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**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**  
**Thirtieth session**  
Geneva, 7–18 May 2018

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

#### **Azerbaijan**

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\* The annex is being circulated without formal editing, in English.

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## Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirtieth session from 7 to 18 May 2018. The review of Azerbaijan was held at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 15 May 2018. The delegation of Azerbaijan was headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Khalaf Khalafov. At its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 17 May 2018, the Working Group adopted the report on Azerbaijan.
2. On 10 January 2018, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Azerbaijan: Ecuador, Slovenia and the United Arab Emirates.
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 Azerbaijan:
  - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/AZE/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.6/30/AZE/2) and its corrigendum (A/HRC/WG.6/30/AZE/2/Corr.1);
  - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/AZE/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Armenia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and Uruguay was transmitted to Azerbaijan through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

## I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

### A. Presentation by the State under review

5. Azerbaijan noted that consideration of the third national report of Azerbaijan within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review was an effective format for providing full information on the activities carried out and measures taken for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as for dialogue and sharing of experience.
6. Azerbaijan stressed that it was party to main international legal instruments in the field of human rights and regularly submits reports to the relevant UN treaty bodies on their implementation. In this regard, Azerbaijan highlighted that the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the 35<sup>th</sup> session of the HRC had named Azerbaijan among 34 countries that fulfil their reporting obligations in a timely manner. Azerbaijan is amongst the 15 countries that submitted mid-term reports on the two cycles of the UPR.
7. Azerbaijan sent a standing invitation to all special procedure mandate holders, recognizing their important role in facilitating cooperation and dialogue with Member States.
8. As a result of referendum held in 2016, amendments were made to the Constitution aimed at further constitutional strengthening of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the formation of an effective and flexible mechanism of public administration and ensuring the effectiveness of economic reforms.
9. In 2017, the Presidential Order on improving the efficiency of the penitentiary system was signed. The Order aims at developing the penitentiary system through humanization of penal policy and also ensures the application of complex institutional, legislative and practical measures for liberalization of criminal law policy, restriction of arrests and deprivation of liberty, and decriminalization of crimes.

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10. Azerbaijan stated that the institutions of pardon and amnesty were also widely used in Azerbaijan. During the reporting period, in total, the President of the country issued 9 acts of pardon, which were applied to 1378 convicts. Furthermore, 2 Acts of Amnesty approved for this period by the Parliament were applied to about 21,000 people.

11. In order to support the development of the legal profession, on February 22, 2018 the President of Azerbaijan signed an Order "On additional measures to develop legal practice in the country". Measures are envisaged to improve the material and technical support for lawyers' organizations in the regions of the country, admission of new members through regular bar exams, advancement of professional training and qualifications of lawyers with a view to improving the quality of legal services.

12. Azerbaijan highlighted that the fight against corruption was one of the priority activities of the Government of Azerbaijan. The presidential Decree of April 27, 2016 approved the "National Action Plan to Promote Open Government for 2016-2018", which intends the improvement of anti-corruption legislation, raising awareness of citizens in the fight against corruption, enhanced engagement of civil society organizations, and the development of proposals for corruption-related crimes.

13. Azerbaijan stated that ASAN Service continues to widen the scope of its activities in the efficient delivery of public services and social innovations to citizens. From 2013 to this day, the centres of the ASAN Service had received more than 20 million applications with the satisfaction rate of 98-100% among the population. Azerbaijan noted that a number of States are interested in learning the experience of ASAN Service and applying this model in their countries.

14. Azerbaijan emphasized that to date, the number of media outlets in the country had exceeded 5,000. About 80% of Azerbaijani population have unhindered access to Internet, which has become the most popular and practical means of information and media communication. State Fund for Support to Development of Mass Media under the President of Azerbaijan continues to carry out its activities effectively.

15. Partnership relations between state and representatives of civil society exist in Azerbaijan. More than 3,254 NGOs have been registered in Azerbaijan, 500 of which function in the field of the protection of human rights. In 2017, the Council of State Support to NGOs under the President of Azerbaijan financed 484 NGO projects and in total allocated more than 3 million Manats for this purpose.

16. Azerbaijan highlighted that, initiated in 2008 by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the International Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, also known as the "Baku Process", which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year, was a platform for coordinating international efforts aimed at strengthening tolerance and mutual understanding, combating discrimination, extremism and xenophobia in society. Major contribution to the development of multiculturalism and tolerance in the country is also made by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

17. As a result of successful implementation of measures envisaged in the adopted policy documents in the field of socio-economic development of Azerbaijan, including the Development Concept "Azerbaijan 2020: A Look into the Future", "Strategic Roadmaps for the National Economy and the Main Sectors of the Economy" adopted in 2016, a noticeable reduction in the unemployment rate has been achieved, social protection of the unemployed has been strengthened, favourable conditions have been created for improving the labour market, competitiveness has been enhanced.

18. Over the past five years, the gross domestic product (GDP) has increased by 1.1 times, including 2.2 times in the non-oil sector, and 1.4 times in household incomes. During this period the non-oil industry has increased 2.2 times, agriculture - 1.2 times, trade - 1.4 times, tourism - 1.7 times, transport - 1.2 times, communication - 1, 5 times.

19. Azerbaijan supports the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development. Most of the guidelines and directions of the Development Concept "Azerbaijan 2020: A Look into the Future" and "Strategic Roadmaps for the National Economy and the Main Sectors of the Economy" are identical to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development was established in 2016.

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20. The Government of Azerbaijan continues to implement a number of comprehensive measures aimed at improving the socio-economic situation of refugees and internally displaced persons and their temporary integration into society, bearing in mind the necessity of future realization of their right to a safe and dignified return to their native lands.

21. Over the past 24 years, about 6.6 billion Azerbaijani Manats were allocated for the social protection of this category of people. 2,000 internally displaced persons received preferential loans for 44 million Manats through the National Entrepreneurship Support Fund with the purpose of investing in business projects. As a result of the activities carried out by the Government of Azerbaijan, the poverty level among this category of people decreased from 75% to 12%.

22. Internally displaced persons are exempted from paying communal and other utility services. Moreover, IDPs studying in state higher and secondary educational institutions on a paid basis are exempted from tuition fees.

23. Azerbaijan highlighted that occupation by Armenia of 20% of the territory of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent regions, was one of the main obstacles to the full-fledged realization of human rights in the country. During the armed aggression, Armenia committed grave violations of the norms of international humanitarian law, including executions and extrajudicial executions of Azerbaijani civilians, hostages and prisoners of war, subjecting them to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. According to estimations, the amount of material damage caused to Azerbaijan as a result of Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani lands is about 818 billion US dollars.

