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National report submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*

Dominican Republic

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Methodology and consultation process

1. This report was prepared on the basis of a series of consultations with the various institutions of the Dominican State responsible for the development of public policies designed to strengthen the fundamental rights of the country's population.
2. It provides an overview of progress achieved since the third cycle of the universal periodic review, taking as its starting point the commitments the State assumed before the international community in accepting 127 recommendations during its interaction with the various countries that took part in its universal periodic review in 2019.
3. The Dominican Republic hereby submits its report on the follow-up given to these recommendations, constituting its report for the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review.

II. Achievements made in the protection of human rights in implementation of the recommendations

National mechanisms for reporting, coordination and follow-up to the universal periodic review (Recommendations 94.37, 94.46 and 94.49)

4. The Dominican State created the Inter-Institutional Commission on Human Rights, attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by Decree No. 408-04 of 2004. The Commission's remit is to assist and support the Government in all human rights-related matters by issuing whatever recommendations it deems appropriate to submit to the executive branch for decision, and especially in the preparation and submission of periodic reports to the various bodies established pursuant to relevant international instruments. The Commission is currently composed of representatives of 34 State institutions.
5. Another important tool is the SIMORED-PLUS recommendations monitoring system, a database in which all human rights-related recommendations received are systematized and linked to the Sustainable Development Goals that facilitates the follow-up and implementation of recommendations.

Constitutional and legislative framework (Recommendations 94.64, 94.65, 94.110, 94.115, 94.116, 94.117, 94.118 and 94.164).

6. The decriminalization of abortion has been the subject of legislative and public debate but there is no consensus within the National Congress for the adoption of amendments to the Criminal Code that would exclude criminal responsibility in the three situations cited, that is, when the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, when the fetus is not compatible with life, and when the mother's life is at risk. It should be noted, however, that there is consensus in the latter case.
7. Regarding national legislation that prohibits and punishes discrimination against members of the LGBTIQ+ community, the country's Constitution establishes the right to equality and prohibits discrimination against all persons. Similarly, a number of bills outlawing discrimination against various categories of people have been examined in Congress with a view to strengthening the legislative framework and the protection of rights.
8. Articles 336 and 336-1 of the Criminal Code also penalize acts of discrimination, punishing them with imprisonment and the payment of a fine. Regarding the right to work, guiding principle No. VII of the Labour Code penalizes discrimination in any sphere.

Institutions and policies (Recommendation 94.159)

9. In 2022, the National Council for Children and Adolescents adopted a new organizational structure, in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents (Act No. 136-03). In addition, the Council has rolled

out a competency-based approach to personnel management and a capacity-building programme under which staff are offered grants and other incentives to sign up for diploma programmes, workshops and training courses.

10. In 2023, the Council's budget allocation was increased by 87.2 per cent, taking it from RD\$1.1 billion in 2019 to RD\$2.06 billion in 2023. This increase made it possible to implement strategic and operational institutional plans that will have benefits for children and adolescents, including the establishment of new shelters and halfway houses and the adoption of an intervention model for the protection of children and adolescents in street situations and situations of mobility in public spaces – a response focused on guaranteeing the fundamental rights of this vulnerable population group.

Human rights policies (Recommendation 94.60)

11. The Dominican State promotes the right to equality and, to this end, through all its institutions, implements policies and programmes designed to contribute to and foster progress towards equity and social inclusion for all.

12. With regard to measures to ensure that doctors and police officers respect the rights and ensure the safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, a reform of the police force was initiated in 2021 with the aim of building a force that is more in touch with citizens and upholds fundamental rights and whose personnel truly understand their role in respect of citizens.

13. Advances achieved as part of the police reform:

- Reopening of the Police Institute of Higher Education in July 2023. The Institute includes the national police force's school of human rights, set up to train police officers in this field and ensure that their actions are respectful of the human rights of all citizens
- Wage increase for police officers, bringing the minimum wage to RD\$500
- Reduction in theft of 24.1 per cent and 12.2 per cent decrease in homicides, based on a comparison between August 2022 and August 2023

14. The Ministry of Health has included measures addressing the needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) population in health policies, plans and regulations, including the 2022 Strategic Plan for Mainstreaming the Gender Perspective in the National Health System and the 2022 Regulations for the Comprehensive Care of Persons in Situations of Gender-based and Domestic Violence.

15. The Ministry has also spearheaded and supported national initiatives such as the "LGBTI Dialogues", an initiative designed to promote action in favour of social inclusion and effective access to all human rights for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersex community through a rapprochement between government institutions, civil society, the private sector, academia and other relevant actors. The first dialogue took place in 2019 and the second in 2022, bringing together around 150 persons and promoting an agenda supportive of the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersex community.

16. In 2022, a training course on gender, rights and LGBTI affirmative therapy was organized with a view to building a critical mass able to respond to the specific needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersex persons. A total of 46 professionals took part.

National human rights institution (Recommendations 94.39, 94.40, 94.41, 94.42 and 94.43)

17. The core elements of the Dominican Constitution are in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) of 1992 and 1993. Accordingly, the Ombudsman's Office is structured

on the basis of its strategic focuses, the general secretariat being the section focused on advocacy and the active defence of human rights.

18. The Opportunities Office and its Governance and Rule of Law Observatories are responsible for academic research, rights advocacy and education on the Constitution, human rights and fundamental rights and responsibilities, among other subjects. Additionally, in 2021, in line with the Paris Principles, the Ombudsman's Office established its Legislative Advisory Unit through which it works to defend rights in the legislative sphere.

19. The Ombudsman's Office's strategic plans envisage the development of a comprehensive plan to draft a new organic law in conformity with the new Constitution and the Paris Principles. The Office is in the process of securing accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, the organization that brings together national human rights institutions and works in association with the United Nations.

20. Articles 190, 191 and 192 of the Dominican Constitution, Act No. 19-01 of 2001 and the case law of the Constitutional Court all reflect the autonomy and independence duly accorded to the Ombudsman's Office in administrative and budgetary matters. The current texts of the aforementioned instruments more than satisfy this requirement.

