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National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*

Mauritania

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Introduction

1. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania hereby submits its national report under the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council.

I. Process for the preparation of the report

2. This report is the result of consultations between the Government, the National Assembly, the National Human Rights Commission, the national mechanism for the prevention of torture, the National Observatory on the Rights of Women and Girls, civil society organizations, the United Nations system and other social, technical and financial partners.

3. It was drafted in accordance with the guidelines set out in Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21 on general guidelines for the preparation of information under the universal periodic review. It reflects the Government's commitment to meeting its international commitments.

4. Mauritania accepted 201 of the recommendations made at the end of the third cycle in January 2021. That same year, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society conducted a campaign to raise awareness about the recommendations and in 2024 it organized a midpoint review.

5. The Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), has developed a national strategy for the promotion and protection of human rights, accompanied by an operational plan that incorporates the accepted recommendations of the third cycle of the universal periodic review, which was validated during several consultation workshops that brought together all relevant stakeholders. This strategy was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 27 December 2023.

6. The report is divided into the following sections: (i) development of the legal and institutional framework; (ii) developments in the promotion and protection of human rights; (iii) status of implementation of accepted recommendations; (iv) achievements, good practices, difficulties and constraints; (v) priorities, initiatives and commitments; and (vi) expectations and needs in terms of technical and financial assistance.

A. Development of the legal and institutional framework

Legal framework

7. The national legal framework for the promotion and protection of human rights has developed both quantitatively and qualitatively over the period under review, with the adoption of several laws and regulations that consolidate the rule of law, democratic governance, citizen participation and the protection of fundamental rights. The main legal instruments adopted include:

- Organic Act No. 2023-014 on the Election of Deputies
- Organic Act No. 2023-012 on the Election of Deputies Representing Mauritians Residing Abroad
- Organic Act No. 2023-011 on the Regions
- Act No. 2025-023 on the National Anti-Corruption Agency
- Act No. 2025-022 on Asset Disclosure
- Act No. 2025-021, the Anti-Corruption Act
- Act No. 2025-011, the Civil Status Code
- Act No. 2025-010 on Political Parties

- Act No. 2025-006, the Investment Code
- Act No. 2024-046, the National Police Regulations Act
- Act No. 2024-039 establishing the Specialized Court to Combat Slavery, Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants
- Act No. 2024-038 on Criminal Provisions relating to Immigration
- Act No. 2024-015 on the Health Insurance Scheme
- Act No. 2024-013 on Freedom of the Press
- Act No. 2024-012 on Professional Journalists
- Act No. 2023-031 on Solid Waste Management
- Act No. 2022-023, the Framework Act on the National Education System
- Act No. 2021-004 on Associations, Foundations and Networks
- Decree No. 2025-074 on the establishment, organization and functioning of the Higher Institute of the Judiciary and Legal Professionals
- Decree No. 2024-154 establishing the management arrangements and procedures for accessing the Digital Portal for Public Services (Khidmaty)
- Decree No. 2024-029 on the status of art professionals in Mauritania
- Decree No. 2023-142 establishing the National System for Preparedness and Response to Emergencies and Natural Disasters
- Decree No. 2023-141 establishing the National Observatory for the Environment and the Coastline
- Decree No. 2023-092 establishing the National Observatory on the Rights of Women and Girls
- Decree No. 2023-085 establishing the Training Centre for Women's Empowerment
- Decree No. 2023-071 on the establishment, organization and functioning of the State Judicial Agency
- Act No. 2022-102 establishing the National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants
- Decree No. 2022-063 on the application in Mauritania of international conventions on refugees
- Order No. 1246 concerning the intersectoral technical committee responsible for preparing reports and following up on recommendations
- Order No. 0066/2022, which lists hazardous types of work prohibited for children

Institutional framework

8. The institutional framework for human rights has undergone several changes, including the creation of the National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants, the Central Office for Combating Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons, the National Observatory on the Rights of Women and Girls and the National Health Solidarity Fund and the reform of the Specialized Court to Combat Slavery, Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants.

1. *National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants*

9. As part of efforts to combat human trafficking and protect victims, the National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants is responsible for coordinating public policies to combat these crimes, in collaboration with institutional actors and civil society. The National Authority is involved in identifying and providing support to victims. It monitors their cases, manages a specialized database and develops national and international cooperation. The establishment of the National Authority

reflects the authorities' commitment to strengthening the institutional response to these crimes, while placing the protection of victims, particularly the most vulnerable, at the centre of its actions.

2. *National Observatory for the Rights of Women and Girls*

10. The National Observatory for the Rights of Women and Girls was created as part of the State's commitment to human rights and gender equality. The Observatory is an independent mechanism, with administrative and financial autonomy. It is responsible for independently monitoring of the situation of women and girls, making recommendations, evaluating public policies, producing data and contributing to international reports. It is governed by a national advisory council comprising 23 members representing various sectors, chaired by a woman with the rank of minister appointed by presidential decree. This initiative illustrates the authorities' determination to respond to the recommendations of international mechanisms, notably the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and to consolidate gender-sensitive governance based on social justice, inclusion and equity.

3. *Specialized Court to Combat Slavery, Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants*

11. A specialized court with national jurisdiction to hear cases of slavery, trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants has been set up in Nouakchott-Ouest. The court has two judicial formations – a collegiate panel or single judge. Investigating judges are appointed as required, and there is a specialized prosecutor. Cases of slavery, trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling punishable by less than 5 years' imprisonment are heard by a single judge, while more serious offences are heard by a panel of three judges. Specific provisions are in place if minors are involved, including the use of social assessments and the application of the Child Protection Code. Cases may be brought before the court through various channels, including complaints from victims. Unless there is a reasoned exception, court hearings are held in the administrative or municipal district in which the offences were committed.

