

## Responses to Recommendations

### BHUTAN

Review in the Working Group: 4 December 2009  
 Adoption in the Plenary: 18 March 2010

**Buthan’s responses to recommendations (as of 18.06.2012):**

| In the Report of the Working Group: | In the Addendum:  | During the plenary:                | Summary:  |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| No response, all pending            | 73 accepted, including 30 (n°13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 50, 51, 56, 57, 58, 59, 72, 73, 74, 75, 83, 87, 98 and 99) on which Bhutan considers to be “engaged in implementation” and 1 on which Bhutan considers that “adequate measures are already in place” (n°49); 23 commented on without giving a clear position and took note of 2 (n°7 and 8 -> Pending) | No additional information provided | <p>Accepted: 73<br/>                 Rejected: 0<br/>                 No clear position: 23<br/>                 Pending: 2</p> |

**List of recommendations contained in Section II of the Report of the Working Group A/HRC/13/11:**

“101. In the course of the discussion, the following recommendations were made to Bhutan. These recommendations will be examined by Bhutan, which will provide responses in due time. The response of Bhutan to these recommendations will be included in the outcome report adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirteenth session.

A - 1. Consider acceding to core international human rights instruments (Pakistan); Favourably consider ratification of all core international human rights instruments (Norway); Consider an early ratification of ICCPR and its Optional Protocols, ICESCR and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment (CAT) and its Optional Protocol (OP-CAT) (Slovakia); Study the possibility of becoming a party to ICCPR as well as ICESCR, as these two international conventions are really cornerstones of the whole human rights system (Viet Nam); Evaluate the possibility of ratifying CAT and OP-CAT (Argentina); Consider the possibility of ratifying CED (Argentina); Consider becoming a party to CRPD (Thailand); Consider becoming a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and ratifying ILO Convention 138 on minimum age and ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour (France); Consider an early ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including accession to the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Court (Slovakia);

A - 2. Accelerate its ongoing transitional efforts with a view to acceding to the core international human rights treaties (Italy);

NC - 3. Adhere to the principles under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol of 1967 with a view to their ratification (Mexico);

NC - 4. Ratify core international human rights treaties, in particular ICCPR and ICESCR (Austria); Ratify the core international instruments, especially ICCPR, ICESCR, CAT and OP-CAT (Denmark); Ratify the main international human rights instruments, in particular ICCPR and its two optional protocols, CAT and OP-CAT, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and the Statute of the International Criminal Court (Chile); Ratify or accede to all core international human rights instruments such as ICCPR, ICESCR and CAT (Germany); Promptly ratify of ICERD to carry out effective implementation of the principles of this instrument (Mexico); Improve guarantees for the exercise of the right to information through the ratification of ICCPR and its two protocols (Spain); Ratify ICERD and CRPD (Spain); Sign and ratify ICESCR, CAT, the Optional Protocol to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and CED (Spain); Accede to CRPD (Egypt); Accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Canada); Accede to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees (Poland); Continue efforts to build a legal framework in order to ensure protection for human rights, involving inter alia the ratification of the main international instruments in this area (France); Make a long-term plan for the step-by-step ratification of or accession to all core international human rights instruments (Slovenia); Become a party to ICERD, ICCPR and its Optional Protocols, ICESCR, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Convention on the Status of Refugees and its Protocol (Argentina);

NC - 5. Incorporate the definition and prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in national legislation (Argentina);

A - 6. Take measures to expedite the enactment of the adoption bill and the child care and protection bill by Parliament (Serbia);

P - 7. Consider establishing an independent national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles (Egypt);

P - 8. Establish an independent national human rights institution in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Azerbaijan);

A - 9. Continue to prioritize efforts aimed at strengthening national institutions and developing national capacities, including establishing relevant mechanisms, to undertake regular studies of international human rights instruments and to make appropriate recommendations to the Government (Malaysia);

A - 10. Continue efforts to strengthen steps and provide resources for the National Commission for Women and Children (Bahrain);