National Human Rights Action Plan (Recommendations 94.44, 94.45, 94.47, 94.144 and 94.147)

21. The Dominican Government's determination to continue advocating and defending the fundamental rights of all persons led it to extend its first National Human Rights Plan, in a revised and updated form, for two years so that it covered the period 2018–2024.

22. The extension was based on the fact that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had a negative impact on the degree of implementation of some of the actions envisaged thereunder. The need for an extension, and to incorporate additional lines of action that were aligned with the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms that the Dominican Government has prioritized, was thus evident.

23. The updated Plan incorporated into some of the action lines the vision set forth in the National Development Strategy 2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms that the Government has prioritized under its strategic management agenda in accordance with the current National Multi-year Plan for the Public Sector.

24. The first report on the implementation of the National Human Rights Plan, which was issued in 2019, highlighted the lines of actions completed one year after the Plan's launch.

25. In 2022, the report on milestones achieved under the Plan was published. This report identified 10 milestones, representing progress achieved towards the set objectives, for each programme with a view to spurring further advances towards fulfilment of the obligations assumed under each of the Plan's programmes and projects.

26. In November 2020, the Ministry for Women launched the Strategic Plan for a Violence-Free Life for Women as part of a national policy designed to bring about changes in the structural and social norms at the root of the persistent violence perpetrated against women and girls. Within the framework of this Plan, in 2022 a bill to create a comprehensive system for the elimination of violence against women was submitted to the National Congress.

Good governance (Recommendations 94.83 and 94.84)

27. An important change in the fight against corruption took place in 2022, when an independent public prosecution office was assigned the task of stepping up the fight against corruption and impunity. This office has changed the dynamic of endeavours to bring cases of corruption to trial by targeting organizations engaged in criminal activity at their roots.

28. There have been a number of successful investigations, including Operación Antipulpo (Operation Anti-Octopus), Operación Coral/Coral 5G, Operación 13, Operación Medusa (Operation Jellyfish), Operación Calamar (Operation Squid) and Operación Agricultura. Overall, 131 individuals and 61 legal entities have been brought to justice through these operations, resulting in seven convictions and the confiscation of various assets for the benefit of the State.

29. Other advances achieved include the enactment of the Asset Forfeiture Act (No. 340-22) and the Act on the Administration and Custody of Seized and Confiscated Assets (No. 60-23), among other legislation – a step forward in the prosecution and punishment of organized crime.

30. Regarding access to justice, the judiciary has carried out a number of actions and initiatives within the framework of its 2020–2024 institutional strategic plan. One of these initiatives entailed an overhaul of court procedures and the implementation of case management systems that facilitate traceability in the court system while at the same time allowing for the productivity of judges and judicial officers to be monitored.

31. Act No. 339-22, authorizing and regulating the use of digital platforms for court proceedings and administrative procedures in the judiciary, was adopted in 2022. Published in Official Gazette No. 11076 of 29 July 2022 together with implementing regulations, the Act authorizes the use of digital services that foster efficiency and access to justice, including:

- Digital signature: all documents issued by the judiciary are signed electronically, improving the security of court and administrative documents. The judiciary has 3,400 judges and judicial officers
- Digital access: the judiciary’s transaction portal allows citizens to make judicial deposits remotely. Launched in November 2023, as at 04.12.2023 (partial close), there were a total of 163 registered users, of whom 111 had been validated
- Virtual hearings: user access to virtual hearings is possible for all judicial processes except criminal proceedings. As at 04.12.2023, virtual hearings had been visited or consulted 696 times.

Awareness-raising and sensitization (Recommendation 94.134)

32. Fundamental rights are protected in Title II of the Dominican Constitution, guaranteeing full and inherent respect for the human person and society as a whole.

33. The aforementioned National Human Rights Plan 2018–2024 is an instrument for the promotion and protection of human rights. Various human rights sensitization and advocacy programmes are also carried out through the Ombudsman’s Office.

34. The Inter-institutional Human Rights Commission provides ongoing training for all its member institutions so as to ensure that they respect the human rights of others in their work.

Statistics and indicators (Recommendation 94.48)

35. Article 11 of Act No.1-12, establishing the National Development Strategy 2030, provides that all plans, programmes, initiatives and public policies must incorporate a human rights perspective in their respective fields of action. The introduction of this requirement, established in the aforementioned Act and expounded upon subsequently in Decree No. 134-14, containing the regulations for the National Development Strategy 2030, was a policy milestone.

36. In 2021, the State completed its second voluntary national review of progress towards fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals and compliance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This achievement is a mark of its commitment to prioritizing policies aimed at addressing the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and placing the country back on a path to development where human rights are the focus and vulnerable population groups are accorded special attention.

37. The information collected in the country's tenth national census will provide updated demographic and socioeconomic data on the resident population and households throughout the country. The findings will also shed light on the situation of people living in poverty, older persons, persons living with disability, migrants, children, women, people living in at-risk areas and housing needs, inter alia.

Equality and non-discrimination (Recommendations 94.50, 94.51, 94.52, 94.53, 94.54, 94.56, 94.57, 94.59, 94.61, 94.63 and 94.66)

38. The draft law on equality and non-discrimination has been submitted to the National Congress several times but has not been adopted as yet. However, the Dominican Government has been making great efforts to combat discrimination, some of which are described below.

- In September 2023, a discussion entitled “Towards a comprehensive anti-discrimination law” was organized in the House of Representative with support from the United Nations, in order to highlight the importance of anti-discrimination laws and share examples of good practice in the adoption and implementation of such laws in Latin America, the Caribbean and other regions
- Resolution No. 0000051 of 2013, on the elimination of discrimination in access to restaurants, bars and entertainment venues. In the period 2020–2023, a total of 55 cases of discrimination of this kind were processed
- General Instruction No. 0002 of the Attorney General's Office, dated September 2023, on the handling of cases involving vulnerable population groups and providing instructions for public servants on the general, immediate and mandatory application of national policies for handling cases involving vulnerable populations groups whose rights have been violated
- The Public Prosecutor's Office has various victim support and protection mechanisms, including the National Directorate for Victim Support and the National Legal Representation Service for Victims' Rights, which, together with other bodies such as the Ministry for Women and the shelters, help to ensure comprehensive protection for victims

39. With regard to efforts to raise awareness within the security forces, the Ministry of Defence runs the Graduate School of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, which specializes in providing professional training and capacity-building in this area.

