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Universal periodic review

## Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review\*

### Afghanistan

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\* The annex is being circulated without formal editing, in the language of submission only.

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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 thirty-second session from 21 January to 1 February 2019. The review of Afghanistan was held at the 2nd meeting, on 21 January 2019. The delegation of Afghanistan was headed by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Suraya Dalil. At its 10th meeting, held on 25 January 2019, the Working Group adopted the report on Afghanistan.

2. On 15 January 2019, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Afghanistan: Iceland, Nigeria and Philippines.

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 Afghanistan:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/32/AFG/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.6/32/AFG/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/32/AFG/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Angola, Belgium, Germany, Portugal on behalf of the Group of Friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Afghanistan through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

## I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

### A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The head of the delegation underscored that Afghanistan placed great importance on the universal periodic review, considering that the promotion and protection of human rights were core components of State-building efforts, and emphasizing that the Constitution of Afghanistan enshrined a clear commitment to the principles of human rights. Effective and transparent governance had a profound impact on the promotion and protection of human rights. In 2017, Afghanistan had adopted a comprehensive strategy to ensure the transparency, effectiveness and accountability of public institutions. The national justice and judicial reform programme had been developed to combat impunity and to ensure access to justice and fair trials.

6. The Government had enacted a new Penal Code, aimed to limit the use of the death penalty and to protect against arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial executions and honour killings. In addition, the annex to the Criminal Procedure Code on alternatives to imprisonment and detention was being enforced.

7. Afghanistan had executed the first phase of the national action plan for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), resulting in an increase in women's representation in public institutions, such as the High Peace Council. Women's inclusion in the labour force had risen to 27 per cent. The Government had launched the Women's Economic Empowerment National Priority Programme, one of ten priority programmes. To address violence and discrimination against women, Afghanistan had established the position of Deputy Attorney General for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children and anti-harassment committees in all ministries. The Supreme Court

had created a special division to review cases of violence against women. In addition, special courts on violence against women were operating in more than 20 provinces.

8. The Government used the utmost precaution to protect the civilian population. In that regard, a national board for the prevention of civilian casualties and a technical working group had been established. As guidance, the Government applied the national policy on the prevention of civilian casualties. Afghanistan remained committed to fully implementing that document.

9. Afghanistan had incorporated the provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment into the new Penal Code, withdrawn its reservation, and ratified the Optional Protocol thereto. With the enactment of the law on the prohibition of torture and the establishment of the commission thereon, Afghanistan had reduced concerns about the mistreatment of prisoners. Furthermore, the Government had taken steps to improve prison infrastructure and to expand health-care and rehabilitation services.

10. In collaboration with its international partners, Afghanistan had reached the point of zero child recruitment in its defence and security forces by implementing a policy aimed at protecting children in armed conflict and by creating child protection centres. Furthermore, the Penal Code prohibited the use of the death penalty for, and the imprisonment and punishment of, children. It had criminalized the practice of *bacha bazi*. Orphanage facilities had been reformed and child protection services provided for children at risk. Afghanistan had adopted a national child labour prevention strategy and action plan pursuant to its commitments to International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). To strengthen a coordinated national response on child protection, a national child protection secretariat had been created under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

11. Notable improvements had been made in access to education and health care. The national education strategic plan contained indicators to monitor progress in the development of the education system. Afghanistan had embarked on a comprehensive review of education curricula to incorporate human rights values. Afghanistan was aiming both to enrol children and to enable them to complete school. With regard to health care, 93 per cent of the population lived within a range of two hours from a public clinic. The rates of infant, newborn and maternal mortality had decreased.

12. To ensure more dedicated service delivery and social inclusion, a national agency for the protection of persons with disabilities had been established.

13. Freedom of expression was instrumental in contributing to the promotion of human rights; no limitations or censorship should be applied to the media. The law on access to information had helped to ensure the right to information. Measures had been taken to protect the rights of journalists and human rights defenders, such as the establishment by the Government and the media of a joint coordination committee for the protection and security of journalists.

14. Afghanistan had witnessed the unprecedented return of refugees and internally displaced persons. In that regard, the Migration Council, led by the President, and the Displacement and Return Executive Committee, led by the Chief Executive, were the decision-making mechanisms to ensure effective responses.

15. Justice and equality were prerequisites for peace and development. Therefore, the National Peace and Development Framework for 2017–2021 affirmed the State's vision of and commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

16. The Government had launched the Citizens' Charter programme as a part of efforts to promote the right to decision-making and to bolster development at the grass-roots level.

17. The upcoming elections would be an opportunity on the path towards democracy and the rule of law. The Government would remain focused on ensuring the proactive participation of citizens in the electoral process.

18. Terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crimes posed major challenges to the State. Afghanistan therefore urged the international community to take a firm stand against

terrorism. The State would be taking further steps to improve security and to end conflict, including through the peace process.

## **B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review**

19. During the interactive dialogue, 94 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

20. Sweden acknowledged the State's commitment to human rights, commended its ratifications and adoption of legislation, yet remained concerned about the human rights situation.

21. Switzerland welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and noted that, despite some progress, women and girls continued to be victims of discrimination, domestic violence and forced marriage.

22. Thailand applauded the efforts made to pursue peace, and welcomed the State's legal reforms, its strengthening of human rights structures and the promotion of education.

23. Tunisia welcomed the strengthening of the human rights legislative framework and the promotion of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and the laws on combating terrorism.

24. Turkey acknowledged the challenges resulting from conflict and terrorism, and the State's perseverance with its human rights achievements, while providing electoral security and pursuing reconciliation with the Taliban.

25. Turkmenistan welcomed the eight development councils, particularly the rule of law and the anti-corruption council aimed at strengthening the judicial system.

26. Ukraine acknowledged the reform of the Penal Code and the adoption of legislation on the prevention of torture.

27. The United Arab Emirates appreciated the fact that the State considered free education a constitutional right, its focus on awareness-raising initiatives for girls' education and its efforts to increase literacy.

28. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomed the passing of laws on combating violence against women and the growth of independent media. It considered the protection of minorities, the safety of journalists and civilian casualties to be critical issues.

29. The United States of America urged the implementation of the Penal Code, while expressing its concern at sexual abuse by the Afghan National Security Forces and at women's access to justice, as the widespread use of mediation in cases of violence against women and girls and forced marriage had led to impunity, undermining the criminal justice system, and increasing violence against journalists.

30. Uruguay welcomed the ratification of human rights instruments, especially the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and urged the State to ratify additional instruments. It was concerned about violations of women's rights.

31. Uzbekistan was pleased that the State had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and had incorporated provisions of human rights instruments into national legislation.

32. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted the impact of invasion, and called for an end to violence and for lasting peace. It acknowledged the impetus given to the right to health.

33. Yemen commended the actions taken to modernize human rights laws, the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the training programmes for law enforcement and the judiciary, despite challenges.