24. Armenia raised four points of order, in which it stated that the information and specific facts provided by Azerbaijan was incorrect and did not meet the UPR requirements. Armenia emphasized that the UPR Working Group was not a competent body to discuss political or conflict-related issues. Azerbaijan was trying to use the UPR procedure voicing its own perception of the conflict with the aim of devaluating the rights of people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination, which Azerbaijan falsely presents as an issue of restoration of territorial integrity. Armenia further stated that the international community, including the United Nations, recognised that the only internationally-mandated format for Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement is the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship. Hence, Armenia rejects any reference to the Nagorno- Karabakh conflict and misinterpretations in the national report and/or during the oral presentation by Azerbaijan. Armenia further stated that attempts to present Armenia as an aggressor by referring to UN Security Council resolutions were completely false and constituted a blatant manipulation of their content. In this regard, the President of the Human Rights Council ruled that it was appropriate for all delegations to make comments and observations and to voice their opinion on human rights issues. He further noted that the state under review was entitled to express its views. The UPR does not aim at discussing or settling disputes among Member States. Bilateral issues should not interfere in discussions requesting that such issues not be raised in the UPR Working Group.

25. In response to the points of order raised by Armenia, Azerbaijan stated that it was not engaging in polemical discussion, rather it emphasized the historical facts, namely the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia accompanied by ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis from the occupied territories, which led to mass violation of human rights of Azerbaijanis and impeded full realization of human rights within the whole country. Azerbaijan also recalled that there were still some Azerbaijani nationals taken hostage by Armenia just because they were visiting the graves of their ancestors in the occupied territories. Azerbaijan also highlighted that wounds of genocide committed in Khojaly district of Azerbaijan by Armenia which resulted in killing of around 700 Azerbaijanis, including children, women and elderly people, had not been healed yet. Azerbaijan also urged Armenia to comply with UN Security Council resolutions that require the complete liberation of Azerbaijani territories and ensure safe and dignified return of IDPs to their native lands. Azerbaijan also called on Armenia to abide by international humanitarian law and to stop ceasefire violations that caused increased number of casualties among civilian population of Azerbaijan living in the settlements adjacent to the line of contact. Azerbaijan underlined that the only solution to the conflict would be the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan expressing the hope that the international community will

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exert pressure on Armenia to liberate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the perpetrators of war crimes against Azerbaijanis will be brought to justice.

26. Moreover, Azerbaijan stressed that it was in a particular situation, and 20% of its territories was under occupation of Armenia. Armenia as an aggressor state must be held accountable for its aggression against Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is a peace-loving nation and unlike Armenia, it does not have any territorial claims against any of its neighbours. Azerbaijan will never allow the creation of the second Armenian state in the territory of Azerbaijan.

## **B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review**

27. During the interactive dialogue, 105 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

28. The Russian Federation noted efforts to support independence of the media and to strengthen intercultural dialogue, especially through Heydar Aliev Foundation.

29. Rwanda encouraged Azerbaijan to enhance measures and policies to address discrimination on all grounds, including through strengthened implementation of existing legislation.

30. Saudi Arabia commended efforts aimed at improving legislation in fighting corruption and strengthening the work of civil society.

31. Serbia welcomed the National Action Plan for Open Government 2016-2018, and the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking 2014-2018.

32. Singapore welcomed the National Action Plan for Open Government 2016-2018, and the increasing State spending on education and active promotion of good governance.

33. Slovakia expressed concern about reports of torture and ill-treatment against journalists and human rights defenders.

34. Slovenia regretted the alleged lack of independence of the Bar Association, and noted reports of harassment and threats against independent lawyers.

35. Spain expressed concern about limitations to the effective enjoyment of freedom of religion of religious “non-traditional” organizations.

36. Sri Lanka welcomed measures related to the right to health, and the steps taken to promote dialogue with civil society.

37. State of Palestine remained concerned at persisting poverty. It acknowledged measures to protect human rights defenders and journalists.

38. Sudan welcomed the national action plan for an open government and legislation on fighting corruption.

39. Sweden wished Azerbaijan success in implementing recommendations.

40. Switzerland expressed concern about reports of harassment, intimidation, and prosecution of opposition representatives, journalists and human rights defenders.

41. Tajikistan made recommendations.

42. Thailand welcomed steps to promote gender equality and efforts to improve prison conditions and treatment of prisoners.

43. Togo welcomed efforts to strengthen the protection of human rights, particularly through the 2016 constitutional reform.

44. Tunisia welcomed efforts to enhance the legal framework, modernise the prison system and combat human trafficking.

45. Turkey welcomed efforts to support IDPs and refugees.

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46. Turkmenistan welcomed improvements in quality public services through innovative methods and the establishment of the ASAN network.
  47. Ukraine noted that Azerbaijan's ability to implement human rights treaties had been impeded since some of the territories were not under its control.
  48. The United Arab Emirates welcomed reforms introduced by Azerbaijan's 2016 constitutional amendment, particularly measures aimed at bolstering the institutional and legal framework.
  49. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland expressed concern about restrictions on freedoms of the press and assembly, the independence of the judiciary and the harassment of human rights defenders.
  50. The United States of America stated that as a result of restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly, political and civic spaces was severely constrained.
  51. Uruguay welcomed Azerbaijan's cooperation with treaty bodies and special procedures, and the process to reform legislation on children's rights.
  52. Uzbekistan praised consistent efforts to protect human rights and to cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms.
  53. Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed cooperation with treaty bodies, and reforms to improve the standard of living of its population.
  54. Viet Nam recognized progress in the Constitutional amendment aimed at providing more effective protection of human rights.
  55. Yemen welcomed Azerbaijan's standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders, and steps to harmonise domestic legislation with international obligations.
  56. Zimbabwe highlighted measures aimed at guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of different categories of the population, such as prisoners, refugees and internally displaced persons.
  57. Afghanistan welcomed Azerbaijan's standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders.
  58. Algeria welcomed measures to promote the values of tolerance and multiculturalism in society, and to guarantee the independence of the judiciary.
  59. Angola welcomed the improvements made in bringing national legislation in line with international human rights standards.
  60. Argentina welcomed Azerbaijan's standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders.
  61. Armenia shared the concerns raised by different human rights mechanisms about the deteriorating human rights situation since the last UPR.
  62. Australia welcomed efforts to strengthen legal protection of human rights, including through laws to combat human trafficking and forced marriage.
  63. Austria urged Azerbaijan to continue collaborating with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association to organize a country visit in the near future.
  64. Bahrain welcomed efforts to improve human rights, including a "one-stop" model for public service delivery.
  65. Bangladesh appreciated implementation of plans of action to combat human trafficking, initiatives to promote multiculturalism, and commitment to ensure gender equality.
  66. Belarus welcomed active cooperation with the treaty bodies and the adoption of laws and regulations to strengthen human rights protection.
  67. Belgium welcomed Azerbaijan's tradition of religious tolerance.