40. The Graduate School offers training and capacity-building courses in human rights and international humanitarian law for personnel at all levels of the armed forces (senior and junior officers, cadets, midshipmen and enlisted personnel) as well as for the general public. As of 2023, 44,984 persons have completed courses.

Racial discrimination (Recommendation 94.58)

41. The Dominican Republic is a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and article 74 (3) of the Dominican Constitution establishes that human rights treaties, covenants and conventions signed and ratified by the Government of the Dominican Republic have constitutional status and are directly and immediately applicable by courts and other organs of the State.

Impunity (Recommendation 94.157)

42. Act No. 24-97 on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence defines violence against women as a criminal offence that the Public Prosecutor's Office is under an obligation to investigate, indict and prosecute so that the perpetrators may be duly punished. To this end, the Attorney General's Office has instructed prosecutors throughout the country to step up efforts to ensure the criminal prosecution of such offences, issuing guidelines for the handling, investigation and effective prosecution of cases of violence that set forth effective

policies for both investigations and the provision of immediate support and protection for victims and their children.

43. The purpose of the aforementioned guidelines is to standardize procedures for victim support, investigation and criminal prosecution. Besides addressing the technical aspects of such cases, the guidelines specify the minimum action to be taken to ensure that the prosecutor assigned to the case can duly investigate and bring the case to trial and that the victims receive dignified treatment and an immediate response to the situation in which they find themselves.

44. Cases of femicide are handled by the ordinary prosecutors' offices and their homicide departments, which are in charge of investigating and prosecuting all such cases.

Conditions of detention (Recommendations 94.76, 94.77, 94.78 and 94.80)

45. The Prison Reform Support Plan was adopted in 2022 by Decree No. 456-20, which declared prison reform to be in the national interest with a mind both to improving citizen security and to ensuring respect for the dignity of persons in conflict with criminal law and their possible social reintegration.

46. The aims of Act No. 113-21, meanwhile, are to protect the integrity and dignity of persons deprived of liberty, reduce the negative consequences of their situation, and provide adequate conditions for their personal development as well as for their corrective rehabilitation, re-education and social reintegration.

47. The General Directorate of Prison and Correctional Services, in coordination with the Ministry of Housing and Buildings, has launched the following renovation, expansion and building programmes for the country's prisons:

- Expansion of the Elías Piña Correction and Rehabilitation Centre, with an investment of over RD\$37 million
- Refurbishment of two wings accommodating inmates suffering from mental health conditions, one in the La Victoria prison and the other in the Najayo Correction and Rehabilitation Centre for Women
- The "Paint your detention centre" programme, under which 500 tins of paint have been donated to refurbish prisons throughout the country
- Renovation of the Rafey Correction and Rehabilitation Centre for Men
- Establishment of human rights offices in La Victoria prison and the Kilómetro 15 prison in Azua, to provide the supervision needed to ensure respect for the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty
- Expansion of the Elías Piña Correction and Rehabilitation Centre

48. Through the various educational programmes designed to ensure the release to society of former prisoners who are changed persons, both critical and self-critical, who value life and recognize their responsibility towards society, the following results have been obtained:

- A total of 3,923 inmates have graduated under an agreement with the National Institute for Vocational Training
- At the start of the 2023/24 academic year, there was an increase of 6,076 in the number of inmates enrolled in formal literacy, basic education and adult secondary education programmes
- A fourth cohort of inmates have graduated under the ASUME programme, coordinated by the telecommunications company, CLARO, in conjunction with the Support and Treatment Subdirectorate. Twelve prisons are taking part and 189 inmates have graduated, with a total of 574 graduates enrolled under the programme

49. To provide for the health needs of persons deprived of liberty, the Dominican Prison System currently employs a total of 179 professionals in different areas of health care.

50. Regarding pretrial detention, article 234 of the Code of Criminal Procedure establishes that persons facing charges should be detained on remand only if they represent a certain flight risk and that one or more of the less restrictive measures available should be imposed. Pretrial detention is reviewed every three months, including the basis for its imposition, and, depending on the circumstances of each case, may be continued, modified or replaced by another measure or the release of the accused.

Prohibition of slavery and trafficking (Recommendations 94.86, 94.87, 94.88, 94.89, 94.90 and 94.91)

51. Through the Office of the Special Prosecutor against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons and in accordance with the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling 2022–2024, the Dominican Government has made significant progress in the fight against these phenomena, working to prevent, prosecute and provide effective protection through measures including:

- Recruitment of staff with English and Creole language skills in order to reduce the obstacles to access to justice that possible victims of trafficking currently face
- Implementation of the protocol on standard operating procedures for the identification, referral and counter-referral of victims of trafficking in persons in border and neighbouring provinces and the protocol for action in cases of trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling affecting children and adolescents
- Creation of a national system of shelters for victims of trafficking and publication of the Practical Guide for the Shelter and Reception of Victims of Trafficking, both designed to address the needs of different victim groups in a differentiated manner through a systematic and comprehensive approach to support and the provision of specialized services
- Deployment of undercover agents and advanced technology to increase interceptions and extract information besides establishing relationships with institutions and reliable high-level sources that collaborate with the authorities in investigative processes.
- Prosecution of cases investigated and punishment of perpetrators. According to statistics provided by the Attorney General's Office, in the period 2020–2023 670 cases came to light
- Designation of a focal point for migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons in every prosecutor's office nationwide
- Labour market integration of survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking throughout the country

Domestic violence (Recommendation 94.167)

52. The National Council for Childhood and Adolescence has launched the National Positive Parenting Programme as a national strategy for the prevention and elimination of parenting practices based on the use of violence against children and adolescents. To date since the Programme's inception, the Council has organized sensitization activities that have reached 66,672 persons nationwide and has issued certificates to 12,388 parents and guardians as a result of 498 workshops in different communities.

53. Furthermore, the National Congress is considering a bill that would increase the importance accorded to child-raising practices, ensure good treatment and promote appropriate care that eschews the physical punishment and humiliating treatment of children and adolescents. The bill has the support of the Office for Children and Adolescents, the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence, the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Children and World Vision.

