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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Palau

* The annex is being circulated without formal editing, in the language of submission only.



Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirty-eighth session from 3 to 14 May 2021. The review of Palau was held at the 9th meeting, on 7 May 2021. The delegation of Palau was headed by the Vice-President and Minister of State, J. Uduch Sengebau Senior. At its 14th meeting, held on 11 May 2021, the Working Group adopted the report on Palau.
2. On 12 January 2021, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Palau: Gabon, Pakistan and Ukraine.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Palau:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a);¹
 - (b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b);²
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c).³
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Canada, Germany, Liechtenstein, Panama, Portugal, on behalf of the Group of Friends on national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America was transmitted to Palau through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation of Palau began by underscoring that Palau was a young nation that had gained its independence in 1994 and that had a population of fewer than 20,000 people. Palau was free of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and 90 per cent of the adult population had received a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The country was ready to slowly open up to visitors.
6. The National Gender Mainstreaming Policy 2018–2023, adopted in 2018, was aimed at guiding the process of developing laws, policies, procedures and practices to achieve gender equality, so that all women and men could enjoy their fundamental human rights and have equal opportunities and responsibilities in all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural development, thereby contributing to the well-being of their families, the resilience of their communities and the development of their country, in accordance with national cultural values. The country plan 2020–2022 aimed at improving the political, economic and social opportunities of women had been developed with the support of Australia.
7. Women were well respected in the community, including by traditional leaders. In the recent national election in 2020, a woman had been elected Vice-President. However, while it continued to be a struggle to raise the number of women in the national legislature, a woman had been elected to the State legislature for the first time in 40 years.
8. A new prison was being built outside the main city of Koror, at a cost of \$4 million, with the objective of providing a better environment for prisoners and address overcrowding.

¹ A/HRC/WG.6/38/PLW/1.

² A/HRC/WG.6/38/PLW/2.

³ A/HRC/WG.6/38/PLW/3.

9. The President, Surangel Whipps, Jr., had recently signed an executive order creating a division of transnational crime within the Bureau of Public Safety that would focus on identifying and eliminating human trafficking in Palau.
10. The Government was committed to ensuring that human rights remained a priority. The authorities would continue to work towards ratifying treaties that had not yet been ratified and towards implementing those that had been ratified through policies and legislation. The constraints faced by Palau in the ratification and implementation of human rights treaties included limited capacity, funds and resources, as well as a perceived contradiction between Palauan cultural traditions and some universal human rights principles. Palau called upon the international community to urgently provide assistance in that regard.
11. It was important to increase understanding of the unratified treaties at the congressional level so that Congress members could engage in discussions about international human rights treaties prior to their ratification. Among the treaties in need of ratification were the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Although Palau had yet to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Constitution protected the people of Palau's civil and political rights, as well as their economic, social and cultural rights. The delegation of Palau hoped to be able to report that at least half of the above-mentioned treaties had been ratified by the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review.
12. The delegation added that, as the tourism industry had come to a sudden halt because of the COVID-19 pandemic, assistance was needed from international partners to enable Palau to fulfil its obligations and protect human rights.
13. Since the previous universal periodic review, the Government had put in place the following laws and policies: (a) a bill to establish minimum equipment and staffing standards for ambulances in Palau; (b) a bill on "school wellness" and nutrition standards for all schools; (c) the Palau National Marine Sanctuary Act; (d) a bill on a national street and home address system; (e) the Coronavirus Relief One-Stop Shop Act; (f) legislation requiring the development of a national policy on care for the ageing; (g) an increase in the monthly stipend provided through the Severely Disabled Assistance Fund; and (h) the Anti-People Smuggling and Trafficking Act.
14. Moreover, the following policies, programmes, assessments and reports had been established, adopted or implemented by the national authorities: (a) a task force to combat human trafficking; (b) the Anti-Human Trafficking Office; (c) a report on strengthening the social protection of vulnerable populations affected by COVID-19; (d) a national coordinating mechanism to facilitate and coordinate efforts to address non-communicable diseases; (e) an economic and social development programme; (f) a national disaster risk-management framework; (g) a national early warning system for disaster risk-management; (i) a national policy for the elderly (March 2020); (j) a national disability policy until 2020; (k) the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy (2018); (l) the Family Protection Act (2012); (m) an increased minimum wage; (n) a monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and (o) the Koror-Airai Sanitation Project.
15. Support had been provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), through a partnership with the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, for the finalization of a report seeking to protect children from dangerous online activities. Additionally, the Ministry and UNICEF were currently conducting a comprehensive assessment of child protection.
16. Regarding the protection of persons with disabilities, a national disability policy was in place. In addition, the Government had established the Severely Disabled Assistance Fund, which was aimed at providing monthly assistance to individuals who are home- or

wheelchair-bound or who were blind. The Government had put in place a policy to provide free, appropriate and public education for children who had been suspended or expelled from school, including children with disabilities.

