measures to ensure that human rights defenders and peaceful activists are free to enjoy their fundamental rights of, inter alia, freedom of expression and freedom of association (Norway);**

120.140 **Adopt an action plan for the employment of women and young people (Morocco);**

120.141 **Strengthen the participation of women in decision-making positions and on the labour market (Egypt);**

120.142 **Continue its efforts to improve people's lives and to promote economic and social development (China);**

120.143 **Continue implementing economic and social development programmes in order to fight poverty (Ethiopia);**

120.144 **Continue progressing in the eradication of poverty, with the implementation of its sound social policies to improve the quality of life of its people, particularly of the most vulnerable (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

120.145 **Continue implementing the 3N Initiative to guarantee the exercise of the right to food (Cuba);**

120.146 **Continue implementing the 3N Initiative in order to ensure the full realization of the right to food (South Africa);**

120.147 **Take, in collaboration with the international community and other United Nations specialized programs, concrete measures to ensure access to adequate food (Madagascar);**

120.148 **Advance in the effective implementation of the human rights to water and sanitation, by increasing public water infrastructures (Spain);**

120.149 **Improve the infrastructure of the health-care system and strengthen women's access to health-care facilities (Madagascar);**

120.150 **Increase efforts to improve women's health, in particular access to family planning services, maternal health care and eliminating the practice of female genital mutilation (Netherlands);**

120.151 **Take appropriate measures to reduce infant mortality and improve access to health services in rural areas (Malaysia);**

120.152 Strengthen health care and consider the possibility of providing mobile clinics for Bedouins (Egypt);

120.153 Facilitate high education and free education to all school-aged children (Egypt);

120.154 Continue to facilitate free access to education for both boys and girls (Ukraine);

120.155 Expand access to education for children and youth, and provide vocational training as a means to improve their future employability (Malaysia);

120.156 Ensure that all children between 4 and 18 years of age have access to education without gender discrimination, in accordance with Article 2 of the Constitution of Niger as well as Articles 2 and 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Canada);

120.157 Ensure the equal right to quality education for young mothers and married girls (Slovenia);

120.158 Ensure the education and training of girls and women, including access to education on sexual and reproductive health (Switzerland);

120.159 Include human rights education in all curricula and school systems (Morocco);¹

120.160 Continue efforts to increase the school enrolment rate and literacy among nomadic populations (Algeria);

120.161 Continue to implement the National Social Welfare Policy for Persons with Disabilities (Pakistan);

120.162 Enhance the protection of migrants and refugees by implementing the law on human trafficking and enhancing the operational capacities of the Commission Nationale d'Eligibilité au Statut de Réfugié and the Agence Nationale de Lutte contre la traite des Personnes (Germany);

120.163 Strengthen safety and protection measures for the exploitation of natural resources, in order to rigorously protect the environment and the health and rights of local residents, and in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights (Slovenia);

120.164 Ensure that business companies, particularly those working in mining, respect the human rights, following the guiding principles on business and human rights (Switzerland).

121. The following recommendations will be examined by Niger, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council in June 2016:

121.1 Refrain from criminalizing the legitimate activities of human rights defenders and repeal or amend all laws and policies which restrict their activities and rights, including by ensuring that anti-terrorism legislation is not misused (Netherlands);

¹ The recommendation as read in the meeting was: "Include human rights education at all levels of the school system."

121.2 **Adopt the implementing decrees of the ordinance on pastoralism, guaranteeing the protection of land rights (France);**

121.3 **Take concrete steps to effectively increase the protection of the rights of pastoralists (Denmark).**

122. **The recommendation below did not enjoy the support of Niger and would thus be noted:**

122.1 **Ensure participation of indigenous peoples in the decision-making and their equal representation in the governance of the country (Ukraine).**

123. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Niger was headed by MOROU AMADOU, Minister of Justice, and composed of the following members:

- Mme MAIKIBI KADIDIATOU DANDOBI, Ministre de la population, de la promotion de la femme et de la protection de l'enfant;
- Mme Kafa REKIATOU CHRISTELLE JACKOU, Ministre déléguée aux affaires étrangères;
- Mme FATIMA SIDIKOU ABOU, Ambassadrice/Représentante permanente du Niger auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies et des autres organisations à Genève;
- M. OUMARIA MAMANE, Conseiller principal du Premier Ministre;
- Mme MOUNKEILA AICHATOU SEYNI, Directrice générale des droits de l'homme, de la protection judiciaire juvénile et de l'action sociale, Présidente du Comité interministériel chargé de la rédaction des rapports initiaux et périodiques aux organes des traités;
- M. IBRAHIM JEAN ETIENNE, Directeur de la protection judiciaire juvénile, membre du Comité interministériel;
- Mme RABIOU ASSETOU TRAORE, Directrice des droits de l'homme, membre du Comité interministériel;
- M. GARBA ISSOUFOU, Premier Secrétaire de la Mission, en charge des questions de droits de l'homme;
- M. MOUMOUNI DJIDA, Ministère de la population, de la promotion de la femme et de la protection de l'enfant, membre du Comité interministériel;
- Mme SOURGHIA MARIAMA, Ministère de la santé, membre du Comité interministériel;
- Mme KAZA AMINA, Ministère de l'enseignement primaire, de l'alphabétisation, de la promotion des langues nationales et de l'éducation civique, membre du Comité interministériel;
- M. LIMAN YAHAY BOUBACAR, Protocole du Ministre de la justice.