4. *Central Office for Combating the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons*

12. The Central Office for Combating the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons is a specialized investigative unit that was established in response to the strong political will to provide the country with an operational mechanism capable of dismantling criminal networks and protecting victims. In the framework of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Office plays a central role in fulfilling the country's international obligations, in particular under the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

5. *National Health Solidarity Fund*

13. As part of the Government's policy of social justice and improved access to healthcare, the National Health Solidarity Fund was created to support the implementation of universal health coverage. The Fund aims to protect the most vulnerable populations, particularly those excluded from conventional insurance schemes, by offering them low-cost, solidarity-based health insurance. Its objectives are to reduce financial barriers to healthcare access, extend health coverage, strengthen basic healthcare facilities and promote prevention. Through its local offices and partnerships with local authorities, civil society and international donors, the Fund works to ensure that healthcare is accessible to all, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 3 and the commitments undertaken by Mauritania in relation to economic and social rights.

B. Developments in the promotion and protection of human rights

14. On 27 December 2023, the National Strategy for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2023–2028 was adopted as part of the presidential programme *Mon Ambition pour la Patrie* (My Ambition for the Homeland). The Strategy, the first of its kind in Mauritania, aims to strengthen the rule of law, ensure social justice and promote effective rights for all, in a context of political stability, reform and governance.

15. Based on solid national and international legal foundations, the Strategy is inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals and follows a transformative approach focused on equality and non-discrimination. Structured around three key values – social justice, social progress and guaranteeing rights – the Strategy comprises 17 strategic areas and 145 concrete targets for action, covering health, education, women’s and children’s rights, the fight against trafficking in persons and institution-building.

16. Implementation of the Strategy is coordinated by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society, with support from the Office of the Prime Minister and a coordination committee. A digital platform enables real-time monitoring. By 2024, 42 per cent of the planned actions had been carried out, in the fields of health, water, education and anti-trafficking.

17. The Strategy reflects a strong political will to build a society that is inclusive, equitable and respectful of human rights. It calls for the mobilization of all stakeholders to make human rights a tangible reality.

18. In partnership with OHCHR, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society has set up a database – the National Recommendations Tracking Database – to track recommendations made by international mechanisms. This strategic tool enables systematic monitoring of the country’s obligations arising from the universal periodic review, the treaty bodies and special procedures. Thanks to this platform, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society ensures centralized archiving, thematic analysis and real-time monitoring of the status of implementation of recommendations, thus facilitating inter-agency coordination and the preparation of national reports.

C. Civil and political rights (recommendations 130.120, 130.121 and 130.122)

19. Following the last review under the third cycle of the universal periodic review, the Government held consultations with political parties on the inclusive and consensual preparation of the 2023 legislative, regional and municipal elections. At the end of the consultation process, in which 24 of the 25 political parties took part, agreement was reached on the following points:

- The adoption of a one-round proportional representation system for regional and municipal council elections.
- For the first time, the election of deputies representing Mauritanians living abroad by direct universal suffrage.
- The introduction of a national list reserved for young people, with 11 seats, divided between the sexes, and with at least 2 seats reserved for persons with disabilities.
- The organization of an administrative census for electoral purposes by the Independent National Electoral Commission in consultation with the Government and political parties.

20. Legislative, regional and municipal elections were organized in 2023, and presidential elections were held in 2024. These elections took place in a spirit of transparency and healthy competition, according to observers from the African Union and the European Union. The results were announced by the Independent National Electoral Commission and accepted by the candidates.

21. Act No. 2025-010 aims to reform the legal framework for political parties in Mauritania by making substantial amendments to the 1991 ordinance. It is part of a drive to modernize the political landscape, strengthen democracy and enhance regulation of political parties.

22. In terms of civil society organizations, there are 8,972 national associations, 28 foundations, 10 networks, 40 associations, 81 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), over 18,000 cooperatives, 52 trade union federations and over 400 trade unions.

23. Act No. 2021-004 on Associations, Foundations and Networks facilitates the registration of associations and takes account of the international conventions to which Mauritania has adhered, guaranteeing the exercise of freedom of association and freedom of expression. The main innovations introduced by the Act include:

- The introduction of a declaratory system in place of a system of prior authorization.
- The relaxation of provisions relating to binding controls.
- The introduction of provisions enabling NGOs to benefit from public, private and foreign funding and technical support.
- The financial, accounting and tax regime for associations.

24. Regional civil society platforms have been set up in the capitals of the wilayahs, focusing on the six thematic groups into which the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are divided. Capacity-building programmes for civil society organizations have been stepped up, and a national strategy for promoting civil society has been adopted.

25. With regard to the administration of justice, the National Strategy for Access to Justice 2019–2029 has introduced high-quality services that provide access to justice tailored to the needs of litigants and the socioeconomic context.

26. In 2023, a national conference on justice was held under the theme “What kind of justice do we want?”, on the basis of which the National Document on Justice Reform and Development was drafted and is currently being implemented. The implementation of this document is steered by the High Commission for the Reform and Development of the Justice System, chaired by the President of the Republic. This is an ambitious five-year structural reform programme.

