

Statement by Representative of Turkmenistan
United Nations Human Rights Council
24th Session
18 September 2013

Mr President,
Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's sincere appreciation to all the delegations that were engaged in constructive dialogue during the 16th Session of the Working Group on Universal Periodic Review on Turkmenistan on 22 April of this year as well as all delegations and stakeholders that have participated in today's session.

I would also like to express our special gratitude to the members of the Troika - Botswana, Ecuador and the Philippines as well as the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council for their hard work, assistance and cooperation in preparing the report of the interactive dialogue.

Turkmenistan attaches great importance and supports the work of the Human Rights Council in the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights. We believe that the Universal Periodic Review reinforces our commitment to genuine progress in the field of human rights on the ground.

As you are aware, during the review, Turkmenistan received a total of 183 recommendations, 85 of them were accepted during the Working Group session and 90 have been taken for further consultations with relevant national institutions and stakeholders.

In consideration of the 90 left recommendations, within the Interagency Commission on implementation of the international obligations of

Turkmenistan on human rights and international humanitarian law, the relevant Government agencies, National human rights institution and national non-governmental organizations were actively engaged.

After careful deliberations and consultations, Government of Turkmenistan decided to fully accept 166 recommendations and partially accept 1 recommendation out of 183 recommendations. 16 recommendations didn't enjoy our support. The views on accepted recommendations as well as the explanation of our position on rejected recommendations are detailed in the report of the Working Group and its addendum.

The majority of accepted recommendations are in line with human rights agenda of Turkmenistan and relate to: ratification of international treaties, implementation of the international human rights instruments that have been ratified by Turkmenistan; promotion and increase awareness on human rights issues, training judiciary and law enforcement bodies on human rights issues, prevention of torture; gender equality, protection of women, children and minorities; the fight against human trafficking, realization of the rights of freedom of expression and access to information, creation of the independent National Human Rights Institution, invitation of the special rapporteurs. Along this agenda, my Government assures that it will endeavour to implement the recommendations, which it have accepted with a view to the overall promotion and protection of human rights in Turkmenistan.

As mentioned before 16 recommendations didn't enjoy our support. Some of the recommendations are not supported due to the lack of evidence cited in the recommendations, for example in recommendation 114.2-114.6. And a number of recommendations that did not enjoy our support are in contradiction with our legal and cultural foundations.

The recommendations related to the signature and ratification of the

various Conventions, including the ratification of the Rome Statute would require careful consideration and analysis of the various branches of our Government and the legislature before action could be taken on them.

Mr. President,

Returning to the accepted recommendations I would like to highlight some of the main areas.

Turkmenistan will consider the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and punishment.

The issue of ratification of the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families is being currently explored.

The ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of a Child on a communications procedure as well as Convention to fight discrimination in education are also in the process of detailed consideration.

Turkmenistan accepts the recommendations (113.22-113.29) related to establishing a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles.

My Government accepts recommendations 113.30-113.47 on the consideration of the issue of invitation of the UN OHCHR Special Rapporteurs to Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistan accepts the recommendations (113.49-113.54) calling for furthering protection and promotion the rights of women. Turkmenistan provides equal right for men and women to enjoy all civil and political rights

stipulated in the international conventions and treaties ratified by the country. The Family Code of Turkmenistan adopted on January 10, 2012 guarantees equal rights for men and women in family relations. The Law of Turkmenistan "On state guarantees of equal rights for women" sets the state guarantees for women to enjoy, on an equal basis with men, human rights and freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural and other fields.

The Law of Turkmenistan "On Combating Human Trafficking" adopted in 2007 is aimed at providing state guarantees of individual freedom, protection of society against human trafficking, including the trafficking of women.

The work on the adoption of new laws on gender equality, women's participation in public affairs and domestic violence will continue.

Turkmenistan accepts the recommendations 113.70-113.72. The competent authorities of Turkmenistan, in accordance with the law, verify all claims and complaints regarding human rights violations filed by citizens and other people.

We also accept the recommendations 113.76-113.79. According to Article 30 of the Constitution, citizens have the right to form political parties and other public associations functioning within the framework of the law. Public associations are an integral part of the civil society. The Law of Turkmenistan "On Public Associations" is aimed at realization of the right of citizens to form associations and defines the legal, institutional basis for the formation, operation, reorganization and liquidation of public associations, and also regulates the social relations arising in this area. Turkmenistan has no laws restricting the activities of NGOs.

According to Article 28 of the Constitution of Turkmenistan, Turkmen citizens have the right for freedom of opinion and expression, the right to obtain information, if it does not present the state or other secret protected by law.

The Law of Turkmenistan "On Media" adopted last year sets out principles of the state policy in regards to the freedom of the media. No one can deny or prevent the media from dissemination of information of public interest, except in accordance with the law; citizens of Turkmenistan have the right to use any form of media to express an opinion; the freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information can not be restricted except in accordance with law if it is necessary for the protection of the constitutional order, health, honor and dignity, private life of citizens and public order; the Law also provides for the unhindered access of citizens of Turkmenistan to reports and materials of foreign media.

Turkmenistan accepts recommendation 113.90. The Law of Turkmenistan "On political parties" adopted in 2012 regulates the relations arising in connection with implementation of the right of citizens to form political parties, in particular creation, operation, reorganization and dissolution of activities of the political parties.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Turkmenistan, whose priority is consistent creation of favourable conditions for realization of the rights and freedoms of every citizen, will, in cooperation with the UN human rights bodies, relevant stakeholders, including national NGOs, ensure the implementation of the recommendations received within the second cycle of the UPR process.

Thank you Mr. President.

AMB