

Distr.: General 9 November 2020

Original: English

Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Thirty-seventh session 18–29 January 2021

## Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Saint Lucia\*

# Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

## I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a summary of 6 stakeholders' submissions¹ to the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

## II. Information provided by stakeholders

# A. Scope of international obligations<sup>2</sup> and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies<sup>3</sup>

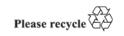
- 2. The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) recommended that Saint Lucia ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.<sup>4</sup> JS1 recommended the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;<sup>5</sup> as well as the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.<sup>6</sup>
- 3. JS2 noted that Saint Lucia had not submitted a voluntary midterm report on the implementation of the key recommendations emanating from the previous reviews.<sup>7</sup>

### **B.** National human rights framework<sup>8</sup>

4. JS1 observed that much of Saint Lucia's domestic legal framework had remained in place since the previous cycle of the universal periodic review and that Saint Lucia's Constitution expressly authorized the death penalty. CGNK stated that the Constitution expressly allowed the taking of life in certain circumstances such as suppressing a riot or

st The present document was not edited before being sent to United Nations translation services.







insurrection, or to prevent the commitment of criminal offences, sending the wrong message about the protection of life and recommended that the people of Saint Lucia and the authorities engage in a participative process to amend the Constitution.<sup>10</sup>

# C. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

### 1. Cross-cutting issues

Equality and non-discrimination<sup>11</sup>

- 5. Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated that Saint Lucia did not have comprehensive laws that prohibited discrimination on grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation. HRW indicated that during the previous cycle of the universal periodic review, Saint Lucia had not supported recommendations<sup>12</sup> to repeal legislation that discriminated against LGBT and intersex people or recommendations<sup>13</sup> to decriminalize consensual sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex.<sup>14</sup> Section 131 of Saint Lucia's 2006 Labour Act did prohibit employers from "unfairly dismissing" a person on the basis of their sexual orientation, but did not prohibit such dismissal on the basis of gender identity.<sup>15</sup>
- 6. HRW stated that Saint Lucia should: pass comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that prohibited discrimination on grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation—including in the employment, housing, access to education, and health care sectors—and that specified effective measures to identify, prevent, and respond to such discrimination; and amend Section 131 of Saint Lucia's 2006 Labour Act so that the prohibition from "unfairly dismissing" a person on the basis of their sexual orientation include gender identity. Just Atonement Inc. (JAI) recommended establishing and implementing policies to address workplace discrimination, and implementing education programs to raise awareness on gender and sexual diversity. JS2 recommended introducing legal and practical measures to eliminate discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons including by repealing discriminatory legislation. Sexual discriminatory legislation.
- 7. HRW noted that Section 133 of Saint Lucia's Criminal Code on "buggery" criminalized consensual same-sex conduct. Additionally, Section 132 of the Criminal Code on "gross indecency" exempted from punishment any act "committed in private between an adult male person and an adult female person, both of whom consent" but did not protect private acts between same-sex couples. 19 JS2 made similar observations noting that the penalty for buggery was imprisonment for ten years. 20
- 8. HRW stated that while buggery and gross indecency laws in Saint Lucia were seldom enforced against consenting persons, their impact was pernicious. Laws criminalizing same-sex conduct reinforced already-existing societal prejudices, effectively giving social and legal sanction for discrimination, violence, stigma, and prejudice against LGBT individuals.<sup>21</sup> JAI made similar observations indicating that LGBTQ+ citizens faced verbal harassment on a daily basis, and even physical threats. JAI added that they were also often denied access to healthcare, the job market, and protection from the police.<sup>22</sup>
- 9. HRW stated that Saint Lucia should: repeal Section 133 of the Criminal Code, which criminalizes consensual same-sex conduct; and amend Section 132 of the Criminal Code to exempt from punishment all private consensual sexual acts, whether by persons of the same or different sex.<sup>23</sup>

Development, the environment, and business and human rights<sup>24</sup>

10. JAI stated that Saint Lucia was among the most vulnerable states to the adverse impacts of climate change for a number of reasons, including its geography and its economy. Islands in the Caribbean were vulnerable to Atlantic hurricanes and tropical storms and Saint Lucia's small geographical area meant that natural disasters had countrywide effects. Additionally, as 70-80 percent of the population was located along the coastal belt, intense hurricanes had direct effects on the livelihood of close to all of its citizens. JAI

also noted that the impact of hurricanes would be particularly crippling in times of a global pandemic.<sup>25</sup>