17. Palau would continue to work with regional and international organizations on establishing a dedicated human rights commission and/or office. However, limited resources and capacities, and difficulties in identifying a proper model that would best fit Palau, continued to represent challenges. In that regard, the delegation called upon the international community, especially OHCHR, to assist Palau in establishing that key institution in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

18. A coordinating committee on ageing had been established to develop and update, on a biennial basis, a national policy on care for the ageing.

19. Regarding COVID-19, a project to strengthen social protection for vulnerable populations affected by the pandemic had been developed and funded by the Government through the Asian Development Bank. The project addressed the immediate COVID-19-related needs (health, social and income support) for low-income home-bound older persons and persons with disabilities, smallholders and victims of domestic and gender-based violence. Laws and policies had been adopted by the authorities to address the protection of vulnerable groups.

20. In 2018, a plan for implementing the Family Protection Act, adopted in 2012, had been approved with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia. The Act made marital rape a crime punishable by a maximum of 25 years' imprisonment, a fine of 50,000 United States dollars or both.

21. Also in 2018, Palau had become a State member of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Ministry of Justice had commissioned IOM to conduct a rapid assessment report on human trafficking in the country. The task force mentioned in paragraph 14 (a) above was also expected to implement a national action plan to combat human trafficking and be the primary body responsible for coordinating all national efforts to combat human trafficking in Palau. In 2019, Palau had ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

22. Concerning corporal punishment against children, the Penal Code regulated the use of force against children and other persons under the special care, responsibility or control of others. It contained provisions limiting the physical discipline of children and prisoners, among others. In its 2019 school handbook, the Ministry of Education clearly stated that corporal punishment was not allowed in the public school system and that teachers and other staff were reminded that corporal punishment would constitute cause for suspension or termination of employment. Concrete measures had been taken by the Ministry of Health and Human Services, the judiciary and the Senate to raise public awareness through community outreach, schools and the radio.

23. In relation to overcrowding in prisons, a national prison with a maximum capacity of 100 prisoners in each building was under construction and should open in 2022. Detainees would be separated by gender, age and gravity of the offence. Schooling programmes and farming and recreational activities would be organized for the prisoners.

24. Regarding freedom of expression, it was recalled that the Constitution provided for individuals' right to freedom of opinion and expression. Article IV (2) of the Constitution reads as follows: "The government shall take no action to deny or impair the freedom of expression or press. No bona fide reporter may be required by the government to divulge or be jailed for refusal to divulge information obtained in the course of a professional investigation". Furthermore, the Constitution gives citizens the right "to examine any government document and to observe the official deliberations of any agency of government" (art. IV (12)). In 2014, the President of Palau had signed a law allowing any person to submit a request to any government agency to produce public records within 10 days of the request and any person to observe the deliberations or public meetings of any government agency.

25. The Ministry of Education ensured that all schools in Palau could provide students with health, safety and overall welfare services. In addition, the Ministry educated students and the community on the services available on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Awareness about gender-based violence was raised throughout the community, including through school outreach programmes.

26. Regarding natural disasters, Palau had revised and endorsed a national disaster risk management framework and plans had been put in place with the assistance of multiple stakeholders.

27. Palau had undergone its first voluntary national review on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and presented “Pathway to 2030: progressing with our past towards a resilient, sustainable and equitable future” at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held in 2019.

28. Regarding climate change, the Government had put in place the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development*. That policy aimed at enhancing adaptation capabilities and resilience to the expected impacts of global climate change, improving the ability of Palau to manage unexpected disasters and minimize associated risks while also mitigating global climate change. Numerous other measures in relation to climate change had been taken by the Government.

29. Measures had been taken by the authorities to protect their citizens and all persons living in Palau from the COVID-19 pandemic. At the outset of the pandemic, the Government had immediately closed the country’s borders to keep Palau safe and free from the virus. Palau was one of only seven countries in the world that was still free of the virus responsible for COVID-19 and it had fully vaccinated over 65 per cent of its population. However, the residents of Palau continued to feel the impact of the pandemic through the loss of jobs and other disruptions to employment. It was estimated that 2,600 jobs in Palau would be directly affected by the pandemic. Several measures had been taken to assist the population of Palau.