Administration of justice and fair trial (Recommendations 94.81, 94.75, 94.82 and 94.79)

54. Within the framework of its institutional strategic plan, the judiciary has implemented a series of actions and initiatives that promote the institutional independence of judges. For example:

- Article 15 of the Judicial Service Act (No. 327-98) provides for a promotion system that allows for judges to move up the career ladder, from one category to the next, based on personal and professional merit
- At the end of 2023, the promotion system and the procedure used to fill positions in the judiciary were harmonized and updated for a third time, allowing for 291 increases in grade and 122 promotions and transfers and strengthening the independence of the judiciary in terms of the appointment and assignment of judges

55. Through the Inspector General's Office, the Judicial Council, which is the judiciary's most senior disciplinary body, adopted the following new disciplinary regulations:

- Resolution No. 02-2023, regulating the disciplinary sanctions procedure applicable to court bailiffs, clerks, court interpreters, public auctioneers and surveyors accredited as public officials, the latter pursuant to the provisions of articles 5, 25 and 116 of the Real Estate Registry Act (No. 108-05)
- Resolution No. 017-2020 of the Council of the Judiciary, amending Resolution No. 25-2018 and approving the disciplinary regulations applicable to judges of the judicial branch

56. In addition, the issuance of release orders is monitored through inter-institutional action in order to ensure that orders are issued within the legally established time frame. In 2023, the working group ensured that:

- 100 per cent of orders for the release of persons whose sentences were not affected by procedural deadlines were issued on time
- Nationwide, the time taken to issue release orders for persons whose sentences were affected by procedural deadlines, was improved from two months in 2022 to one month in the period from January to October 2023, equivalent to a 50 per cent reduction in time to issuance

Rights related to name, identity and nationality (Recommendations 94.160, 94.161 and 94.162)

57. In April 2023, the National Civil Register Directorate issued Circular No. 02/2023, providing that birth registrations requested after Tuesday, 25 April 2023, and within the deadline established in article 73 of Act No. 4-23, that is, no more than 180 days from the date of birth, may be registered at the Civil Register Office in the place of birth or the place of residence or domicile of the mother or father, or, if the child was born in a health centre, in the registration unit within this centre.

58. In addition, article 73 of the aforementioned Act repealed the procedure for approving late registrations of birth, now referred to as registrations "after the deadline", that is, after the 180-day window for registration has expired. Instead, a procedure that takes account of the age of new registrees has been introduced whereby the birth of persons under 16 years of age can be verified and registered directly with a civil register office.

59. Resolution No. 9-2023 exempts from the verification procedure late registrations of birth and death that have been recorded or are in the process of notification, having provided for the creation of a computer platform that has made it possible to exempt, without cost or additional procedure, 310,143 birth registrations, of which 78,313 correspond to births of minors, thereby ensuring that the issuance of birth certificates is not delayed.

60. Mobile units have been introduced to carry out birth registration formalities for persons who have not been recorded. These persons' files are processed by the Decentralized

Birth Registration Unit for births notified after the deadline and, if additional investigation is required, are forwarded to the Investigations and Legal Opinions Unit of the National Civil Register Directorate, without any need to refer them to other internal units of the institution.

61. Measures adopted to address and mitigate the problem of unregistered children under 5 years of age include:

- Regulations implementing Organic Act No. 4-23, on civil status documents, providing for the establishment of simplified procedures that will allow for birth registrations to take account of the age and situation of vulnerability of the registree.
- Adoption of new birth registration procedures designed to facilitate the birth registration of those who are not yet included in the Dominican Civil Register by allowing for the implementation of modern, updated and efficient mechanisms
- Installation of 66 units in medical centres throughout the country (62 hospitals and 4 clinics) to allow for close daily contact with women in maternity wards, who are referred to the registration unit to obtain the necessary assistance

Rights related to marriage and the family (Recommendations 94.93, 94.94 and 94.95)

62. The family is the cornerstone of Dominican society, as established in article 55 (2) of the Constitution, which provides that the State will guarantee the protection of the family and that the good of the family is inalienable and indefeasible, in accordance with the law.

63. To this end, the Dominican State has established institutional mechanisms through which goods and services to support the comprehensive development of the family are provided, as detailed in his report.

64. Act No. 1-21, enacted on 16 January 2021, amended and repealed several provisions of the Civil Code and Act No. 659 of 1944, on civil status documents, and prohibits marriage for persons under 18 years of age.

Economic, social and cultural rights and the right to an adequate standard of living (Recommendations 94.98, 94.99, 94.100, 94.101, 94.102, 94.103, 94.105)

65. In its July–September 2023 bulletin, the Ministry of Planning and Development reported that the overall poverty rate in 2022 was 27.7 per cent, 3.0 percentage points lower than in 2021. In the first and second quarters of 2023 there was a reduction in the national rate of monetary poverty, which was 23.4 per cent in April–June, 4.2 percentage points lower than in the same period of 2022, and the downward trend has been continuing since. In the third quarter, monetary poverty fell by 4.0 percentage points compared to the same quarter of the previous year, standing at 24.4 per cent. This estimated rate for July–September 2023 is the lowest for the third quarter of the year since 2016.

66. Although monetary poverty has certainly been reduced, the Dominican Government continues to make efforts to overcome multidimensional poverty, focusing its actions on the provision of financial support and capacity-building through programmes and initiatives that can serve to increase autonomy and self-advocacy and thus bring about real economic and social sustainability for citizens.

67. Decree No. 377-21 created the “Get Ahead” (Supérate) programme, replacing the “Progressing with Solidarity” programme, and set forth the new strategy for the comprehensive fight against poverty in the Dominican Republic.

68. By the end of 2023, the “Get Ahead” programme had made promising progress in addressing the barriers posed by poverty in the Dominican Republic, having organized 53,268 capacity-building and vocational training activities nationwide, benefiting a total of 9,303 women and 43,965 men, in addition to training and awareness-raising sessions in which at least 61,975 teenagers and young persons took part.

69. Regarding support for families with members diagnosed with a disability, some 3,191 persons (2,871 women and 262 men) receive an allowance of RD\$6,000 per month.

