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Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Iceland

* The annex to the present report is circulated as received

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	3
I Summary of the proceedings of the review process	3
A. Presentation by the State under review	3
B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review	5
II. Conclusions and/or recommendations	14
Annex	
Composition of the delegation	26

Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-sixth session from 31st October to 11 November 2016. The review of Iceland was held at the 4th meeting on 1 November 2016. The delegation of Iceland was headed by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Ms. Ragnhildur HJALTADÓTTIR. At its 10th meeting held on 4 November 2016, the Working Group adopted the report on Iceland.

2. On 12 January 2016, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Iceland: Algeria, Philippines and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Iceland:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/26/ISL/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Iceland through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the UPR.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The delegation of Iceland reported that following the recent parliamentary elections, 48 per cent of the members of parliament were women.

6. The Universal Periodic Review provided a unique opportunity to address both achievements and challenges within States.

7. The delegation explained that Icelandic law was based on a dualistic system. It was not sufficient to incorporate a convention as a whole into domestic law, because that did not allow for a really effective implementation of the convention. Consequently, the ratification process could be lengthy, which has caused some criticism.

8. Iceland had a long tradition of democracy and a robust institutional framework for protecting human rights, including a well-functioning judicial system and parliamentary ombudsman.

9. Civil society in Iceland was active in scrutinizing the actions of authorities and holding them accountable, and it played an indispensable role in human rights protection.

10. For seven years in a row, Iceland had topped the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Index, and had remained top of the Global Peace Index since its launch in 2007.

11. Iceland's first UPR review in 2011 had resulted in 84 recommendations, the majority of which had been accepted by the Icelandic authorities. An inter-ministerial working group had consulted civil society in preparing the report for the current review; a draft report was published on the Ministry of Interior web-site. Civil society had also submitted its own reports for the current review.

12. The strongest domestic criticism during the UPR preparation concerned in particular the slow process of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. As of 24 September 2016 the Government had ratified that Convention, following the adoption of a parliamentary resolution.

13. Since Iceland submitted its report, there had been some further developments, mostly as a direct result of the UPR process.

14. Following recent changes to the Act on Gender Equality a wage equality standard had been introduced, in the form of equal pay certification for companies and institutions. A recent action plan on gender equality provided for the introduction in the next four years of gender mainstreaming in all policy and decision making, gendered budgeting, and a review of the existing Act on Gender Equality. The action plan covered the labour market and equal pay, gender-based violence, education, health and international cooperation. It provided for measures to increase the role of men in achieving gender equality. The maximum payment for parental leave had recently been increased significantly, to enable both parents to take parental leave.

15. The proposed revision of the Social Security Act had been approved by Parliament in October 2016, to simplify the benefit system and increase the flexibility of voluntary retirement. The minimum pension had been increased, to ensure an adequate standard of living for those on the lowest incomes.

16. In June 2016, the Althingi had adopted a new Act on Foreigners, providing for increased safety for people seeking international protection, with a special focus on the best interests of the child, vulnerability and the situation of stateless persons. There would be a time limit of 18 months for reviewing applications for international protection and for residency. There would be a reception and screening centre for asylum seekers, where their needs and health conditions would be assessed upon arrival. The number of asylum seekers was predicted to reach 1000 in 2016.

17. An action plan on integration, adopted in September 2016, aimed to draw upon diverse cultural backgrounds and immigrants' knowledge and skills to enrich Icelandic society. Steps would be taken to ensure easy access for immigrants to public services, along with measures to encourage active participation in society. The authorities would seek broad consensus with non-governmental organisations, the media and the private sector in implementing the action plan.

18. The delegation emphasized the priority given to education in Iceland, which was egalitarian and homogenous based on values of democracy, inclusion and equal opportunities. Conscious of the dangers of hate speech, the Ministry of Education had been involved in the "No hate speech movement" since 2014, with the active participation of young people.

19. For the first time, the Minister of Interior had submitted a human rights report to the Althingi in 2016. The report outlined an important step for further progress with the establishment of an inter-ministerial human rights steering committee. The task of which is to enhance and coordinate the implementation of human rights commitments and follow-up on the outcome of the universal periodic review.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

20. During the interactive dialogue, 66 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

21. Togo welcomed the progress made by Iceland towards the implementation of the recommendations accepted during the second UPR cycle. Togo noted with satisfaction the inclusive participatory process during the preparation of the report and welcomed Iceland's accession to various international human rights instruments.

22. Tunisia commended the efforts to protect the rights of women and asked about measures taken to combat discrimination and violence against women and to achieve gender equality in the labour market, especially wage parity. Tunisia inquired about measures taken to establish a national human rights institution and to combat early school dropouts.

23. Turkey welcomed the high percentage of women in Parliament, measures taken to increase women's representation, including in the police, and Iceland's praiseworthy approach to equal pay standards. Turkey supported the recommendations of treaty bodies to Iceland regarding cases of violence against women and preventing child sexual abuse.

24. Ukraine commended Iceland's promotion of gender equality as a roadmap to follow, including through support to the #HeForShe and Barbershop Conference campaigns. Ukraine commended progress in ratifying instruments for the rights of persons with disabilities and Iceland's contribution to humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees.

25. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland noted legislative developments on gender equality, rights of immigrants, asylum-seekers and elderly persons. It requested an update on levels of racial and ethnic discrimination, on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and on progress in establishing a national human rights institution and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

26. United States of America commended Iceland for its commitment to tolerance, gender equality and the rights of LGBTI persons and the reception of Syrian refugees for resettlement. It welcomed the establishment of a reception centre for asylum-seekers and human trafficking victims and the opening of a new prison. It expressed concern at continued problems of gender-based violence, violence against children and societal discrimination against immigrants and non-prosecution and conviction of human trafficking offenders.

27. Uruguay welcomed the efforts of Iceland to promote gender equality, advance LGBTI rights in the areas of marriage and adoption, and address domestic violence through a multi-sectoral approach, but noted that the National Plan of Action to combat sexual and gender based violence had not been renewed.

