NATIONS UNIES
LE HAUT-COMMISSAIRE
AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME

UNITED NATIONS
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

20 January 2025

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Cyprus by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 46th session in April-May 2024. As the final outcome report on the review of Cyprus was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 57th 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/cy-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. Constantinos Kombos
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus

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

OHCHR takes positive note of the re-accreditation, in October 2022, of the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights (CAPHR) with "A" status, and of the signature, in January 2021, of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, of which ratification is encouraged.

As recommended during the UPR review, Cyprus is encouraged to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the European Convention on Nationality, and the Council of Europe Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in relation to State Succession.

The enactment, in 2021, of the Law on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which recognizes femicide as a specific offence and as an aggravating factor in sentencing, was noteworthy. However, the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions, including in senior positions in the public and private sectors, the high rate of unemployment among women compared with men, and the continuing gender wage gap continue to be matters of concern that would require further efforts.

Positive note is taken of the enactment, in 2023, of a law banning any form of conversion 'therapy' aimed at changing or suppressing a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, as well as of a draft bill for Legal Gender Recognition currently under parliamentary consideration. Further progress would be needed to legalize same-sex marriage and ensure equal adoption rights to all couples, irrespective of their sexual orientation.

As raised during the UPR review, progress is also needed to combat violence and discrimination against members of racial and ethnic minorities, including Roma, as well as LGBTIQ+ persons, refugees and asylum-seekers, and persons with disabilities, and to ensure their equal access to employment, housing, education, health care and public services.

Cyprus is encouraged to continue the practice of developing an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix of thematically clustered recommendations may be of use in the development of such an implementation plan. The Government is encouraged to explicitly link each UPR recommendation to corresponding

recommendations from other international and regional human rights mechanisms and to the relevant SDG and its targets. This will, in turn, facilitate the creation of synergies between UPR implementation and SDG-related actions and reporting within the context of the Voluntary National Review (VNR).

The Government is also encouraged to establish a national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up, 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 about two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, the Government of Cyprus 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
20 January 2025