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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Gabon

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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 twenty-eighth session from 6 to 17 November 2017. The review of Gabon was held at the 3rd meeting, on 7 November 2017. The delegation of Gabon was headed by the Minister of State, Minister of Justice and Chargé for Human Rights, Francis Nkea Ndzigue. At its 10th meeting, held on 10 November 2017, the Working Group adopted the report on Gabon.
2. On 13 February 2017, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Gabon: Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
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 Gabon:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/28/GAB/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.6/28/GAB/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/28/GAB/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and Uruguay was transmitted to Gabon through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. Introducing its report, the delegation of Gabon underscored the spirit of cooperation that had prevailed in the country within the framework of the universal periodic review since 2008 and noted that the national report had been prepared by the National Committee for the Drafting of Human Rights Reports in collaboration with civil society and the parliamentarians responsible for human rights. Gabon regarded the review as an opportunity to take stock of its national human rights policies in order to consolidate good practices and make the necessary changes.
6. The delegation also noted that, in 2014, Gabon had ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Its ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had also taken effect.
7. The Civil and Criminal Codes had been amended to better address domestic and marital violence, including through the introduction of provisions in the Criminal Code to define and punish marital sexual assault.
8. A road map for amending the law on the establishment and organization of the National Commission on Human Rights in order to bring it into line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles) was before Parliament.
9. With regard to cooperation with civil society, the Government had established mechanisms for consultation and dialogue, such as the National Network for the Protection of the Rights of the Child in Gabon, the National Network for the Promotion of the Rights of the Child in Gabon, Voix des Oubliés (Voice of the Forgotten), which worked with

persons deprived of their liberty, the Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities and the National Forum on the Rights of the Child.

10. Various human rights campaigns had been conducted, including outreach campaigns run in conjunction with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on the importance of birth certificates and the telephone helpline project for vulnerable children. The Government worked in this respect with the United Nations system, including UNICEF, the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

11. A bill on the establishment of a national body for the prevention of torture had also been drafted, and, within the framework of the national strategy on corporal punishment, capacity-building seminars for public sector employees had been held throughout the country. The Children's Code, which contained provisions on combating violence against children, was before Parliament.

12. With regard to human rights training for law enforcement officials, capacity-building seminars had been held for criminal investigation officers, prison security officers, gendarmes, customs officers, judges and lawyers.

13. The National Health Policy and the National Health Development Plan for the period 2017–2021 governed the country's health policies. It should be noted that the resources allocated to the health system had increased since 2012 and that strenuous efforts had been made to tackle pandemics through the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on Malaria for 2013–2017 and the National Strategic Plan on Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS for 2012–2016. The health-care funding provided by the National Health Insurance and Social Protection Fund had risen from 22 billion CFA francs (CFAF) in 2012 to CFAF 52 billion in 2015. Access to basic health-care services had been expanded through the construction of hospitals, and the list of medicines reimbursed by the Fund had been extended to include treatments for rare and costly diseases.

14. With regard to the right to education, efforts were under way to combat school dropout and increase school attendance. The shortage of secondary school teachers of arts subjects had been addressed and teacher training schools had been streamlined. Lecture halls and classrooms had been built at secondary and higher education establishments. Studies on school dropout and teenage pregnancies were intended to provide a framework for the right of young people to education and training. The "One Young Person, One Profession" project had facilitated training in certain professions, such as construction and hairdressing, for 1,785 young people in 2016.

15. In the area of combating poverty, the National Health Insurance and Social Protection Fund covered the costs of health, water and electricity and paid benefits to low-income families, who were also supported under the Human Investment Strategy in Gabon. A mobile emergency medical service had been established in July 2017 for the 11 per cent of the population living in extreme poverty with the aim of providing free health-care assistance. The Social Protection Code, adopted in 2017, was intended to reduce poverty, hardship and informal employment, including through the provision of income support for persons who were destitute.

16. In connection with the promotion and protection of the rights of women, the delegation noted that the provisions of the Civil Code pertaining to succession had been amended. The Government had also made efforts to empower women through training and helping young women to take their place in society, in partnership with UNFPA, allocating funds to support women refugees and establishing income-generating activities for women.

17. The implementation of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy had been strengthened by two laws: Act No. 9/2015 on the Establishment of Quotas for Women and Young People in Political Office and for Women in Senior Civil Service Posts; and Act No. 10/2016 on Combating Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. In addition, the capacities of 120 actors involved in the prevention of gender-based violence had been strengthened, and a platform for professional development had been established.

