Draft UPR input for the High Level Political Forum 2021

Recommendations for HLPF consideration:

- When preparing the HLPF thematic sessions and relevant background documents, the HLPF secretariat is invited to make better use of the human rights mechanisms' work, guidance and recommendations, including UPR recommendations linked to COVID-19 and its response and recovery;

- Consider institutionalizing linkages between the HLPF, and the work of the Human Rights Council, including its UPR process, in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda by creating a standing HLPF agenda item on human rights and leaving no one behind in delivering on the 2030 Agenda;

- Encourage countries presenting the voluntary national reviews to make use of the human rights mechanisms' reports, guidance and recommendations when drafting the VNR and in its follow up, and to integrate issues related to sustainable development in reporting on the human rights situation in the country, in recognition of the fact that these are two interlinked processes and that the 2030 Agenda is grounded in human rights norms and standards.

2021 UPDATE

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) peer review mechanism on the human rights situation in all Member States provides a range of opportunities to reinforce 2030 Agenda efforts, based on international human rights law. This continues to apply during the COVID19 pandemic, serving as a forum for Member States to share experiences and responses, as well as generate recommendations cognizant of the new context, thus contributing to the global dialogue on "Sustainable and resilient recovery".

The 36th UPR Working Group session, the first since the COVID19 outbreak, itself postponed, and held in hybrid – mostly virtual – modalities, included pandemic-referenced recommendations. These addressed the right to health, such as strengthening national healthcare systems and the accessibility of essential health services; the right to education; women's rights, notably domestic violence; and specific groups such as older persons, children, persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees.

Statements made particular reference to the impact of the pandemic on poverty reduction and development. Member States noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated many socioeconomic development challenges, and impeded efforts underway at the national and global levels to achieve the SDGs and implement UPR recommendations from previous cycles. Examples of successful measures included the introduction of short-term working arrangement schemes, expanded social security coverage, and facilitating online public education.



The OHCHR/UPR secretariat supported country responses to the COVID19 emergency through sharing infographics of key relevant recommendations of all international human rights mechanisms, for the top 30 most affected countries, by SDG. In 2020, twenty-eight States were reviewed, resulting in 3337 recommendations. Of this number, 3263 recommendations were linked to the SDGs or SDG targets. A total of 2651 recommendations enjoyed the supported of the States under review. Out of the supported recommendations, 2618 recommendations were linked to the SDGs or SDG targets.*

The UPR secretariat has developed <u>country-specific tools to facilitate States in linking human</u> rights recommendations and the SDGs:-

- Letters from the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Foreign Minister of each Member State once its UPR outcome is adopted in the Human Rights Council (126 are available on line);
- Matrices of thematically clustered recommendations for each country, linked to relevant SDGs and targets, starting with those accepted by the State (126 as well);
- Infographics (126 as well) providing trends between second and third cycle and linking human rights mechanisms' recommendations with the top five SDGs.

Tools are also available for other stakeholders:

- The <u>UPR Practical Guidance</u> specifically meant for Heads of UN Offices worldwide (available in the six UN languages) so as to maximize the use of this mechanism for country engagement on human rights and integration at least of accepted UPR recommendations in UNSDCFs;
- <u>Tips for engagement at country level for National Human Rights Institutions and NGOs;</u>
- <u>Tips for Members of Parliament</u>.

*Data drawn from the Universal Human Rights Index on 10 February 2021 https://uhri.ohchr.org/en/