



PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

26 June 2024

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Turkmenistan by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 44<sup>th</sup> session in November 2023. As the final outcome report on the review of Turkmenistan was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 55<sup>th</sup> session, I have 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/tm-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

His Excellency  
Mr. Raşit Meredow  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan



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

The renewed commitment by Turkmenistan to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families is welcome. Due note is also taken of the work of the Interdepartmental Commission on Compliance with the International Obligations Undertaken by Turkmenistan in the Field of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law to analyse the possible ratification of additional international human rights instruments. Turkmenistan is encouraged to accelerate the ratification process of pending human rights instruments and enhance its cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, including by inviting the United Nations special procedures mandate holders to visit the country.

Positive note is also taken of Turkmenistan's support to the recommendations pertaining to the strengthening of the Office of the Ombudsperson, including those referring to its full compliance with the Paris Principles. It is hoped that the Office of the Ombudsperson will soon function in full accordance with the Paris Principles, following the request of the Office of the Ombudsperson to be accredited with the Global Alliance of National human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

During the review, concerns were raised with regards to several areas in which progress is needed, including the persistence of gender-based violence and discrimination; reported cases of enforced disappearances; poor conditions of detention; and restrictions on fundamental freedoms, including freedom of opinion, expression, movement, and religion, and on the work of civil society. Turkmenistan is encouraged to build on efforts being undertaken in these areas, as reported by the delegation of Turkmenistan during the review, and to adopt concrete measures to ensure the full respect of human rights and uphold fundamental freedoms. Positive note has been taken of the stated openness of Turkmenistan to also consider noted recommendations with the aim of exploring the best way to address them.

The cooperation of Turkmenistan with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to eliminate forced labour, including the signing of a memorandum of understanding enabling the ILO to monitor working conditions in cotton fields during the harvest period, is noteworthy. Turkmenistan is encouraged to enhance such cooperation and implement the ILO's recommendations to align its labour inspection system with international standards.



Turkmenistan is also encouraged to approve and implement the roadmap to follow up to the UPR outcome, including by allocating State budgeting, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the Assembly, the judiciary, the Office of the Ombudsperson, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix may be of use in the implementation of such a roadmap. 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 further strengthen the Interdepartmental Commission on Compliance with the International Obligations Undertaken by Turkmenistan in the Field of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, 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 in about two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, the Government of Turkmenistan may wish to consider submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2026, detailing both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR  
26 June 2024