27. The material conditions of life in detention have been improved. The construction of new prisons in Riyadh (Nouakchott-Sud) and Kiffa, and the refurbishment of all other establishments, have put an end to prison overcrowding. Budget allocations for the care of prisoners have increased significantly. The operating budget of the prison administration has increased from 64,115,418 ouguiyas (UM) in 2020 to UM 143,999,221 in 2025, an increase of 124 per cent. The hygiene and sanitation of facilities are ensured, and sentence adjustments are made for the benefit of convicted offenders.

28. Programmes to support the social and professional reintegration of prisoners are implemented, such as training and production workshops, such as baking, welding and sewing. A total of 186 inmates work in these workshops. Some have achieved convincing results, integrating well into society after their release. The follow-up of these individuals after their release is carried out in partnership with NGOs such as Fondation Noura, Caritas-Mauritanie, Association de lutte contre la dépendance and Association mauritanienne pour la santé de la mère et de l'enfant.

29. A programme for the rehabilitation of young people in prison is being developed in partnership with the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society and the relevant ministries, notably the Ministry of Vocational Training and the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Employment and Sports, and the General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion (Taazour), in collaboration with OHCHR, to implement skills training in trades that best meet market demand.

30. The commitment of Mauritania to upholding the right of peoples to peace and security at the national and international levels is reflected by the country's participation in United

Nations peacekeeping missions in Central Africa and the counter-terrorism and anti-crime efforts made in the Sahel.

31. Support for the long-term maintenance of freedom of the press and the development and professionalization of public media was bolstered through the following:

- The extension of rural radio stations and FM service and the establishment of regional stations of Mauritania National Television.
- Public backing of the private press through subsidies and coverage of 85 per cent of the printing costs by the Government Printing House for newspapers that meet the required ethical and technical profession criteria.

32. Action in the area of civil status is being strengthened through the removal of technical obstacles that prevent access by all Mauritians to civil status documents, and enrolment campaigns are organized. The 2023 campaign resulted in the enrolment of 66,000 citizens, many of them from the diaspora. In addition, the Houwiyeti digital application has been set up, enabling holders of national identification numbers to apply for, track and obtain all kinds of secure documents remotely (passports, identity cards, residence cards, civil status certificates), and any other document for which the remote application process has been secured.

33. As part of the fight against corruption, the legal framework is being revised and brought into line with international standards. The laws on the declaration of assets and interests and on the fight against corruption have been updated, and an independent National Anti-Corruption Agency has been established, with broad powers to prevent, investigate and monitor corruption, receive declarations of assets and protect whistle-blowers.

34. The National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2030 has been updated to strengthen governance, transparency and integrity through 10 priority programmes, ranging from transparency in public life to raising ethical standards among national stakeholders. Under Decree No. 010-2024, a national steering committee chaired by the Prime Minister oversees the implementation of this strategy and the action plan resulting from the governance assessment, with operational monitoring undertaken by the Inspectorate General of State.

35. As part of the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons 2020–2022, the legal framework was modernized, stakeholders received training, a mechanism for receiving and processing complaints and a national mechanism for referral and guidance of victims were created.

36. The national prize for human rights and social cohesion was created to recognize initiatives by citizens and associations to promote human rights.

D. Economic, social and cultural rights – general measures of implementation (recommendations 130.167, 130.90 and 130.144)

37. The Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity, adopted as the national reference document for development policy, provides the framework for implementing economic and social policies. It aims to sustainably reduce poverty, foster inclusive growth and promote social equity through the improved distribution of wealth. The implementation of the Strategy is aligned with the country's international commitments, notably the Sustainable Development Goals and the recommendations arising from international and regional human rights mechanisms, in particular those of the universal periodic review.

38. The revitalization of decentralization efforts has achieved significant progress through the following measures:

- The creation of a ministry responsible for decentralization and local development.
- The launch of the Nouakchott City Development Programme, with financing of UM 5 billion from the State budget.
- The implementation of the National Strategy for Decentralization and Local Development.

- The implementation of the Local Economic Development and Community Initiative Programme, which aims to improve the living conditions of the population.

39. In the field of education, for the third year running, the Government has implemented the Republican School project, which aims to guarantee equal opportunities and strengthen social cohesion and national unity by restoring the role of public schools as a forum for the transmission of republican values. In this context, sustained efforts have been made to reinforce school infrastructure, improve teacher training and provide the necessary teaching aids. By 2024, these measures had raised the net primary school enrolment rate to 81 per cent and the retention rate to 83 per cent.

40. A teachers' housing fund has been set up, supported by the allocation of 2,508 social housing units built under the Dari programme, for a total value of over UM 22 billion. In addition, a monthly bonus of UM 20,000 has been allocated to over 4,000 teachers in the sixth year of basic education.

41. The Government is continuing its efforts to improve equitable access to healthcare services through the supply of essential medicines, increased recruitment of medical staff, improved working conditions for healthcare personnel, and the construction and equipping of healthcare facilities. As a result of these measures, the rate of access to healthcare services reached approximately 80 per cent in 2024.

42. Social protection in the area of health has been strengthened following the creation of the National Health Solidarity Fund, which has expanded access to health insurance to nearly 200,000 vulnerable people.