70. Manos Dominicanas, one of the main entrepreneurship initiatives under the “Get Ahead” programme, reports that 1,940 craftsmen and craftswomen were actively working in 2023, generating income of RD\$21,477,998 that has enabled them to improve their quality of life.

71. In addition, the Digital Christmas Bonus, worth RD\$1,500, was distributed to 500,000 Dominicans through the “Your cash” (Tu Efectivo) plan.

72. Also, 1,510,432 families received the “Feed yourself” (Aliméntate) cash allowance, worth RD\$1,650.00 per month, and 1,320,969 households received the gas allowance, worth RD\$470.00 per month.

73. The electricity allowance, intended to cover the cost of electrical energy services and worth RD\$703.60 per month, was paid to 533,864 low-income families in 2023 and 196,859 households received the “Let’s learn” allowance (Bono Aprende) and “Let’s get ahead” allowance (Bono Avanza), intended for families with school-age children in basic and secondary education, respectively.

74. A total of 801 women received the “Get ahead” allowance specifically for women, worth RD\$10,000 and intended for victims of gender-based violence, to help them move towards financial and social autonomy.

Right to adequate housing (Recommendations 94.107 and 94.108)

75. The “My Home” (Mi Vivienda) programme led by the Ministry of Housing is working to achieve a quantitative reduction in the housing deficit through the construction of new low-cost, subsidized housing available only to people who do not have their own home. The Government’s goal under this programme is to deliver more than 7,500 new apartments that benefit more than 30,000 people.

76. The State subsidizes 60 per cent of the total cost of the home and the remaining 40 per cent is financed at a rate of 8 per cent, fixed for 6 years, making the resulting monthly payment the lowest in the market. Home owners will pay between 7,500 pesos for a two-bedroom apartment and 12,000 pesos for a three-bedroom house.

77. Numbers achieved under this programme:

- As of October 2023, 1,524 of the 1,760 units planned under the “My Home Model City” project in Santo Domingo Norte municipality, equivalent to 86 per cent of the total units envisaged for this housing development, had been delivered. More than RD\$4,565 million was invested in this project
- As of November 2023, 1,700 homes had been delivered under the “My Home” programme in the municipal district of San Luis, in Santo Domingo, for an investment of RD\$7,172 million
- As of December 2023, 590 housing units had been delivered under the Hato del Yaqué “My Home” housing project in this district of the province of Santiago
- Under the Los Salados “My Home” project, 656 homes have been delivered, representing an investment of RD\$1,505 million and benefiting more than 2,100 persons

78. Additionally, under the “Rebuilding the Dominican Republic” (Dominicana se Reconstruye) programme, which groups together all projects involving the replacement of earthen floors with cement and home refurbishment and construction throughout the country, 42,943 homes have been renovated, benefiting more than 181,000 people and representing an investment of RD\$5,808 million.

Right to work (Recommendations 94.96 and 94.97)

79. To promote equal opportunities and non-discrimination, the Ministry of Labour has carried out various awareness-raising activities to sensitize employers and workers to the topics of attention to disability and corresponding regulations, attention to diversity, attention to persons with HIV/AIDS, and gender equity.

80. The main aim of these activities was to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities from vulnerable sectors of the population. From 2021 to 2023, the Ministry of Labour managed to raise awareness among close to 35,000 people.

81. Under the National Employment Plan, the aim of which is to generate 600,000 decent jobs in the formal economy by 2024, an additional 403,000 jobs had been created as of February 2023 relative to August 2020 and there were 125,000 more formal jobs in the private sector than in February 2020, before the pandemic. The open unemployment rate was 4.8 per cent, 1.1 percentage points lower than the average rate for 2018 and 2019, which was 5.9 per cent.

82. Resolution No. 024-2022, instituting the Temporary Employment Programme, and Resolution No. 025-2021, instituting the Youth Employability Programme were issued in November 2021 to promote the labour market insertion and reinsertion of young persons and adults.

Right to health (Recommendations 94.109, 94.111, 94.113, 94.114, 94.122, 94.143 and 94.166)

83. The National Health Service is making considerable efforts to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality across the public health network, including by implementing training and capacity-building programmes for personnel, providing medical equipment and strengthening neonatal health-care programmes.

84. The Neonatal Mortality Reduction Acceleration Plan led to an 11 per cent decrease in mortality in the period from January to October 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. A reduction in maternal mortality of approximately 46% was also achieved.

85. With regard to health services, in 2022 the budget allocated to the high-cost medicine programme was increase two-fold, to 7.3 billion pesos.

86. In December 2020, the authorities announced that two million new members had joined the national health insurance scheme, which now has more than 6.8 million members. Of this number, 5,762,249 million are affiliated to the subsidized scheme and around 1,185,326 are affiliated to the contributory scheme, meaning that more than 60 per cent of the population is affiliated to one of the schemes administered by the national health insurance service.

87. The outpatient building of the Luis Eduardo Aybar complex in the National District has opened, making 76 consultation rooms available in two stages and covering 22 medical specialties, and the Padre Billini hospital, which had been undergoing refurbishment for five years, has been renovated and refitted, for an investment of RD\$2,175 million. A total of 532 primary care centres and clinical and diagnostic centres have been refurbished.

88. The National Health Service has absorbed a 26 per cent increase in outpatient consultations, 21 per cent increase in laboratory tests, 24 per cent increase in diagnostic imaging, 8 per cent increase in surgical procedures, 13 per cent increase in hospitalization and 14 per cent increase in emergency admissions.

89. The National Health Service has provided new equipment to more than 100 health-care facilities, for an investment of RD\$1,972,321,277.10. Twelve hospitals nationwide have received new computed tomography (CT) scanners, guaranteeing access to diagnostic examinations for thousands of patients.

HIV/AIDS

90. In recent years, the incidence of HIV has decreased substantially, with a 16 per cent decline in new infections that has kept the overall prevalence in the general population at 0.9 per cent. However, a higher prevalence of between 4.6 per cent and 29.6 per cent is found in key populations according to the 2022 serological and behavioural surveillance survey of key populations.