18. Gabon had developed a sectoral action plan and a national strategy on birth registration and had established simplified procedures. Almost 15,000 applications for late birth registration were pending.

19. Ritual crimes, including the removal of organs, had been addressed through a presidential order issued to the Government and key actors in the fight against murder and similar crimes with the aim of bringing to justice the perpetrators of such crimes. A bill on mandatory sentencing for such crimes was before Parliament, and the bill on the amendment of the Criminal Code provided for a significant increase in the penalties for such crimes.

20. The delegation also noted that Gabon was continuing its efforts to improve detention conditions, including through vaccination campaigns in prisons. Prison monitoring commissions had been established at every trial court in application of article 531 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

21. In the area of juvenile justice, a decree on the rehabilitation of prisoners through work had been developed in conjunction with UNICEF and adopted in 2014 pursuant to the law on minors. A centre for entrepreneurship would be set up in each prison to provide training for minors in detention and help young people find work after their release.

22. An interministerial commission established in 2014 was reviewing the legislation to combat trafficking in persons with the aim of revising Act No. 9/2004 on Preventing and Combating Child Trafficking. Persons convicted of human trafficking offences were not eligible for reduced sentences.

23. The delegation also informed the Working Group that efforts to strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities were focused on empowerment, including integration into the workforce. Those efforts included partnership agreements between the Government and businesses, support from the economic empowerment fund set up to promote income-generating activities, the allocation of social housing, the provision of mobility aids and improved access to public buildings. Act No. 9/2015 established procedures for the care of persons with mental illness.

24. In January 2017, Gabon had developed a new Communications Code that took account of proceedings involving complaints against the press, guaranteed freedom of the press and the independence of journalists and decriminalized offences against the legislation on the press. The National Media Council had been converted into a regulatory authority with legal status as an independent administrative body.

25. In order to safeguard the rights of minorities more effectively, the Government had worked with UNICEF to organize campaigns to process late birth registrations in local communities. The Government had also signed the first agreement on community forest management.

26. Concluding its introductory remarks, the delegation underscored the willingness of Gabon to continue its efforts to promote and protect human rights, with technical support from the Human Rights Council, and to respond to questions in a spirit of constructive dialogue.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

27. During the interactive dialogue, 73 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

28. Chile welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and encouraged Gabon to continue cooperating with international and regional mechanisms and civil society, in order to achieve gender equality and full respect of the rights of women and girls.

29. China commended efforts to promote socioeconomic development, reduce poverty, improve the education infrastructure, adopt a national health policy, combat domestic

violence and trafficking, and protect the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable people.

30. The Congo welcomed the adoption of the Communications Code, which had decriminalized media offences, the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and measures for women's empowerment, the eradication of discriminatory practices and universal health insurance. It encouraged Gabon to adopt a law on early marriage and gender-based violence.

31. Côte d'Ivoire praised the measures taken to follow up on the recommendations of the second universal periodic review. It noted the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy and the elaboration of an integrated plan to give pygmies access to social, education and health-care services.

32. Cuba welcomed the capacity-building activities for the protection of children in conflict with the law and child victims of trafficking, the awareness-raising on international standards on the rights of the child, and the adoption of the National Health Development Plan with increased spending on health care.

33. Djibouti commended the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

34. Egypt welcomed efforts to fight trafficking, improve health services, combat disease and epidemics, reinforce education for all, combat poverty, empower women, protect minorities, and ensure freedom of assembly and of the press.

35. Ethiopia noted the adoption of the National Health Development Plan 2011–2015, and the intensification of the fight against poverty, with the safety net programme and social protection measures for the most disadvantaged populations.

36. France welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

37. Georgia commended the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, steps taken towards combating trafficking, strengthening juvenile justice and protecting persons with disabilities, and the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy. It noted gaps in guaranteeing full protection against all forms of discrimination.

38. Germany appreciated the fact that Gabon had called on the International Criminal Court to investigate the riots during the 2016 elections. It noted the importance of an independent inquiry into the post-election violence.

39. Ghana welcomed the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the awareness-raising campaigns by the National Committee to Monitor the Fight Against Child Trafficking and the Directorate-General for Human Rights.

40. Guatemala expressed concerns at reports of sexual abuse by peacekeeping operatives from Gabon.

41. Honduras welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy.

42. Iceland welcomed the abolition of the death penalty in 2010 and the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy.