43. The TECHGHIL Agency was established in 2021 to promote youth employment.

44. To reduce poverty and promote social inclusion, the Government has strengthened the role of the General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion through a multi-sectoral approach. The Delegation runs a number of structural programmes in the fields of social protection, health, education, access to drinking water and food security for vulnerable populations. The main achievements between 2020 and 2024 include the following:

- Universal health coverage has been extended to 620,000 citizens in precarious situations, thanks to a health insurance programme that receives funding of over UM 210 million per year.
- Twenty health centres have been built and equipped in remote areas to bring healthcare closer to vulnerable populations.
- Nutritional inputs imported using the government budget save 30,000 children from malnutrition every year.
- Sixty-three schools have been built and equipped in rural and peri-urban areas.
- The National School Meals Programme is supported by an annual contribution of over UM 120 million, guaranteeing daily meals for thousands of pupils from poor households.
- The Zaed programme has enabled 70 drinking water systems to be installed and hydrogeological studies to be carried out in 137 localities, helping to improve access to water for isolated communities.
- Between 2021 and 2023, the cash transfer programme served 88,000 beneficiary families, strengthening the resilience of the poorest households.
- The update of the unified social register, launched in 2021 with 59 teams deployed, has improved the targeting of social interventions and aims to cover the entire national territory by 2025.

II. Implementation of recommendations from previous cycles

Ratification of and accession to international instruments (recommendations 130.5, 130.23, 130.27, 130.33, 130.34, 130.35, 130.36, 130.37 and 130.47)

45. Mauritania has ratified the main human rights treaties, as well as several International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions.

46. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol were ratified in 2012, and the initial report was submitted to the Committee in 2023.

47. Mauritania has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

48. The priority remains the alignment of national legislation with the provisions of the international conventions already ratified by Mauritania. To this end, a special effort is being made to revise and harmonize national laws and regulations.

49. Violence and harassment are already prohibited under national labour legislation, which is revised whenever necessary, either on the initiative of the Government or through dialogue with the social partners. Consideration will be given to ratifying the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) once the above-mentioned harmonization process has been completed.

Cooperation and follow-up with human rights mechanisms (recommendations 130.38, 130.40, 130.41, 130.42, 130.46 and 130.188)

50. The Government has set up a mechanism for selecting eligible candidates for vacant positions on international human rights mechanisms. National figures, including those from civil society, have been elected to international mechanisms such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Migrant Workers, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee against Torture.

51. Within the framework of cooperation with international and regional human rights mechanisms, the following measures have been taken:

- The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society–OHCHR support plan 2024–2025 is currently being implemented.
- The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons visited the country in 2022.
- The Working Group on discrimination against women and girls visited the country in 2023.
- The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants visited the country in September 2025.
- Reviews of initial and periodic reports by treaty bodies, namely the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in 2023 and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2024.
- Participation in the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council and the high-level event commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

52. As part of the country's efforts to meet its international commitments, the following measures have been taken:

- The adoption and implementation of the National Strategy for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2024–2028.
- The adoption and implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons 2020–2022 and 2024–2026.

- The adoption and implementation of the road map for harmonizing national legislation with ratified conventions.
- The adoption and implementation of the National Solidarity and Equity Plan to strengthen social cohesion.
- The adoption of the Strategy for the Advancement of Persons with Disabilities.
- The adoption of the Action Plan for Children without Family Support.

National human rights institution (recommendations 130.59, 130.60 and 130.61)

53. The Government attaches great importance to the role and independence of the National Human Rights Commission. In this context, several specific measures have been taken to ensure that it is fully compliant with the Paris Principles:

- The National Human Rights Commission benefits from a strengthened legal framework and is regulated by an organic law that guarantees its independence, pluralism and financial and administrative autonomy.
- The Commission's human, technical and financial resources have been gradually increased to enable it to effectively fulfil its mandate.
- The fact that the Commission has been accredited with category A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions testifies to its compliance with the Paris Principles and its credibility at the international level.

Equality and non-discrimination (recommendations 130.66, 130.69, 130.70, 130.71, 130.260, 130.49, 130.50, 130.72 and 130.73)

54. The fight against all forms of discrimination and the promotion of equality are central to national human rights policy.

- The Criminalization of Discrimination Act makes discrimination a criminal offence punishable by appropriate penalties and provides effective legal remedies for victims.
- Mauritania is working to harmonize its domestic law with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in particular through legislative reforms and public policy measures.
- A programme to modernize the civil registry has been implemented, facilitating birth registration and reducing administrative obstacles, particularly for vulnerable populations and minority groups.
- The National Plan to Strengthen Social Cohesion is being implemented to strengthen inclusion, cultural diversity and the fight against discrimination.
- Specific measures are taken to ensure the full participation in social and economic life of minorities, children from vulnerable groups and persons with disabilities.
- In the areas of education and culture, awareness-raising campaigns are conducted to combat sociocultural prejudice and promote the values of tolerance and harmonious coexistence.

Right to development and an adequate standard of living (recommendations 130.84, 130.157, 130.158, 130.86, 130.87, 130.88, 130.152, 130.153, 130.154, 130.155, 130.159, 130.160, 130.161 and 130.162)

55. The General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion is a key component in the national strategy for social protection, cohesion and economic inclusion. Its flagship programmes have led to major advances for vulnerable populations.

56. The Tekavoul programme has distributed UM 6.404 billion to poor households. Between August 2024 and August 2025, regular cash transfers covered all wilayahs and benefited 136,000 households, with an implementation rate of 98 per cent and at a cost of

UM 2,261,722,500. Short-term transfers, deployed in 22 *moughataas* (departments) in six wilayahs, reached 192,998 individuals for a total of UM 318,662,150.