30. Full recognition of human rights was accorded to all citizens of Palau and to all non-citizens living in Palau. The Government expressed its gratitude and appreciation for all the support provided by development partners, regional and international organizations and United Nations agencies with regards to the protection, promotion and implementation of the human rights commitments and obligations of Palau.

31. Palau had taken note of all the recommendations made by States and asked the Human Rights Council to give the national authorities some time to consult with relevant stakeholders and provide a response to all recommendations.

32. Regarding the remark made by China on child labour and the reduction of poverty, the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, in partnership with UNICEF, was currently conducting a comprehensive assessment to advance plans for an improved system of child protection. The study would build on and complement past work, including the child protection baseline assessment, the review of implementation of the Family Protection Act, the outputs of the child protection system orientation and planning workshop and the recommendations arising from the child protection online baseline research and assessment. Regarding poverty reduction, Palau had recognized its children’s right to be protected against abuse, neglect, exploitation, drugs and pornography. Children with special needs had the right to receive special care. The second sentence of article IV (11) of the Constitution read: “The government shall protect children from exploitation.”

33. Those States that had made advance questions would hopefully find responses in the national report of Palau. The authorities will also respond shortly to the comments raised by various States during the interactive dialogue. The States, especially Denmark, were thanked for their support.

34. In conclusion, Palau reiterated its call for help from the international community, donors and partners to assist in its efforts towards the ratification of human rights treaties and the establishment of a national human rights institution.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

35. During the interactive dialogue, 52 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

36. Senegal noted with satisfaction that Palau had demonstrated its commitment to human rights by ratifying many of the main international human rights instruments and that it had drawn up a policy and an action plan on climate change in favour of resilient development.

37. Serbia welcomed the efforts of Palau to implement the recommendations from the previous cycle of the universal periodic review, especially those on establishing national human rights institutions and mechanisms for reporting to the United Nations in the field of human rights.

38. Slovenia welcomed the “happy, healthy, sustainable and resilient Palauan communities in a changing world” vision of the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development* and the Palau Pledge,⁴ both of which aimed to ensure a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

39. Spain appreciated the efforts made by Palau to promote gender equality but noted that the legal framework was insufficient. Spain noted that, despite ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the adoption of targeted legislation, discrimination against persons with disabilities in the workplace had not been fully addressed.

40. The Sudan commended Palau for the efforts it had made, including for the establishment of a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up to engage with the international human rights mechanisms.

41. Timor-Leste highlighted the creation of a national human rights task force, the adoption of the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development*, the adoption of the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy for 2018–2023 and the reactivation of the Palau national youth congress.

42. Ukraine welcomed the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy and the efforts made in partnership with UNICEF to improve child protection. Ukraine highlighted the promising steps taken by Palau in combating human trafficking.

43. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland recognized the progress made by Palau on human rights issues since its 2016 review, including in the field of domestic violence, with the criminalization of marital rape. It noted the continued efforts made to uphold democratic values through an independent media and an independent judiciary and the fight against corruption.

44. The United States of America commended Palau for regulating the conditions of employment of foreign workers and for acceding to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. It expressed concern, however, about forced labour and human trafficking for the purpose of sex, discrimination against foreign workers and the underreporting of rape and domestic violence.

45. Uruguay recognized the efforts made by Palau, including on strengthening the protection of children online. Uruguay was encouraged by the creation of the national human rights committee and by the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman.

46. Vanuatu, in its call for climate action, congratulated the Government of Palau for revising the national disaster risk management framework in 2016, as well as for preparing for and responding to natural disasters.

47. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed the progress made to ratify international human rights instruments and the cooperation with UNICEF to establish a system for protecting children online. It also welcomed the national policies on persons with

⁴ See <https://palaupledge.com/>.

disabilities and on gender mainstreaming and the programmes implemented to combat violence against women.

48. Argentina welcomed the standing invitation extended by Palau to all the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. It also highlighted the important steps taken to combat trafficking in persons, including through the creation of a Presidential special task force, and encouraged Palau to continue and deepen those efforts.

49. Armenia welcomed the institutional changes aimed at fighting trafficking. It hoped that Palau would establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles in the foreseeable future.

50. Australia commended Palau for the measures taken to implement the Family Protection Act 2012 and was pleased to provide assistance to Palau to support implementation of that Act.