91. According to national estimates for 2022, 79,000 persons in the Dominican Republic are living with HIV. As of October 2023, 95 per cent of this number (74,900) know their HIV status and are receiving care through the comprehensive support service, placing the country in a position to achieve the targets set for the first pillar of its treatment and prevention plan. Of these 74,900 people, 71 per cent (52,909) are receiving antiretroviral treatment, which has reduced mortality by 41 per cent, exceeding the country's target.

92. This improvement was attributable to Government investments that have allowed for a significant increase in antiretroviral therapy coverage, a reduction in dropout rates and the implementation of combination HIV prevention. These budget allocations constitute an unprecedented State contribution to the national response to HIV and AIDS.

93. Implementation of the Support Programme for Key Populations at Higher Risk of HIV 2022–2024, financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and involving 30 not-for-profit associations, is continuing.

94. To ensure that women receive effective protection against violence, the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance is working to develop prevention and health-care services for persons living in situations of violence. These efforts have resulted in the following advances:

- An updated version of the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance Regulations for the Comprehensive Care of Persons in Situations of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence was published in November 2022
- Ministerial Resolution No. 000022 of 2021, on the elimination of obstetric violence, has been disseminated for implementation nationwide
- In coordination with the National Health Service, 23 support units for victims of violence have been established
- Physical abuse and rape have been defined as events subject to mandatory reporting and epidemiological surveillance

Access to sexual and reproductive health and services (Recommendations 94.119, 94.120 and 94.121)

95. In the Dominican Republic, there is currently no legislation that decriminalizes abortion. This has generated intense debate both at the legislative level and in the public sphere. Opinion is divided among legislators and society as a whole, making it difficult to obtain general approval for legislation that excludes criminal responsibility in the three situations cited.

96. It is important to note that, despite this lack of general consensus, there is agreement on one of the specific grounds for exclusion of responsibility, namely when the mother's life is at risk. However, despite multiple attempts, on several occasions, to obtain the bill's passage, it has so far failed to obtain the votes necessary for its adoption in the National Congress.

97. The Dominican Government hereby expresses its commitment to establishing the conditions necessary to guarantee the full enjoyment of sexual and reproductive rights. It is actively seeking to create an enabling environment conducive to the exercise of these fundamental rights, thus promoting the well-being and autonomy of its citizens in the reproductive and sexual spheres. Evidence of this is the national sexual and reproductive health policy adopted by the Ministry of Health through Resolution No. 000012 of 2020 as a strategic instrument to guide the actions of the National Health Service in the public and private spheres.

Access to education (Recommendations 94.123, 94.124, 94.125, 94.126, 94.127, 94.128, 94.129, 94.130, 94.132, 94.133 and 94.137)

98. The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country in March 2020 necessitated the immediate closure of educational institutions nationwide and the adoption of emergency strategies to mitigate the situation, including instructions for education to continue virtually. The resulting “Education for all while protecting health” (Educación para Todos Preservando la Salud) programme was devised as part of the “Let’s learn at home” (Estrategia Aprendamos en Casa) strategy, benefiting about 2.3 million students.

99. Beginning in the 2021/22 academic year, educational institutions gradually returned to on-site teaching, with approximately 2.5 million students in the public and private sectors benefitting from the definition of the new educational model set forth in the Institutional Strategic Plan 2021–2024.

100. With support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), adaptations were made to allow for the start of, or return to, face-to-face teaching in the new pandemic-induced social situation. These adaptations involved 7,529 counsellors and psychologists, 255,254 students, 70,292 teachers, 121,111 families and 5,342 public schools.

101. A comprehensive assessment programme was implemented under which 6,125 preschool teachers and 293 national, regional and district educational experts (the latter from the Bahoruco 18 district office) were trained and 2,348 preschool students and 1,669 primary school students (a total of 4,017) underwent assessment.

102. Other achievements include:

- The national policy for initial literacy in the early learning stage, the aim of which is to develop in pupils in the first grade of primary school the reading, writing and mathematical skills that will allow for their comprehensive development, has benefitted more than 450,000 children enrolled in public sector schools
- The following computer equipment has been delivered to students and teachers in public schools: 23,832 laptops for teachers, 168,810 tablets for primary school students and 220,842 netbooks and 9 laptops for secondary school students. In addition, 732,322 students benefitted from a robotics project, 12,775 robotics kits were delivered and 1,090 robotics laboratories were set up in schools
- The results of assessments conducted under the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2022 show that the Dominican Republic was among the few countries in which pupils’ performance in reading, mathematics and science improved, with an overall score of 350 points, up from 334 points in 2018 and 339 in 2015
- 6,590,181 textbooks were delivered to 1,301,343 preschool and primary school students and 1,767,392 to 187,039 young persons and adults
- 59,929 children under 5 years of age were enrolled in the different networks or service modalities of the National Institute for Integrated Early Childhood Services
- Ministry of Education Communication No. 620/2023, of 24 July 2023, instructs school directors to ensure that no student is excluded from the classroom and reiterates in one of its provisions that students who do not have a birth certificate must be allowed to enrol in the various levels of education
- The Pupil Transport Pilot Programme created by Decree No. 616-22 of 23 October 2022 has 400 buses for the use of the student population and, as of 29 October 2023, was providing transport for a total of 1,065,870 students in the pilot localities, bringing transport cost savings for all beneficiary families of RD\$319,761,000.
- The Student Allowance Programme will provide 1,800,000 students throughout the country with financial assistance of 1,000 pesos to cover part of their school expenses for the 2023/24 school year, which they will receive through their parents
- 133 students with disabilities received support during national assessment processes, facilities providing for the application of diagnostic tests according to disability have

been made available, and the protocol for transfers from the Comprehensive Care Centre for Early Childhood to school is being implemented

- 998 students with disabilities benefitted from the provision of resources for use in learning and support spaces such as electric wheelchairs, books providing guidance on attention to diversity measures in secondary education, story books, folders in raised print, canes, easy-to-read books and other teaching materials

103. The direct coordination of the National Literacy Plan entitled “Quisqueya learns with you” (Quisqueya Aprende Contigo) had been transferred to the Ministry of Education and the programme is scheduled for relaunch in 2024.