57. The El Maouna scheme benefited 58,241 people in the two Hodhs, at a cost of UM 109,400,000. Other transfers, targeting particularly vulnerable people (such as persons with serious illnesses or affected by disasters), reached 37,200 individuals at a cost of UM 30,673,325, despite an implementation rate of only 51 per cent. At the same time, social advancement initiatives benefited 98,297 households for a budget of UM 4.4 million, while economic inclusion activities reached 3,388 households in three regions, with an implementation rate of 98 per cent and at a cost of UM 38,203,000. The same programme also benefits over 110,000 vulnerable households through the National Health Insurance Fund/Taazour universal health insurance scheme. According to an assessment by the World Bank, this programme has helped reduce poverty by around 2 per cent.

58. The Social Register is a national targeting tool. It is a whole-of-government database that is updated on a regular basis and guarantees the transparency and efficiency of public policies.

59. The Temwine programme supports food security and the purchasing power of 131,550 households by supplying subsidized shops. The programme has an implementation rate of 93 per cent and an overall cost of UM 1,135,472,836. The introduction of village food security stocks has far exceeded its initial objectives, with 812 set up at a cost of UM 64,500,000 compared with the 150 initially planned, i.e. an increase of 541.33 per cent.

60. The Albarka – Taamir hub has strengthened self-employment and economic inclusion through the development of income-generating activities and support for agropastoral sectors, with the construction of 17 large dams, while promoting social cohesion and community solidarity.

61. The Cheyla programme has improved access to basic social services. In the field of education, 120 schools were built in seven poor *moughataas* of Nouakchott in 2024, at a cost of UM 800,695,661, and another 24 schools in the interior of the country, at a cost of UM 335,432,759. The construction of 1,912 classrooms is under way. In the health sector, hundreds of health centres and points have been built and equipped, and hundreds of drinking water supply systems have been installed in rural areas. In the energy sector, 11 solar power plants have been put into service in five wilayahs, and another is under way. A further nine villages are in the process of being connected to the national network, while in parallel two local networks are being constructed in Rosso. The total budget allocated to this component is UM 748 million.

62. The Dari programme has facilitated access to social housing by building new units in several towns.

Human rights and the environment (recommendations 130.81, 130.82 and 130.83)

63. Cognizant of its vulnerability to the effects of climate change, Mauritania has taken important steps to strengthen its institutional framework and integrate the climate dimension into its public policies, notably the Environmental Code.

64. To ensure an inclusive approach, the country has identified as priorities the development of appropriate policies and legislation, the funding of adaptation and mitigation projects, the strengthening of institutional and local capacities, and the active participation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and local communities in decision-making processes. In this context, multisectoral working groups have been set up, and the Climate and Green Economy Directorate has been created within the Ministry of the Environment, tasked with coordinating national strategies, integrating climate resilience into development planning and piloting community adaptation programmes.

65. Mauritania regularly takes part in the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where it presents its commitments. It has submitted its first updated nationally determined contribution plan covering the energy, agriculture, forestry and waste sectors. The second nationally determined contribution implementation plan, the fifth national communication and the biennial transparency report are currently being drafted.

66. Two studies were carried out in 2024 on corporate social responsibility and the impact of the extractive industries on the realization of economic and social rights.

Rule of law, fight against impunity and prohibition of torture and ill-treatment (recommendations 130.101, 130.106, 130.110, 130.111, 130.118 and 130.119)

67. Monitoring of detention is carried out by the bodies authorized for this purpose. The public prosecutor or his or her deputy regularly inquire about the conditions of police custody facilities and the people held there.

68. Presidents of indictment chambers, prosecutors general, investigating judges, sentence enforcement judges and public prosecutors regularly visit the prisons in their jurisdictions.

69. The National Human Rights Commission and the national preventive mechanism can conduct visits to all places where a person may be deprived of liberty at any time, including unannounced visits.

70. All prisoners may ask to speak to judges and inspection officials during their prison visits, without any staff member present. In the event of an allegation or complaint of an act of torture, the competent authority is obliged to initiate an investigation systematically to examine the case for the purpose of initiating criminal proceedings.

71. The perpetrators of acts of torture during interrogation are systematically brought to justice and punished in accordance with the seriousness of the offence. In case RP101/2023, four civil servants who had committed acts of torture were sentenced to life imprisonment and one accomplice to 18 months' imprisonment. All of these officers have been dismissed from service.

Conditions of detention (recommendations 130.102 and 130.103)

72. The reform of the criminal justice and prison systems is one of the focus areas of the action plan for implementing the national justice reform and development document, which emerged from the national justice conference held in 2022 and 2023. This focus area includes the creation of a prison administration authority, a review of the regulatory framework for prisons, and the construction and renovation of prison infrastructure up to standard.

73. The capacities of the members of the National Guard responsible for prison security and surveillance, and of prison administration staff, are regularly reinforced during training and awareness-raising workshops organized by the administration in collaboration with its main partners. The prison administration has organized several awareness-raising sessions for members of the National Guard on the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). Over two hundred officers, non-commissioned officers and agents of the National Guard took part in a four-day workshop on respect for human rights in prisons, organized in partnership with the General Staff of the National Guard. A guide to best practice and brochures are distributed to prison staff. Two workshops on respect for human rights in prison were organized for 60 participants in Kiffa and Aleg, in partnership with OHCHR. The project to support the rehabilitation of the justice system organized a seminar for 40 participants in Nouakchott. A number of prison administration and security staff have undertaken study trips to Algeria, Morocco, the United States of America, France, Tunisia and other countries and have participated in relevant conferences such as the biennial conferences of the African Correctional Services Association.