51. Brazil encouraged Palau to raise the minimum age of criminal liability and forbid all forms of corporal punishment against children, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also encouraged the Government to ensure that all children born in the country could become nationals of Palau in order to avoid statelessness.

52. Bulgaria noted the creation of a national human rights task force and the adoption of the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development* and the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy. It also recognized that Palau had undertaken legislative reforms to enhance protection of the rights of the child.

53. Canada congratulated Palau for having adopted a human rights-based approach to its climate and environmental action. It urged Palau to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

54. Chile welcomed the integration of a gender perspective into policies and the presentation in 2015 of the intended nationally determined contribution to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

55. China stated that women in Palau still suffered from systemic discrimination and widespread violence and abuse, that human trafficking was rampant, that the incidence of poverty was high and that the education and health-care systems were inadequate. It noted that child marriage and child labour were widespread.

56. Cuba recognized the efforts made by Palau to confront and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, including in the field of disaster risk reduction in the face of natural phenomena.

57. Denmark commended Palau for adopting a national action plan against human trafficking and stated that Palau could take additional steps to make sure that victims and survivors reported cases of trafficking and were provided with the necessary legal, health, psychological and social services.

58. The Dominican Republic recognized the progress and efforts made by Palau to prepare a response to climate change and its commitment to the global initiative to reduce emissions.

59. Estonia commended Palau for acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and for including trafficking in its Penal Code. It encouraged Palau to establish a comprehensive protection system that would address all cases of domestic violence.

60. Fiji congratulated Palau on the steps taken to combat climate change, including the passage of the Palau Energy Act and the submission of the intended nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement to work towards the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

61. Finland highly appreciated the engagement of Palau in the universal periodic review process.

62. France invited the authorities of Palau to implement the recommendations arising from the universal periodic review and wished them success in the review process.
63. Georgia commended Palau for ratifying the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; for establishing a task force to combat human trafficking and creating the Anti-Human Trafficking Office. Georgia also welcomed the establishment of the Severely Disabled Assistance Fund and social protection programmes.
64. Germany commended Palau for acceding to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and for adopting a national action plan against trafficking in persons. It remained concerned, however, about sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence. Germany also acknowledged the multiple challenges posed by climate change.
65. Iceland welcomed the repeal of legal provisions criminalizing consensual sexual activity between men in its new Penal Code and encouraged Palau to take into further consideration the rights of LGBTI+ individuals.
66. India commended Palau for the measures taken to mitigate the impact of climate change and to improve adaptation capabilities. It acknowledged the challenges and constraints faced by Palau and remained committed to cooperating in its development.
67. Indonesia took note with appreciation of the enactment of legislation to improve the well-being of students and school nutrition standards, on social services and care for the ageing population and on funding for the severely disabled. It encouraged full implementation of that legislation and the creation of relevant programmes.
68. Iraq welcomed the legislative and executive reforms undertaken since the previous universal periodic review, including the steps taken to combat human trafficking through the adoption of a national action plan.
69. Ireland commended Palau for the adoption of a national action plan to combat human trafficking and the accession in 2019 to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. It encouraged Palau to accede to the remaining international human rights treaties and their optional protocols.
70. Israel acknowledged the challenges faced by Palau in terms of climate change, funding and capacity-building. It commended Palau for adopting a national disability policy (2017–2020), the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy and the 2020–2022 Palau country plan, which includes the goal of ensuring women’s full participation in political, economic and social life.
71. Italy welcomed the standing invitation extended by Palau to the special procedure mandate holders and expressed appreciation for the measures taken on gender equality, particularly the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy, and for the 2020–2022 country plan. Italy noted the progress made in combating human trafficking, including through accession to relevant international treaties.
72. Japan highly appreciated the positive steps taken by Palau to promote and protect the rights of children through the ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).
73. Luxemburg congratulated Palau for the adoption of a national action plan to combat human trafficking and for the implementation of the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy 2018–2023, which, notably, aimed at improving the representation of women in decision-making roles.
74. Malaysia welcomed the pledges made by Palau to promote gender equality and support children, older persons and persons with disabilities. It encouraged Palau to continue to make efforts to address climate change and human trafficking and to benefit from technical cooperation and capacity-building, including from within the Human Rights Council and in the framework of the universal periodic review.

75. Maldives took positive note of the progress Palau had made, especially the establishment of the national human rights committee, the adoption of the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development* and the establishment of the Severely Disabled Assistance Fund.