28. Afghanistan welcomed the amendments to the Gender Equality Act in order to accelerate progress on gender equality and equal opportunity. It also appreciated the establishment of an equal opportunity fund with the aim of funding programmes and research on promoting gender equality nationally and internationally.

29. Albania applauded Iceland's record of supporting a rules-based system for the promotion and protection of human rights, consistent with major human rights institutions. Albania invited the Government to further strengthen its national efforts and human rights mechanisms.

30. Algeria welcomed the measures taken by Iceland since 2011 to fight against gender inequality and in particular, to achieve wage equality and set a minimum quota for women

serving on public committees and company boards. Algeria also welcomed steps taken with respect to rights of persons with disabilities, particularly through law and policy.

31. Argentina congratulated Iceland for its endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration and its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Argentina noted the adoption of normative and institutional initiatives to protect and improve the situation of women.

32. Armenia commended Iceland for its exemplary human rights record, particularly on gender equality and women's rights, the inclusion of human rights in the curricula and efforts to provide inclusive education. Armenia welcomed legislative and administrative measures to promote rights of persons with disabilities and encouraged continued ratification of human rights instruments.

33. Australia commended progress, while noting that the Icelandic Human Rights Centre had no on-going funding or statutory standing as a national human rights institution. Australia noted the lack of comprehensive legislation to protect the rights of intersex people and called on Iceland to strengthen protection for LGBTI persons. Australia called on Iceland to strengthen protection for the elderly.

34. Bangladesh noted the concerns of treaty bodies over crucial areas of inequality affecting women, especially those by CEDAW about the difficulties encountered by migrant women in employment and health care and about their exposure to violence. It noted the concern of the Committee on the Rights of the Child about the lack of the best interest principle to ensuring parents' access to the child.

35. Brazil shared the concern of CRC about the possibility of migrant children not being covered by child healthcare services. It urged Iceland to improve access of children and adolescents to educational materials and general information about health services. Brazil commended the amendment to the Gender Equality Act to accelerate progress on gender equality.

36. Canada congratulated the achievement of the best performance in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap index and encouraged Iceland to continue efforts to close the gender pay gap by 2022. Canada commended resettling of refugees referred by UNHCR and appreciated its on-going exchanges with Iceland on best practices on integration and the high participation rate of migrants in the labour market.

37. Chile highlighted the initiatives undertaken by Iceland aimed at countering gender discrimination, in particular the establishment of a 40% quota in governmental committees and public businesses' councils and boards. It acknowledged the progress made by Iceland in the areas of migration and refugee status, as well as the legislative measures taken to improve the rights of persons with disabilities.

38. China expressed concern about racial discrimination and xenophobia and lack of improvement in overcoming gender inequality and women often suffer from violence. The rights of children, older persons and persons with disabilities were yet to be fully guaranteed. Migrants were subject to discrimination in employment, education and healthcare. China urged Iceland to take effective measures to resolve those problems.

39. Colombia highlighted Iceland's leadership in the areas of gender equality and rights of women. It highlighted the adoption of the National Action Plan against trafficking in persons, as well as the decision of Iceland to accept more refugees in the context of the on-going crisis.

40. Czech Republic appreciated the information presented, particularly about the final stages of the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

41. Denmark welcomed that Iceland expected to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture before the end of 2016. Denmark commended Iceland for its intention to establish a national human rights institution based on the Paris Principles. Denmark wished to learn how Iceland faced the challenges regarding trafficking due to greatly increased tourism.
42. Ecuador welcomed the amendment of the Gender Equality Act and the enactment of the Foreigners Act and the Immigration Act. In view of the challenge of implementation, Ecuador hoped that such initiatives as the adoption of a human rights national action plan and the establishment of a national human rights institution would be achieved in the near future.
43. Egypt was deeply concerned by the increasing incidents of hate crimes, racist discourse, xenophobia and discriminatory policies in Iceland. It was concerned about the existing gender pay gap for work of equal value and discrimination against persons with disabilities in numerous fields
44. Estonia commended Iceland for taking further steps in dealing with cases of domestic violence and paying attention to violence against persons with disabilities, especially women. Estonia welcomed greater attention to human trafficking and encouraged Iceland to further involve civil society in the development, implementation and evaluation of anti-trafficking policy. Estonia appreciated Iceland's active participation in the global coalition of Freedom Online and its excellent results in ensuring a free and open internet.
45. Finland was pleased that civil society had been consulted and given the opportunity to give their views on the national report; that Iceland had amended the Penal Code to criminalize domestic violence in compliance with the Istanbul Convention; and that a legislative proposal on establishing a national human rights institution was under public consultation. Finland encouraged Iceland to continue its important work in improving Barnahus services for children with disabilities and in promoting the Barnahus model regionally.
46. France welcomed measures to promote gender equality as well as the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
47. Georgia highlighted the progress made by Iceland since its first UPR, particularly the adoption of Acts on Foreigners and Immigrants, and initiatives implemented to combat gender inequality, including the Equal Pay Systems Standard. Georgia welcomed the ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking in Human Beings and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
48. Germany commended Iceland for its commitment to uphold and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. Germany noted, however, that Iceland had not yet ratified the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as indicated during the first review.
49. Ghana commended Iceland on the high percentage of women in Parliament and welcomed the action plan on Gender Equality within the police to enhance representation and professional development of women.
50. Replying to questions about the establishment of a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, the representative of Iceland, Ms. Ragna Bjarnadóttir, said that a legislative proposal had been drafted by the Ministry of the Interior following open consultations, including for a new body based upon the existing Icelandic Human Rights Centre. The proposed national institution would take on activities required under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A new national action plan for human rights would be presented to Parliament in 2017.

51. Concerning ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, a proposal drafted by the Ministry of the Interior provided for the Parliamentary Ombudsman to fulfil the functions of the national preventive mechanism required under the Optional Protocol. The Icelandic authorities were making every effort so that the Ombudsman can take over this new function in early 2017.