A - 11. Improve the work of the National Commission for Women and Children by enhancing its capacity, providing it with additional human resources and an adequate budget, in cooperation with the international community (Morocco);

A - 12. Consider, as appropriate, learning and adopting, in accordance with national conditions, the best practices of other developing countries on the of the oversight mechanisms (Sri Lanka);

A - 13. Favourably consider the possibility of drawing up a national plan of action to protect the rights of children, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Belarus);

A - 14. Envisage the adoption of a national plan for the promotion of the rights of the child and call for international assistance to allow it implement such a plan (Morocco);

A - 15. Move forward on mainstreaming gender issues into all Government plans and policies (Japan);

A - 16. Take concrete measures aiming at fostering a genuine human rights culture with due regard to national and regional particularities as well as historical, cultural and religious backgrounds (Islamic Republic of Iran);

A - 17. Develop educational programmes to prevent and combat negative social attitudes towards different ethnic groups (United States);

A - 18. Continue to work with international organizations and the Human Rights Council in particular to promote development and human rights (Lao People's Democratic Republic);

NC - 19. Strengthen its cooperation with human rights special procedures and consider issuing a standing invitation (Brazil); Consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council (Latvia); Extend an open and permanent invitation to the United Nations special procedures mandate holders (Chile); Extend an open and standing invitation for all the special procedures (Spain);

NC - 20. Accept visits from United Nations special rapporteurs, and in particular to accept the request made by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, which has been awaiting a response since 2006 (France); Respond positively to the request for a visit of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (Spain); Issue an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (Denmark); Approve the request for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (Norway);

A - 21. Bear in mind the need to work towards securing the full range of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, for all Bhutanese, in continuing the pursuit of Gross National Happiness (Philippines);

A - 22. Continue pursuing the realization of the full range of human rights and fundamental freedoms for the Bhutanese people, in accordance with the country's international human rights obligations (Malaysia);

A - 23. In line with previous recommendations of Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, develop policies and programmes to support the elimination of stereotypes associated with traditional roles and prevent the emergence of new stereotypes that are discriminatory against women (Germany); Continue its efforts to eliminate stereotypes based on male superiority (Turkey);

A - 24. Continue and strengthen measures to enforce existing regulations to combat negative stereotyping of women in the local media (Serbia);

A - 25. Follow up on the recommendation by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to introduce specific legislation and raise public awareness in order to close the gender gap, particularly in rural areas (Norway);

NC - 26. Introduce specific legislation providing for the adoption and implementation of temporary special measures to accelerate de facto gender equality (Azerbaijan);

A - 27. Continue adopting measures to eliminate discrimination, particularly gender-based discrimination (Chile);

NC - 28. Enact legislation that eliminates and prevents all discrimination against any resident, including in education (United States);

NC - 29. Consider abolishing restrictive requirements such as "no objection certificates" or "security clearance certificates" when individuals apply for higher education, jobs, business licences and travel documents (Brazil);

A - 30. Continue to strengthen the promotion and protection of the human rights of vulnerable groups within society, particularly women, children, disabled persons and persons with HIV/AIDS (Thailand);

A - 31. Continue taking effective measures to further promote and protect the rights of women and children (Islamic Republic of Iran);