Administration of justice and fair trial (recommendation 130.104)

74. An ambitious five-year structural reform of the judicial system has been launched. Coordinated by the High Commission for Justice Reform, it aims to establish an independent, efficient and accessible judicial system that complies with international standards. This reform is structured around six strategic areas: improving the status of justice professionals, facilitating access to justice, improving the efficiency and transparency of the judicial system, reforming the criminal justice and prison systems, the digital transition and developing judicial infrastructure.

75. A precise timetable for implementation during the period 2024–2028 has been drawn up, with performance indicators and multi-sector mobilization. Ongoing projects include the revision of Code of Criminal Procedure, the Narcotics Code, the Code of Civil Procedure, and the Commercial and Administrative Code, and the drafting of codes of ethics for judges, court officials and the legal and judicial professions.

76. The Higher Institute of the Judiciary and Legal Professions has been established and will be responsible, among other things, for the exclusive training of judges, court clerks, prison officers and child protection officers.

Trafficking in persons and contemporary forms of slavery (recommendations 130.62, 130.74, 130.105, 130.113, 130.114, 130.129, 130.130, 130.131, 130.132, 130.133, 130.134, 130.135, 130.136, 130.137, 130.138, 130.139, 130.140, 130.142, 130.143, 130.145, 130.146, 130.147, 130.149, 130.150, 130.58 and 130.89)

77. A series of ambitious measures is being taken to combat trafficking in persons, slavery and similar practices. The adoption of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons 2020–2022 made it possible to structure a multisectoral response, including awareness-raising, institutional capacity-building and criminal prosecution. Within this framework, 17 training workshops have been held for judicial and security authorities and civil society, 6 analytical studies have been conducted on contemporary forms of trafficking, and the National Authority for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants has been established. The national referral mechanism and the fund for aid and assistance to trafficking victims have been set up, along with a toll-free number (1916) to receive complaints and reports.

78. Collaboration with international partners, notably OHCHR, ILO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Organization for Migration, has enabled further reflection on the implementation of Acts No. 2015-031 and 2020-017 and the adoption of an operational road map. Joint interministerial circular No. 104–2021 was issued to ensure strict enforcement of the law by judges and law enforcement officers. Nineteen national awareness campaigns were conducted, and short films were produced to educate the public about the risks of trafficking, forced labour and discrimination.

79. An exemplary legislative arsenal has been adopted to combat slavery and trafficking in persons, accompanied by an institutional monitoring and coordination mechanism comprising the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society and the Public Prosecution Service. A specialized unit monitors cases involving human rights violations, particularly those relating to slavery. As a result, 95 people have been sentenced to prison terms and 21 to suspended sentences, 39 have been acquitted and 2 have had their cases dismissed.

80. The Ministry of Justice and its partners actively participate in awareness campaigns, commemorations and initiatives such as the national caravan against slavery and human trafficking. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Humanitarian Action and Relations with Civil Society has played a significant role in documenting cases, training 390 NGOs in monitoring techniques and acting as a civil party in court proceedings. Mauritania asserted its regional leadership by organizing the subregional conference on slavery in the Sahel, placing efforts to combat this practice at the top of the agenda for the States members of the Group of Five for the Sahel.

81. In addition to criminal provisions, the decree on the protection of victims and the order on the referral mechanism provide for the identification and protection of and assistance to victims to be coordinated and ensure that they are referred to the appropriate services for support.

82. The Specialized Court to Combat Slavery, Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants receives sufficient resources from the State budget to ensure its operations. In addition to the cost of the hearings, which are covered by the budget allocation for criminal, correctional and police proceedings, appropriate means of transport are made available to the members of the Court.

Rights related to marriage and the family (recommendations 130.163, 130.164, 130.165 and 130.166)

83. Article 10 of the Constitution states that the family is the basic unit of society. The family is founded on marriage, by which a man and a woman unite for the purpose of a lasting conjugal life.

84. Family policy is adopted to address family issues and meet the aspirations of families, in line with societal values and development requirements. A central department is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

85. The National Programme for the Promotion and Stability of the Family (Ravah) has been revitalized. A comprehensive action plan has been developed based on the reality of Mauritanian families. It identifies the challenges they face and the factors that hinder family cohesion, as well as proposing measures to promote the family and enable it to fulfil its social and educational roles.

86. As part of this policy, the Nevagha child maintenance collection fund has been established. Family dispute units handled 8,250 household disputes in 2024.

Right to health (recommendations 130.168, 130.169 and 130.170)

87. The National Solidarity and Response Plan was implemented from the outset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and helped mitigate the effects of the health crisis on vulnerable populations. In addition to the distribution of food and cash transfers, and exemptions from certain taxes, the Plan strengthened health infrastructure, while paying particular attention to older persons, through targeted health and social protection measures, including free healthcare, priority vaccination and support for food security.

88. Hospital capacity has been enhanced by recruiting medical staff, setting up screening and vaccination centres throughout the country and launching large-scale awareness campaigns.

