



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

17 July 2023

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Finland by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 41st session in November 2022. The constructive engagement between your Government, my Office, and the UPR mechanism is warmly welcome. As the final outcome report on the review of Finland was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 52nd session, I have also taken note of the efforts of your Government to implement specific recommendations since the previous review.

A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations, starting with those supported by your Government, is available at OHCHR's website (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/fin-index>), and should be considered as part of this letter. The matrix indicates the recommending State and links each recommendation to relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In annex, I have also attached my Office's observations in light of the outcome of the fourth cycle of the UPR. In line with previous practice, I will be sending similar observations to all Member States once their fourth cycle UPR outcome is adopted by the Human Rights Council, with a view to follow-up action in close cooperation with national entities and other stakeholders.

I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the support available through the Voluntary Fund for UPR Implementation, which may be activated at the request and with the consent of a concerned State, along with tools such as the "[UPR practical guidance](#)" and the "[UN good practices](#)" repository on how the UPR process supports sustainable development, with a view to facilitating efforts to implement UPR recommendations in line with the SDGs.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Volker Türk

His Excellency
Mr. Pekka Haavisto
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland



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

The adoption of the National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights (2020-2023), which focuses on developing human rights monitoring at the national level, and the proposal submitted to Parliament to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, are welcome. Also welcome are the adoption of the Government's Action Programme to Combat Racism and to Promote Good Relations in October 2021, and the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in cooperation with the Sámi people. With regard to the negotiation over the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament, Finland is encouraged to intensify efforts towards the adoption of the revised Act.

The ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance is also encouraged, as are improvements to the legal framework and institutional measures to combat violence against women and strengthen national laws on related offences. Action is also needed to fight against racial discrimination, xenophobia and hate speech, also by taking all necessary steps to review the Non-Discrimination Act and other relevant anti-discrimination laws.

Finland is encouraged to continue the practice of developing an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, the national human rights institution, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix may be of use in the development of such an implementation plan. The Government is encouraged to explicitly link each UPR recommendation to corresponding recommendations of other international or regional human rights mechanisms and to the relevant SDG and its targets. This will, in turn, facilitate the creation of synergies between UPR implementation and SDG related actions and reporting within the context of the Voluntary National Review (VNR).

The Government is encouraged to establish a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to reporting to the international human rights mechanisms, and to implementing the recommendations, in line with the guidance provided by OHCHR following regional consultations and the High Commissioner's report to the Human Rights Council ([A/HRC/50/64](#)).

Further, an important measure that can positively contribute to follow-up action is voluntary mid-term UPR reporting. All Member States are encouraged to submit a voluntary mid-term UPR report some two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, the Government of Finland is encouraged to continue with the practice of submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2025, detailing both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.



OHCHR
17 July 2023