Comprehensive sex education strategy

104. A total of 325 preschool counsellors, psychologists and coordinators from the 18 regions took part in an orientation day on socioemotional education for the initial level of the Sex Education in Values Programme, and 22 national educational experts, 36 regional experts, 41 district counsellors and psychologists and primary school teachers from the 20 prioritized districts took part in workshops organized for national and regional teaching experts from the first grade of secondary education.

105. As part of the Sex Education in Values Programme, a youth camp for leadership in values was held on the initiative of the Office for Children and Adolescents. The Office has been working to develop a policy for preventing and addressing early unions and teenage pregnancy since 2020 and issued the policy on 7 December 2021.

106. The youth camp, in which 279 students from 28 educational institutions in the 14 prioritized districts in nine regions took part, was one of the actions being organized by the Ministry of Education to promote student participation and leadership.

Discrimination against women (Recommendations 94.135, 94.136, 94.138, 94.139, 94.140, 94.150, 94.154, 94.155 and 94.158)

107. Act No. 33-18 reserves 40 per cent of positions on lists of candidates for elected office for women and article 316.21 of Act No. 20-23, on the electoral system, defines political violence perpetrated against women on the basis of their gender as a criminal offence.

108. Constitutional Court judgment No. 0620/23 establishes that the gender quota must be applied at the constituency level, and not at the national level, in order to ensure women’s due participation in elections, on equal terms, and due representation in elected positions.

109. There has been an increase in the number of women forming part of decision-making forums. Two of the 10 members of the Monetary Board, the body responsible for key decisions on the financial system and the economy, are women. In the executive branch, the position of vice-president is held by a woman, 2 out of a total of 22 ministers are women (the Minister of Culture and the Minister for Women) and women lead a number of the country’s 31 provincial governments. Of the five judges with seats on the Central Electoral Board, two are women, as are 4 of the 17 Supreme Court judges and 4 of the 13 Constitutional Court judges, and the Attorney General’s Office is currently headed by a woman.

110. The following measures have been taken to combat discrimination against women:

- The third National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity, covering the period 2020–2030, which sets forth sectoral strategies aligned with the National Development Strategy 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, Sustainable Development Goal 5, and with other programmes and public policy tools designed to foster gender equity
- The Gender Equality Seal for the Public and Private Sector: Making the Dominican Republic Equal, an initiative led by the Ministry for Women with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that promotes a management model focused on quality for equality and redressing gender inequalities

111. Another initiative that contributes to the elimination of stereotypes and discrimination against women is the inter-agency round-table working group on positive masculinity, composed of representatives of the Ministry for Women, UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), among other institutions.

112. In addition, gender equity and development offices have been created in all ministries.

Violence against Women (Recommendations 94.74, 94.112, 94.141, 94.145, 94.146, 94.148, 94.149, 94.151, 94.152, 94.153 and 94.156)

113. A comprehensive bill on violence against women is before the National Congress, having been submitted by the executive branch in December 2022. In September 2023, the Minister for Women organized a meeting in the Senate during which she indicated that the bill should be considered by a bicameral commission.

114. Action taken to combat violence against women:

- The Directorate for Preventing and Addressing Violence works to defend and uphold the human rights of women through actions and interventions as part of programmes designed to promote the rights of women and prevent and address gender-based and domestic violence
- The Directorate against Gender-based Violence of the Attorney General's Office works to ensure that institutional guidelines and policies are applied, besides providing logistical and technical support to the units providing support for victims of gender-based violence, domestic violence and sexual offences and, where there are no support units, within the prosecutors' offices themselves
- Shelters have been established to protect women and their children from violent death and physical, psychological and sexual aggression. In 2023, 1,775 protection orders were granted
- Training in how to identify and address possible cases of violence has been provided to 400 health-care providers and 700 police officers
- The National School of the Public Prosecutor's Office has organized more than 20 training sessions, reaching more than 1,400 people overall. It also runs human rights diploma courses that strengthen the capacities of actors and improve the way in which cases are processed and addressed
- Training in victim support and the investigation of cases has been provided for staff of the Public Prosecutor's Office, with more than 200 prosecutors and lawyers working within units providing comprehensive support for victims of gender-based violence, domestic violence and sexual offences having received training on their role
- Three behavioural intervention centres for men are currently operating, one in the National District, one in Santiago de los Caballeros in the Northern Region and one in San Juan de la Maguana in the Southern Region
- The 809-200-1202 "Life Line" service, which is available nationwide, has been improved and extended to operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

115. Fourteen new gender violence units have been opened to ensure comprehensive national coverage. Regarding the prosecution of acts of sexual violence, 628 cases were sent to trial in 2020, 566 in 2021, 494 in 2022 and 563 in 2023.

Children (Recommendations 94.104, 94.106 and 94.163)

116. Article 56 of the Constitution establishes that the family, society and the State must give priority to the best interests of children and adolescents and have an obligation to assist and protect them and thus guarantee their harmonious and holistic development and the full exercise of their fundamental rights, in accordance with the Constitution and the law. To this end, the country has adopted special laws and adheres to international instruments concerning the protection of the rights of the child.

Teenage pregnancy

117. Since the adoption of Act No. 1-21, which prohibits marriage for persons under 18 years of age, a policy for the prevention and management of early unions and teenage pregnancies has been in place, with responsibility for its implementation lying with the National Council for Children and Adolescents and the Office for Children and Adolescents.

118. Within the framework of this policy, a comprehensive sexual education programme is being run in community settings in 20 municipalities prioritized because of the incidence of early unions and pregnancies in the local area.