76. The Marshall Islands commended Palau for the ongoing initiatives to improve the child protection system and for programmes to support children and families. It welcomed the efforts made to enhance climate change adaptation and resilience, most notably through the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development*.

77. Mauritius applauded the *Palau Climate Change Policy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development*, which would enhance adaptation and resilience to the expected impacts of global climate change across all sectors. It made recommendations while understanding that Palau was a country with limited resources.

78. Mexico welcomed the measures taken to promote inclusive education for persons with disabilities, the establishment of the Anti-Human Trafficking Office and the adoption of a policy to address climate change.

79. Montenegro noted the actions taken by the Government and underlined several noteworthy achievements. Montenegro called for steps to be taken to improve the child protection system and reiterated its call for Palau to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Second Optional Protocol, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

80. Morocco commended Palau for defending fundamental values relating to human rights, for the normative measures implemented to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights, for the progress made in favour of children's rights and for the special attention given to the rights of persons with disabilities.

81. Nepal noted the efforts made by the Government to formulate legislation and the establishment of institutions for promoting and protecting human rights. Nepal welcomed the establishment of a task force to combat human trafficking and noted the national policies to improve opportunities for women in Palau.

82. The Netherlands commended Palau for its proactive role in engaging with treaty bodies and special procedures. It welcomed the development of the country plan aimed at improving opportunities for the women of Palau and noted that legislation aimed at combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity had not yet been enacted.

83. New Zealand acknowledged the progress made by Palau since the previous universal periodic review. New Zealand commended Palau for its efforts to support the rights of women, including through accession to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

84. Pakistan appreciated the implementation of the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy to promote the equal participation of men and women in decision-making and to ensure a safe and secure environment at home and in the workplace.

85. Paraguay welcomed the accession of Palau to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Paraguay noted the establishment of the national human rights committee and encouraged the adoption of specific laws and policies to combat child labour.

86. Portugal welcomed the recent ratification by Palau of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

87. The Russian Federation regretted that Palau had not yet ratified a number of key international human rights instruments.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

88. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Palau and enjoy the support of Palau:

88.1 Take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations from the second cycle were fully implemented (Sudan);

88.2 Continue to effectively integrate the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the internal legal system (Russian Federation);

88.3 Continue to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of the recommendations accepted under the universal periodic review and establish a mechanism to link it to the 2030 Agenda (Dominican Republic);

88.4 Request technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to advance in the ratification of the main international human rights instruments to which Palau is not yet party, as well as to ensure the incorporation of international obligations into its national legal system deriving from international human rights treaties to which the country is already a party (Uruguay);

88.5 Speed up efforts to complete the ratification of all the international human rights treaties it has signed, especially those considered as core international human rights instruments (Brazil);

88.6 Ratify international human rights treaties and their optional protocols in order to strengthen the application and observance of international human rights standards, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Chile);

88.7 Ratify human rights treaties that it has signed, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Finland);

88.8 Continue its efforts to accede to or ratify more human rights treaties and their optional protocols, as previously recommended (Israel);

88.9 Consider ratifying the main international conventions on human rights already signed in 2011, starting from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Italy);

88.10 Ratify without delay the seven main human rights treaties, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Luxembourg);

88.11 Continue efforts in the process of ratification of international instruments and in cooperation with human rights mechanisms (Morocco);

88.12 Ratify the main international human rights treaties still pending, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Paraguay);

88.13 Ratify the remaining core international human rights treaties and their optional protocols and incorporate their provisions in the national legislation (Ukraine);

- 88.14 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Vanuatu);**
- 88.15 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Portugal) (India);**
- 88.16 **Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal) (Australia) (France) (India);**
- 88.17 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Second Optional Protocol, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (France) (Australia) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 88.18 **Continue steps towards the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia);**
- 88.19 **Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (India) (Maldives) (Argentina) (France); Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women without delay (Iceland); Ratify, as soon as possible, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Spain);**
- 88.20 **Ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (India);**
- 88.21 **Consider ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Nepal);**
- 88.22 **Proceed with the ratification of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and other core human rights treaties and seek in this regard, where needed, the support of the OHCHR office for the Pacific (Germany);**
- 88.23 **Swiftly ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other core human rights instruments (Estonia);**
- 88.24 **Accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and implement all of its provisions (Ireland);**
- 88.25 **Strengthen the efforts to end gender-based violence and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Italy);**
- 88.26 **Continue to take the steps necessary towards the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Malaysia);**
- 88.27 **Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and adapt its legislation accordingly (Mauritius);**
- 88.28 **Prioritize the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as other core human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (New Zealand);**
- 88.29 **Ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Denmark) (Japan);**