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68. Plurinational State of Bolivia welcomed advances in drinking water supply and the increase in public investment in health and education.
  69. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomed Azerbaijan's standing invitation to special procedures. It expressed concern about underrepresentation of women in political and public life.
  70. Brazil expressed concern about the alleged violations of the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.
  71. Brunei Darussalam commended Azerbaijan on the programme for the development of inclusive education for persons with disabilities, and acknowledged measures to improve the health care system.
  72. Bulgaria noted consistent policy measures to guarantee equality between women and men, the rights of the child, and the rights of persons with disabilities.
  73. Burundi welcomed the National Action Plan for the Improvement of the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
  74. Cambodia welcomed achievements of the socio-economic development plan.
  75. Canada encouraged Azerbaijan to strengthen protections for civil society, women and LGBTI people, and expressed concern about the administrative burden on NGOs.
  76. Chile welcomed Azerbaijan's ratification of treaties. It expressed concern about limitations to freedom of association, despite recommendations accepted during the previous cycle UPR.
  77. China welcomed efforts and achievements in promoting and protecting human rights.
  78. Cote d'Ivoire urged Azerbaijan to strengthen its legislative framework to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights, especially for women, children, persons with disabilities and migrants.
  79. Croatia welcomed the approval of the State Programme for the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities 2018-2024.
  80. Cuba highlighted measures to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and to improve the functioning of the courts and judicial infrastructure.
  81. Cyprus remained deeply concerned about the challenges and restrictions faced by journalists, human rights defenders and youth activists.
  82. Czechia acknowledged the religious tolerance and cooperative approach towards international observers during the 2018 presidential elections.
  83. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea commended Azerbaijan on its progress in international cooperation and promotion of human rights of its citizens.
  84. Djibouti welcomed the ratification of the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Additional Protocol to the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption.
  85. Ecuador welcomed Azerbaijan's excellent reporting records to treaty bodies, and its leadership in the promotion of transparent, accountable and efficient public services.
  86. Egypt welcomed Azerbaijan's cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and its efforts to enhance the independence of the judiciary.
  87. Estonia acknowledged Azerbaijan's increased cooperation with the UN human rights system encouraging further steps for free expression.
  88. France made recommendations.
  89. Gabon welcomed efforts to promote gender equality and to combat domestic violence, and to create assistance centres for victims of domestic violence.
  90. Georgia welcomed the ratification of international legal instruments and steps to issue standing invitation to all Special Procedures.

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100. Germany welcomed efforts to improve the socio-economic conditions of internally displaced persons, and remained concerned about ongoing repression against civil society.
  101. Ghana welcomed efforts to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms encouraging it to continue with positive initiatives.
  102. Greece noted some positive steps taken by Azerbaijan, including the country visits of special rapporteurs during the period under review.
  103. Honduras welcomed actions to reduce poverty, and progress in the area of education, in particular for women and girls.
  104. Hungary called upon the Government to continue to combat human trafficking.
  105. Iceland welcomed the reform to the education system and took positive note of the growth in literacy rate.
  106. India appreciated measures to improve health care facilities, and welcomed efforts to ensure gender parity in secondary and tertiary education of women and girls.
  107. Indonesia welcomed initiatives to ensure employment, housing and education of all people, and efforts to address domestic violence and to protect children's rights.
  108. Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the raising of public awareness and the launching of training courses on human rights for officials and professionals.
  109. Iraq praised Azerbaijan's efforts to harmonise national laws with its international obligations, and welcomed the standing invitation for special procedures mandate holders.
  110. Ireland remained concerned that legislation governing the functioning of civil society remains unduly restrictive.
  111. Italy welcomed Azerbaijan's commitment to promoting peaceful coexistence of persons belonging to different religions.
  112. Jordan welcomed efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and align them with its national reports
  113. Kazakhstan appreciated measures to combat human trafficking, to strengthen social policies, and to modernize the judicial and penitentiary systems.
  114. Kenya called on Azerbaijan to improve conditions of migrants and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and minorities by facilitating access to education, labour, housing and health, and to improve children's rights by eliminating child marriages.
  115. Kuwait welcomed Azerbaijan's commitment to the promotion of human rights and sustainable development, which are necessary to improve human conditions.
  116. Kyrgyzstan praised achievements in the socio-economic area and legislative measures, including changes in the Constitution.
  117. The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomed efforts to establish the Women's Association for Rational Development.
  118. Lebanon welcomed efforts to comply with its international obligations, as well as cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.
  119. Libya positively noted the achievements made, particularly the ratification of a number of international treaties.
  120. Malaysia welcomed Azerbaijan's efforts in domesticating ratified human rights conventions into its national legislation, and in combating human trafficking.
  121. The Maldives welcomed efforts for the socioeconomic development of the country.
  122. Mexico acknowledged progress in implementing UPR recommendations, in particular the Constitution's amendments and the Law on Public Participation.
  123. Montenegro called upon Azerbaijan to undertaken additional measures for introducing a human rights-based model of disability.

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124. Morocco welcomed efforts to fight corruption, including the establishment of a national plan of action for open government.
125. Myanmar welcomed steps to fulfil international rights obligations. It expressed concern about reports of repression against civil society.
126. Namibia commended Azerbaijan on the referendum, which led to the strengthening of constitutional protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
127. Nepal welcomed the achievement of economic development and subsequent promotion of social and economic rights.
128. The Netherlands encouraged Azerbaijan to take additional steps to strengthen human rights and the rule of law, including ensuring for freedom of expression by enhancing the protection of journalists and human rights defenders.
129. Nigeria welcomed efforts to improve anti-corruption legislation and the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.
130. Norway expressed deep concerns about additional restrictions placed on civil society since the last UPR.
131. Pakistan appreciated efforts to ensure the welfare of the internally displaced persons and refugees resulted from the Azerbaijan-Armenian conflict.
132. Panama highlighted the establishment of an inter-governmental group to draft the 3rd national report with the participation of civil society.
133. Paraguay welcomed Azerbaijan's ratification and reporting records, and the law on domestic violence. It expressed concern about the terminology "illegal migrants."
134. Peru recognized advances in the fight against poverty, and efforts to modernize the judicial system and to change the approach of the functionaries towards children in conflict with the law.
135. The Philippines welcomed the Migration Code and the Preschool Education Act. It also appreciated efforts to institutionalize a centralized national child database.
136. Portugal welcomed efforts to combat human trafficking, and the establishment of a protection mechanism for unaccompanied children seeking asylum.
137. Qatar appreciated legislative measures to enhance the national legal framework, and its cooperation with special procedures mandate holders.
138. The Republic of Korea welcomed initiatives aimed at enhancing the accessibility of courts and the efficiency of the administration of justice.
139. The Republic of Moldova noted the progress made in the justice system reform, increased public spending for education and access to healthcare, and investment in capacity-building, human rights education and training.
140. Romania welcomed the standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders.
141. Costa Rica underscored advances, including cooperation with the treaty bodies and with special procedures.
142. Azerbaijan reiterated its commitment to democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms. It presented the electronic court system that is in the process of development. The Bar Association has been reformed to ensure the independence and quality of legal services. Azerbaijan actively cooperates with the Council of Europe and the UN on combating torture, and applies zero tolerance policy for incidents of torture which create criminal liability.
143. Azerbaijan stressed that it respects the commitments under the European Court of Human Rights. Where the European Court finds violation of individuals' human rights by virtue of final decision of national courts, those decisions are to be reviewed, in accordance with national legislation. In 2015 the European Court delivered judgment in case of Azerbaijan IDPs against Armenia, which confirmed the fact of ongoing occupation of significant part of territory of Azerbaijan by Armenia. The judgment has not been executed yet. Promotion of rights of national minorities is also among the main priorities of the

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Government. Among other means, there are TV and Radio programmes broadcasted in minority languages, including Armenian.