Right to education (recommendations 130.176, 130.178, 130.179, 130.180, 130.183, 130.184, 130.185, 130.186, 130.187, 130.189, 130.190, 130.191 and 130.238)

89. Through the Sub-Saharan Africa Women's Empowerment and the Demographic Dividend project, the Ministry of National Education and Reform of the Education System has undertaken a number of pivotal measures, such as the redistribution of over 40,000 textbooks to third-year secondary school classes, the payment of 48,619 hours of additional allowances for exam classes, the awarding of 12,000 school scholarships to girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, the rehabilitation and equipping of 57 latrine blocks in targeted secondary schools, the updating of 2,000 electronic tablets and the dissemination of 15 teaching booklets and 37 new course books covering core subjects.

90. The adoption of Act No. 2024-023 on the national education system extended compulsory schooling to the end of basic education, making primary and lower secondary education free and compulsory for all children aged 6 to 15. Specific measures are taken to ensure access to education for children with disabilities, through the adaptation of school curricula and the development of a national strategy for the professional integration and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, whose right to education is guaranteed under the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act.

91. The quality of teaching has been improved by modernizing initial training and standardizing the curricula of teacher training colleges, which are now based on a modular system with a stronger focus on academic and professional aspects. Access to teacher training colleges now requires a minimum grade in the future language of instruction. Ongoing training needs are identified and sessions organized accordingly. A digital platform is currently being developed to facilitate self-study and distance learning. The education system is based on the pillars of quality, governance and educational provision, which has led to the recruitment of 10,000 teachers.

92. Thanks to the Sub-Saharan Africa Women's Empowerment and the Demographic Dividend project and national initiatives, 325 safe spaces have been created, benefiting more

than 18,000 young girls. A further 5,914 girls have received vocational training in 16 fields at the Training Centre for Women's Empowerment.

Human rights education, training and awareness-raising (recommendations 130.177, 130.181 and 130.182)

93. Several curricula have been revised to enable the gradual integration of human rights concepts into the education system. To this end, an agreement has been signed on the inclusion of human rights education modules in school curricula, in order to raise awareness among pupils from an early age of the values of dignity, equality and responsible citizenship.

94. Partnership agreements have been signed to strengthen human rights training for students at the National School of Youth and Sports, the National School of Administration, Journalism and the Legal Service, and the National Police Academy.

Participation of women in political and public life (recommendations 130.231, 130.232, 130.233, 130.234 and 130.235)

95. Efforts have continued to strengthen the participation of women and marginalized groups in political and public life. The legal framework has been consolidated to ensure better representation of women in executive, legislative and decision-making bodies. In this respect, specific measures, notably the introduction of quotas and the promotion of equal opportunities, have gradually increased the representation of women in elected and appointed bodies.

96. The Government remains committed to maintaining and strengthening measures to promote women's access to positions of responsibility, to pursuing reforms and programmes aimed at increasing their representation in executive, legislative and decision-making bodies, to working towards their empowerment and active participation in political and public life, to continuously improving the quota for women's representation, and to redoubling efforts to ensure their inclusive participation.

Violence against women (recommendations 130.51, 130.52, 130.54, 130.56, 130.108, 130.109, 130.192, 130.193, 130.194, 130.195, 130.196, 130.197, 130.198, 130.199, 130.201, 130.202, 130.203, 130.204, 130.205, 130.207, 130.208, 130.209, 130.210, 130.211, 130.212, 130.213, 130.214, 130.215, 130.216, 130.217, 130.218, 130.219, 130.63, 130.67, 130.68, 130.156, 130.206, 130.226 and 130.200)

97. The fight against gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation and child marriage, is a priority under the national policy for the protection and promotion of women's and girls' rights.

98. A robust national machinery has been put in place, which comprises:

- The National Committee to Combat Gender-based Violence, responsible for coordinating multisectoral actions
- The National Commission to Combat Child Marriage, which works to prevent and eradicate this practice

99. Measures to combat female genital mutilation are provided for in the action plan under the National Strategy on Female Genital Mutilation.

100. To prevent violence against women and girls, annual activities are organized jointly by the justice, Islamic affairs and health sectors with partners from civil society, including training for stakeholders and support for victims, the opening of reception and guidance centres for victims and the provision of social, psychological and legal support.

101. The "Karama" draft law on combating violence against women and girls has been the subject of several consultations with civil society, including the Fondation des Oulémas de Mauritanie (Mauritanian Ulama Foundation). The bill, which covers all forms of violence against women and girls, defines rape in line with international standards.

102. Important initiatives have been introduced to combat impunity for violations committed by public officials. Laws criminalizing torture and slavery have been adopted, and a number of officials have been handed heavy penalties and exemplary disciplinary sanctions.

103. Inflicting or attempting to inflict injury to the genitals of a girl by infibulation, desensitization or any other means constitutes an offence.

Persons with disabilities: independence and inclusion (recommendations 130.254, 130.257, 130.258, 130.255, 130.256 and 130.259)

104. The National Strategy for the Inclusion and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in 2024. It is designed to address the priorities of persons with disabilities, who account for over 10 per cent of the population according to the fifth general population and housing census. A major focus of this strategy is on social protection to compensate for the costs associated with disability as a factor in perpetuating poverty, with the aim of directly contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1.

105. The following social protection and financial measures have been taken for the benefit of persons with disabilities:

- An annual increase in the budget for health insurance for persons with disabilities and cash transfers for the benefit of children with multiple disabilities.
- The implementation of programmes to empower persons with disabilities.
- The establishment of a ministerial platform to facilitate access to the services of the Ministry for Social Welfare.
- The signature of a health insurance agreement covering several thousand persons with disabilities.
- Educational support for children with disabilities under the National Education Sector Development Programme.
- The opening of branches of the centre for the education and social development of children with disabilities.
- The training of 90 trainers in autism, Braille and sign language.
- The establishment of El Ousra television station, which helps raise public awareness and promote education for children with disabilities.
- The issuance of disability cards for persons with disabilities.
- The establishment of specific cash transfer programmes and scholarships for children with disabilities.