- 88.30 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Japan) (Senegal) (Argentina) (France);**
- 88.31 **Continue efforts towards the ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Marshall Islands);**
- 88.32 **Continue efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as other core international human rights instruments (Indonesia);**
- 88.33 **Sign and ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as previously recommended (Armenia);**
- 88.34 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and abolish the use of the death penalty in all circumstances (Finland);**
- 88.35 **Improve the protection of foreign workers and recognize the rights of refugees by ratifying the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Luxembourg);**
- 88.36 **Sign and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Spain);**
- 88.37 **Accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (Russian Federation);**
- 88.38 **Accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Estonia); Ratify or accede to the Rome Statute (Germany); Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Luxembourg);**
- 88.39 **Ratify and implement the 2014 ILO Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 88.40 **Issue an open invitation to all Human Rights Council special procedures (Ukraine);**
- 88.41 **Strengthen its human rights capacity through increased cooperation with regional organizations such as the Pacific Community and the Pacific Islands Forum, as well as with the OHCHR regional office for the Pacific (Luxembourg);**
- 88.42 **Seek international assistance and support for addressing challenges of capacity-building and resource constraints and meeting the human rights obligations of Palau (Pakistan);**
- 88.43 **Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Argentina) (Finland); Establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Senegal); Establish an independent national human rights institution, in conformity with the Paris Principles (Luxembourg); Establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Montenegro); Establish an independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Ukraine);**
- 88.44 **Intensify efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution, fully in line with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);**
- 88.45 **Continue to advance towards the creation of national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

- 88.46 Pursue the accreditation of the Office of the Ombudsman as a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Australia);
- 88.47 Take further steps to strengthen and fully operationalize its national human rights committee and the Office of the Ombudsman, including by providing additional financial and human resources and seeking international cooperation in support of their institution-building (Brazil);
- 88.48 Continue efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Chile);
- 88.49 Provide the national human rights institution with a broad mandate in accordance with the Paris Principles (France);
- 88.50 Step up efforts to establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Germany);
- 88.51 Consider establishing an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (India);
- 88.52 Continue to take steps towards establishing a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Malaysia);
- 88.53 Establish a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles in order to develop capacities in the field of human rights and ensure the allocation of sufficient resources for its operation (Mexico);
- 88.54 Allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources to ensure the efficiency of the National Human Rights Committee and strengthen its capacities to collaborate with the international human rights protection system, considering the possibility of receiving cooperation for this purpose, within the framework of Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17 (Paraguay);
- 88.55 Continue and intensify nationwide awareness-raising programmes on human rights and the enjoyment of human rights, including programmes specifically targeting women, youth and children (Fiji);
- 88.56 Develop a national plan of action for human rights education and work with educational institutions in order to implement the plan (Slovenia);
- 88.57 Complete the updating of its current climate change policy and see to its implementation (Vanuatu);
- 88.58 Ensure that women, children, persons with disabilities, minority groups and rural communities are meaningfully engaged in the development and implementation of climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks (Fiji);
- 88.59 Continue efforts to combat climate change, including by considering the development and implementation of relocation strategies for coastal communities affected by rising sea levels (Fiji);
- 88.60 Continue to take adequate measures to mitigate the effects of climate change (India);
- 88.61 Continue efforts to mitigate the negative effects of climate change (Iraq);
- 88.62 Improve its ability to manage unexpected disasters and minimize disaster risks (Marshall Islands);
- 88.63 Continue efforts to enhance adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change (Nepal);
- 88.64 Continue efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including through the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2018) regarding the design and approval of a comprehensive national strategy on children (Uruguay);