144. Azerbaijan emphasized that over last 15 years, extreme poverty had been eliminated and absolute poverty had decreased to 5.4%. GDP has grown by 3.2 times, gross income of population by 9.8 times, unemployment was reduced to 5%. Regional development programmes concentrate mainly on rural areas. 8,000 km of roads, 300 bridges and tunnels, 52 km of gas pipelines for households, 8,000 schools, 300 kindergartens, 451 hospitals were constructed and renovated. 487 rural settlements with 700.000 population gained access to clean water.

145. Azerbaijan noted the Draft Law on disabilities, which has been elaborated and will be adopted by the Parliament soon. Azerbaijan uses international classification of diseases in identification of disabilities.

146. Azerbaijan stated that all conditions for unhindered communication with human rights defenders had been created for persons in detention. The State had guaranteed the right to peaceful assembly and association and had not interfered in any demonstrations as long as they comply with Law.

147. Azerbaijan also noted that in 2017, 148 cases of human trafficking were identified. 47 children in detention were under constant monitoring. Computer based learning opportunities are organized for them for their future reintegration.

## **II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

**148. The recommendations listed below have been examined by Azerbaijan and enjoy the support of Azerbaijan:**

**148.1 Maintain positive dynamics of ratifying international human rights treaties (Bangladesh);**

**148.2 Continue to align national human rights legislation with international human rights standards in this area (Cuba);**

**148.3 Harmonize national legislation in conformity with the international treaties that Azerbaijan has acceded to (Egypt);**

**148.4 Continue to bring national human rights legislation in line with international human rights standards (Jordan);**

**148.5 Establish a national mechanism for coordination, implementation, reporting and follow-up of human rights issues in line with elements identified in the OHCHR Study/Guide of 2016 concerning NMRFs (Portugal);**

**148.6 Strengthen national mechanisms for follow-up to the implementation of international human rights recommendations received by the State, through the establishment of a broad inter-institutional mechanism (Paraguay);**

**148.7 Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

**148.8 Extend an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment (Costa Rica);**

**148.9 Continue efforts to implement accepted recommendations relating to combating torture and other forms of cruel treatment (Lebanon);**

**148.10 Continue cooperating with the Human Rights Council mechanisms (Sudan);**

**148.11 Continue its efforts to promote and protect human rights in collaboration with the Human Rights Council and the Office of the High**

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**Commissioner for Human Rights, on the basis of the needs identified by Azerbaijan (Tajikistan);**

**148.12 Continue active engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms (Viet Nam);**

**148.13 Fully cooperate with, respond to, and follow the recommendations of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and all Human Rights Council special procedure mandate holders (Greece);**

**148.14 Share with the others, national best practices of the peaceful coexistence (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

**148.15 Share best national practices of peaceful coexistence of different religions and confessions (Iraq);**

**148.16 Maintain and further continue its valuable contributions for strengthening inter-civilizational and intercultural dialogue (Kazakhstan);**

**148.17 Continue measures to strengthen capacity of national human rights protection mechanisms (Uzbekistan);**

**148.18 Increase and extend to all public service sectors training on the protection of the rights of persons in situation of human mobility (Ecuador);**

**148.19 Continue to improve national legislation and to strengthen corresponding institutions, ensuring the rights of women and children (Belarus);**

**148.20 Continue taking effective measures to better promote and protect the rights of women and children in the country (Kazakhstan);**

**148.21 Create conditions and secure adequate resources for the Ombudsman's Office to develop its full capacity and fulfil its mandate (Slovakia);**

**148.22 Reform the Ombudsman institution to maintain A status according to the Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (Germany);**

**148.23 Continue to strengthen the office of the Commissioner for Human Rights including enhanced resource allocation (Sri Lanka);**

**148.24 Craft a comprehensive, long-term National Action Plan that would encompass all government efforts to promote and protect human rights of its people (Philippines);**

**148.25 Consider adopting a National Action Plan to promote all women's rights (Namibia);**

**148.26 Continue efforts to develop education system on human rights (Uzbekistan);**

**148.27 Continue efforts in the field of human rights education and training (Morocco);**

**148.28 Provide training to law enforcement, the judiciary and other stakeholders on handling cases of violence against women and ensure all cases are promptly and thoroughly investigated (Canada);**

**148.29 Continue making available professional training programmes for government employees and legal workers to increase human rights education (Egypt);**

**148.30 Continue efforts to achieve gender equality, particularly in the labour market (Tunisia);**

**148.31 Comprehensively implement the existing national legislation prohibiting gender discrimination (India);**

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- 148.32 **Maintain the positive dynamics of gender equality in the public service recruitment process (Pakistan);**
- 148.33 **Strengthen the national legal framework against all forms of discrimination based on disability. (Algeria);**
- 148.34 **Take appropriate steps to counter racial discrimination, including by introducing a definition of racial discrimination in national legislation (Namibia);**
- 148.35 **Continue promoting capacity-building activities aimed at harmonizing national institutions in line with the SDGs, particularly Goal 16 (United Arab Emirates);**
- 148.36 **Further SDGs-centric approach deployed by the Government in undertaking measures designed to advance the promotion and protection of human rights (Viet Nam);**
- 148.37 **Enhance the role of women in strengthening democracy and ensuring sustainable development (Bahrain);**
- 148.38 **Continue enhancing the role of women in strengthening democracy and ensuring sustainable development (Bangladesh);**
- 148.39 **Further SDG-centric approach deployed by the Government in undertaking the measures designated to advance the promotion and protection of human rights (Bangladesh);**
- 148.40 **Further SDG-centric approach in undertaking measures to advance the realization of the rights to education for its people (Indonesia);**
- 148.41 **Maintain economic development dynamics with a view to improving the well-being of the population (Islamic Republic of Iran);**
- 148.42 **Continue efforts to promote human rights through programs aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (Kuwait);**
- 148.43 **Further SDG-centric approach deployed by the Government in undertaking the measures designed to advance the promotion and protection of human rights (Maldives);**
- 148.44 **Further SDG-centric approach deployed by the Government in undertaking the measures designed to advance the promotion and protection of human rights (Pakistan);**
- 148.45 **Continue efforts to improve the quality of education in the public schools while implementing the SDGs (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**
- 148.46 **Take further steps to implement the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, taking into account the recommendations from the Working Group on Business and Human Rights (Thailand);**
- 148.47 **Prohibit corporal punishment against children and promote non-violent alternatives as disciplinary measures (Uruguay);**
- 148.48 **Revise current legislation in order to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, including at home (Montenegro);**
- 148.49 **Ensure the implementation of the Presidential Decree on the improvement of penitentiary system, in particular the part on the renovation of infrastructure, enhancement of the control over conditions of detention and prevention of potential cases of corruption (Russian Federation);**
- 148.50 **Improve conditions in prisons and detention centres, and ensure necessary access to medical care for inmates (Czechia);**
- 148.51 **Continue efforts to combat human trafficking and to protect and support victims, particularly women and children (Tunisia);**