34. Albania welcomed the efforts made to improve women's participation in governance and decision-making processes at various levels, and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
35. Algeria was pleased that Afghanistan had continued to implement its national action plan for women, peace and security, despite its limited financial resources.
36. Angola made recommendations to encourage more action to promote and protect human rights.
37. Argentina welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and the visit of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.
38. Australia was encouraged by the peace talks, although concerned about the large number of civilian casualties. It acknowledged the progress made in strengthening women's rights.
39. Austria appreciated the efforts made to improve the human rights situation and to implement previous review recommendations, noting that many challenges remained.
40. Azerbaijan welcomed the legal changes and steps taken to protect the rights of internally displaced persons, and that the State provided effective mechanisms to address their needs. It urged the international community to provide assistance.
41. Bahrain welcomed the adaptation of many laws, despite the difficult circumstances, and noted the incorporation of human rights in education curricula.
42. Bangladesh commended the extensive legal and policy reforms undertaken pursuant to the recommendations made during the second cycle, and the achievements in women's rights.
43. Belarus welcomed the efforts made to improve the institutional and legislative framework, the reform of the criminal justice system and training on human rights for law enforcement officials.
44. Belgium congratulated Afghanistan on having adopted its first national action plan on women, peace and security, and on publicizing its financial contribution to the country office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).
45. Bhutan commended the establishment of the council for the rule of law and anti-corruption under the supervision of the President.
46. The Plurinational State of Bolivia welcomed the process undertaken to expand the range of legal reforms, including the ratification of instruments.
47. Bulgaria encouraged the State to take more tangible measures to eliminate violence against women and girls and to improve access to education and work. It appreciated the commitment to combating trafficking.
48. Canada welcomed the progress made in protecting women rights, and urged the State to implement legislation through public education, the training of officials and ensuring access to justice.
49. Chile commended the legal reforms to criminalize torture and crimes against humanity, the prohibition of harassment against women and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
50. Afghanistan emphasized that the National Defence and Security Forces were committed to respecting and protecting human rights. Military operations were not conducted if the risk of harming the civilian population or property was high. Furthermore, technical devices, including recorders, had been introduced for military personnel to avoid misconduct. National Directorate of Security personnel had been undergoing training on human rights and international humanitarian law, which was also a part of the curriculum at the National Directorate of Security Academy.

51. The Government would review its national policy on the prevention of civilian casualties to raise awareness about national and international laws and to prevent the establishment of military bases in public places; take feasible precautions during counter-attacks; and conduct risk assessments and investigate incidents involving civilian casualties. An independent human rights department had been established within the National Directorate of Security to monitor its detention facilities and personnel, including at the provincial level. The department had based its work on the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and it had submitted its quarterly reports to the President of Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

52. According to the Human Rights Department, cases of torture and human rights violations had dropped by 93 per cent since 2014. Assessments made by the National Directorate of Security had demonstrated that most violations had been committed during arrest operations because of suspects' negligence of warnings and for opposing armed resistance. The Directorate had developed a plan to strengthen its internal oversight and to increase awareness on the prevention of torture in 2019.

53. With regard to child protection, all juvenile detainees were currently sent to juvenile correction centres in their respective provinces following their arrest and debriefing.

54. The Centre for the Protection of Journalists and Media Organizations and the Centre for Coordination had been established to assess threats and provide protection.

55. To protect minorities and to ensure their security, a plan had been developed, resulting in a decrease in attacks against minorities.

56. Regarding international cooperation, the National Directorate of Security was actively cooperating with UNAMA, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. Visits had been made to detention centres across the country by representatives of those organizations. National security institutions had signed a joint memorandum with the Commission.

57. The National Defence and Security Forces were prepared to take further steps; in particular, a policy document to protect human rights and prevent casualties during operations had been prepared and would come into force following consultations.

58. Significant progress had been made in women's empowerment, the elimination of violence against women and improving access to justice. The law on the elimination of violence against women and an implementation strategy had been developed, while more than 27 women's protection centres and family protection units had been established. The law against harassment against women and children had been approved, together with the relevant mechanisms to facilitate its implementation. The new Penal Code prohibited virginity tests without the consent of the person concerned. Within the Ministry of Women's Affairs, two directorates offered legal services to survivors of violence and their families. The Afghan Women's Chamber of Commerce had been providing technical and marketing support. One of the most important achievements was the increase in women's participation in decision-making and high-ranking positions; there were now four women ministers, 12 deputies and four ambassadors. Women were better represented in peace negotiations.

59. The new Penal Code had reduced the number of crimes previously punishable by the death penalty. In addition, a special committee had been established to review those cases. On the basis of its findings, the commission had proposed to the President that the death penalty be replaced with life imprisonment.

60. The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomed the progress in promoting human rights by the establishment of national committees and the implementation of national programmes, including strategies to reduce poverty.

61. Costa Rica noted the instability caused by the conflict and terrorism. It was concerned that death sentences and violence and discrimination against women and girls persisted, despite the legal reforms.

62. Croatia commended the strengthening of the human rights legislation framework and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. It remained concerned about human rights violations, which arose from insecurity.
63. Cuba welcomed the reform of the legal framework, and highlighted the action taken to improve the quality of and access to education, particularly for girls.
64. Cyprus commended the efforts made to increase the participation of women. It was however concerned that lack of security disproportionately affected women and children, and that impunity impeded reconciliation.
65. Czechia welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. It recognized the significance of the first parliamentary elections, and encouraged support for participation in political and public affairs.
66. Denmark welcomed the State's commitment to human rights, including its judicial reforms. It highlighted the need to strengthen the implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women.
67. Djibouti commended the normative and institutional framework to strengthen democracy and the rule of law. It appreciated the efforts to reform the judiciary and combat corruption.
68. Egypt commended the adoption of the laws on criminal procedure, the prevention of financing of terrorism, the structure of special courts and combating corruption. It welcomed the improvements in health and women's welfare.
69. Estonia commended the progress made through the adoption of the new Penal Code, the national plan on women and the measures taken to defend children's rights, and urged the State to make further efforts.
70. Finland commended the efforts made to improve human rights; as a member of the Human Rights Council, however, Afghanistan needed to prove its commitment completely.
71. France congratulated Afghanistan on the presentation of its report.
72. Georgia commended the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the adoption of the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and lauded the commitment to fight corruption.
73. Germany commended Afghanistan for ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
74. Greece commended the adoption of a new Penal Code and of the national action plan for women, peace and security, among others.
75. Honduras welcomed the efforts made to strengthen the human rights system by reforming the judiciary.
76. Hungary remained concerned about torture, despite the lifting of reservations to the Convention against Torture and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, and encouraged the allocation of an inclusive budget for education to ensure equal access.
77. Iceland noted the efforts made to combat corruption, and the law on the prevention and prohibition of harassment of women and children.
78. India appreciated the provision of better health services and free education, and the reduction in poverty, although it expressed its concerns that the right to life was under threat from externally imposed terrorism.
79. Indonesia appreciated the efforts made to consolidate the peace process by ratifying several instruments and establishing the council for the rule of law and anti-corruption.
80. China welcomed the adoption of the National Peace and Development Framework and the efforts to eradicate poverty and safeguard women's and children's rights. It supported the peace and reconciliation process.
81. Iraq welcomed the adoption of several laws, and the efforts made to combat terrorism and in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

