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

8 January 2026

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Kenya by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 49th session in April/May 2025. As the final outcome report on the review of Kenya was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 60th 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/ke-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. Musalia Mudavadi, E.G.H.
Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary
for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs
of the Republic of Kenya

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

OHCHR takes positive note of the progress reported by Kenya during its review in relation to economic and social rights, including the reduction of food insecurity through targeted interventions such as subsidized agricultural inputs and climate smart farming – whilst noting that further measures are still required to reduce food insecurity. Also notable is the continued advancement of the business and human rights agenda and the hosting of the African Business and Human Rights Forum in 2024.

While noting that Kenya did not support recommendations to abolish the death penalty, the advancement of national dialogue and the ongoing legislative initiatives to abolish the death penalty, as mentioned by the Kenyan delegation during the UPR review, is welcomed. Kenya is encouraged to abolish the death penalty as soon as possible, and in the interim, to maintain a moratorium on executions.

Ongoing initiatives to overcome challenges in the operationalization of the Prevention of Torture Act, including through intensified training and the introduction of a standardised charge sheet and a rapid reference guide to aid in prosecuting torture-related cases, are welcomed. While noting initiatives taken to strengthen police training on crowd management, Kenya is encouraged to further strengthen measures to ensure the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of speech, by preventing the excessive use of force by the police and other security agents and by investigating police misconduct, and by criminalizing, investigating and prosecuting those responsible for enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings by security forces.

During the UPR review, the Kenyan delegation acknowledged the increase in cases of femicide in the country. The establishment of a taskforce in 2025 to investigate the causes of femicide and formulate proposals for consideration by the Government is a welcome step. OHCHR looks forward to the implementation of the supported recommendations relating to the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Due note is taken of the ongoing review of the 2014 National Policy and Action Plan on Human Rights with the view to integrating emerging human rights issues. Kenya is encouraged to also integrate UPR recommendations into the Plan, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, county governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix of thematically clustered recommendations may be of use for this endeavour. 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).

Noting that Kenya supported a recommendation to strengthen the National Committee on International and Regional Human Rights Obligations as a national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up, the Government is encouraged to further strengthen this Committee 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 Kenya may wish to continue with the practice of submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2027, detailing implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR
January 2026