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

A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations, starting with those supported by your Croatia, is available at OHCHR's website (https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/hr-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. Gordan Grlić-Radman
Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia

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

Positive note is taken of the ongoing efforts by Croatia to reduce early school dropout rates and improve access to quality primary education, with particular attention to marginalized communities, including Roma communities. These inclusive policies represent an important investment in equality of opportunity and social cohesion.

Following concerns raised during the UPR, Croatia is encouraged to continue its efforts to strengthen the protection of journalists, in particular by transposing the European Union directive on Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) into national legislation. Such measures will reinforce the fundamental principles of freedom of expression, media pluralism, and the rule of law.

Concerns regarding discrimination were also raised during the UPR. Continued efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of anti-discrimination legislation would be important, particularly with regard to the protection of ethnic minorities, women, and LGBTI persons. Additional measures are encouraged to reinforce strategies addressing racism and xenophobia, and to strengthen the implementation of laws and policies protecting women and children from domestic and sexual violence, with a gender-sensitive approach and standardized training for relevant officials.

Croatia is also 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, the Republic of Croatia Ombudsman, 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. Croatia 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).

Croatia is further 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, Croatia may wish to continue with 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