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

17 June 2026

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Belarus by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 50th session in November 2025. As the final outcome report on the review of Belarus was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 61st session, I have taken note of the efforts of Belarus to implement specific recommendations since the previous review.

A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations, starting with those supported by Belarus, is available at OHCHR's website (https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/by-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. Maxim Ryzhenkov
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus

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

It is positively noted that Belarus has supported a recommendation to move towards the abolition of the death penalty. Belarus is encouraged to take steps to implement this commitment.

Positive note is also taken that Belarus has amended legislation on domestic violence and simplified the procedure for issuing protective orders. The adoption of legislation in 2022 ensuring equality for persons with disabilities and non-discrimination on the grounds of disability is a welcome development. It is also encouraging that Belarus has amended the Act on the Rights of the Child to protect children from illegal activities on the internet and from sexual violence.

It is deeply regrettable that Belarus has withdrawn from the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Belarus is encouraged to consider ratifying this instrument again. Belarus is also urged to ensure that all allegations of torture, ill-treatment and death in custody are independently and effectively investigated. It should guarantee freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, allowing the independent functioning of the media and civil society organizations, and ensure that all persons arbitrarily detained for the peaceful exercise of those freedoms are released.

Belarus is also strongly encouraged to establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles.

Belarus is encouraged to develop an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, 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. Belarus 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).

Belarus 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 which 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, Belarus may wish to consider resuming the practice of submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2028, detailing both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR
June 2026