



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

19 January 2024

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Israel by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 43rd session in May 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 Israel was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 54th 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/il-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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'V. Türk', written in a cursive style.

Volker Türk

His Excellency
Mr. Israel Katz
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel



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

The ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Israel is welcome, noting also that Israel was the first non-European country to do so. Israel's efforts to combat human trafficking, including through the five year implementation plan focusing on prosecution, prevention and victim protection, are noteworthy.

The progress made in promoting gender equality is noted with appreciation, including through the establishment of a ministry dedicated to the advancement of women and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence. Efforts by Israel for the protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons have also been positively noted, including measures by the police to eliminate violence and the circular of the Director General of the Ministry of Health to ban conversion therapy by medical professionals.

Progress is still needed in some crucial areas. In particular, inequalities and discrimination, including on the basis of religion or belief, with regard to Israeli Arabs, Palestinians, as well as migrants and asylum-seekers are of concern. Israel is also encouraged to use administrative detention only when necessary and in line with international human rights standards. Ensuring the continued independence and impartiality of the judiciary remain of critical importance.

As raised during the review, Israel is strongly encouraged to cease settlement expansion and respect international human rights obligations within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, effectively investigate and punish all forms of violence against Palestinian civilians, and guarantee access by Palestinians to all economic and social rights, including basic services.

Israel is encouraged to develop an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the Knesset, the judiciary, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix referred in the letter from the High Commissioner for Human Rights 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 from other international and 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 strengthen its joint forum of state authorities, 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 Israel 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
19 January 2024