- 11. JAI highlighted that Saint Lucia's economy largely depended on the agriculture and tourism sectors, which accounted for over half of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Increasingly intense hurricanes and salt-water intrusion had already led to a decline in agricultural output, and projected beach erosion would negatively impact the tourism industry.<sup>26</sup> JAI noted that studies indicated the complete erosion and flooding of at least 11 percent and 24 percent of all island beaches by 2040. Moreover, critical infrastructure, including two international seaports and two airports, were located on low-lying coastal land and that rising intensity of storms and sea-level would disrupt traffic in and out of these hubs, negatively affecting the tourism industry.<sup>27</sup>
- 12. JAI stated that climate change also directly impacted individual livelihoods of Saint Lucian citizens. According to JAI, with more intense damage caused by hurricanes each year, an increasing number of citizens needed to be evacuated and by 2100, rising sea-level would likely displace 20 percent of the population from their homes permanently. However, because central Saint Lucia was geographically unsuited for living, consisting of mostly mountains, and surrounding Caribbean islands also faced similar perils, those displaced because of climate change would have limited options.<sup>28</sup>
- 13. JAI also noted that Saint Lucia had adopted policies to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. In 2015, Saint Lucia made its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submission under the Paris Agreement, and the Government had also established the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for 2018–2028. Although the State had identified the necessary infrastructure, the biggest setback of the NAP was the lack of financial resources.<sup>29</sup>
- 14. JAI recommended that Saint Lucia: implement in full the policies set out in Saint Lucia's NAP; and continue to research and establish adaptation plans beyond 2028 to ensure that Saint Lucia was a sustainable place to live in the long-term.<sup>30</sup> It also recommended that Saint Lucia coordinate with other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and third countries to create an inter-governmental system for displaced citizens to seek asylum in extreme weather events.<sup>31</sup>
- 15. JAI also stated that, though under the Paris Agreement, countries had committed to jointly mobilizing \$100 billion per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries, including SIDS such as Saint Lucia, this funding had not yet reached such states. Moreover, small island nations could not access the Green Climate Fund for the purpose of adapting to future climate change impacts.<sup>32</sup> JAI stated that larger emitting countries should financially contribute to Saint Lucia's NAP programs and provide technological assistance.<sup>33</sup>

### 2. Civil and political rights

Right to life, liberty and security of person<sup>34</sup>

- 16. JS1 highlighted that during the previous cycle of the universal periodic review, the Government of Saint Lucia had noted recommendations<sup>35</sup> to establish a formal moratorium on the death penalty. JS1 also observed that, in responding to these recommendations, the Government had however, recalled "that there has been a de facto moratorium on the death penalty since 1995". JS1 stated that Saint Lucia had effectively observed a moratorium since 2011, when courts issued the last death sentences, but that the death penalty still existed under law. To its credit, Saint Lucia had had no person on death row since 2013, eliminating the imminent possibility of executions.<sup>36</sup>
- 17. JS1 indicated that the death penalty was available as a sentence for various violent crimes, including aggravated murder, the murder of criminal justice personnel, including members of the police, murders committed in the course of or in furtherance of sex offenses, hate crimes, and drug trafficking, murders committed in furtherance of acts of terrorism, murders for capital gain, murders that are part of multiple murders, and murders by an offender who has previously been convicted of murder.<sup>37</sup>

- 18. JS1 noted, however, that the death penalty was not a mandatory punishment for any crime. Judges may consider mitigating factors and the Governor-General had the authority to grant clemency, a pardon, or a stay of execution. Additionally, Saint Lucia prohibited courts from sentencing people to death for crimes committed as juveniles. The law also prohibited sentencing pregnant women or people with psycho-social disabilities, subject to qualifications, to the death penalty.<sup>38</sup>
- 19. JS1 recommended that Saint Lucia: abolish the death penalty and replace it with a sentence that was fair, proportionate, and in compliance with international human rights standards; impose an immediate, official moratorium on the death penalty; and prior to any public referendum concerning the death penalty, conduct a comprehensive awareness-raising campaign on human rights and alternatives to the death penalty, in collaboration with civil society organizations in the region.<sup>39</sup>
- 20. JS1 also recommended that Saint Lucia ensure that each person potentially eligible for a death sentence was represented by competent counsel at all stages of judicial proceedings and while pursuing relief under the prerogative of mercy, regardless of the person's ability to pay for legal representation.<sup>40</sup>
- 21. JAI stated that although the Police Act (1965) made any "unnecessary" use of police violence liable to a fine, the legislation did not define "unnecessary" force. JAI noted the investigative report which had concluded that in 2010-2011, the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force (RSPF) had effectively created "death lists" to deliberately kill suspected criminals and staged the crime scenes to cover up the killings. Many other cases of police violence awaited review, as procedures to investigate police officers were often delayed.<sup>41</sup>
- 22. JAI recommended that Saint Lucia: adopt a law on use of police force which clarified what constitutes "unnecessary" force; adopt a law prohibiting the use of firearms by police during arrests to protect property and clarifying that the use of firearms is only legal when used to avoid the imminent threat of death or serious injury; and establish an independent agency to investigate cases that involve the use of police force, ensuring transparent and efficient procedures.<sup>42</sup>

Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law<sup>43</sup>

- 23. JS1 indicated that though the Constitution guaranteed a fair hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial court established by law, the judicial system continued to face many challenges, including inadequate protections for witnesses, as well as limited forensic capabilities and delays in processing evidence.<sup>44</sup>
- 24. JAI recommended that Saint Lucia: establish and implement police training programs on appropriate use of force and provide guidelines on civil confrontation;<sup>45</sup> and that it continue to offer diversity training programs for the police that focused on police interactions with the LGBTQ+ community, and expand the training programs to all government employees.<sup>46</sup>
- 25. JS1 also recommended that Saint Lucia continue to recognize the jurisdiction of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court over criminal appeals arising out of cases originating in Saint Lucia.<sup>47</sup>
- 26. JS1 noted that the Bordelais Correctional Facility, the island's central prison, had reported in 2019, that its remand population was at the highest in four years. JS1 also noted reports that the prison population had been 105.4% of capacity in 2017 and that people in the prison lacked access to clean drinking water.<sup>48</sup>
- 27. JS1 recommended that Saint Lucia: ensure that detention conditions complied with the Nelson Mandela Rules; and ensure the improvement of detention conditions, particularly with respect to food, health care, sanitation, and quarantine measures, so as to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, particularly for people at greater risk.<sup>49</sup>

#### 3. Economic, social and cultural rights

Right to health<sup>50</sup>

- 28. The Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA) noted that Saint Lucia had not received any recommendation on comprehensive sexuality education or sexual and reproductive health during the previous universal periodic reviews.<sup>51</sup>
- 29. SLPPA indicated that Saint Lucia had taken steps to pass policy to protect and support the sexual and reproductive health and rights of children and adolescents.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, JS2 stated that the Education Ministry had made significant strides over the years to incorporate non-traditional information into school curricula.<sup>53</sup>
- 30. JS2 indicated, however, that moral and religious norms appeared to still dictate the content of the Health and Family Life Education curricula as well as the delivery of the content. The constant outcry against exposing youth and adolescents to information related to their sexual health remained a barrier.<sup>54</sup>
- 31. SLPPA stated that the Health and Family Life Education curriculum did not effectively provide the education, information, tools and skills for young people to navigate their sexuality. SLPPA noted that though the data for 2016 of the Adolescent Fertility Rate in Saint Lucia recorded a miniscule decrease from the previous number for December 2015, the rate of births for women aged 15-19 was still extremely high.<sup>55</sup>
- 32. SLPPA stated that Saint Lucia's Health and Family Life curriculum, needed to reflect and impact the reality of children and adolescence and adhere to United Nations standards. Without this, children and adolescents would continue to be vulnerable and at high risk of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.<sup>56</sup>
- 33. JS2 recommended that Saint Lucia: revise the existing Health and Family Life Education curriculum to bring it in line with United Nations technical guidelines on comprehensive sexuality education; provide on-going and regular training for teachers and providers to ensure content is delivered in a non-judgmental, evidence-based and non-biased manner which does not reinforce existing cultural, religious or gender stereotype; and remove all barriers to contraceptive access for young people of 16 years and older since the age of consent for sex permitted by law is 16 years, and facilitate intensive provider education about the laws.<sup>57</sup>
- 34. JS2 stated that the Saint Lucia parliament had legalized abortion under specific conditions, including cases of rape, incest, gross foetal abnormality or when the pregnancy was a threat to the life or health of the woman. However, the restrictions relating to abortion which remained in the Criminal Code of Saint Lucia, had resulted in women being unable to access abortion effectively. The result had been the continuation of unsafe abortions and the use of abortifacient medicines which were available on the black market, without prescriptions.<sup>58</sup>
- 35. JS2 added that there was no education and training available for health professionals and no protocols in place to facilitate the limited provisions within the law, which allowed access to abortion.<sup>59</sup> JS2 recommended that Saint Lucia provide protocols for effective procurement of abortion services, and increase the legal access to abortion for all women.<sup>60</sup>