82. Ireland commended Afghanistan on the A status accreditation of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and the efforts made to advance human rights.
83. Italy welcomed the efforts to promote and protect human rights, and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and urged its implementation.
84. Jordan commended the efforts to implement recommendations made during the previous cycle, and the progress made in gender equality and developing education, despite existing challenges.
85. Kazakhstan commended the legal and institutional changes made, reiterating its commitment to provide financial and technical support to Afghanistan for economically sustainable development and security, and women's empowerment.
86. Kuwait commended the progress made in empowering women and promoting their political and economic participation, and the reforms made to improve services and to realize economic, social and cultural rights.
87. Kyrgyzstan welcomed the progress made in strengthening the national legislative and institutional frameworks, and also the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
88. The Islamic Republic of Iran admired the efforts made to protect civil and political rights in implementing previous review recommendations, despite the ongoing war.
89. Libya noted positive developments, including the adoption of a criminal procedural law and the Penal Code, and the removal of discriminatory elements that violated human rights.
90. Afghanistan had recently proven its commitment to democracy by holding parliamentary elections. Having learned lessons from that experience, it was working on a plan to strengthen security for the upcoming presidential election. With regard to electoral reform, legislative amendments had been made and the biometric system had been used for the first time.
91. Afghanistan was enforcing the newly adopted law on access to information through the commission on access to information. The State's measures had contributed to a reduction in violence against journalists.
92. A high council on the rule of law and anti-corruption had been established. It had been functioning as a policymaking body, supervising the reforms in the judicial and law enforcement areas. The anti-corruption committee working under the high council was supervising anti-corruption activities.
93. Pursuant to its international obligations, Afghanistan had created a platform to select commissioners for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.
94. Afghanistan was working to achieve self-reliance; work was under way to align national development priorities to the targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals.
95. Enrolment rates and access to education had been growing since 2011. Post-enrolment attendance and lack of access to education for girls were matters of concern. The Government had been working to remedy those issues, including through policies to increase adult literacy and expand education services.
96. Access to health care was improving, and progress was being made in data collection, monitoring and autonomy in health-care service delivery. Considerable gains had been made in access to clean drinking water, sanitation and energy.
97. Afghanistan had prioritized issues relating to returnees and internally displaced persons. Several programmes had been approved to improve economic opportunities and to address the displacement crisis.
98. Afghanistan had taken significant strides to promote children's rights. In particular, steps had been taken to improve the relevant legal and policy framework and to build institutions. It had accelerated efforts to pass the Child Act, which would codify all the



provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Afghanistan was implementing a policy on the protection of children in armed conflict, pursuant to its commitments. Improved procedures had been effective in preventing the recruitment of children. Law enforcement agencies had been working to rescue children from the risk of recruitment by terrorist groups. In addition, a national action plan to end child marriage had been developed, and the work on a coordination and financing mechanism for that plan was under way. Afghanistan had launched a national child social protection programme to improve the situation of vulnerable children.

99. Liechtenstein welcomed the adoption of the law on the elimination of violence against women, but expressed its concern at the prevalence of violence against women.

100. Lithuania wished Afghanistan success in implementing its universal periodic review recommendations.

101. Luxembourg welcomed the progress made in implementing the action plan on peace, women and security, and the efforts on access to education. It urged the State to strengthen the ongoing peace process, although was concerned about the security and humanitarian challenges posed.

102. Malaysia commended the developments in national policy, the efforts to foster human rights culture and the measures taken to promote women's rights and empower women.

103. Maldives welcomed the ratification of key human rights instruments and the efforts to promote human rights awareness among law enforcement officials and the judiciary.

104. Malta welcomed the law on religious minorities, the steps taken to address discrimination against women and the ratification of human rights instruments.

105. Mauritania appreciated the State's achievements and its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, and the measures taken to protect citizens and combat terrorism.

106. Mauritius welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the programmes to improve the rate of literacy, alleviate poverty, and improve infrastructure and access to services.

107. Mexico acknowledged the progress made and the reform of the Penal Code with regard to violence against women, and hoped that the relevant strategy and action plan would be implemented.

108. Montenegro encouraged the implementation of the national strategy and action plan concerning violence against women and the strengthening of accountability for the recruitment or use of children.

109. Myanmar welcomed the State's positive achievements, but noted the need to strengthen the rights of women and children.

110. Nepal commended the resilience and perseverance of the Afghan people, and hoped for an expeditious and sustainable conclusion to the peace process.

111. The Netherlands acknowledged the State's commitment to human rights, but stressed the importance of a national mechanism for transitional justice and national reconciliation.

112. Nigeria commended Afghanistan for its cooperation with human rights mechanisms and efforts to combat terrorism and corruption.

113. Norway appreciated the efforts made to improve the situation of women, but remained worried about the quality of implementation. It commended the follow-up to the recommendations made by the national human rights institution.

114. Oman noted the establishment of the development, rule of law and anti-corruption council, and the high-profile legislative reforms.

115. Pakistan commended Afghanistan for its efforts to reduce poverty by ensuring better access to economic means, food security and better policies.

116. The Philippines recognized the efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, and appreciated the efforts made to address the drug trade.

117. Poland noted the significant legal and practical achievements of the State, including combating corruption, the promotion of women's empowerment, and access to health and education, but was alarmed at the allegations of torture and the recruitment and abuse of children, among others.

118. Portugal commended the work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

119. Qatar welcomed the strengthening of the rule of law and the fight against corruption. It commended the efforts to implement the National Peace and Development Framework and to strengthen economic, social and cultural rights.

120. The Republic of Korea acknowledged the efforts to strengthen the legal and institutional framework on human rights, especially the new Penal Code.

121. The Republic of Moldova noted the measures taken to implement the law on the elimination of violence against women. It was concerned about the large number of prisoners on death row and the execution of minors.

122. Romania noted the efforts to improve human rights, and stressed the importance of ensuring the full exercise of human rights by all citizens.

123. The Russian Federation supported the efforts to address human rights issues, but noted that women faced discrimination, violence and forced and early marriage.

124. Saudi Arabia applauded the integration of human rights in the legal, judicial and security sectors, and also the provision of training workshops.

125. Senegal commended the lifting of reservations to article 20 of the Convention against Torture and the progress in the legislative area, and encouraged more efforts to eradicate poverty.

126. Serbia commended the efforts of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and encouraged it to continue to exercise its vital functions.

127. Singapore acknowledged the efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure children's access to education. It welcomed the draft national policy on girls' education.