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- 148.52 Carry on efforts to enable tangible progress in combating trafficking in persons (Turkmenistan);
- 148.53 Pay special attention to women and children in terms of trafficking (Ukraine);
- 148.54 Work towards ending all forms of human trafficking, including by developing a new National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 148.55 Intensify actions to prevent and to fight trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation (Angola);
- 148.56 Continue efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, particularly the exploitation of children and women, by strengthening the fight against traffickers (Djibouti);
- 148.57 Continue with ongoing efforts to combat trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation and forced labour (Ghana);
- 148.58 Continue efforts to prevent and combat trafficking of persons for the purpose of labour exploitation (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 148.59 Continue efforts to combat human trafficking (Iraq);
- 148.60 Strengthen efforts to combat human trafficking and to protect and assist the victims of human trafficking, particularly children (Lebanon);
- 148.61 Take all necessary steps to eliminate human trafficking and strengthen measures to provide necessary assistance to victims of trafficking by facilitating their reintegration into society (Malaysia);
- 148.62 Continue to intensify efforts to combat and address human trafficking, including by revising the legal definition of “vulnerable individuals” under the Law on Trafficking in Persons and increasing number of shelters available to victims of trafficking (Namibia);
- 148.63 Sustain its efforts in combating human trafficking as well as safeguard the rights of migrant workers (Nigeria);
- 148.64 Apply all legislative, administrative and other measures to combat trafficking in persons (Panama);
- 148.65 Continue and intensify its efforts on behalf of children and women generally, to ensure their safety in the domestic environment and to remove any obstacles to their education, development and access to equal opportunities (Tajikistan);
- 148.66 Take further steps to afford all persons deprived of their liberty with all fundamental legal safeguards from the very outset of their detention (Hungary);
- 148.67 Further increase action aimed at ensuring the promotion of freedom of religion for all confessions throughout the country (Italy);
- 148.68 Continue its work to develop the freedom of speech, to support independence of the media, to boost professionalism of journalists and to strengthen their social protection (Russian Federation);
- 148.69 Continue to take measures to grantee the freedom of association and to engage closely with civil society in upholding human rights protection (Myanmar);
- 148.70 Respect the right of lawyers (France);
- 148.71 Continue taking further steps for the strengthening of juridical system (Tajikistan);

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- 148.72 **Expand application of modern information technologies and innovations in the justice system (Belarus);**
- 148.73 **Ensure the independence, impartiality and transparency of the judicial system, and improve access to justice (France);**
- 148.74 **Increase the use of technological and electronic innovations in the provision of government services (Qatar);**
- 148.75 **Continue efforts to implement the National Plan to Eradicate Corruption 2016 – 2018 (Tunisia);**
- 148.76 **Continue its ongoing efforts to enhance the transparent and efficient nature of the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations (Turkey);**
- 148.77 **Continue progress in combating corruption through the use of innovative approaches (United Arab Emirates);**
- 148.78 **Intensify efforts to eradicate corruption (Bahrain);**
- 148.79 **Continue to enhance transparency in public entities and to strengthen its legal and policy framework to eradicate corruption in the public sector (Singapore);**
- 148.80 **Continue to share best national practices for the provision of public services through a single window model, in order for them to be subsequently replicated (Cuba);**
- 148.81 **Maintain the progress achieved in eliminating corruption at the national level (Iraq);**
- 148.82 **Continue to use technological innovation to promote public legal services (Kuwait);**
- 148.83 **Continue with its efforts in combating corruption and other related economic crimes (Nigeria);**
- 148.84 **Further strengthen its on-going judicial reform process through smart technology and awareness programme for law enforcement staff (Myanmar);**
- 148.85 **Ensure that any allegations of torture are investigated effectively, independently and impartially (Switzerland);**
- 148.86 **Continue efforts to fight corruption at the national level (Morocco);**
- 148.87 **In line with the Human Rights Committee, take specific measures for the exercise of political participation in plural and competitive elections (Costa Rica);**
- 148.88 **Continue efforts for the promotion and protection of civil, economic and cultural rights (Yemen);**
- 148.89 **Strengthen ongoing initiatives aimed to improve the economic and social welfare of its citizens, in particular health and education (Sri Lanka);**
- 148.90 **Continue measures to improve equitable enjoyment of socio-economic rights by vulnerable and marginalized communities (Nepal);**
- 148.91 **Continue to promote economic and social sustainable development, raise people’s standard of living and lay a solid foundation for the enjoyment of all human rights by its people (China);**
- 148.92 **Continue efforts to implement the national program for social and economic development (Libya);**
- 148.93 **Continue to strengthen social security measures to provide assistance for low income families (China);**

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- 148.94 **Continue its efforts to combat poverty, especially among the most disadvantaged and marginalized members of the population, and reduce disparities between the capital and rural areas (State of Palestine);**
- 148.95 **Continue to strengthen its successful social programmes in the fight against poverty and social exclusion (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**
- 148.96 **Continue efforts aimed at strengthening social policy and poverty eradication (Saudi Arabia);**
- 148.97 **Continue strengthening poverty reduction policies in rural areas, including through measures to strengthen small sustainable agriculture (Plurinational State of Bolivia);**
- 148.98 **Adopt a national policy on employment for young people, in particular for young people in rural areas (Honduras);**
- 148.99 **Reinforce the implementation of the Action Program on Protection of Mother and Child Health to ensure a reduction on high prevalence of maternal and infant deaths (Angola);**
- 148.100 **Continue its efforts to further improve the access to, and the quality of health care services (Brunei Darussalam);**
- 148.101 **Continue its efforts to improve the health care facilities in rural areas in collaboration with relevant UN agencies (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);**
- 148.102 **Increase easy access to health care services, ensure adequate budget for health expenditure, improve health care infrastructure, and promote skills of health service providers (India);**
- 148.103 **Continue to implement the program of action on the protection of women's and children's health and to ensure that all programs related to maternal and child health are extended to rural areas (Kyrgyzstan);**
- 148.104 **Adopt promptly the bill on reproductive health and family planning (Uruguay);**
- 148.105 **Ensure women's decision-making powers concerning their health status and the use of abortion for family planning (Iceland);**
- 148.106 **Ensure that school-age children, including foreigners, have the right to education. (Algeria);**
- 148.107 **Continue to invest in state spending on public education, in particular in the rural areas to promote equal access to education (Singapore);**
- 148.108 **Continue efforts aimed at protection and promotion of women's rights through relevant strategies, action plans and campaigns (Georgia);**
- 148.109 **Continue enhancing the role of women in strengthening democracy and ensuring sustainable development (Turkmenistan);**
- 148.110 **Continue assistance and promotion on women's empowerment both in the public and private sectors (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**
- 148.111 **Continue to take systematic and coherent measures to raise awareness of and combat discrimination against women (Romania);**
- 148.112 **Enhance efforts to address patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes through strengthened implementation of relevant laws and policies (Rwanda);**
- 148.113 **Increase efforts to eliminate violent and discriminatory practices against women, specially addressing the issue of selective abortions based on the sex of the foetus (Uruguay);**