- A - 32. Reinforce the human rights protection of vulnerable and disabled children (Chile);
- A - 33. Improve the situation of vulnerable children, particularly those living in rural and remote areas, and children with disabilities (Azerbaijan);
- A - 34. Establish specialized services to meet the needs of children with disabilities (Spain);
- A - 35. Combat domestic violence (Turkey);
- A - 36. Expedite finalization of the draft domestic violence bill (Serbia);
- A - 37. Elaborate programmes aimed at elimination of all forms of violence against women and adopt the bill on domestic violence which is supposed to be tabled by 2010 (Poland); Enact legislation on domestic violence to protect the rights of women as a matter of priority (United Kingdom); Enact legislation on domestic violence as a matter of priority and increase access to justice for victims of such violations (Netherlands); Enact legislation on domestic violence and seek to eliminate all forms of violence against women while increasing access to justice for women victims, especially in remote and rural areas (United States);
- A - 38. Continue, in collaboration with the National Commission for Women and Children and other relevant stakeholders, to pursue public advocacy campaigns and promote greater awareness and understanding of the rights of victims of violence against women (Serbia);
- A - 39. Continue to work towards eliminating all violence against women and to increase access to justice for women victims of violence, including in remote and rural areas (Canada); Further address the issue of eliminating violence against women and children (Japan);
- NC - 40. Adopt measures to increase the number of women working on violence against women issues in law enforcement agencies (United States);
- NC - 41. Prohibit corporal punishment of children at home (Slovenia);
- A - 42. Consider realizing as soon as possible its plans to establish four more women and child protection units in the other major towns (Singapore);
- A - 43. Intensify efforts to combat trafficking, align its definitions of prostitution and trafficking with international law, intensify its efforts to provide support to women at risk and seek bilateral agreements with neighbouring States (United States);
- A - 44. Promote measures to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children (Japan);
- A - 45. Continue with current activities and efforts to ensure that the establishment of democracy and a democratic culture of governance in the country are firmly entrenched and made sustainable through completion of the institution and capacity-building process and the process of enacting various laws and regulations as may be required by the Constitution (Indonesia);
- A - 46. Continue on the path chosen and, in particular, foster and promote activities and discussion on human rights issues domestically and capacity building of institutions (Switzerland);
- A - 47. Strengthen efforts to build the rule of law in Bhutan in accordance with international standards, integrating, alongside these, the principles of Gross National Happiness (Viet Nam);
- A - 48. Promote improvement in the juvenile justice system (Japan);
- A - 49. Promote and ensure freedom of religion for all individuals of all faiths (Denmark);
- A - 50. Continue to protect and strengthen freedom of the press and media (Kuwait);
- A - 51. Strengthen capacity-building measures for workers in the media and the press also through efforts of the international community (Kuwait);

NC - 52. Enact legislation that promotes and protects the rights to freedom of opinion and expression (United Kingdom);

NC - 53. Promote the establishment of civil society organizations without undue restrictions and seek the assistance of the United Nations system in Bhutan to this end (Netherlands);

NC - 54. Establish effective mechanisms to monitor the situation of human rights in the country and allow independent human rights organizations to operate in Bhutan and express their views freely (Italy); Allow free exercise of the work of independent human rights organizations (Spain);

NC - 55. Strengthen the working conditions and involvement of civil society organizations (Norway);

A - 56. Undertake extensive advocacy campaigns to encourage greater women's participation in the political process at both the national and local levels (Indonesia);

A - 57. Continue efforts to raise greater awareness among Bhutanese in all areas of the country of the democratic process, including voting rights, in order to foster greater political participation by all members of society (Turkey);

A - 58. Continue targeted policies and initiatives to encourage greater participation of women in the electoral process (Turkey);

A - 59. Take proactive measures to promote women's participation in the local elections planned for in 2010 (Norway);

NC - 60. Repeal all provisions which criminalize sodomy and other sexual activities between consenting adults (Canada); Decriminalize sodomy or other sexual activity between consenting adults (Slovenia); Eliminate legal provisions which criminalize sodomy and other sexual activities between consenting adults (Spain);

NC - 61. Establish a monitoring mechanism to effectively ensure the protection of the rights of children in alternative care, including in monasteries (Austria);

NC - 62. Provide adequate support to children in the care of their extended families (Austria);

A - 63. Take further efforts in addressing the problem of unemployment, especially among young people (Belarus);

A - 64. Intensify efforts to create more employment opportunities for youth by, inter alia, providing more entrepreneurship training courses and apprenticeships (Malaysia);