43. India welcomed the National Health Development Plan 2011–2015, the increase in resources for the National Health Insurance and Social Protection Fund, the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy, and awareness-raising on the situation of children without birth certificates. It encouraged the adoption of measures to ensure freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly.

44. Indonesia was encouraged by the ratification of a number of international human rights instruments, the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights, and the introduction of vaccinations against HIV infections.
45. Iraq commended the creation of legal assistance offices for women, efforts to increase the representation of women in public life, the establishment of special courts for children, the adoption of a national strategy for reproductive health, and the strategy to combat HIV/AIDS.
46. Ireland welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the extending of a standing invitation to special procedures. It expressed concerns at reports of arrests and harassment of journalists, civil society activists and human rights defenders. It welcomed the decriminalization of media offences in the Communications Code, of 2016, but noted that certain provisions unduly restricted freedom of expression.
47. Italy welcomed the adoption of legal provisions against domestic violence and rape, efforts in the fight against poverty, and the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
48. Lebanon appreciated efforts to reduce poverty, to combat trafficking in persons and trafficking in children and to fight epidemics.
49. Libya commended measures taken for judicial protection, and in the health and education sectors.
50. Luxembourg welcomed the referral to the International Criminal Court which had led to the sending of a mission by the Court in June 2017, and the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It noted remaining challenges in the area of freedoms of expression, assembly and association.
51. Madagascar welcomed the adoption of the National Health Development Plan, the work with civil society on raising awareness of human rights, and the capacity-building campaigns in police stations and places of detention — particularly regarding torture and the protection of minors in conflict with the law.
52. Malaysia highlighted the development and adoption of the National Policy on Health and Reproduction, the National Health Development Plan and the national strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS. It noted with concern the comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the disproportionately high number of people living with HIV/AIDS, the high rate of mother-to-child transmission and the limited availability of HIV/AIDS-related services.
53. The delegation of Gabon explained that, in 1990, the governing and opposition parties had come together at a national conference and drafted the current Constitution of Gabon. Since then, any provision or piece of legislation had been adopted only in accordance with the Constitution. In the area of human rights, Gabon was making efforts to meet the requirements of the conventions it had signed and to implement the provisions to guarantee those rights.
54. Freedom of the press was protected in Gabon and was safeguarded by the new Communications Code, under which journalists were no longer subject to criminal penalties for an offence against the legislation on the press (*délit de presse*) or offence of opinion (*délit d'opinion*).
55. Gender equality was also observed in all government institutions and in Parliament, with the share of women fixed at 30 per cent. The quota would be raised to 50 per cent.
56. With regard to the post-election violence, Gabon had already referred the matter to the International Criminal Court and the authorities were awaiting the Court's conclusions. As a result, it was not necessary to open a second international inquiry, as mentioned by the European Union. At the national level, the matter had also been referred to the public prosecutor, investigating judges and the courts.

57. The delegation added that the minimum age for marriage in Gabon stood at 18 years and that parties must give their consent to be married and must not be forced into marriage.
58. The new Criminal Code and Criminal Code of Procedure criminalized mutilation and the removal of organs. Efforts to combat HIV/AIDS were continuing.
59. The provisions of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, had been incorporated into national law based on decree No. 337. The decree was currently before the National Assembly. A committee had been established to deal with issues pertaining to the trafficking in children. In addition, the new Children's Code covered all issues in the area of the rights of the child.
60. Maldives welcomed the implementation of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy. It noted the important steps taken towards child protection with the help of UNICEF and the strengthening of legislative measures such as the Children's Code.
61. Mali welcomed the accession by Gabon to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It praised the adoption of a national strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS.
62. Mauritania commended the establishment of mandatory health insurance for all. It praised the efforts of Gabon to create a permanent national integrated structure to combat human trafficking, as well as the setting up of a parliamentary commission for the protection of persons, in particular women and children.
63. Mauritius welcomed the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and an independent national mechanism for the prevention of torture. It praised the ratification in 2014 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
64. Mexico praised the positive impact of the National Policy on Health and Reproduction 2006–2015 and the National Health Development Plan 2011–2015. It commended Gabon for its Humane Investment Strategy and its economic security programme for the integration of persons with disabilities.
65. Montenegro expressed appreciation for the adoption of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It praised the progress made in the field of education, but noted the concerns of several United Nations human rights treaty bodies regarding the quality of education. It encouraged Gabon to develop a comprehensive strategy on inclusive education, including for children with disabilities.
66. Morocco welcomed the integration of a bill in the Criminal Code to penalize domestic violence. It encouraged the efforts of Gabon aimed at creating a permanent, integrated national structure to combat trafficking in persons, as well as the endeavours to promote gender equality and protect women's and children's rights.
67. Namibia welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It requested information about the progress made on amending articles 6 and 24 of the Constitution with regard to women's equality.
68. The Netherlands commended the measures taken to enforce and coordinate national legislation and policies, and to raise public awareness, on the issue of trafficking in persons. However, it expressed concerns about the 2016 post-election violence and strongly regretted the pressure and intimidation experienced by the political opposition.
69. Nigeria praised Gabon for its combating and prevention of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. It noted the measures taken in partnership with UNICEF in the area of judicial protection of children who are in conflict with the law or are victims of trafficking in persons.
70. Pakistan commended the efforts of Gabon in combating trafficking in persons. The adoption of the national health policy, the finalization of the National Health Development Plan 2011–2015 and the wider implementation of the National Health Insurance and Social