- 88.65 **Adopt and implement a comprehensive national strategy for children to cover all areas of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and allocate appropriate human, technical and financial resources for its implementation (Sudan);**
- 88.66 **Strengthen coordination and availability of services for survivors of domestic violence (Canada);**
- 88.67 **Commit resources, including through international cooperation, to establish shelters and safe homes for women and children subjected to violence (Iceland).**
89. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Palau and have been noted by Palau:**
- 89.1 **Integrate as soon as possible the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into national legislation (France);**
- 89.2 **Prioritize accession to a number of core human rights treaties and, in this regard, intensify cooperation with OHCHR (Armenia);**
- 89.3 **Transform the reporting committee on United Nations conventions on human rights into a standing interministerial body responsible for the implementation, reporting and follow-up on all human rights recommendations and commitments (Portugal);**
- 89.4 **Take appropriate measures to fight all forms of discrimination (Italy);**
- 89.5 **Enforce regulations that protect foreign workers, particularly regarding discrimination in employment, pay, housing, education and access to social services, and investigate and prosecute violations (United States of America);**
- 89.6 **Continue to implement measures and initiatives under the action plan for climate and disaster resilient low emission development in order to combat climate change and strengthen communities' resilience (Dominican Republic);**
- 89.7 **Continue efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change on livelihoods and human rights (Sudan);**
- 89.8 **Consider progressive anti-discrimination law reforms to guarantee comprehensive protection against discrimination in accordance with international human rights law, norms and standards (Fiji);**
- 89.9 **Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that addresses direct and indirect discrimination and encompasses all the prohibited grounds of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity (Iceland);**
- 89.10 **Prohibit discrimination in employment, including discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity (Canada);**
- 89.11 **Revise the Constitution to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (Denmark);**
- 89.12 **Introduce in its Constitution provisions explicitly prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Luxembourg);**
- 89.13 **Review the legislative framework to explicitly prohibit discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity and eliminate all legal or administrative provisions that may discriminate against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Mexico);**
- 89.14 **Introduce comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity (Netherlands);**
- 89.15 **Take further steps to support the enjoyment of the rights of those with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, including through the**

introduction of legislation and policies to protect against discrimination (New Zealand);

89.16 Invest further efforts for the protection of victims of trafficking, especially children (Armenia);

89.17 Take concrete measures to better protect migrant workers against ill-treatment and exploitation, paying particular attention to the fight against human trafficking and discrimination (Canada);

89.18 Effectively combat human trafficking and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women (China);

89.19 Establish standard procedures for identifying and supporting victims of human trafficking (Estonia);

89.20 Pursue current efforts against human trafficking (France);

89.21 Intensify its efforts towards the protection of and assistance to victims of human trafficking (Georgia);

89.22. Implement a systematic approach against trafficking in persons, especially women and children (Germany);

89.23 Sustain its endeavours to counter trafficking in human beings and to guarantee assistance to the victims (Italy);

89.24 Supplement its anti-trafficking legislation with measures for the protection and assistance of victims (Luxembourg);

89.25 Continue efforts to support the effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, including through increased work to investigate, prosecute and convict traffickers and the adoption of procedures to better identify and support victims of trafficking (New Zealand);

89.26 Continue efforts to eliminate human trafficking, including by maintaining its cooperation with IOM (Portugal);

89.27 Develop and implement a national action plan on modern slavery with clear performance indicators and allocation of responsibilities (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

89.28 Enforce the anti-trafficking laws by prosecuting officials for illegal practices that facilitate trafficking and do not prosecute or penalize victims for unlawful acts traffickers compelled the victims to commit (United States of America);

89.29 Increase efforts to investigate and prosecute human traffickers, including complicit officials, and sentence convicted traffickers to adequate penalties (United States of America);

89.30 Continue to promote, through the Ministry of Health and Human Services and health information resource centres, the knowledge of the population about the services available in relation to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Cuba);

89.31 Strengthen efforts to develop programmes for capacity-building and training in the areas of education, employment and business to boost economic activities, development and livelihoods (Indonesia);

89.32 Strengthen its development policy and fully authorize resources for the benefits of its people through friendly relations and collaboration with other States and with regional and international organizations (Indonesia);

89.33 Mainstream human rights in the development of its public policies and programmes and facilitate greater participation of women in the process (Indonesia);