### 4. Rights of specific persons or groups

 $Women^{61}$ 

- 36. JS2 noted that Saint Lucia had accepted recommendations<sup>62</sup> on gender-based violence including on domestic violence, sexual violence and marital rape. JS2 indicated that these recommendations involved different actions to be taken by various government areas and included practical steps, measures, policies and legislative framework modifications but that none of those recommendations had been fully implemented.<sup>63</sup>
- 37. JS2 added that domestic violence remained a significant problem, but noted that there had been no prosecutions of crimes of gender-based violence during 2018. While

police were willing to arrest offenders, the Government prosecuted crimes of violence against women only when the victim pressed charges. The Gender Relations Department identified lack of training in trauma-specific interview techniques as a major problem for evidence collection.<sup>64</sup>

- 38. JS2 indicated that, according to statistics, incidents of rape in Saint Lucia were much higher than incidents of rape on a global scale and violence against women was disturbingly high.<sup>65</sup> JS2 highlighted that the law criminalized spousal rape only when a couple was divorced or separated or when a protection order had been issued by the Family Court. Two recommendations on this topic had been received and accepted in previous reviews, however, there had been no developments on this issue.<sup>66</sup>
- 39. JS2 observed that though the legal framework could be improved, the biggest problems were the inconsistent application of the law in practice, and the approach of individual judges, police officers, social workers, medical staff, educational workers and other professionals who were the contact points of victims. JS2 indicated that quality and well-established multisector cooperation of all relevant stakeholders in the field of violence prevention and control was necessary.<sup>67</sup>
- 40. JS2 recommended that Saint Lucia ensure effective multi-sectoral services to address gender-based violence. This should include: ensuring the full range of medical, legal, psychosocial and livelihood services to victims of violence and rape without discrimination; providing reparation for crimes of sexual violence; and protecting the privacy and security of women who filed reports and testified about sexual and gender-based violence. Saint Lucia should also adequately implement its legislative framework addressing domestic and sexual violence, and ensure the inclusion of legal provisions on marital rape, as well as a specific definition of violence against women.<sup>68</sup>

#### Children<sup>69</sup>

- 41. SLPPA highlighted that on 20 November 2018, Saint Lucia had passed the Child Justice Bill and the Children Care, Protection and Adoption Bill.<sup>70</sup>
- 42. SLPPA noted that over one thousand child abuse cases had been reported over the period of 2010-2015. Sexual abuse was the most common type of reported child abuse, accounting for 34 per cent, of all reported cases. Generally girls accounted for over 70 per cent of the victims. The 12-16 year old group were most often victims and many of the total cases were cases of incest.<sup>71</sup>
- 43. SLPPA also recalled a survey which had indicated a strong relationship between early marriage/union and rates of women from the poorest households.<sup>72</sup>

#### Notes

The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: www.ohchr.org.
Civil society

Individual submissions:

CGNK
Center for Global Nonkilling, Grand-Saconnex (Switzerland);
HRW
Human Rights Watch, Geneva (Switzerland);
JAI
Just Atonement Inc., New York (United States of America);
SLPPA
St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association, Castries (Saint Lucia).

Joint submissions:

JS1 **Joint submission 1 submitted by**: The Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis (The United States of America); and The

World Coalition Against the Death Penalty;

JS2 **Joint submission 2 submitted by**: Akahata-Equipo de

Trabajo en Sexualidades y Géneros, Buenos Aires (Argentina); The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA); Caribbean Right Here Right Now

Platform Sexual Rights Initiative (C-RHRN).

302

<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used in UPR documents:

ICERD International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Racial Discrimination;

ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural

Rights;

OP-ICESCR Optional Protocol to ICESCR;

ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

ICCPR-OP 1 Optional Protocol to ICCPR;

ICCPR-OP 2 Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of

the death penalty;

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women;

OP-CEDAW Optional Protocol to CEDAW;

CAT Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or

Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

OP-CAT Optional Protocol to CAT;

CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child;

OP-CRC-AC Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in

armed conflict;

OP-CRC-SC Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child

prostitution and child pornography;

OP-CRC-IC Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure;
ICRMW International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All

Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;

CRPD Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

OP-CRPD Optional Protocol to CRPD;

ICPPED International Convention for the Protection of All Persons

from Enforced Disappearance.