Children (recommendations 130.239, 130.240, 130.241, 130.242, 130.243, 130.244, 130.246, 130.247, 130.248, 130.53, 130.55, 130.245, 130.249, 130.250 and 130.253)

106. In accordance with the Labour Code and the Child Protection Code, Order No. 0066 of 17 January 2022 was adopted, prohibiting the employment of children under 18 years of age in work that poses a risk to their physical or mental health. The Order lists hazardous types of work prohibited for children in agriculture, livestock farming, fishing, mining, construction and public works, and in informal sector activities such as domestic work and begging. This list is revised every four years in consultation with the social partners.

107. The Second Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour (2022–2026), supported by the ILO, takes account of the recommendations of the Durban Call to Action on the Elimination of Child Labour of May 2022, the impacts of COVID-19 on child labour, the strengthening of national and regional institutions and the mobilization of the necessary resources.

108. The country has aligned itself with the recommendations of the Nouadhibou tripartite declaration of 15 July 2022 and studies by the ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) showing that social protection reduces child labour and encourages school enrolment.

Women's empowerment (recommendations 130.85, 130.221, 130.222, 130.223, 130.224, 130.225, 130.227, 130.228, 130.229 and 130.230)

109. Various laws and strategies aim to promote women's participation in public life and reduce gender inequality.

110. The development of social security and positive discrimination in favour of women remain at the heart of the agenda of the General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion. Over 90 per cent of the beneficiaries of the Tekavoul programme are women. The transfer is made to the person who is primarily responsible for the children's upbringing. Rural women feel that there is transparency and justice, in addition to assistance that alleviates their suffering and daily difficulties.

111. With each cash transfer, beneficiaries are invited to social advancement sessions, which help them to change their mentality and habits.

112. Social advancement sessions cover topics such as breastfeeding, nutrition, medical check-ups, hygiene, sanitation, development, women's and children's rights, and anything else that affects people's daily lives or can improve their practices and have a positive impact on their lives.

Migrants (recommendations 130.262, 130.263, 130.264 and 130.265)

113. The employment of male and female domestic workers is regulated by Order No. 797. The labour inspectorate provides employees and employers with model contract forms for domestic work, which must be signed and registered for the employment relationship to be considered valid.

114. The employer must ensure that the domestic worker undergoes a medical examination before he or she is recruited. The minimum wages corresponding to domestic worker categories are equal to or higher than the guaranteed interprofessional minimum wage and are set freely by the parties.

115. A domestic worker recruited outside the place of employment or moved from that place by the employer during performance of the contract has the right to payment of travel expenses.

Refugees and asylum-seekers (recommendations 130.261 and 130.266)

116. Mauritania has strengthened its legal and institutional framework for the protection of refugees, in line with its international commitments. The adoption of Decree No. 2022-063 brought national legislation into line with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, while enshrining procedural guarantees, the right of appeal and the principle of non-refoulement.

117. The National Advisory Commission on Refugees, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and partner NGOs, is responsible for assessing asylum applications, protecting refugees and stateless persons, and finding durable solutions, such as local integration and resettlement.

118. Refugees enjoy equal access to essential services (healthcare, education, employment and social security). The Tekavoul, El Maouna and Al Barkha social programmes include refugee households among their beneficiaries, while school and healthcare facilities have been built at the M'Berra camp, which housed over 153,000 refugees by the end of 2023.

119. In view of the growing influx of Malian refugees – around 55,000 new arrivals in 2023 – Mauritania is pursuing its efforts to protect vulnerable groups and promote integration. A national road map aims to guarantee equitable access to education for refugee children.

III. Status of implementation of voluntary pledges and commitments

120. Mauritania actively supports efforts to protect and promote human dignity and participates in and contributes to discussions and initiatives in Islamic, Arab, African and international forums.

IV. New and emerging issues – advances and challenges

121. The implementation of some recommendations made under the third cycle of the universal periodic review, notably on the ratification of certain international conventions and the adoption of certain national laws, is proving difficult. Nevertheless, the country has made significant progress in strengthening its institutional and legislative framework, further harmonizing its legislation with international standards and consolidating monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. These efforts reflect the country's determination to overcome obstacles and ensure the full realization of its human rights commitments.

V. Challenges requiring support from the international community

122. As a developing country, Mauritania faces a number of obstacles to the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. Key challenges include:

- The inadequate human and financial resources of the institutions and organizations responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- The low level of specialization of judges, lawyers and court officials in human rights.
- The need to strengthen the culture and awareness of human rights at all levels of society.

123. These challenges highlight the importance of cooperation and assistance from the international community to support Mauritania in its efforts to consolidate its institutional capacities and promote a sustainable human rights culture.

124. The implementation of the National Strategy for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2024–2028 requires substantial support from technical and financial partners.

Conclusion

125. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania reaffirms its commitment to human rights and the well-being of all its citizens. The progress made in education, health, social protection, the inclusion of vulnerable people, the fight against child labour and gender-based violence, and environmental protection, bears witness to this commitment.

126. The Government thanks its international partners and all stakeholders for their support and calls for stronger cooperation to overcome the remaining challenges, to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