A - 65. Continue every effort to fulfill its tasks and overcome all the challenges of eradicating poverty and improving economic and social conditions of Bhutan people (Lao People's Democratic Republic); Step up its efforts to further reduce poverty, particularly in rural areas, and to improve the well-being of the people (Belarus); Continue its efforts to achieve equitable socio-economic development and to further address poverty alleviation through its overarching objective according to its current policies and action plan (Cambodia); Continue to fight poverty, with the support and cooperation of the international community (Bangladesh); Continue its efforts to eradicate absolute poverty (Pakistan); Devote more resources to plans to reduce poverty and to programmes supporting the most vulnerable groups in society, especially in rural areas of the country (Viet Nam);

A - 66. Continue to strengthen its efforts in tackling poverty and enhancing the access of all persons, especially those living in rural areas, to basic social services such as health and education (Thailand);

A - 67. Develop a strategy to combat malnutrition (Brazil);

A - 68. Continue its efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals within the stipulated time frame (Bangladesh);

A - 69. Continue efforts to ensure that the right to health can be enjoyed on a fair and equal basis by everyone in the country within the context of attaining the Millennium Development Goals, and

improve the training of medical and paramedical personnel (Algeria); Take further measures to enhance the national system for health care (Kyrgyzstan);

A - 70. Ensure compulsory and free of all costs primary education for all children (Azerbaijan);

A - 71. Continue the policy of free education through cooperation with and assistance from the international community (Indonesia);

A - 72. Introduce literacy programmes aimed especially at women, and improve access to education by women, including those in remote parts of the country (Austria);

A - 73. Intensify its efforts to close the gender gap in education, in particular at higher levels, for which it is necessary to have international cooperation and technical assistance so that it can face up to the shortage of teachers and infrastructure needs in order to eradicate illiteracy and achieve full access to scientific knowledge for its population by using modern teaching methods (Venezuela);

A - 74. Implement additional measures to ensure equal access for girls and women to all levels of education, including provision of incentives to girls and their families to remain in school, development of non-formal educational opportunities to reduce illiteracy among girls and women and increased access to adult education (United States);

A - 75. Take action to encourage pregnant and/or married girls and women to continue their education (United States);

NC - 76. Continue to work with all neighbouring countries to find a lasting solution to illegal and economic migrants through the bilateral process, based on agreements already reached between the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal (Lao People's Democratic Republic);

NC - 77. In line with recommendations of the Committee in the Rights of the Child, enhance efforts to find a prompt solution for either the return or resettlement of people living in refugee camps, with particular attention to children and women and reunification of families (Germany); Focus on refugees from Bhutan in camps in eastern Nepal wishing to return to Bhutan and in particular, at this juncture, on addressing those cases with compelling humanitarian concerns (Netherlands);

NC - 78. Step up efforts to find a sustainable solution for refugees through discussion with relevant parties, and attach particular importance to children and women and the need for families to remain together (Algeria); Enhance efforts to find a prompt solution for the return or resettlement of people living in refugee camps in eastern Nepal (Denmark); Intensify efforts to find a sustainable solution to the situation of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, in agreement with neighbouring States (France); Take active measures to find a solution in Nepal and Bhutan for the remaining number of refugees (Norway);

NC - 79. Resume dialogue with Nepal and enhance cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to resolve the question of Bhutanese refugees, including by voluntary return, with particular attention to family reunification and other humanitarian cases (Canada); Work with UNHCR and the Core Group to develop a near-term initiative to allow some refugees to return immediately to Bhutan, granting special consideration to cases of humanitarian concern, such as those involving the elderly (United States);

NC - 80. Make it a priority on the agenda of the new Government and, if necessary, the Parliament, efforts to seek a constructive solution to the refugee problem, respecting the rights of those concerned, and in that context step up dialogue with the international community and the United Nations humanitarian agencies (Switzerland);

NC - 81. Adopt the necessary legal framework and launch appropriate policies, including awareness campaigns for the public, to guarantee the indiscriminate access of the Nepalese minority to the same enjoyment of human rights as for other Bhutanese citizens (Slovakia); Take measures to ensure respect for the human rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities (Canada); Take legislative and practical measures to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to minorities (United Kingdom); Commit to ensuring respect, in all circumstances, of the fundamental rights and dignity of all people in the country (Switzerland); Address the claims of discriminatory treatment of minorities (Italy);