128. Slovakia appreciated the State's efforts, but was concerned about the threats, acts of intimidation and harassment faced by civil society actors and women and girls.

129. Slovenia commended the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission for its independence. It was concerned that women and children disproportionately suffered from the effects of corruption, despite the commitment made to combat corruption.

130. Spain noted the efforts made in the area of human rights, especially on violence against women, and the challenges posed by limited institutional capacity and resources.

131. Sri Lanka welcomed the State's withdrawal of its reservations to article 20 of the Convention against Torture, its accession to the Optional Protocol to that Convention, and the enactment of laws incorporating provisions of the Convention and its efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

132. The State of Palestine commended Afghanistan for providing mechanisms to respect the rights and needs of internally displaced persons and returnees, and for adopting the national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

133. Afghanistan stressed that it was among the first Islamic countries to support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In recent years, it had strengthened its cooperation with the United Nations system, including with OHCHR.

134. Although global terror had targeted Afghanistan, it had contributed fully to ensuring security in the region. The situation at the time of the review was characterized by the large number of casualties due to the conflict. Despite the challenge posed by terrorist groups,

Afghans strove to achieve security, peace and justice. Afghanistan believed in the peace process and an inclusive, dignified and sustainable outcome.

135. The head of the delegation appreciated the constructive role played by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, civil society organizations and other stakeholders. She thanked all Member States that had sent their questions in advance and for their participation in the review. She also thanked the secretariat and the members of the troika for their efforts in presenting the final list of recommendations.

## **II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

136. The following recommendations will be examined by Afghanistan, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council:

136.1 Ratify the main instruments related to human rights to which it is not yet a party (Senegal); Consider acceding to the international instruments to which it is not a party (Honduras);

136.2 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (France);

136.3 Launch a process of accession to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Ukraine);

136.4 Consider acceding to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Honduras);

136.5 Consider acceding to the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, among others (Honduras);

136.6 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Kyrgyzstan) (Croatia); Sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Portugal);

136.7 Sign the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);

136.8 Sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, as previously recommended (Portugal); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Slovakia);

136.9 Ratify without reservations the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court, and establish national legislation regulating its cooperation with the Court (Switzerland);

136.10 Ratify the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute (Liechtenstein) (Estonia);

136.11 Ratify the first Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Estonia);

136.12 Establish a moratorium on executions as a first step towards ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Ireland); Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Estonia); Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Liechtenstein) (Montenegro); Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Luxembourg); Launch a process of accession

to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Ukraine);

136.13 Abolish the death penalty and consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Uruguay);

136.14 Implement a moratorium on the use of capital punishment and sign the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Portugal);

136.15 Intensify the process of submission of overdue reports to United Nations treaty bodies (Ukraine);

136.16 Engage with the special procedures whose requests for a country visit are pending (Ukraine);

136.17 Take measures to further continue the protection and promotion of human rights by strengthening and establishing human rights units within the power structures (Turkmenistan);

136.18 Maintain the advancement of human rights as a priority (Turkey);

136.19 Continue efforts to promote awareness of human rights through educational curricula (Turkmenistan);

136.20 Continue arranging training and awareness-raising campaigns to educate the public on human rights values, as was the case during the reporting period between 2014 and 2018 (Turkmenistan);

136.21 Coordinate the activities of national and international human rights organizations working on different aspects of human rights in Afghanistan (Uzbekistan);

136.22 Continue efforts to strengthen the institutional and legal framework for the protection of human rights (Uzbekistan);

136.23 Ensure that constitutional human rights protections are a key component and objective of any peace negotiations (Australia);

136.24 Take continued steps to strengthen the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission's capacity, including by ensuring its fiscal sustainability (Australia);

136.25 Prioritize the implementation of Afghanistan's national plan of action on women, peace and security, in particular by ensuring the broad participation of civil society, especially women, at all stages of the peace process (Switzerland);

136.26 Continue governmental efforts in support of the work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and enhance its financial independence in order to ensure that the Commission achieves the objectives for which it was established (Bahrain);

136.27 Continue supporting the work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, including its budgetary allocations and the application of its recommendations (Chile);

136.28 Continue its current approach to strengthening human rights institutions and confronting the enormous challenges facing the country, both in security and economically, so as not to adversely affect the human rights situation (Kuwait);

136.29 Continue strengthening national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles (Nepal);

136.30 Finalize the adoption of a funding mechanism to implement the national plan of action on women, peace and security (Luxembourg);

- 136.31 Increase the budget of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and designate its commissioners as soon as possible, in conformity with the Paris Principles (Mexico);
- 136.32 Continue its efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights in the country by strengthening its national policies and programmes to further improve the well-being of its people (Malaysia);
- 136.33 Implement the national child labour strategy and action plan, investigating those suspected of being complicit in child exploitation and prosecuting those found responsible (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 136.34 Integrate the national action plan for Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in national programmes through the regular budget (Sweden);
- 136.35 Fully implement and enforce its elimination of violence against women law and its national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) (Australia);
- 136.36 Take further steps to promote women's full and meaningful participation in activities related to peace negotiations, peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the country (Bulgaria);
- 136.37 Implement the national action plan for implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) with adequate resources in order to further promote equal rights for women and girls, while providing the same level of support and protection for boys (Czechia);
- 136.38 Ensure the active participation of women in the peace process (Iceland);
- 136.39 Ensure the meaningful participation of women in peace negotiations (Australia);
- 136.40 Strengthen efforts to address violence against women, provide greater access to justice to women and increase women's participation in the peacemaking process (Indonesia);
- 136.41 Enhance its efforts to effectively implement the Security Council resolution on women, peace and security and ensure women's full participation in the peace process (Lithuania);
- 136.42 Allocate financial resources for the efficient implementation of the national action plan on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) (Ukraine);
- 136.43 Continue the process of incorporating human rights into governmental and non-governmental educational curricula, including those of universities and military academies (United Arab Emirates);
- 136.44 Continue implementation of the national policy on civilian casualty mitigation and prevention (Australia);
- 136.45 Undertake a review of the security challenges faced during parliamentary elections, and apply the lessons learned to ensure the safety of Afghans during the upcoming presidential election (Canada);
- 136.46 Address fully the challenges relating to ensuring the integrity, neutrality and transparency of the electoral process as identified by the international community before the upcoming presidential election (Czechia);
- 136.47 Build on the positive elements of the recent electoral experiences in order to ensure the consolidation and the viability of the electoral system (Romania);
- 136.48 Continue capacity development of Afghan youth (India);