<sup>3</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.1–88.29, and 88.47–88.52.

<sup>4</sup> CGNK, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> JS1, para. 19. See also CGNK, p. 7.

- <sup>6</sup> JS1, para. 19.
- <sup>7</sup> JS2, para. 2.
- <sup>8</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.30–88.34, and 88.36–88.45.
- <sup>9</sup> JS1, para. 9.
- <sup>10</sup> CGNK, p. 7. See also JAI, paras. 19 and 22.
- <sup>11</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.53, and 88.59–88.71.
- For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.61 (Australia), 88.62 (Germany), 88.64 (Netherlands).
- <sup>13</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.60 (Slovenia), 88.66 (Spain), 88.67 (United States of America), 88.68 (Uruguay), and 88.69 (Chile).
- <sup>14</sup> HRW, para. 4.
- <sup>15</sup> HRW, para. 11. See also JAI, para. 27 JS2, para. 24.
- <sup>16</sup> HRW, para. 15.
- <sup>17</sup> JAI, para. 31.
- <sup>18</sup> JS2, para. 27.
- <sup>19</sup> HRW, para. 3.
- <sup>20</sup> JS2, para. 23.
- <sup>21</sup> HRW, para. 7.
- <sup>22</sup> JAI, para. 28.
- <sup>23</sup> HRW, para.10. See also JS2, para. 26.
- <sup>24</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.120–88.121.
- <sup>25</sup> JAI, paras. 4-5.
- <sup>26</sup> JAI, para. 4.
- <sup>27</sup> JAI, para. 7.
- <sup>28</sup> JAI, paras. 8-9.
- <sup>29</sup> JAI, para. 11.
- <sup>30</sup> JAI, para. 13.
- <sup>31</sup> JAI, para. 15.
- <sup>32</sup> JAI, para. 12.
- <sup>33</sup> JAI, para. 17.
- <sup>34</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.34, 88.72–88.78, 88.85, and 88.99–

```
<sup>35</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras, 88.72 (Spain) and 88.77 (Paraguay).
<sup>36</sup> JS1, paras. 2-3.
<sup>37</sup> JS1, para. 10.
<sup>38</sup> JS1, para. 11.
<sup>39</sup> JS1, para. 19.
<sup>40</sup> JS1, para. 19.
<sup>41</sup> JAI, paras. 19-20.
<sup>42</sup> JAI, paras. 22-24.
<sup>43</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.81, and 88.98–88.104.
<sup>44</sup> JS1, para. 12.
<sup>45</sup> JAI, para. 25.
<sup>46</sup> JAI, para. 32.
<sup>47</sup> JS1, para. 19.
<sup>48</sup> JS1, para. 16.
<sup>49</sup> JS1, para. 19.
<sup>50</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras. 88.111–88.113.
<sup>51</sup> SLPPA, p. 2, para. 3.
<sup>52</sup> SLPPA, p. 3, para. 5.
<sup>53</sup> JS2, para. 30.
<sup>54</sup> JS2, para. 30.
55 SLPPA, para. 7.
56 SLPPA, para. 9.
^{57} JS2, paras. 31-32. See also SLPPA, para. 9.
<sup>58</sup> JS2, paras. 17-18.
<sup>59</sup> JS2, para. 19.
<sup>60</sup> JS2, para. 21.
^{61} For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, para. 88.46, 88.54–88.58, and 88.79–88.90.
<sup>62</sup> For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/31/10, paras, 88.79 (Portugal), 88.80 (Spain), 88.83
    (Colombia), 88.84 (France), 88.85 (Germany), 88.86 (Mexico), 88.87 (Panama), 88.88 (United
    Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), 88.89 (Philippines), 88.90 (Haiti), 88.91
   (Argentina), 88.93 (Djibouti).
<sup>63</sup> JS2, paras. 6-7.
<sup>64</sup> JS2, para. 11.
65 JS2, para. 14.
<sup>66</sup> JS2, para. 12.
<sup>67</sup> JS2, para. 13.
<sup>68</sup> JS2, paras. 15-16.
^{69}\ \ For\ relevant\ recommendations\ see\ A/HRC/31/10,\ paras.\ 88.34-88.35,\ 88.45-88.46,\ and\ 88.85-88.97.
<sup>70</sup> SLPPA, para. 5.
<sup>71</sup> SLPPA, para. 7.
<sup>72</sup> SLPPA, para. 7.
```