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- 148.114 **Strengthen existing measures to raise awareness of and combat discrimination against women (Zimbabwe);**
- 148.115 **Continue to take systematic and coherent measures to raise awareness and combat discrimination against women (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**
- 148.116 **Continue efforts to enhance gender parity and promote non-discrimination of women in all spheres (Sri Lanka);**
- 148.117 **Continue undertaking measures to combat violence against women, including by conducting awareness campaigns on the negative impact of gender-based stereotypes with a view to eliminating them (Republic of Moldova);**
- 148.118 **Continue and intensify efforts in promoting gender equality and reducing violence against women through systematic and coherent measures (Malaysia);**
- 148.119 **Take additional measures to promote and protect women's rights, combat domestic violence, and promote gender equality, including legal reforms on gender violence and the development of a national action plan (Brazil);**
- 148.120 **Increase its efforts to promote and protect the rights of women, fight against domestic violence and promote gender equality (Togo);**
- 148.121 **Strengthen measures to combat domestic violence and violence against women including through the implementation of legislation to ensure justice for victims (Rwanda);**
- 148.122 **Continue efforts to ensure women's rights by completing the adoption and implementation of gender equality measures and the fight against domestic violence (Gabon);**
- 148.123 **Intensify efforts to promote and protect women's rights, with a specific focus on the fight against domestic violence (Italy);**
- 148.124 **Continue efforts to promote and protect the rights of women, to combat domestic violence and to achieve gender equality (Kyrgyzstan);**
- 148.125 **Involve women more actively in decision-making process and ensure their full and equal participation in the political and public life (Ukraine);**
- 148.126 **Strengthen mechanisms to promote the full and effective participation of women in different spheres, thus guaranteeing their effective incorporation into public life (Bosnia and Herzegovina);**
- 148.127 **Step up efforts to strengthen the role of women in political and socio-economic development of the country (Bulgaria);**
- 148.128 **Continue with the work that has allowed greater political participation of women in decision-making positions in recent years (Ecuador);**
- 148.129 **Strengthen the full participation of women, on an equal footing, in political and public life. (Peru);**
- 148.130 **Promote more integrated youth and adolescent services, involving multiple agencies, to improve availability of and access to complementary services with a particular focus on access to such services for girls and young women (Republic of Moldova);**
- 148.131 **Implement the Action Program on Protection of Mother and Child Health, and ensure that all maternal and child health programs cover rural areas (Togo);**
- 148.132 **Accelerate its legislative reform process aimed at protecting the rights of the child (Zimbabwe);**
- 148.133 **Include in the Criminal Code provisions expressly prohibiting child pornography (Côte d'Ivoire);**

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- 148.134 **Ensure the adoption and effective implementation of the draft law on the rights of persons with disabilities (Russian Federation);**
- 148.135 **Consider adopting laws on the rights of persons with disabilities in line with the general principles of the policies of the government (Sudan);**
- 148.136 **Expedite the formulation of the law on the rights of persons with disabilities, based on the recommendations from the CRPD Committee and with civil society participation. (Thailand);**
- 148.137 **Invest additional efforts to comprehensively improve the situation of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion (Serbia);**
- 148.138 **Ensure that the State Programme for the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities is successfully implemented and to share the experience and best practice with the other Member countries (Brunei Darussalam);**
- 148.139 **Continue to implement policies to support the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in society and their active participation in community life, and to allocate adequate financial resources for this purpose (Djibouti);**
- 148.140 **Complete the elaboration and adoption of all legislative and institutional measures for persons with disabilities (Gabon);**
- 148.141 **Continue its institutional reforms for strengthening the protection of human rights, including by intensifying measures to adopt the bill on the rights of persons with disabilities (Indonesia);**
- 148.142 **Continue to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**
- 148.143 **Explicitly include in its legislation the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of disabilities (Panama);**
- 148.144 **Continue implementing programmes and projects aimed at ensuring access to inclusive education for all children with disabilities (Bulgaria);**
- 148.145 **Disseminate successful national experience to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue (Belarus);**
- 148.146 **Continue to strengthen inter-cultural dialogues (Islamic Republic of Iran);**
- 148.147 **Continue its constructive engagement in ensuring the rights of Azerbaijan IDPs forcefully expelled from the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan to return to their native lands. (Turkey);**
- 148.148 **Maintain positive experience of allocating adequate funds for welfare programmes of the internally displaced persons (Bangladesh);**
- 148.149 **Maintain positive experience of allocating adequate funds for the welfare programme of the internally displaced persons (Jordan);**
- 148.150 **Raise the awareness of the efforts undertaken to ensure the rights of IDPs to return to their native lands in safety and dignity (Maldives);**
- 148.151 **Continue to make every effort to ensure the rights of IDPs to return to their native lands in safety and dignity (Pakistan);**
- 148.152 **Continue efforts to guarantee equality in access to education with the continuation of the provision of academic scholarships for Internally Displaced Persons (Qatar).**

**149. The following recommendations will be examined by Azerbaijan, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council:**

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- 149.1 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal; Spain);**
- 149.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure and ensure its full implementation (Slovakia);**
- 149.3 **Intensify internal coordination related to the accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedures (Georgia);**
- 149.4 **Consider the possibility of ratifying the Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Bosnia and Herzegovina);**
- 149.5 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Burundi; Portugal);**
- 149.6 **Take into consideration the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Romania); Consider ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Uruguay);**
- 149.7 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Austria; Spain);**
- 149.8 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and align its national legislation (Cyprus);**
- 149.9 **Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Côte d'Ivoire; Cyprus; Spain);**
- 149.10 **Ratify the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention (Estonia);**
- 149.11 **Ratify the human rights instruments to which it is not a party yet, in particular the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Honduras);**
- 149.12 **Extend a standing invitation to the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers to undertake fact-finding country visits with respect to the situation of judiciary and legal professions in the country (Greece);**
- 149.13 **Establish independent and transparent mechanisms for disciplinary proceedings against lawyers in conformity with the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and Recommendation 21 (2000) of the Council of Europe on the freedom of exercise of the profession of lawyers (Austria);**
- 149.14 **Comply with decisions of the European Court of Human Rights concerning illegal imprisonments on politically motivated charges (Cyprus);**
- 149.15 **Respect its obligations as a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, and implement all decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (France);**
- 149.16 **Take the necessary measures to combat the acts of violence and discrimination, such as stigmatization against persons pertaining to the LGBTBI community, and encourage Azerbaijan to deepen the measures to ensure the investigation and sanctioning of those acts. (Argentina);**
- 149.17 **Ensure LGBTI people are protected against all forms of discrimination and violence in both law and practice (Canada);**
- 149.18 **Adopt a legal comprehensive framework against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Chile);**
- 149.19 **Thoroughly review its applicable legislation, in line with its international obligations and commitments, in order to eliminate and combat discrimination based on any ground, including sexual orientation and gender identity (Honduras);**