- 136.49 Strengthen human rights training for judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials (Qatar);
- 136.50 Strengthen efforts to ensure that all officers and soldiers of the Afghan national security and defence forces, as well as the officials in the judiciary and law enforcement, are fully trained on international humanitarian and human rights law (Slovenia);
- 136.51 Continue efforts to combat terrorism, to improve the level of security in the country, and to prevent and to reduce the number of victims among the civilian population (Belarus);
- 136.52 Continue its efforts to combat terrorism and its funding (India);
- 136.53 Adopt further measures to counter terrorism and extremism and to safeguard people's lives and property (China);
- 136.54 Continue its efforts in combating terrorism and its funding (Nigeria);
- 136.55 Improve the skills of the poor and enable them to have better economic opportunities (Oman);
- 136.56 Continue to promote the gender strategy in order to ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and to enable them to play a more effective role at the national level (Bahrain);
- 136.57 Continue the admirable progress made in promoting the rights of women by fully implementing its gender strategy, and continue the efforts in promoting and protecting the human rights of children and disabled persons (Bhutan);
- 136.58 Develop campaigns, trainings and educational programmes aimed at combating gender stereotypes and discrimination from an early age, and eradicate deep-rooted violent practices, arguing "moral crimes", such as "honour" killings, mutilation, stoning, forced self-immolation, child marriage, and exchanges using marriage to settle disputes (Costa Rica);
- 136.59 Fight gender-based discrimination, promote effective participation by women in the peace process, according to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and guarantee the rights of women (France);
- 136.60 Continue its efforts towards achieving gender equality, including by promptly implementing the national action plan to end child marriage (Greece);
- 136.61 Exercise fair treatment of women and girls before the law and effective enforcement of the elimination of violence against women law (Slovakia);
- 136.62 Continue efforts to further enhance gender equality and women's empowerment in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 136.63 Intensify measures to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (Uzbekistan);
- 136.64 Continue implementing the policy aimed at creating the necessary national frameworks for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (Belarus);
- 136.65 Continue engaging the international community and development actors for the mobilization of resources to fully implement its development plans (Philippines);
- 136.66 Scale up its efforts in fighting corruption (Nigeria);
- 136.67 Provide all necessary requirements to ensure the successful implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy (Qatar);

- 136.68 Guarantee the protection of civilians, given the sensitive security environment (France);
- 136.69 Take all necessary measures to minimize civilian casualties, considering that Afghan civilians, especially women and children, continue to suffer the devastating impact of the armed conflict (Republic of Korea);
- 136.70 Deepen its measures in order to repeal the death penalty in its national legislation (Argentina);
- 136.71 Commute all existing death sentences for offenders who committed the crime for which they were sentenced when under the age of 18 (Belgium);
- 136.72 Further progress in streamlining and implementing new legislation in the fields of combating torture and access to information (Turkey);
- 136.73 Commute all death sentences for offenders who committed crimes while under the age of 18 (Portugal);
- 136.74 Implement a moratorium on executions, aiming at the complete abolition of the death sentence, and commute existing sentences of capital punishment to other forms (Sweden);
- 136.75 Consider instituting a moratorium on executions and commuting death sentences of minors (Albania);
- 136.76 Reinstate its moratorium on executions, remove the death penalty from all criminal laws and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Australia);
- 136.77 Introduce a moratorium as a first step towards the full abolition of the death penalty (Austria);
- 136.78 Establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to abolishing it, and immediately reduce the number of crimes subject to the death penalty (France);
- 136.79 Provide official figures regarding death sentences and executions, and consider adopting a moratorium on the death penalty (Italy);
- 136.80 Establish a moratorium on executions with a view to the complete abolishment of the death penalty, and commute all existing death sentences (Liechtenstein);
- 136.81 Further reduce the number of crimes carrying capital punishment, and consider the re-establishment of the moratorium on the death penalty (Lithuania);
- 136.82 Consider an immediate moratorium on executions as a first step towards the abolition of the death sentence, and commute all existing death sentences for persons below 18 years of age at the time of the commission of the crime (Republic of Moldova);
- 136.83 Ensure thorough implementation of Afghanistan's anti-torture law (Slovakia);
- 136.84 Take effective measures to strictly enforce the national prohibition of torture and to ensure that no person is subjected to unlawful treatment, and that all allegations of such treatment are duly investigated by the proper criminal authorities and perpetrators are held to account (Sweden);
- 136.85 Continue its fight against and the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, with special emphasis on human rights defenders (Spain);
- 136.86 Build on achievements in the prevention of torture by prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment (Ukraine);
- 136.87 Intensify measures to improve the work of the penitentiary system, and continue integrating the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel,

**Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment into national legislation (Russian Federation);**

136.88 **Improve the conditions of detention (Poland);**

136.89 **Prohibit all forms of corporal punishment (Portugal);**

136.90 **Take measures to guarantee the protection of human rights and international humanitarian law through the investigation and punishment of the perpetrators of serious human rights violations, in particular the perpetrators of aerial attacks against the civilian population (Argentina);**

136.91 **Ensure the protection of civilians, and that all incidents of civilian casualties are thoroughly investigated, that those responsible are prosecuted and that remedies and reparations are provided to the victims (Austria);**

136.92 **Take necessary measures to prosecute those responsible, belonging to armed groups or security forces, for having committed crimes against the civilian population during the conflict, and for having recruited or used children (Costa Rica);**

136.93 **Hold accountable individuals responsible, including government officials, for threats and violence against journalists (United States of America);**

136.94 **Investigate and punish the perpetrators of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, intimidation and threats against the population, in particular against human rights defenders and journalists (Argentina);**

136.95 **Take steps to protect against and prosecute those who attack and obstruct the work of journalists and human rights defenders (Canada);**

136.96 **Ensure prompt investigation of violence against women, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice in accordance with the elimination of violence against women law (Canada);**

136.97 **Comply in a more effective way with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and create policies and practices to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, as well as to increase accountability and promptly investigate and prosecute all cases of violence against women and girls (Finland);**

136.98 **Work towards the establishment of a fair and independent judiciary system that is equipped with adequate resources (Germany);**

136.99 **Promptly investigate all allegations of torture of detainees, enforced disappearances and summary executions, and prosecute those responsible (Germany);**

136.100 **Further enforce existing legal prohibitions on the use of coerced confessions in judicial proceedings, and take appropriate disciplinary action against prosecutors and judges who permit the use of such information (Germany);**

136.101 **Promptly and impartially investigate all attacks on journalists, and ensure that appropriate measures are taken against any person found responsible for them (Greece);**

136.102 **Guarantee the safety of journalists and media workers operating throughout the country, and end the impunity of perpetrators of crimes against them (Albania);**

136.103 **Promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of torture of detainees, and prosecute all those responsible for committing and ordering those crimes (Hungary);**