A - 82. Continue to make sure that its legislation and practices in the fight against terrorism match its international obligations related to human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law (Mexico);

A - 83. Share its experiences and best practices internationally on the concept of Gross National Happiness (Philippines);

A - 84. Consider sharing its sustainable development experiences through the help of the relevant specialized agencies (Singapore);

A - 85. Continue its contribution at the international level to efforts aimed at fighting hunger in accordance with the outcome of the World Food Summits as well as relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council (Egypt);

A - 86. Continue and strengthen with international cooperation its efforts in environmental conservation and protection, which contribute significantly to global efforts to safeguard the common heritage of mankind (Islamic Republic of Iran);

A - 87. Continue to make the most of its experience within the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Switzerland);

A - 88. Call upon the international community to pay attention to the difficulties associated with the present stage of development in Bhutan and provide the needed assistance to it to strengthen the capacity of its national mechanisms responsible for preparing periodic reports for treaty bodies and to train its law enforcement officials, judges and police officers in the area of human rights (Egypt); 2

A - 89. Oversee the strengthening of technical cooperation between Bhutan and various United Nations organs to enhance capacity in the field of exchange of technology and information (Kuwait);

A - 90. Call for enhanced cooperation and support from the international community and relevant United Nations agencies to strengthen the capacity of existing oversight mechanisms that serve to promote and protect human rights in Bhutan, in keeping with domestic requirements (Sri Lanka);3

A - 91. Request technical assistance and cooperation, as deemed appropriate, from the international community, including relevant United Nations and specialized agencies, with a view to ensuring the promotion and protection of the full spectrum of human rights of its people (Malaysia);

A - 92. Call upon relevant United Nations agencies and organizations, in particular UNICEF, to provide technical assistance to build its capacity to promote gender equality, make women more autonomous, protect children in the country and set up effective institutional mechanisms for birth registration (Algeria);

A - 93. Continue advancing its efforts to improve indicators regarding poverty, illiteracy, schooling, mothers' health and access to water with the cooperation of the international community, in particular the developed countries, which must increase their official development aid and other forms of aid to Bhutan (Cuba);

A - 94. With the support of the international community, including the relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations, strengthen its efforts to implement its national food security-related programmes (Egypt); Call upon the international community, especially the relevant United Nations programmes and funds, to provide assistance for Bhutan to sustainably consolidate its national strategy for food security and improve national food production (Algeria);

A - 95. Continue to fully use technical assistance and international cooperation to promote the implementation of national development programmes so as to improve its capacity in protecting its people's right to health and education (China);

A - 96. Seek the assistance of the international community to meet the Millennium Development Goals (Philippines);

A - 97. Call for the provision of technical and financial assistance by the international community to contribute to the development process of the country with the view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (Islamic Republic of Iran); 4

A - 98. Continue its process of consultation with civil society in its follow-up to the universal periodic review (United Kingdom);

A - 99. Establish an inclusive process to follow up on the recommendations of the Working Group (Norway).

### *Notes*

2 The recommendation as read during the interactive dialogue: The international community pays attention to the difficulties associated with the present stage of development in Bhutan and provide the needed assistance to it to strengthen the capacity of its national mechanisms responsible for preparing periodic reports for treaty bodies and to train its law enforcement officials, judges, and police officers in the area of human rights (Egypt).

3 The recommendation as read during the interactive dialogue: Enhanced cooperation and support from the international community and relevant United Nations agencies to strengthen the capacity of existing oversight mechanisms that serves to promote and protect human rights in Bhutan, in keeping with domestic requirements (Sri Lanka).

4 The recommendation as read during the interactive dialogue: Providing technical and financial assistance by the international community to contribute to the development process of the country with the view to achieve Millennium Development Goals (Islamic Republic of Iran).

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