- 89.34 Continue to address the issue of alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse by renewing the Substance Abuse Prevention Strategic Plan and conducting awareness-raising activities (Japan);
- 89.35 Take further measures to reduce non-communicable diseases and to promote mental health and reproductive health among children, adolescents and adults (Japan);
- 89.36 Consider instituting free universal education, at least until the age of 16, and develop school-based policies on physical education (Mauritius);
- 89.37 Repeal and amend laws and regulations establishing age and third-party authorization requirements for adolescents to access sexual and reproductive health information, education and services (Netherlands);
- 89.38 Continue to take measures to deal with the socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (Pakistan);
- 89.39 Continue to strengthen its successful social protection programmes to provide for the best possible well-being and quality of life for its people (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 89.40 Take effective measures to reduce poverty population and meet the basic needs of its people (China);
- 89.41 Develop and strengthen national action plans and policies for poverty alleviation for the most vulnerable groups and with a human rights perspective, focusing on the targets of Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 10 (Paraguay);
- 89.42 Continue to promote gender equality and support programmes for children, elderly persons and persons with disabilities (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 89.43 Eliminate child marriage and child labour and guarantee children's right to education, especially girls' (China);
- 89.44 Raise the age of criminal responsibility (Estonia);
- 89.45 Further strengthen efforts to protect children in Palau, including by explicitly prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings, without any exceptions (Ireland);
- 89.46 Adopt and enforce legislation to specifically criminalize the sexual exploitation of children (Malaysia);
- 89.47 Establish a child protection system to combat violence against and exploitation of children and work with international partners to implement this recommendation (Maldives);
- 89.48 Amend the legislation in force to prohibit corporal punishment of girls, boys and adolescents in all settings, raise the minimum age for marriage to 18 years and bring the juvenile justice system in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Mexico);
- 89.49 Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings (Montenegro);
- 89.50 Amend the existing legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings (Paraguay);
- 89.51 Strengthen teacher training on alternative non-violent forms of discipline (Timor-Leste);
- 89.52 Amend the existing legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings (Ukraine);
- 89.53 Continue to prioritize the promotion of gender equality through its policies and programmes, including through the allocation of adequate resources (Australia);

- 89.54 Take effective measures to better assist victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including by establishing a coordinated referral system (Denmark);
- 89.55 Continue efforts to combat and eliminate violence against women and children and consider the development and adoption of a national strategy to frame and advance these efforts (Fiji);
- 89.56 Take measures to enable systematic prosecution of cases of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (Germany);
- 89.57 Train law enforcement to deal with survivors of domestic abuse and gender-based violence in a supportive and effective manner which encourages disclosure of abuse and crimes and fosters prevention (Ireland);
- 89.58 Continue its efforts in the field of gender equality and combat gender-based violence and domestic violence (Luxembourg);
- 89.59 Step up efforts to increase the participation of women in the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, particularly at decision-making levels (Bulgaria);
- 89.60 Facilitate the greater participation and representation of women in public office, especially at decision-making levels (Chile);
- 89.61 Maintain efforts in the implementation of the 2020–2022 country plan to continue increasing the participation of women in the political, economic and social life of the nation (Cuba);
- 89.62 Take further steps to increase the participation of women in the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, particularly at decision-making levels, including through the adoption and implementation of temporary special measures (Iceland);
- 89.63 Increase the percentage of women participating in public and political life (Iraq);
- 89.64 Increase the participation of women at decision-making levels and address social factors that impede their participation (Israel);
- 89.65 Formulate policies to promote the participation of women in public positions and decision-making processes at the national level (Mexico);
- 89.66 Continue efforts to promote women's participation in political life and their access to decision-making positions (Morocco);
- 89.67 Increase the participation and representation of women in public and political life through public policies and awareness-raising programmes and strengthen education programmes on sexual and reproductive health (Spain);
- 89.68 Ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are guaranteed by law in all areas of life, in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources to effectively implement the national disability-inclusive policy (Bulgaria);
- 89.69 Continue efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular by improving mobility and equitable access to public places and services (Canada);
- 89.70 Effectively implement the national disability-inclusive policy (Israel);
- 89.71 Promote inclusive education for children with disabilities (Malaysia);
- 89.72 Promote and increase efforts to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities and the elderly (Morocco);
- 89.73 Adopt legislation to guarantee equality and non-discrimination of persons living with disabilities in all aspects of life and allocate sufficient technical, budgetary and human resources (Spain);

89.74 Step up efforts to improve the plight of socially vulnerable groups of the population, especially migrant workers, including by ensuring their protection from discrimination (Russian Federation);

89.75 Further strengthen the efforts in implementing a sustainable development policy for the well-being of its people (Timor-Leste).

90. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Palau was headed by Honourable Mrs. J. Uduch, Vice President and Minister of State and composed of the following members:

- Mr. Jeffrey Antol, Director, Bureau of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of State;
 - Ms. Roxanne Blesam, Chief of Staff, Office of the Vice President and Minister of State;
 - Ms. Hila Asanuma, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General;
 - Mr. Kyonori Tellames, Associate Planning Coordinator, Ministry of Finance;
 - Ms. Laydee M. Ngirmeriil, Ministry of State.
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