- 136.104 Promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of torture of detainees, enforced disappearances and summary executions, and prosecute those responsible in line with international human rights standards (Norway);
- 136.105 Refer cases of violence against women to the criminal justice system, not to mediation or traditional dispute resolution mechanisms (Iceland);
- 136.106 Strengthen the position and the number of women in the security sector, and implement awareness campaigns on human rights, especially with regard to women's access to justice (Netherlands);
- 136.107 Promptly investigate and prosecute cases of violence against women in line with international human rights standards, including so-called honour killings (Norway);
- 136.108 Guarantee access to justice to persons with disabilities, especially with regard to access to inclusive education and health (Spain);
- 136.109 Increase efforts to effectively combat impunity relating to acts of violence against women, and prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish acts of discrimination perpetrated against women (Uruguay);
- 136.110 Exert all efforts to end impunity by strengthening the implementation of the Penal Code and the enforcement of prosecutions (Cyprus);
- 136.111 Strengthen access to justice for victims, and fight impunity (France);
- 136.112 Implement effective measures to fight impunity, including through continued and full cooperation with the International Criminal Court (Netherlands);
- 136.113 Take the necessary measures to eradicate the culture of impunity related to war crimes or serious human rights violations by holding perpetrators accountable, and ensure that all candidates for public office are persons with no record of such crimes or abuses (Poland);
- 136.114 End impunity for threats, acts of intimidation, harassment and violence faced by women and civil society actors, and ensure their prompt and thorough investigation (Slovakia);
- 136.115 Continue enforcing its constitutional provisions on freedom of religion and belief, including by duly protecting individuals and property from religiously motivated violence (Czechia);
- 136.116 Continue efforts to ensure that all religious communities are free to practise their religion or belief, and that this right is adequately protected (Malta);
- 136.117 Continue efforts aimed at mitigating ethnic, tribal and sectarian tensions among Afghans, and prohibit by law any call for national, racial or religious hatred (Senegal);
- 136.118 Adopt specific measures to effectively protect freedom of belief for practitioners of minority religions (Angola);
- 136.119 Take steps to ensure a safe working environment for human rights defenders (Estonia);
- 136.120 Promote additional measures to maintain a favourable environment for and protect the work of civil society and human rights defenders, including journalists (Chile);
- 136.121 Ensure freedom of expression, offline as well as online, and improve work concerning the prevention and investigation of attacks against journalists, media workers and media offices (Estonia);
- 136.122 Guarantee the safety and security of journalists and human rights defenders (France);

- 136.123 Take all measures to protect and support journalists, human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, humanitarian workers and civil society organizations; investigate all attacks against them; and bring perpetrators to justice (Iceland);
- 136.124 Adopt effective measures to ensure adequate protection of journalists (Italy);
- 136.125 Adopt specific measures to protect and support journalists, human rights defenders and other actors of civil society, enabling them to work freely, without fear of reprisal or attack (Lithuania);
- 136.126 Take further concrete measures to improve conditions for journalists and human rights defenders (Norway);
- 136.127 Make further efforts to protect civil society organizations, human rights defenders and journalists from attacks and threats, and ensure a safe and secure environment for their work (Republic of Korea);
- 136.128 Implement an effective policy to protect human rights defenders in coordination with civil society (Luxembourg);
- 136.129 Continue taking steps in the field of women's empowerment by expanding women's participation in political, economic and social processes in Afghanistan (Kazakhstan);
- 136.130 Continue progress towards the empowerment of women, and increase their representation in government institutions (Egypt);
- 136.131 Ensure that women can fully and meaningfully participate in decision-making in all initiatives related to national and local-level peace processes (State of Palestine);
- 136.132 Continue efforts to combat trafficking in persons (Egypt);
- 136.133 Intensify measures to combat drug trafficking and opium production (Philippines);
- 136.134 Expedite the adoption of the child protection law, the family protection law and the migration law (Kyrgyzstan);
- 136.135 Adopt the draft law on protection of the family in order to bring the provisions of the Civil Code, on the part concerning the marriage age, in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Russian Federation);
- 136.136 Continue to strengthen its social programmes in favour of its people, especially the most vulnerable sectors (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 136.137 Further continue administrative and institutional reforms aiming at improving public services delivery (Azerbaijan);
- 136.138 Continue to provide programmes to help the poor and other vulnerable groups, including in rural society, to improve their skills and to give them better access to economic opportunities as well as basic services (Lao People's Democratic Republic);
- 136.139 Continue efforts to promote the economic, social and cultural rights of the people, in particular vulnerable social groups, such as women, children, persons with disabilities, refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, who have suffered a lot from internal wars (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 136.140 Ensure the provision of an alternative livelihood for people dependent on opium farming in order to provide them with legitimate sources of income for the realization of their economic and social rights (Pakistan);

- 136.141 Ensure the effective implementation of land allocation policies and the provision of housing for returning refugees, leading to durable solutions and allowing for their regular and sustained return (Pakistan);
- 136.142 Adopt and implement effective policies to reduce poverty and unemployment through, inter alia, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Algeria);
- 136.143 Continue strengthening its national programmes for reducing poverty (Bhutan);
- 136.144 Continue the development programme for rural enterprises in Afghanistan to economically empower women (Plurinational State of Bolivia);
- 136.145 Strengthen the poverty reduction strategy in its two approaches, as foreseen in the national framework for peace and development, and improve food security to reduce poverty (Plurinational State of Bolivia);
- 136.146 Continue efforts to reduce the increasing incidence of poverty (Libya);
- 136.147 Continue ongoing poverty reduction measures (India);
- 136.148 Continue efforts to implement effective policies to reduce poverty and unemployment (Indonesia);
- 136.149 Continue ongoing national development in accordance with the National Peace and Development Framework (2017–2021), focusing on improving people's livelihoods and eradicating poverty (China);
- 136.150 Develop plans to alleviate poverty (Iraq);
- 136.151 Adopt effective measures to counter the spread of poverty (Jordan);
- 136.152 Develop a robust mechanism to address poverty in the country (Malaysia);
- 136.153 Continue its efforts to develop effective and sustainable health systems for citizens' better access to quality health-care services (Bangladesh);
- 136.154 Continue working on the effective implementation of the national health strategy until 2020 in order for citizens to have better access to health-care services (Cuba);
- 136.155 Enhance efforts to provide greater access to essential health-care services and to ensure the right to education for children and youth, and to prevent any disruption to the education process (Indonesia);
- 136.156 Continue to step up efforts to improve access to health care to all, including persons with disabilities (Maldives);
- 136.157 Continue to promote and develop effective and sustainable practices in the health system so that all citizens have access to quality health care (Oman);
- 136.158 Provide the necessary medical immunization, particularly polio vaccination, and use maximum available resources to ensure the availability and accessibility of health care for all Afghan people, particularly vulnerable groups affected by the conflict (Saudi Arabia);
- 136.159 Ensure that sufficient health-care centres are built in the provinces and remote areas outside Kabul to support the effective implementation of health policies (Singapore);
- 136.160 Ensure access to immunization, particularly polio vaccination, and use maximum available resources to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality health care for all (Sri Lanka);