52. The delegation provided an overview of current legislation to combat the use of torture, including that a prisoner could appeal against his or her conditions of detention to the Ministry of the Interior, which had to respond within four working days. Torture was not specifically defined in the Penal Code, but Article 68 of Iceland's Constitution, in line with Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, prohibited torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment. Unlawful compulsion and wrongful arrest were prohibited under the Penal Code.

53. As for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, since 2014 work had been in progress, based on public consultation, to revise the Legal Capacity Act, the Act on the affairs of persons with disabilities and the Social Services Act, to protect the legal capacity of such persons, prevent their forced hospitalisation and provide for user-controlled personal assistance and independent living. It was foreseen that the Ministry of Welfare would present an action plan, on matters of disability, on the internet for open review. Progress was being made on pensions for persons with disabilities. The Social Security Act adopted in October 2016 had increased pensions for those on the lowest incomes.

54. In response to a question from Bangladesh, the delegation stated that since 2011 Iceland's official development assistance had increased by 74 per cent in real terms. Iceland's development strategy 2017-2021 would be decided upon by the new Government.

55. Concerning measures to combat trafficking, a national steering group was responsible, in line with a national action plan, for identifying victims of trafficking and of forced labour; devising an educational programme on trafficking for relevant professionals and the trade unions; and training labour inspectors to detect forced labour. Iceland was planning a comprehensive public awareness campaign on workers' rights.

56. Greece commended Iceland for its recent activities to promote gender equality, amendments to the Gender Equality Act, including quotas, commitments to promote and protect LGBTI rights, its comprehensive integration policy for refugees and migrants and significant efforts on behalf of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

57. Guatemala noted the progress made in the promotion and protection of human rights in Iceland, and particularly with regard to refugees and asylum seekers. However, national refugee laws should be reviewed so that they are fully aligned with provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and relevant international standards.

58. Haiti noted that model improvements have been reported with respect to gender equality, ethnic discrimination and racism, and the rights of people with disabilities, particularly through the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Haiti praised Iceland as a model for all small island nations in many areas, including human rights.

59. Hungary complimented the efforts made to develop the Equal Pay Standard, which might serve as a valuable example to other countries seeking to achieve gender equality. Hungary commended the multi-faceted work and national institution functions of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre, but noted its powers, independence and financing were not established by statute. Hungary asked about the intentions of Iceland on ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

60. Indonesia noted many initiatives undertaken to combat gender inequality as well as the adoption of the Act on Foreigners in June 2016 and the Act of Immigrants in 2012 aimed at strengthening the legal protection of foreigners and immigrants. Indonesia also appreciated the adoption of legislation on judicial reform in May 2016.
61. Iran (Islamic Republic of) noted the reports of sexual abuse of children and the reduced quality and availability of public healthcare services, notably for families of children with disabilities. It noted the increasing number of cases of violence against women and the persisting attitudes and stereotypes leading to violence against women.
62. Iraq commended the follow-up of Iceland to previous recommendations, which were additional steps to promote and protect human rights domestically. Iraq acknowledged the initiatives of Iceland to reinforce the rights of older persons by providing for domestic assistance and nursing care.
63. Italy took note of the efforts of Iceland to combat domestic violence, particularly with regard to the “Keep the Window Open” model aimed at improving procedures in dealing with domestic violence to ensure more safety, as well as improved assistance services for victims.
64. Japan highly commended the measures taken to improve the status and participation of women in society. Japan asked Iceland to share information on measures to implement the 2030 Agenda. Japan commended the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and asked about new legal systems or measures introduced in that connection. Japan inquired about positive progress made or difficulties encountered in preparing for the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
65. Lebanon noted that Iceland had rigorously followed up on the recommendations from the previous UPR in 2011, in particular with respect to the amendments to anti-discrimination laws and to the achievement of gender equality.
66. Libya commended Iceland for the critical steps taken to ratify the European agreement on human rights and harmonize national legislation with that agreement.
67. Maldives acknowledged the commitment of Iceland to ensure strong representation of women in public institutions, including the implementation of the minimum gender quota. Maldives appreciated the measures taken to protect the rights of persons with disabilities through the 2011 Act on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
68. Mexico acknowledged the progress made by Iceland in developing initiatives in the areas of disability, rights of the child and migration. It particularly congratulated Iceland for the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
69. Mongolia highlighted Iceland’s policy actions to balance gender equality and increase the number of women employees in public services. Mongolia commended Iceland for its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, its support for the rights of elderly people, its focus on the rights of the child and for safeguarding the welfare of children. Mongolia commended Iceland for its continuous effort to combat domestic violence and sexual abuse through appropriate changes to legislation and practice.
70. Montenegro welcomed the high number of implemented recommendations and the determination of Iceland to further strengthen the national human rights institution by establishing it in accordance with the Paris Principles. Montenegro highlighted the gender equality policy and results achieved so far and encouraged Iceland to implement the recommendations of several treaty bodies to adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, covering all grounds.

71. Mozambique commended Iceland for topping the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index for the last seven years. Mozambique hailed the work of the Icelandic Integration Development Fund, which emphasized projects and research to combat ethnic discrimination and racism and strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations working with immigrants.

72. Namibia appreciated amendments to the Gender Equality Act and the introduction of the Equal Pay System Standard. Namibia welcomed Iceland's policy to grant immigrants equal access to the labour market and the initiatives to strengthen the position of refugees and asylum-seekers.

73. Netherlands encouraged Iceland to ratify the Istanbul Convention promptly and remarked on Iceland's strong record in gender equality, which served as a positive model. Netherlands noted that there was room to improve the equal chances of men and women in education and that the gender pay gap was not yet fully eradicated. Netherlands encouraged Iceland to continue its remarkable efforts on gender equality and to share its best practices.

74. Norway noted significant improvements in Iceland since the last review when society was suffering from the consequences of the global financial crisis. Icelandic authorities had through a targeted policy been able to improve the conditions for vulnerable groups. Norway noted that Iceland's rapidly growing economy brought new challenges, which could easily result in a larger unregulated labour market and a need for a comprehensive approach to tackling corruption and tax evasion. Norway encouraged Iceland to develop a wider scope of protection against discrimination and more tools to address the rights of persons who were subjected to human trafficking.