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- 149.20 **Ensure that the existing anti-discrimination legal framework does explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Iceland);**
- 149.21 **Take steps to intensify the fight against all forms of discrimination, in full compliance with international obligations (Italy);**
- 149.22 **Incorporate the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in the current legal framework (Mexico);**
- 149.23 **Implement a comprehensive awareness raising campaign on elimination of existing sex-based stereotypes (Montenegro);**
- 149.24 **Ensure that Article 283 of the Criminal Code on incitement to racial hatred is not misused to persecute or intimidate individuals for their political belief (Republic of Korea);**
- 149.25 **Continue measures to ensure that ethnic minorities, including the Lezghui and Talysh populations, enjoy all their rights (Peru);**
- 149.26 **Adopt a draft law on the protection of children from all forms of corporal punishment (Kyrgyzstan);**
- 149.27 **Safeguard children's rights by enacting the Draft Law on Protection of Children Against All Forms of Corporal Punishment (Namibia);**
- 149.28 **Investigate all allegations of torture and ill treatment of journalists, human rights defenders and activists, and bring perpetrators to justice (Slovakia);**
- 149.29 **Take measures to eradicate torture, ill treatment and arbitrary arrests in line with the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In addition, strengthen public policies and education to combat discrimination and violations of the rights of the LGBT community (Costa Rica);**
- 149.30 **Protect persons from arbitrary detentions and ill-treatment that they face for any personal consideration, including their sexual orientation and gender identity, ensuring their full social integration in the same footing (Spain);**
- 149.31 **Immediately and unconditionally release all prisoners arrested on political grounds, including Mr. Ilgar Mammadov and adopt safeguards against arbitrary or politically motivated detention (Norway);**
- 149.32 **Release all activists, journalists and bloggers held on politically-motivated charges, and dismiss the criminal charges against those individuals that have already been released (Australia);**
- 149.33 **Ensure that human rights defenders, lawyers and civil society actors are able to carry out their activities without fear or threat of reprisal, obstruction, legal or administrative harassment, as previously recommended (Sweden);**
- 149.34 **Stop all politically motivated legal proceedings against independent civil society actors (Sweden);**
- 149.35 **Amend the Code of Administrative Offenses, Law on Grants and Law on NGOs to eliminate requirements for re-registration and to simplify regulations on access to funding. (Sweden);**
- 149.36 **Ensure the right to freedom of expression, including by revoking its decision from 2017 to block the websites of several independent and opposition media. (Sweden);**
- 149.37 **Guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, both online and offline, freedom of association and peaceful assembly (Switzerland);**

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- 149.38 **Immediately and unconditionally release all individuals in custody for exercising their fundamental freedoms, including the rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly and religion (United States of America);**
- 149.39 **Amend the Law on Advocates and Advocates' Activities to remove executive and judicial representatives from the Qualification Commission of the Bar Association, to prevent the use of punitive measures against lawyers for their human rights work, and to ensure transparent criteria and procedures for admission (United States of America);**
- 149.40 **Take the necessary measures to guarantee that all persons can exercise peacefully their right to freedom of expression in conformity with international standards, in particular regarding human rights defenders (Argentina);**
- 149.41 **Remove libel and defamation as criminal offences and take further steps to ensure journalists may work freely and without fear of retribution (Australia);**
- 149.42 **Review administrative and legislative provisions and projects, including on defamation, to fully guarantee the enjoyment of freedom of expression, assembly and association (Austria);**
- 149.43 **Take steps to implement its international obligations on freedom of expression, including decriminalization of defamation (Belgium);**
- 149.44 **Create environment for free and independent media and take effective measures to ensure that the press and media can work free from the oppression, intimidation or reprisals (Slovakia);**
- 149.45 **Take steps to cease restrictions on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and ensure that the right to manifest one's religion in private or in public is fully protected and realized (Ghana);**
- 149.46 **Ensure full respect for freedom of expression in line with its international commitments, including by ensuring that all journalists may work freely and without fear of retribution, allowing foreign media broadcasts without undue restrictions and ensuring unfettered access to the country for journalists, and ending the travel restrictions against independent journalists, NGO leaders and opposition members (Greece);**
- 149.47 **Immediately and unconditionally release all persons arbitrarily detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, including Ilgar Mammadov in order to respect a decision of the European Court of Human Rights (Slovenia);**
- 149.48 **Let the Internet remain an area for free speech, particularly by unblocking the oppositional websites closed in the spring of 2017, and stopping the persecution of people voicing critical opinions online (Norway);**
- 149.49 **Guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, and peaceful assembly (Peru);**
- 149.50 **Strengthen the legal framework for the protection of human rights and basic freedoms, including freedom of expression as included in the National Plan (Lebanon);**
- 149.51 **Continue ensuring that human rights defenders and journalists are protected from any act of intimidation or reprisal or any other impediment to their work (State of Palestine);**
- 149.52 **Permit peaceful civic activity by ending cases against NGOs and independent media, removing undue restrictions to accessing foreign grants and amending laws regarding the registration, operation, and funding of NGOs, in accordance with the recommendations of multilateral institutions, and ending the blocking of independent and opposition websites (United States of America);**

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- 149.53 **Repeal the recent legislation that restricts freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and ensure a safe environment for journalists, activists and human rights defenders (Spain);**
- 149.54 **Take measures to guarantee the safety of journalists, in conformity with resolution 32/2 of the Human Rights Council, and ensure prompt, impartial and thorough investigations (Chile);**
- 149.55 **Ensure freedom of expression and media freedom, including by promptly and thoroughly investigating all allegations about torture and ill-treatment of journalists, human rights defenders and youth activists, and prosecute perpetrators (Estonia);**
- 149.56 **Decriminalize defamation, and include it in the Civil Code in accordance with international standards (Estonia);**
- 149.57 **Ensure freedom of expression and the press, in particular by reviewing the Law on Defamation and ceasing the blocking of opposition sites (France);**
- 149.58 **Bring administrative and legal practices regarding the freedom of assembly in accordance with article 49 of the Constitution and article 5 of the Law “On Freedom of Assembly” (Germany);**
- 149.59 **Guarantee the full exercise of the rights to freedom of assembly, expression and association, also by improving the environment for NGOs to freely carry out their activities (Italy);**
- 149.60 **End all interference in the work of lawyers through disbarment or other disciplinary measures on improper grounds such as expressing critical views (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 149.61 **Remove legislative and practical obstacles to the registration, funding and operation of Non-Government Organisations (Australia);**
- 149.62 **Take all necessary measures to support the development of a vibrant civil society, in particular by simplifying the rules on the financing of NGOs (Belgium);**
- 149.63 **Revise legislation requiring civil society organizations to register activities to better protect the effective operation of civil society and the media, consistent with international law (Canada);**
- 149.64 **Remove legislative and practical obstacles for the functioning of civil society (Croatia);**
- 149.65 **Ensure that all civil society organizations and activists can operate without undue hindrance or fear of persecution (Cyprus);**
- 149.66 **Amend laws restricting the activities of civil society, including the code of administrative offences, the law on grants as well as the law on NGOs in order to simplify NGO registration and their access to funding (Czechia);**
- 149.67 **Ensure that human rights lawyers are not disbarred for political reasons and remain entitled to represent clients in courts (Czechia);**
- 149.68 **Ensure that all defendants have access to appropriate legal representation, including by increasing the number of qualified lawyers (Estonia);**
- 149.69 **Revise the Law on NGOs in order to promote the development of civil society (France);**
- 149.70 **Revise restrictive NGO and grant legislation from early 2014 and bring it in line with international standards (Germany);**
- 149.71 **That all governmental authorities, in cooperation and consultation with the Bar Association and with lawyers themselves, should take steps to**