- 136.161 Guarantee equal access to education for women and girls, and combat harmful practices, such as forced and early marriage (Uruguay);
- 136.162 Implement all necessary actions to provide girls with education (Cyprus);
- 136.163 Continue efforts to provide education and care for children with disabilities (Yemen);
- 136.164 Increase the resources allocated to education, and introduce the culture of teaching human rights during each school cycle (Angola);
- 136.165 Take the necessary measures to protect schools and other educational establishments, in accordance with the Safe Schools Declaration (Argentina);
- 136.166 Continue the effective implementation of the national education strategic plan until 2021 in order to improve schooling levels, in particular enhancing literacy programmes (Cuba);
- 136.167 Take concrete steps to realize the right to education for girls by ending discriminatory practices (Hungary);
- 136.168 Pursue and strengthen measures to ensure equal access to quality education for all, especially for girls in rural areas, and combat barriers to education due to insecurity (Djibouti);
- 136.169 Continue efforts towards free and compulsory education (Tunisia);
- 136.170 Adopt targeted measures to ensure that education is truly compulsory through the effective implementation of legislation restricting child labour and by ensuring access to education for all in a safe environment (Greece);
- 136.171 Continue its efforts to achieve equal opportunities in the right to education, particularly for women and girls (Tunisia);
- 136.172 Ensure quality education for all children, including improving access to education for girls in all regions of the country (Estonia);
- 136.173 Take further steps to ensure access to education for all in a safe environment, with particular focus on girls and women, internally displaced persons and persons with disabilities (Georgia);
- 136.174 Take concrete steps to realize the right to primary and secondary education for girls by ending discriminatory practices, recruiting more female teachers and ensuring that all schools have adequate boundary walls, toilets and access to safe water (Iceland);
- 136.175 Continue ongoing measures towards access to better health care and affordable education (India);
- 136.176 Take specific measures to improve access to education, and give special attention to challenges faced by vulnerable groups, including girls, women and persons with disabilities, to complete their education (Mauritius);
- 136.177 Strengthen literacy programmes and access to education in a safe environment, with particular attention to girls, boys and women, internally displaced persons and persons with disabilities (Mexico);
- 136.178 Address challenges to increase girls' access to education (Myanmar);
- 136.179 Ensure the protection of schools, education and pupils in accordance with Afghanistan's commitment as a signatory of the Safe Schools Declaration (Norway);
- 136.180 Step up efforts in addressing barriers to education, especially for women and girls (Philippines);

136.181 Continue efforts in promoting a culture of human rights through education and training programmes, and activities (Philippines);

136.182 Set up a mechanism to follow up on the implementation of the declared objectives of the third national strategic plan for education for the period 2017–2021 (United Arab Emirates);

136.183 Guarantee that education for all children is not a privilege but a right (Portugal);

136.184 Invest more efforts, despite all the different circumstances, to provide education for all children in all areas of the country (Serbia);

136.185 Ensure that the Ministry of Education intensifies its public awareness campaigns, in particular in the provinces, to promote the importance of education for girls (Singapore);

136.186 Uphold the right to education, ensuring access to education for women and girls, and ensure accountability for perpetrators of attacks on education institutions (Sri Lanka);

136.187 Continue efforts in child and women's rights protection and improving their conditions, especially in the education and health-care sectors (Croatia);

136.188 Ensure the full implementation of the elimination of violence against women law and the 2018 Penal Code's provisions related to violence against women and girls (United States of America);

136.189 Take the necessary steps for the effective implementation of the elimination of violence against women law (Albania);

136.190 Increase, where possible, the number of shelters for women and girl victims of gender-based violence, and strengthen the care service provided (Angola);

136.191 Deepen measures to investigate and sanction discriminatory and degrading customs and traditions towards women and girls, such as the virginity test (Argentina);

136.192 Take further measures to prevent violence and eliminate discrimination against women, guarantee their full participation in public and political life, including in the peace and reconciliation process, and ensure the full implementation of the national action plan on women, peace and security by allocating sufficient human, technical and financial resources (Austria);

136.193 Ensure the effective implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women, including by raising awareness and increasing knowledge of the law among the population, the police force and the judiciary (Belgium);

136.194 Further promote the empowerment of women and the protection of their rights through the effective enforcement of the Penal Code and the elimination of violence against women law, the prosecution of perpetrators of violence against women and the further promotion of women's participation in the peace process and all spheres of society (Thailand);

136.195 Strengthen measures to eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and ethnic, religious or linguistic minority groups, and to protect their rights (Chile);

136.196 Ensure the elimination of violence against women law is effectively implemented and uniformly enforced, and that all cases of violence against women, including so-called "honour killings", are promptly investigated and prosecuted under the criminal justice system and not referred to traditional dispute resolution mechanisms (Ireland);

- 136.197 Prosecute violence against women, notably so-called honour killings (Cyprus);
- 136.198 Push for the National Assembly's approval of the law on the elimination of violence against women, and ensure that the law is fully enforced (Denmark);
- 136.199 Continue to strengthen the promotion and protection of women's rights through the effective implementation of national strategies and action plans for the elimination of violence against women (Djibouti);
- 136.200 Continue its efforts to combat violence against women and domestic violence through the full implementation of the national strategy adopted in this context and related national programmes in this area (Tunisia);
- 136.201 Accelerate progress in tackling gender-based violence, including domestic violence against women and girls (Estonia);
- 136.202 Continue measures aimed at the effective implementation of the elimination of violence against women law (Georgia);
- 136.203 Promptly investigate and prosecute cases of violence against women (Hungary);
- 136.204 Develop special programmes to reduce violence against women (Iraq);
- 136.205 Take further steps to ensure full implementation of the elimination of violence against women law and the provisions regarding the protection of women's rights included in the new Penal Code and the national action plans for women and on women, peace and security (Italy);
- 136.206 Conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the content of the law on the elimination of violence against women, and encourage women to report all cases of violence (Liechtenstein);
- 136.207 Introduce effective measures to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, including abolishing the referral of such crimes to mediation, ensure prompt investigation of violence and ensure effective redress for victims (Lithuania);
- 136.208 Combat violence against women and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice (Luxembourg);
- 136.209 Continue to strengthen efforts aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls (Maldives);
- 136.210 Strengthen efforts aimed at eliminating discrimination and violence against women (Malta);
- 136.211 Take all necessary steps aimed at combating violence against women, including ensuring the accountability of perpetrators (Ukraine);
- 136.212 Address factors leading to violence against women, including the lack of awareness of people of the law and of human rights (Myanmar);
- 136.213 Continue legislative and administrative reforms to prevent all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls (Nepal);
- 136.214 Implement fully the national strategy and action plan on the elimination of violence against women, as previously recommended (Portugal);
- 136.215 Ensure the effective implementation of the elimination of violence against women law, and make continued efforts to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls (Republic of Korea);
- 136.216 Continue measures to improve the situation of women, in particular with regard to their access to justice and participation in State administration and decision-making institutions (Serbia);