75. Pakistan commended the significant progress made in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. Pakistan appreciated the laws and policies introduced for the protection of refugees, migrants, older persons and persons with disabilities.

76. Panama welcomed the ratification by Iceland of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in 2014 and measures adopted for its effective implementation.

77. Paraguay welcomed the decision of Iceland to double the number of female ambassadors as part of its gender equality policy and the adoption of the Act on Execution of Sentences 2016 and the Foreigners Act 2016. Paraguay wished Iceland success in the implementation of the national action plan 2016-2019.

78. Philippines highlighted Iceland's recognition as a world leader on gender equality and urged Iceland to address concerns regarding the reportedly high number of cases of violence against women. Philippines welcomed the respect for worker's rights in Iceland and the incorporation of provisions of the ICMRW in Icelandic legislation. It remained concerned that Iceland had yet to establish a national human rights institution, with specific mandates on women and children's rights, and did not have a comprehensive national human rights action plan.

79. The Russian Federation noted that despite progress in the area of human rights, there were a growing number of cases involving violence against women and the high acquittal rates in such cases. It expressed concern about the low number of judicial proceedings and convictions in cases involving the sexual abuse of children.

80. Senegal welcomed the reforms undertaken to implement the accepted recommendations and noted with satisfaction the efforts of Iceland to enforce compliance with human rights standards, particularly in the area of equality of opportunity, non-discrimination and the protection of persons with disabilities.

81. Serbia encouraged Iceland to continue providing support to human rights oriented non-governmental organizations and to set up a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles. Serbia endorsed the recommendations of the Council of Europe's experts for a broader involvement of civil society in the development and implementation of anti-trafficking policies, including against labour exploitation.

82. Sierra Leone noted with interest Iceland's establishment of a national action plan against the trafficking in persons (2013-2016) and its active civil society. It encouraged Iceland to increase access to justice for women who were victims of sexual and domestic violence.

83. Replying to questions, the representative of Iceland, Ms. Ragna Bjarnadóttir, explained that according to the Constitution everyone was equal before the law, and all statutes and regulations had to be construed in line with that provision. The Ministry of Welfare was preparing legislation to prohibit all labour market discrimination. A legislation proposal banning all discrimination on the basis of national origin, race and colour had also been prepared and was subject to public consultation.

84. The delegation explained that immigration had increased. In 2016, 10 percent of the population had an immigrant background. New legislation on foreigners would come into effect from January 2017. The action plan on integration for 2016-2019 aimed to secure protection and equal opportunities for migrants. As for health care for migrants and their children, those coming from the European Economic Area enjoyed the same provision as nationals; and those entering the country from elsewhere had to purchase health-care for the first six months, after which they had full access to the national health system.

85. Concerning refugees, Iceland had redeemed its pledge and expected to accept 100 Syrian refugees by the end of 2016, through the office of the UNHCR. Asylum-seekers received free legal advice and could appeal the decisions made in their cases. The delegation stated that Iceland was in the process of opening its first formal reception centre for refugees for improving the asylum process and treatment of refugees and migrants.

86. Few unaccompanied minors sought asylum in Iceland, but in recent months twelve between the ages of 14 and 18 had done so. They were placed in foster care and their interviews were conducted at Barnahus (the Children's house) which also provided support from a range of professionals.

87. All foreign workers, who accounted for 9 per cent of the labour market, were entitled to equal treatment. Collective wage agreements applied to all members of a workforce irrespective of nationality, as did the Equal Pay Standard. The chief obstacle for foreign workers finding employment was usually a lack of knowledge of the Icelandic language.

88. An action plan was being prepared to improve the status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex persons. Draft legislation also included a proposal banning age-based discrimination in the labour market.

89. Iceland had only few and very small extremist groups, and those that existed had no electoral representation. The Penal Code provided for fines and imprisonment in serious cases of racial discrimination. Penalties for other offences could be increased if the offences included an element of racial discrimination. Violations by the media of the prohibition against racial discrimination were also subject to investigation and prosecution.

90. Public authorities had designated a hate crime officer. Details were provided of the programmes and projects being implemented in cooperation with the OSCE and ODIHR against hate crime including for training on investigations and data collection. The Ministry of Education was working on reducing online hate speech. Reference was made to the important work of the Icelandic Safer Internet Centre.

91. One of the first tasks of the new inter-ministerial human rights steering committee would be to examine the implications of ratifying OP-CRC-IC, OP-CRPD and OP-ICESCR, before a formal decision was taken.
92. Iceland was preparing to ratify the 1954 and 1961 conventions relating to statelessness. Iceland's new Act on Foreigners had been drafted with the help of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. There was a legislative proposal to amend the Citizenship Act, which if adopted would make way for ratification of the Protocol to the 1954 Convention.
93. Iceland was also preparing to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women. The delegation stated that domestic law was already in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, so there was no need for that Convention to be incorporated as a whole into domestic law.
94. Slovenia acknowledged the high human rights standards in Iceland and welcomed comprehensive information and activities on human rights education. Slovenia commended Iceland for its achievements and leading role on gender equality and women's rights. Slovenia noted that Iceland had not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.
95. Spain welcomed commitments of Iceland on gender equality and the rights of women, including those in the future national action plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Spain also noted the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
96. The State of Palestine welcomed the efforts of Iceland in combatting discrimination and racism and various measures taken to address this problem, including preparing legislative proposals on anti-discrimination. It welcomed the positive steps taken to improve the education, especially through the White Paper on Education Reform.
97. The Sudan commended the judicial reforms, in particular the adoption of legislation in 2016 to establish a third instance to the court system, a court of appeal, to enable a second hearing of the statements of witnesses and defendants. The Sudan commended the ratification of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and ILO core conventions.
98. Sweden welcomed the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, while noting civil society criticism that proposed national legislation did not live up to the Convention. Sweden appreciated the important raising of public awareness on domestic violence, however only a few cases had been prosecuted since the review in 2011 and relatively lenient sentences had been passed.
99. Tajikistan welcomed the comprehensive policy to establish a positive environment in schools for children and the responsibility of schools to establish a framework to fight against physical, mental and social violence. It noted the gender equality policy and the initiatives to support the rights of older persons by providing them with assistance and homecare.
100. Thailand applauded Iceland's plan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the CRPD. Thailand welcomed amendments to the Gender Equality Act, and to the Penal Code criminalizing domestic violence, but remained concerned at persistent gender-based discrimination in the labour market and about the protection of the rights of migrant women. Thailand welcomed Iceland's efforts to ensure compliance with the Standard Minimum rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and encouraged Iceland to fully implement the "Bangkok Rules" in order to improve the treatment of women prisoners.