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ensure that lawyers are protected from intimidation and harassment or other improper interference in their work (Slovenia);

149.72 Revise all laws, regulations and practices concerning freedom of association, to bring them into full compliance with international human rights standards (Ireland);

149.73 Review and amend legislation related to the registration of non-government organizations and its financial means, with a view to guarantee the independence of the civil society representatives (Mexico);

149.74 Enhance the protection of journalists, human rights defenders and NOGs by removing undue restrictions to access foreign grants by amending NGO legislation, particularly regarding the registration, operation and funding of NGOs (Netherlands);

149.75 Review its legislation regarding NGOs in order to ensure a safe and enabling environment for them to operate and have free access to funding (Norway);

149.76 Refrain from any undue interference in the work of lawyers and ensure the effective independence of the Bar Association of Azerbaijan (Germany);

149.77 Revise the selection process for the bar of lawyers, ensuring the use of objective, transparent and independent criteria, which will promote the legal protection of all persons (Mexico);

149.78 Investigate all allegations and prosecute perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment of journalists and political opponents, and strengthen the training of relevant public authorities and staff on human rights (Republic of Korea);

149.79 Investigate thoroughly allegations of ill-treatment of individuals in police custody with perpetrators being held to account (Australia);

149.80 Ensure effective, prompt and independent investigations to all cases of harassment and violence against journalists and human rights defenders and bring perpetrators to justice (Austria);

149.81 Enhance efforts to investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment, in particular against human rights defenders, journalists and members of religious groups, and hold perpetrators accountable (Brazil);

149.82 Investigate promptly and impartially all allegations of arbitrary arrest and detention of civil society actors and develop transparent processes to ensure ready access to legal representation (Canada);

149.83 Thoroughly investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment against detainees and sanction the perpetrators of such acts (Chile);

149.84 Investigate allegations of arbitrary arrests of human rights defenders and journalists, and ensure that freedom of opinion and expression is not unduly restricted on grounds of extremism, defamation or “humiliation of honour” (Czechia);

149.85 Thoroughly investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment of detainees and hold perpetrators accountable (Greece);

149.86 Ensure prompt, effective, independent and impartial investigations into all allegations of arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment of human rights defenders, civil society activists and journalists (Ireland);

149.87 Make the necessary adjustments to ensure access of women to employment, by eliminating wage inequalities between men and women, and promote collective bargaining between trade unions and employers, by acting as mediators during dialogues and agreements concluded between the parties (Panama);

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- 149.88 Establish a robust legal framework to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women (Nepal);
- 149.89 Adopt without delay a national strategy for the prevention of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and allocate the necessary resources for these policies to ensure their effectiveness (Belgium);
- 149.90 Carry out policies aimed at ensuring the application of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence (Paraguay);
- 149.91 Redouble its efforts to ensure access to inclusive and quality education for girls and women in rural areas (Honduras);
- 149.92 Take measures to ensure that secondary school attendance rate among girls in rural areas is raised to the commendably high level of attendance of girls in urban areas (Hungary);
- 149.93 Continue and strengthen ongoing efforts to eliminate child marriage and ensure that girls complete secondary education before getting married (Togo);
- 149.94 Continue efforts to eliminate child marriage and to ensure that girls go through secondary education before marriage (Kyrgyzstan);
- 149.95 Pursue efforts to preserve cultural and linguistic diversity including through the education system (Russian Federation);
- 149.96 Facilitate the procedure of compulsory registration for minority communities and do not unnecessarily obstruct their religious freedom (Spain);
- 149.97 Use the terminology “migrants in irregular situation” for those who enter into the country and who have not yet completed the entry formalities (Paraguay);
- 149.98 Implement a non-discriminatory asylum policy (Switzerland);
- 149.99 Grant all asylum seekers access to the asylum system, by ensuring that the definition of refugees is compatible with Article 1 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Netherlands);
- 149.100 Take necessary measures to ensure the access of all children, in particular that of IDPS in the education system (Afghanistan);
- 149.101 Guarantee all the rights of freed activists (France).

**150.** In the view of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the recommendations listed below are not relevant since they are not factually correct, are unilateral interpretation of the respective matters and do not comply with the bases of the review stipulated in HRC resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, and therefore will not be considered by the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- 150.1 Stop the use of corruptive means to foster the Azerbaijan’s conflict perception in different international organizations (Armenia);
- 150.2 Collaborate fully with the European Court of Human Rights regarding the application on case Hayk Makuchyan and Samvel Minasyan against Azerbaijan and Hungary (Armenia);
- 150.3 Condemn the repeated and unpunished use of inflammatory warmongering language by high level politicians speaking about Armenia and the Armenians and its adverse impact on the public views (Armenia);
- 150.4 Ensure that foreigners with Armenian surnames are not denied access to the country on arbitrary and discriminatory bases (Armenia);
- 150.5 Preserve and protect the cultural and archaeological heritage in its jurisdiction, without altering their cultural and ethnic identity, including the medieval Armenian cemetery in Julfa (Armenia);

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150.6 **Stop to falsify statistics on the IDPs and refugees by applying a misleading methodology of their accounting (Armenia).**

**151. 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.**

## **Composition of the delegation**

The delegation of Azerbaijan was headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khalaf Khalafov and composed of the following members:

- Amb. Vaqif Sadiqov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva;
  - Mr. Toghrul Musayev, Deputy Minister of Justice;
  - Mr. Ismat Aliyev, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs;
  - Mrs. Sevinj Hasanova, Deputy Minister of Economy;
  - Mr. Natiq Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population;
  - Mrs. Sadagat Gahramanova, Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs;
  - Mr. Chingiz Asgarov, Chief of Section, Presidential Administration;
  - Mr. Vahid Gahramanov, Deputy Head of Directorate, State Migration Service;
  - Mr. Faig Gurbanov, Head of Human Rights and Public Relations Department, Ministry of Justice;
  - Mr. Ismayil Asadov, Chief of Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
  - Mr. Rafi Gurbanov, Deputy Chief of Division, State Committee on Religious Associations;
  - Mr. Rashad Hasanov, First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
  - Mr. Emil Hasanov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva;
  - Mr. Seymur Mardaliyev, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva;
  - Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva;
  - Mr. Emin Aslanov, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva.
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