



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

COURTESY TRANSLATION

30 October 2023

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Benin by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 42nd session in January/February 2023. The constructive engagement between your Government, my Office, and the UPR mechanism is warmly welcome. As the final outcome report on the review of Benin was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 53rd 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/bj-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, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-main>, 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

H. E.
Mr. Olushegun Adjadi Bakari
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Benin



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

The ratification of various instruments are welcome developments, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure; and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The operationalization of the Benin Human Rights Commission, which had been granted “A” status in 2022, is to be commended. Benin’s constitutional reform abolishing the death penalty and the adoption of progressive laws protecting women’s rights, including sexual health and reproductive rights are also noteworthy.

Benin is invited to reconsider its withdrawal from the Protocol to the African Charter and to recognize again the competence of the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights. The establishment of a national preventive mechanism in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment should be prioritized.

Benin is encouraged to strengthen and expand the democratic space, particularly through the exercise of the right to vote in a peaceful context of free, periodic and transparent elections, and through legislative reforms in order to guarantee the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, to prevent the arbitrary suspension of media outlets and to effectively protect human rights defenders.

Benin should also consider taking concrete measures with a view to protecting persons with albinism from violence, discrimination and abduction. Furthermore, preventive and protection measures to eliminate discrimination, violence and stereotypes against LGBTI persons should be adopted.

Benin is also encouraged to develop an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the National Assembly, the judiciary, the Benin Human Rights Commission, 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 further encouraged to further strengthen the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to reporting to 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 could 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 Benin may wish to consider 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
30 October 2023