101. Timor-Leste welcomed adoption of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons and for Iceland taking the lead in promoting women's rights particularly to increase the representation of women in the police. Timor-Leste commended Iceland's willingness to improve its asylum procedures.

102. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) noted with concern the significant wage gap between men and women and the lack of sufficient representation of women in decision-making processes, particularly in foreign affairs, the judiciary and academia. Like the Human Rights Committee, Venezuela expressed alarm at the situation of impunity of perpetrators for the sexual abuse of children.

103. Portugal congratulated Iceland on the 40th anniversary of its first gender equality legislation. It welcomed the new gender equality action plan for the period 2016-2019, aiming at accelerating progress in the area of gender equality and equal opportunities for women. Portugal welcomed the public consultation process on the legislative proposal on establishing a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles.

104. The representative of Iceland, Ms. Ragna Bjarnadóttir, stated that a cross-sectoral action group on the gender wage gap had recently proposed a plan for bridging this gap. Among the proposals was concrete action to increase the number of men in health care and education and the number of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

105. Regarding gender based violence, the delegation reported that increased awareness and the resulting change in attitudes have led to an increased number of cases being reported to the police. With more attention and a thorough review of working methods, improvements had been made by the police in responses to complaints and notifications of domestic violence, better follow-up measures, reforms of the justice system aimed at providing greater legal protection for victims, support for domestic violence victims and viable ways of helping those who use violence in intimate relationships to tackle the problem.

106. Recent amendments to the Penal Code allowed for more severe punishment in cases of violence amongst family members and a new Restraining Order and Expulsion Orders Act empowered the police to remove perpetrators from their homes in cases of domestic violence.

107. The delegation stated that one of the measures regarding increased effectiveness of investigation included a pioneering policing model on dealing with domestic abuse, called Keep the Window Open. The model aimed at improving procedures in dealing with cases of domestic violence in order to ensure safety in the home, improve services for victims and offer treatment to offenders. It was also intended to improve the position of children in violent households and place a special focus on providing services to immigrant women and victims with disabilities.

108. A multi-sectoral working group within the justice system dealing with sexual offences was appointed earlier this year to research the root causes and improve procedures relating to sexual violence. The group recently put forward draft proposals on reform in six areas, regarding investigations, the prosecution, the courts, victims, suspects and perpetrators and preventive and awareness-raising measures. Some of the proposed measures could be put into practice immediately; others could materialize in the next four years.

109. The delegation stated that the plan emphasized citizens' security under the law, the thorough, efficient and just handling of cases, building confidence in the justice system, shortening processing time and clarifying responsibilities and procedures within the justice system and between its various component parts. It stressed the need for preventive and

educational and awareness-raising programmes on a formal and permanent basis, as well as psychological assistance for perpetrators.

110. Iceland was one of the first states to sign the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention in March 2011. Currently, the Ministry of the Interior, in cooperation with other relevant ministries and NGO's, was working on a few outstanding issues which were expected to be completed early next year including in relation to education, participation of the private sector, media and telephone helplines. Subsequently, the Convention would be ready for ratification.

111. Iceland referred to measures to address violence and sexual abuse against children, including through amendments to the Penal Code and through awareness-raising, including of children, and of training to professionals. Three ministries were now cooperating on an action plan on violence against children. An action plan on child protection in general was currently being prepared by the Ministry of Welfare.

112. Human rights and equality education was introduced in the school curriculum and provided to all stakeholders. Within the framework of that curriculum, some municipalities had organized LGBT rights' education in schools. The importance of the early school leaving and drop-out issue increased in the context of the financial crisis. Iceland had been working on reforms in that regard based on a White paper from 2014 and was continuously strengthening upper secondary education. Iceland had also been investing and improving on the pre-primary and compulsory education.

113. It was foreseen that the Sustainable Development Goals were to be set out in the national action plan and to be thoroughly integrated into Iceland's draft policy for International Development Cooperation 2017-2021.

114. In conclusion, the representative of Iceland, Ms. Ragnhildur Hjaltadóttir, thanked all members and observers of the Human Rights Council for their constructive criticism and encouragement, and for the valuable advice, questions and recommendations received during the review. The Icelandic authorities would take the recommendations seriously and do their utmost to implement them wherever appropriate. There was always room for improvement, and the dialogue was a welcome tool to improve the human rights situation.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

115. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Iceland and enjoy the support of Iceland:

115.1. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Turkey); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Estonia); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Georgia); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Lebanon); Ratify the Optional Protocol on the Convention against Torture (Portugal);

115.2. Expedite action on the ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Ghana);

115.3. Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Greece);

** The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited

- 115.4. Promptly ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Guatemala);
- 115.5. Ratify as soon as possible the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Germany); Ratify as soon as possible the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Slovenia);
- 115.6. Conclude its own procedures to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Italy);
- 115.7. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish the National torture Preventive Mechanism (Ukraine);
- 115.8. Establish without delay an effective well-resourced and staffed national preventive mechanism according to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Czech Republic);
- 115.9. Ratify and implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture at the earliest possible time (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 115.10. Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, (Albania);
- 115.11. Make progress towards the ratification of pending human rights international instruments, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Chile);
- 115.12. Ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Brazil);
- 115.13. Ratify without delay the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance signed in October 2008, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture signed in September 2003 (France);
- 115.14. Take appropriate measures for the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Togo);
- 115.15. Finalize the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Iraq);
- 115.16. Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Sierra Leone);¹

¹ The text of the recommendation as read out “Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (Sierra Leone).