119. As a result of implementation of the policy for the prevention and management of early unions and teenage pregnancies, the following advances have been achieved:

- 162,000 persons have benefitted from comprehensive sex education programmes implemented in schools and community settings such as the “Positive Parenting, Life Skills, Life Project” and “Clubs for Girls” initiatives
- 32 support and counselling units for adolescents aged from 10 to 19 years old are in operation
- 13 clubs for girls aimed at preventing early unions and teenage pregnancies and promoting girls’ empowerment have been established in conjunction with the “Get Ahead” Programme and with the support of UNICEF, benefitting 305 girls
- The rate of teenage pregnancy has decreased, dipping from 19.74 per cent in 2022 to 17.89 per cent in the first quarter of 2023

Older persons

120. The National Council of the Ageing Person is responsible for actions taken to improve the quality of life of older persons, including:

- The “Family of Affection” (Familia de Cariño) Programme, an initiative to identify trustworthy families in areas where older adults who require care services reside, targeting in particular households composed of single women who can care for older adults and households of retired or unemployed older adults, under which their homes are converted into “Homes of Affection” where the Government supports them through comprehensive programs for the care of older adults. A total of 274 families have taken part in the programme
- The award of solidarity pensions for older adults, payable monthly for life and equivalent to 60 per cent of the public sector minimum wage. From August 2020 to date, 52,825 such pensions have been granted
- Implementation of the “Interns with Wisdom” (Pasantes con Sabiduría) programme, which promotes entrepreneurship and productive living through internships in public and private institutions through which the knowledge and wisdom of older adults can be passed on to the young. In 2022, 293,988 persons took part

Children: protection against exploitation (Recommendations 94.92 and 94.165)

121. Article 56.1 of the Dominican Constitution declares the elimination of child labour to be a matter of supreme national interest, bringing the text of the Constitution into line with widely accepted positions and ratified international instruments on the elimination of child labour.

122. The Ministry of Labour, through its Directorate for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour and in conjunction with other actors in the system, has taken the following measures to prevent and eliminate child labour, including its worst forms:

- The “Changing attitudes: against child labour” campaign, under which promotional materials such as baseball caps, t-shirts, pens, flyers and brochures about national and international legislation on child labour were produced or published

- Four stories for children written to raise awareness among children between 7 and 12 years of age
- Development of the DAR-CE (describe, analyse, reflect-commit, evaluate) method, a cascade training method based on observation and evaluation that helps to drive collective change in ideas and practices surrounding child labour.

123. The Inter-institutional Commission against the Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, composed of representatives of more than 20 government and non-governmental institutions and international organizations including UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO) International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, is also involved in this work.

124. The findings of the 2019 National Multipurpose Household Survey revealed that, in the Dominican Republic, 3.8 per cent of children and adolescents were engaged in child labour, attesting to a reduction in the general indicator, from 6.7 per cent in the 2014 Household Survey, following the application of the new methodology.

125. According to figures for the year to August 2022, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling registered 10 victims of these offenses under 18 years of age.

Persons with disabilities (Recommendations 94.169, 94.170 and 94.171)

126. The National Development Strategy has four strategic focuses, which together define the country's development model. The second focus is to build a society of equal rights and opportunities where education, health care, decent housing and quality basic services are guaranteed and reducing poverty and social inequality is a priority. This second focus encompasses persons with disabilities.

127. More specifically, the National Development Strategy entails a commitment to guarantee a universal and sustainable social security system to cover the risks associated with old age, disability and longevity. Another aim is to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, promoting their economic and social inclusion and protecting those in situations of vulnerability. Specific actions have included the development of comprehensive mechanisms and services that facilitate the educational and social integration of persons with disabilities, promoting the development of their human potential, including through the use of information technology and new communication tools within a framework of equity and social justice.

128. Legislative advances include the adoption of Act No. 34-23, on support, inclusion and protection for persons with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), published in Official Gazette No. 11109 of 7 June 2023. The purpose of this Act is to regulate the provision of support and protection for persons with ASD and provide for their full and effective inclusion in society through measures to protect and guarantee their rights and ensure that their needs are met.

129. Article 51 of the General Health Act establishes that: "Persons affected by a mental disorder may request that one or more persons of their choice are present during the procedure followed to obtain their consent. The persons selected by the person being treated may be any of those with whom he or she is associated in addition to any of those already established in articles 54 and following."

Migrants (Recommendations 94.174, 94.177 and 94.182)

130. The Dominican State has an extensive constitutional framework related to the fundamental rights of all persons and the principle of non-discrimination is included within the set of fundamental guarantees applicable to all persons in the country.

131. Since August 2020, the Dominican Government has focused its foreign policy on promoting and defending human rights and democratic values, participating in multilateral and bilateral forums in order to raise international awareness of the various situations in which human rights are violated.

132. Under the leadership of the Dominican Republic, an international consensus has been achieved regarding the situation in Haiti, its neighbouring country, and resolutions on assistance for Haiti have been brought before the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly.

133. At the regional level, the Dominican Government has spearheaded the Alliance for Development in Democracy, an informal forum for dialogue and strategic coordination to promote economic growth within a framework of democracy, human rights and respect for the Sustainable Development Goals that is composed of Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Panama.

134. Through the various legal tools existing in both national and international law, protection for people in situations of mobility is ensured on an ongoing basis, as enshrined in article 46 of the Constitution, concerning freedom of transit and the right to seek asylum in the country.

135. Applications for asylum are made through the National Refugee Commission, the national body with exclusive authority to make decisions on applications for recognition of refugee status in application of the provisions of the Refugee Convention, the Protocol on Refugees and the Decree establishing the National Refugee Commission and its regulations.

Human rights defenders (Recommendation 94.85)

136. An institutional, educational radio programme entitled *Así es el Defensor del Pueblo* explains to the general public what the Ombudsman does and provides information about the work of the Ombudsman's Office. The programme looks at human rights, fundamental rights and responsibilities, good public governance, and the social and democratic rule of law. Newspapers, social networks, banners and posters are also used to raise public awareness.

137. The Dominican Republic enjoys considerable sociopolitical stability for the region. International indicators place the country in forty-third position, out of 180 countries, in the World Press Freedom Index, with a score of 71.88 in 2023, and in eighty-third position, out of 163 countries analysed, in the Global Peace Index, an improvement on its position in 2022, when it was ranked eighty-eighth. The country scored 2,019 points in the latter index, which is published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, improving its score relative to 2022, when it obtained 2,022 points.

138. The Worldwide Governance Indicators for the Dominican Republic also improved. The country moved up from the forty-second percentile in 2018 to the fifty-first in 2022, with the greatest improvements evident in the indicators for control of corruption, government effectiveness and rule of law. This socioeconomic and political stability attests to the existence of a situation of rule of law that facilitates the work and protects the rights of human rights defenders.