136.217 Fully implement the law on the elimination of violence against women and the 2018 Penal Code by ensuring that cases of violence against women and girls are appropriately investigated and prosecuted through the criminal justice system, and that judges and prosecutors are sufficiently resourced to do their jobs (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

136.218 Eliminate discrimination and violence against women and children, also through education on human rights and by raising awareness of the general public (Slovenia);

136.219 Adopt all necessary legal and regulatory measures to eliminate violence and discrimination against girls and women (Sri Lanka);

136.220 Take extra measures to prevent and combat domestic violence and to take care of abandoned children (Algeria);

136.221 Continue measures for women's empowerment (India);

136.222 Continue efforts to integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women in society (Libya);

136.223 Provide further support for the empowerment of women in the economic sphere (Oman);

136.224 Continue efforts aimed at empowering women (Poland);

136.225 Continue steps taken to achieve the empowerment of women, especially in the economic field (Romania);

136.226 Allocate sufficient economic and human resources for coordination of departments involved in human rights, in particular those which are responsible for safeguarding the empowerment of women in Afghan society (Spain);

136.227 Continue to take the necessary measures to strengthen the rights of children, including with regard to access to education (Albania);

136.228 Effectively promote and promptly implement the 2017 national action plan to eliminate early and child marriage, in full consultation with civil society (Austria);

136.229 Set the legal age for girls to marry at 18 years, and ensure that the law is effectively enforced, including by investigating and prosecuting cases of child marriage (Belgium);

136.230 Abide by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Afghan child protection policy, notably by ending the unlawful recruitment and use of children in armed conflict (Canada);

136.231 Take appropriate measures to ensure birth registration of all children born in the country, in order to reduce the risk of statelessness (Thailand);

136.232 Continue setting up adequate strategies to protect the rights of children (Tunisia);

136.233 Protect the rights of the child, including girls, notably in the area of access to education and protection against all types of violence (France);

136.234 Adopt measures to prevent and combat violence against women and girls in all sectors (Honduras);

136.235 Take further steps to ensure a framework policy for the protection of the rights of the child in line with international standards (Malta);

136.236 Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings (Montenegro);

136.237 Implement safeguards to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse of boys, known as *bacha bazi*, including by Afghan national security forces, and hold those responsible accountable, including through prosecution (United States of America);

136.238 Ensure that forced and early marriages of girls are prohibited, that those responsible are prosecuted and punished and that victims are rehabilitated (Denmark);

136.239 Continue taking necessary measures to criminalize the so-called practice of *bacha bazi*, and make all efforts in terms of prevention and justice in order to eradicate the practice (Mexico);

136.240 Take measures to strengthen child rights by promptly and thoroughly investigating all allegations of forced marriage, the practice of *bacha bazi*, or any other form of sexual exploitation of children, and appropriately prosecuting all those found responsible (Germany);

136.241 Intensify efforts to prevent and combat child, early and forced marriage, and take appropriate measures to fight all forms of violence against children and to promote their rights, including the right to education (Italy);

136.242 Take measurable steps to prevent and end the recruitment of children and to ensure the accountability of all perpetrators (Lithuania);

136.243 Accelerate the process of bringing the law on family protection amending the age of marriage into accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Myanmar);

136.244 Ensure the protection of the rights of all children without discrimination, and take steps to bring an end to child marriage by promptly implementing the national action plan on child marriage (Pakistan);

136.245 Combat effectively the recruitment of child soldiers (Poland);

136.246 Adopt and implement a national action plan to end child marriage, and adopt the necessary legal and regulatory measures to ensure consistent implementation at the central and local levels of laws on violence against women (Republic of Moldova);

136.247 Take concrete measures to ensure the protection of the rights of the child, including through access to education for all and the prevention of sexual abuse and child recruitment (Romania);

136.248 Take measures towards the rehabilitation and reintegration, rather than detention, of children formerly associated with armed groups (Portugal);

136.249 Take all measures to protect the civilian population in full respect of international humanitarian law and human rights, in particular specific measures for the protection of ethnic and religious minorities (Switzerland);

136.250 Redouble efforts on legislation to protect ethnic and religious communities (Honduras);

136.251 Intensify efforts to protect and promote freedom of religion or belief and the rights of persons belonging to religious minorities (Italy);

136.252 Establish an independent mechanism to assess how religious and ethnic minorities can be better protected against violent attacks (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

136.253 Establish a system to identify and assess the educational needs of children with disabilities, and build institutionalized capacity to assist and provide them with inclusive education (Bulgaria);

136.254 Improve and strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities, economically, politically and



socially by establishing policies and concrete actions at the central and local levels (Finland);

136.255 Guarantee the return of Afghan refugees and ensure their enjoyment of their rights and reintegration (Jordan);

136.256 Continue efforts to protect the rights of internally displaced persons and provide effective mechanisms for addressing their specific needs (Azerbaijan);

136.257 Create an enabling environment for the regular and sustained return of refugees through provision of livelihood opportunities for decent employment and equitable access to quality education and health-care services (Pakistan);

136.258 Increase efforts and prioritize the implementation of the policy on internally displaced persons to ensure that the most urgent needs of those displaced are met and sufficient resources are allocated (State of Palestine).

137. 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 Afghanistan was headed by S.E. Mme Suraya DALIL, Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent d’Afghanistan auprès de l’Office des Nations Unies et Chef de la delegation and composed of the following members:

- Monsieur Ghulam Haidar Allama, Adjoint du Procureur Général d’Afghanistan;
  - Madame Nabila Musleh, Vice-Ministre des Affaires de la Femme;
  - Monsieur Mohd. Ismail Rahimi, Vice-Ministre des Affaires Economiques;
  - Monsieur Ajmal Obaid Abidy, Sous-Directeur Général à la Direction de la Sécurité Nationale;
  - Monsieur Abdullah Attai, Membre du Haut Conseil à la Cour suprême d’Afghanistan;
  - Monsieur Mohammad Haroon Mutasem, Directeur des Affaires juridiques auprès de la Présidence de la République;
  - Monsieur Ahmad Massih Hami, Directeur du Département du Droit international au Ministère de la Justice;
  - Monsieur Abdul Hameed Akbar, Directeur de la Planification au Ministère du Travail;
  - Monsieur Sayed Sameer Bedrud, Conseiller à la Mission Permanente d’Afghanistan;
  - Monsieur Mohibullah Taib, Adjoint Directeur Général au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères;
  - Monsieur Safiullah Delawar, Membre du Cabinet du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères;
  - Monsieur Suhrab Wali, Fonctionnaire au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères;
  - Monsieur Hamed Abdulhai Formuli, Premier Secrétaire à la Mission d’Afghanistan;
  - Monsieur Mirwais Qaderi, Troisième Secrétaire à la Mission Permanente d’Afghanistan;
  - Monsieur Sher Alam Abasi, Troisième Secrétaire à la Mission Permanente d’Afghanistan.
-