115.17. **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Ukraine); Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Argentina);**

115.18. **Ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance as early as possible, which Iceland signed in 2008 (Japan);**

115.19. **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention relating to the status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Mozambique);**

115.20. **Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Italy); Ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence "Istanbul Convention" (Turkey); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) (Finland); Ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Montenegro); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence "Istanbul Convention" (Netherlands); Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Slovenia);**

115.21. **Submit its overdue reports to the relevant treaty body mechanisms (Sierra Leone); Submit overdue reports to the human rights treaty bodies (Ghana);²**

115.22. **Implement an action plan on domestic violence and sexual violence against women, including immigrants and those from minority groups (Sierra Leone);**

115.23. **Continue to amend its national legislation in line with the international human rights instruments (Libya);**

115.24. **Implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Sierra Leone);³**

115.25. **Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and align the national legislation and practice with it (Egypt);**

115.26. **Take measures aimed at establishing a national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Georgia);**

115.27. **Continue with its efforts to establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Namibia);**

115.28. **Step up efforts to establish a national human rights institution, in line with the Paris Principles (Philippines);**

² The text of the recommendation as read out "Decriminalize defamation within its civil code in accordance with international standards and submit overdue reports to the human rights treaty bodies" (Ghana).

³ The text of the recommendation as read out "Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (Sierra Leone).

- 115.29. **Develop an inclusive process with the objective of establishing a national human rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);**
- 115.30. **Revise the status of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre with the goal of ensuring full compliance with the Paris Principles (Hungary);**
- 115.31. **Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, drawing on the experience of the Icelandic Human Rights Centre (Australia);**
- 115.32. **Strengthen the national human rights institution, fully compliant with the Paris Principles (Ukraine);**
- 115.33. **Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Turkey); Establish a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles (Algeria); Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Egypt);**
- 115.34. **Establish an independent national human rights institution, aligned with the Paris Principles (France); Establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles (Mongolia);**
- 115.35. **Adopt the necessary measures to establish a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Panama);**
- 115.36. **Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and adequate resources, in line with the Paris Principles (Afghanistan);**
- 115.37. **Establish as soon as possible a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles, with a broad mandate and sufficient resources (Paraguay);**
- 115.38. **Swiftly conclude the process of establishing a national human rights institution based on the Paris Principles in order for that institution to be rapidly created (Portugal);**
- 115.39. **Establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles and develop a comprehensive National Human Rights Action Plan (Indonesia);**
- 115.40. **Continue its efforts to adopt the national action plan on human rights and establish an independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Sudan);**
- 115.41. **Pursue the development and adoption of a comprehensive national human rights action plan to strengthen consistency and cooperation in the implementation of related policies and programmes (Canada);**
- 115.42. **Continue efforts to formulate a national human rights action plan (Philippines);**
- 115.43. **Advance its activities aimed at ensuring full realization of the rights of women, children, elderly people and the persons with disabilities (Mongolia);**
- 115.44. **Enact legislation that includes protection from discrimination on the basis of intersex status (Australia);**
- 115.45. **Enact legislation that prohibits age based discrimination (Australia);**
- 115.46. **Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation (Timor-Leste);**

- 115.47. Adopt specific laws to eliminate other forms of discrimination to supplement existing legislation on gender discrimination in the country (Spain);
- 115.48. Adopt a comprehensive national legislation to combat all forms of discrimination and to pass national legislation that lives up to the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Sweden);
- 115.49. Consider enacting a comprehensive law against all forms of discrimination and to adopt an action plan for its implementation (Serbia);
- 115.50. Complete the drafting of a law against discrimination and provide for its enactment as soon as possible (Russian Federation);
- 115.51. Continue efforts to fight against discrimination, racism and hate speech (Lebanon);
- 115.52. Continue to combat discrimination, hate speech and racism (Pakistan);
- 115.53. Continue to take measures to combat ethnic discrimination and racism as well as hate speech on grounds of ethnicity, colour, race and religion (Tajikistan);
- 115.54. Develop national policies to fight hate crimes and hate speech (Lebanon);
- 115.55. Combat effectively racial discrimination, xenophobic words and deeds, and strike down on hate crimes through legislation, law enforcement and administrative measures (China);
- 115.56. Consider introducing a criminal law provision that expressly considers the racist motivation of an offence as a specific aggravating circumstance (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 115.57. Take the necessary measures to combat all forms of intolerance and offences motivated by hatred or racial considerations (Algeria);
- 115.58. While continuing to protect freedom of opinion and expression consistent with Article 73 of the Constitution, maintain Article 233 (a) of the General Penal Code and Article 27 of the Media Act which explicitly prohibit hate speech and direct incitement to hatred (Canada);
- 115.59. Increase efforts to prosecute and convict human traffickers through the training of investigators, prosecutors and judges on detecting and prosecuting such crimes (United States of America);
- 115.60. Exert further efforts to implement the national plan to combat human trafficking (Sudan);
- 115.61. Increased focus on supervisory and control mechanisms in the labour market. Develop a wider scope of protection against discrimination and more tools to address the rights of persons who are subject to human trafficking (Norway);
- 115.62. Carry out the adoption of the action plan for the prevention of all forms of violence, with a view to strengthening the framework for the protection of all victims, in particular those belonging to vulnerable groups (Mexico);
- 115.63. Promote the political participation of women in public positions of power (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));

