

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO LATVIA – Add.1

BELGIUM

- Is the Government considering regulating formal partnerships between people of the same sex?
- The Committee against Torture has expressed concern about acts of violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Has the Government of Latvia undertaken steps to prevent such violence and to protect the LGBT community?
- Is the Government of Latvia considering accepting the individual complaints procedure under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture?
- Has the Government of Latvia been undertaking steps to incorporate into domestic law the crime of torture as defined in article 1 of the Convention against Torture or article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights?
- A considerable number of reports from Latvia to the treaty bodies are overdue. What measures has Latvia taken to remedy this?

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Could you provide us with detailed information about steps Latvia has taken/is going to take to combat discrimination and ill-treatment of vulnerable groups (i.e. members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community)?
- The Czech Republic expresses its concern about reportedly increasing number of racially motivated crimes. Could you elaborate what legal actions the Latvian Government is going to take in order to effectively fight against this kind of crime?
- The Czech Republic expresses its concern about a high number of allegations of the use of force and ill-treatment by law enforcement officials. Could you please brief us about measures Latvia is going to adopt in order to ensure prompt, impartial and effective investigations into all allegations of ill-treatment committed by law enforcement officials?
- Which measures Latvia has taken/is planning to take with respect to meeting international standards in prisons and detention facilities?
- The Czech Republic expresses its concern that incidents of human trafficking has reportedly continued to increase. Could you please brief us on what additional steps Latvia is going to make in order to deter this kind of crime?

NORWAY

- Norway has concerns about the capacity of the Ombudsman's Office, and would value comments from the government regarding future plans for strengthening the institution.
- We would like to express our concerns regarding protection of victims of human trafficking as well as victims of domestic violence. We would appreciate an account of the government's strategy for victim protection and a comment on any plans for educating the judiciary and the police to enhance their competence in treating victims.
- Norway is worried about the relatively large number of people with non-citizen status. Would the government consider to enhance the naturalization through free training courses for the naturalization examinations and to remove the requirements for exams for particular vulnerable groups and people who are educated in Latvia? Does the Government have a strategy for improving social and political rights of the non-citizens?
- We are concerned about the deterioration of children's rights as a result of the financial crisis, especially those children living in the rural areas and the children living and working on the streets. Would the Government consider strengthening relevant control institutions in order to ensure these children's right to education, medical treatment and nourishment, as well as protecting them for being exploited?
- Considering that Latvian criminal law does not recognize hate speech related to homophobia and transphobia, Norway would welcome the Government's view of the need to amend the law in this regard.

SLOVENIA

- When does Latvia intend to ratify the outstanding core universal human rights instruments?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- Please could you inform us whether there are plans to seek accreditation of the Office of the Ombudsman by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC)?
- We welcome actions taken by Latvia to combat discrimination and promote tolerance, including on the basis of race, ethnicity and nationality. In this context we would be grateful to know what actions Latvia took in response to the incidents of anti-Semitism referred to in the stakeholder report.

- We welcome the news of an update to the State Programme for the Integration of Society and of the proposed new Policy Guidelines. We would welcome further details of measures planned under the revised Programme and Guidelines. In this context we would also welcome Latvia's reactions to the recommendations cited in the 'Minorities' section of the UN report on improving the integration of ethnic minority groups.
- UK welcomes Latvia's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Additional Protocol. However could you tell us what progress has been made to promote the equal rights for disabled persons in the employment market and improve accessibility?
- Please could you tell us how Latvia plans to address the observations in the UN report regarding prison conditions?
- We would be grateful to know what steps have been taken to ensure that homosexuals do not experience discrimination and violence in Latvia. What consideration has the government given to legal recognition for same sex relationships?
- Please could you tell what steps have been taken to reduce incidents of human trafficking and fictitious marriages abroad, which can lead to labour or sexual exploitation?
- We should be grateful if you would provide information on the extent to which civil society was consulted in the preparation of your national report.