- 115.64. Continue its policies and efforts to further promote and protect women's rights (Armenia);
- 115.65. Intensify the efforts to raise awareness among women and girls about their rights under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and on the individual communication procedures contemplated in its Optional Protocol (Panama);
- 115.66. Take general measures to eliminate gender stereotypes on the role and obligations of women and men, in particular through awareness-raising campaigns and education (Ecuador);
- 115.67. Accelerate tackling gender inequality, effectively protect women's rights, and strike down at violence against women (China);
- 115.68. Continue active measures and initiatives to minimize the gender gap (Japan);
- 115.69. Increase its efforts to close the economic gender gap in order to bring about greater gender equality (Thailand);
- 115.70. Continue its proactive efforts in order to ensure full gender equality in education and the labour market (Netherlands);
- 115.71. Address gender pay disparity effectively through the full implementation of the equal pay system standard (Maldives);
- 115.72. Adopt and implement measures that ensure equal remuneration for equal work of equal value in an effort towards fulfilling the Government's commitment to eliminate the gender pay gap before 2022 (Namibia);
- 115.73. Continue strengthening the role of women in the professional and labour market sphere (Argentina);
- 115.74. Adopt a new action plan to fully implement the Equal Pay Standard to eradicate the gender pay gap for work (Egypt);
- 115.75. Step up measures aimed at elimination of violence against women (Ukraine);
- 115.76. Deepen the measures taken to combat gender-based violence, sexual abuses and violations suffered by women with a special focus on migrant women and women with disabilities (Chile);
- 115.77. Strengthen awareness-raising plans and programmes on violence against women, including training programmes aimed at increasing sensitivity towards victims and their vulnerabilities (Chile);
- 115.78. Intensify its measures to raise awareness of domestic violence (Timor-Leste);
- 115.79. Put into practice a new action plan to combat sexual violence (Uruguay);
- 115.80. Adopt a national plan against sexual and domestic violence that takes into account the specific needs and vulnerabilities of migrant women and women with disabilities (Bangladesh);
- 115.81. Adopt a national plan of action on the prevention and protection from all forms of violence, including domestic violence (Estonia);

- 115.82. Update the Plan against Domestic and Sexual Violence, that despite expiring in 2011, has not been re-newed (Spain);
- 115.83. Pay special attention to combatting domestic and sexual violence, by implementing a new national action plan and ensure that it reinforces the provision of services to women and girl victims of sexual violence (France);
- 115.84. Conduct follow-up activities related to the implementation of national legislation and awareness campaigns aimed at reducing the number of cases of domestic violence (Sweden);
- 115.85. Address the causes of the high number of acquittals in sexual violence cases against women (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
- 115.86. Intensify measures to raise awareness of domestic violence, including through training for judges, prosecutors, police and health officers (Turkey);
- 115.87. Closely monitor the investigation and prosecution of cases of domestic and sexual violence and their effectiveness, improve access to justice for victims of such violence and provide training in the field of domestic and sexual violence for judges, police, prosecutors and other relevant professionals (Czech Republic);
- 115.88. Ensure that sentencing laws are appropriate and adequate to address domestic and sexual violence (United States of America);
- 115.89. Improve access to justice for women victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence (Maldives);
- 115.90. Support comprehensively increased efficiency in fighting violence against children (Tajikistan);
- 115.91. Establish Government-coordinated measures aimed at prevention of sexual abuse of children (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
- 115.92. Adopt a new national plan of action on children with adequate follow-up mechanisms for full implementation (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
- 115.93. Ensure that the new national plan of action is equipped with an evaluation mechanism (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
- 115.94. Take further steps to protect the rights of the child, prevent child abuse, exploitation and violence (Ukraine);
- 115.95. Increase professional and effective working procedures in addressing child sexual abuse cases (Maldives);
- 115.96. Intensify steps to combat and prevent discrimination, especially against persons with disabilities, particularly with respect to the rights to education, housing and social assistance (Ghana);
- 115.97. Continue its efforts in combatting and preventing discrimination, especially against persons with disabilities, particularly with respect to the rights to education and social assistance (State of Palestine);
- 115.98. Improve the integration of children of migrants into the national health system (Brazil);
- 115.99. Strengthen migration policies based on respect for the human rights of all migrants (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));

115.100. Take measures for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrants and their families (Togo);

115.101. Develop targeted programmes and strategies to increase the awareness of migrant women of their rights and provide free legal aid and effective remedies if and when their rights are violated (Bangladesh);

115.102. Adopt a comprehensive national integration strategy that ensures the proper integration of migrants and increases the awareness of migrant women of their rights and protection thereof (Thailand).

115.103. Continue efforts to host refugees and migrants (Algeria);

115.104. Strengthen the measures for the effective implementation of the regulatory framework in the field of immigration, asylum and refugees, in particular by training public officials involved, as well as by accelerating efforts towards the adoption of the action plan 2016-2019, in order to ensure that migrants can be fully involved in society on an equal basis with citizens (Mexico).

116. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Iceland, which considers that they are already implemented or in the process of implementation.

116.1. Finalize the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Greece); Finalize the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Iraq);

116.2. Accelerate the process of ratification as the concerned groups require the imminent protection of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Hungary);

116.3. Make progress towards the ratification of pending human rights international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Chile);

116.4. Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Albania);

116.5. Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Senegal);

116.6. Adopt a new action plan on gender equality to ensure continuity, as the previous plan expired in 2014 (Spain);

116.7. Adopt the new plan of action on gender equality (Timor-Leste);

116.8. Speed up efforts towards the adoption of a new national action plan in the area of disability, in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Mexico).

117. The following recommendations will be examined by Iceland which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council in March 2017.

117.1. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Finland); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);

- 117.2. **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Montenegro); Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Portugal);**
- 117.3. **Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Albania);**
- 117.4. **Ratify as soon as possible the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Germany);**
- 117.5. **Ratify and effectively implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Czech Republic);**
- 117.6. **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Spain);**
- 117.7. **Conclude its own procedures to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (Italy);**
- 117.8. **Ratify the UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims and other state parties (Germany);**
- 117.9. **Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the ILO Convention 189 (Philippines);**
- 117.10. **Ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Iraq);**
- 117.11. **Proceed with the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its optional protocol, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Ecuador);**
- 117.12. **Reassess the reasons behind the reservations made to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with the aim of withdrawing them (Panama);**
- 117.13. **Withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Sierra Leone);⁴**
- 117.14. **Following the parliamentary elections held 29th October 2016, implement the constitutional reforms approved by the people of Iceland at the 2012 referendum (Haiti);**

⁴ The text of the recommendation as read out “Accelerate efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and implement into national law the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and withdraw its reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (Sierra Leone).

- 117.15. Undertake measures to ensure that domestic courts are put in a position to apply the principles stemming from the European Convention on Human Rights. (Denmark);
- 117.16. Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and adequate resources, in line with the Paris Principles, including specific mandates to ensure social, economic and cultural rights, and especially the rights of women (Albania);
- 117.17. Establish a national human rights institution with a broad mandate and sufficient resources, in accordance with the Paris Principles, which includes concrete mandates regarding the rights of women and social, economic, and cultural rights (Guatemala);
- 117.18. Accelerate the adoption of the national action plan on human rights, which was presented to the Icelandic Parliament (Iraq);
- 117.19. Adopt the proposed national action plan for human rights (Pakistan);
- 117.20. Meet its ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNP (Bangladesh);
- 117.21. Launch the process to design and implement the National Action Plan on business and human rights in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on business and human rights (Colombia);
- 117.22. Ensure that its policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement measures effectively serve to prevent and address the heightened risk of business involvement in abuses in conflict situations, which includes situations of foreign occupation (State of Palestine);
- 117.23. Improve financial supervisory mechanisms to ensure better control and transparency in order to combat corruption and tax evasion (Norway);
- 117.24. Consider introducing anti-discriminatory legislation and establish a specialized body to combat racism and discrimination, which could form part of a body with wider objectives in the field of human rights generally (Namibia);
- 117.25. Establish a special body to combat racism, and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, language and religion (Russian Federation);
- 117.26. Eradicate racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination against foreigners (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));
- 117.27. Complete the work on an anti-discrimination bill, and to establish a specialized body to combat racism and discrimination and allowing victims to institute criminal proceedings on hate speech in fair trials and due process (Egypt);
- 117.28. Revise or make amendments to existing legislation, and to adopt all other necessary measures, in order to fight all forms of incitement and agitation to hatred and violence (Sweden);
- 117.29. Issue a bill that criminalizes defamation of religious prophets and symbols as well as criminalizes hate media speech which creates incitement to hatred and xenophobia (Libya);
- 117.30. Revise its social benefits programmes for assisting vulnerable families (Bangladesh);

- 117.31. Take further steps to increase the budget for public education and continue to improve school facilities for children (State of Palestine);
- 117.32. Provide protection for the family as the natural and fundamental unit of the society (Egypt);
- 117.33. Eradicate discriminatory practices in the labour market that detrimentally affect women (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));
- 117.34. Ensure that victims of domestic, gender-based and sexual violence are able to report incidents and press charges without fear of adverse consequences in case of losing in court (United States of America);
- 117.35. Ensure that minors are separated from adults in places of detention (Russian Federation);
- 117.36. Guarantee adequate legal protection and rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence (Russian Federation);
- 117.37. Eradicate crimes of sexual abuse and trafficking of children (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of));
- 117.38. Annul the provision of medical treatment without consent as laid down in Icelandic law (Spain);
- 117.39. Take additional measures to fully protect the human rights of all persons with disabilities, including to preclude involuntary hospitalization and coercive health care approaches, to prioritize free and fully informed consent for medical treatment, and to promote the involvement of persons with disabilities in decision-making related to their well-being (Canada);
- 117.40. Review its legislation to ensure that it fully complies with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and international standards on refugees and asylum seekers (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
- 117.41. Decriminalize defamation within its civil code in accordance with international standards (Ghana).⁵

118. The recommendations below did not enjoy the support of Iceland and would thus be noted.

- 118.1. Ratify all international human rights instruments that have already been signed (Uruguay);
- 118.2. Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia);
- 118.3. Sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Turkey);
- 118.4. Ratify the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Egypt); Ratify the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (Ghana); Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Senegal);

⁵ The text of the recommendation as read out “Decriminalize defamation within its civil code in accordance with international standards and submit overdue reports to the human rights treaty bodies” (Ghana).

- 118.5. **Accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Brazil);**
- 118.6. **Accelerate the process towards the ratification of the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Philippines);**
- 118.7. **Widen the scope of international obligations through ratification of international treaties such as the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Albania);**
- 118.8. **Promptly ratify the International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Guatemala);**
- 118.9. **Ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (Armenia);**
- 118.10. **Incorporate without delay the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in its national legislation, and make it applicable in its judicial proceedings, as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Paraguay);**
- 118.11. **Follow up on the request of the Human Rights Committee, suggesting the complete incorporation of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in its national legislation (Senegal);**
- 118.12. **Incorporate the CEDAW Convention and its Optional Protocol into its national legislation (Mongolia);**
- 118.13. **Allow for complaints on grounds of discrimination to be taken up by existing mechanisms for the protection of human rights, consistent with procedures available for gender-based discrimination cases, until a national human rights institution compliant with the Paris Principles is established (Canada);**
- 118.14. **Investigate, in full consultation with stakeholders, the possibility of a universal basic income as a replacement of the existing social protection system (Haiti).**
- 119. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Iceland was headed by Ms Ragnhildur HJALTADÓTTIR, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, and composed of the following members:

- H.E. Mr. Högni S. KRISTJÁNSSON, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Iceland, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
 - Ms. Kristín HARALDSDÓTTIR, Political Advisor to the Minister of the Interior;
 - Ms. María Mjöll JÓNSDÓTTIR, Director, Ministry for Foreign Affairs;
 - Ms. Guðrídur THORSTEINSDÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Welfare;
 - Ms. Nína Björk JÓNSDÓTTIR, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
 - Mr Gudni OLGEIRSSON, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture;
 - Ms Ragna BJARNADÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of the Interior;
 - Mr Thórdur SIGTRYGGSSON, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva;
 - Ms Rún KNÚTSDÓTTIR, Senior Legal Advisor, Ministry of Welfare;
 - Ms Edda Björk RAGNARSDÓTTIR, Temporary Officer, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva.
-