Protection Fund showed the commitment of Gabon to providing basic health facilities to its population.

71. Portugal welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

72. The Republic of Korea commended the active cooperation of Gabon with the International Criminal Court in its efforts to provide justice and protect human rights. The commitment to human rights mechanisms was demonstrated by a standing invitation to all special procedures.

73. Rwanda particularly commended Gabon for the notable progress in improving the social and economic status of its citizens. It welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

74. Senegal commended the adoption of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy, the reforms in the judicial system, the reforms aimed at improving living conditions and reducing overcrowding in prisons, and the adoption of Law No. 09/2004 on preventing and combating the trafficking of children.

75. Sierra Leone welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It mentioned the draft bill to amend the Criminal Code so as to incorporate penalties for domestic violence and the trafficking of children. It encouraged efforts to strengthen the implementation of the legislation aimed at defining and eliminating early marriage and gender-based violence.

76. Singapore commended the full implementation by Gabon of recommendations from the previous universal periodic review, in particular those related to strengthening protection of vulnerable groups. It praised the expansion of the National Health Insurance and Social Protection Fund, and the support by Gabon for persons with disabilities.

77. Slovenia welcomed the adoption of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It noted the adoption of the Children's Code, but regretted the reports of the high dropout rates at primary and secondary schools, as well as the low enrolment rates of girls in tertiary education. It noted with concern the lack of engagement by local indigenous people in the efforts to preserve rainforests and biodiversity.

78. South Africa commended the steps to reform the National Human Rights Commission. It welcomed the legislation to impose penalties for domestic violence and human trafficking, the emphasis on integrating HIV services into various health facilities, and the implementation of social protection measures for the most disadvantaged people.

79. Spain commended the progress made since the previous universal periodic review, referring to the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

80. The State of Palestine commended the intensified fight against poverty through the National Social Assistance Fund. It welcomed the plans of Gabon to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

81. The Sudan noted with satisfaction the developments since the previous review in 2012, such as the amendment of many acts to bring them into line with several United Nations human rights instruments, referring to the Children's Code and to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

82. Timor-Leste commended Gabon for adopting the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy and for creating the National Social Assistance Fund. It highlighted the creation of a dedicated court system for children, and the increase in the representation of women in political life and decision-making.

83. Togo praised the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It commended the creation of the national health assistance fund that offered mandatory health insurance to all.

84. Tunisia commended the participatory approach — which had included civil society — in preparing the national report. It welcomed the efforts made to implement the recommendations from the last universal periodic review, through the ratification of international instruments and cooperation with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

85. After the presidential elections, a political dialogue had been organized and a new Government subsequently installed. It had taken steps to ensure that persons with disabilities were included in all government bodies, including at the ministerial level, and to provide equal access to public service employment for men, women and young people.

86. An interministerial commission had been established to regularize the civil status of all persons, including indigenous peoples. Birth certificates would be issued to the 15,000 identified individuals, who would see an improvement in their circumstances.

87. Freedom of expression and the freedom of the press were also guaranteed by the Constitution and the Communications Code.

88. With regard to access to medical care, a ministry and a social security system, supported by the mobile emergency medical service, were responsible for providing such access to deprived persons.

89. Turkey commended the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It welcomed the adoption of a national health policy, as well as of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy. It noted with appreciation the national strategies in the area of birth registration to raise awareness of the importance of birth certificates, particularly for children of school age.

90. The United Kingdom deplored the reversal of positive steps previously taken to enable greater space for political debate, by placing restrictive measures on and using excessive force towards those wishing to exercise their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

91. The United States of America expressed its deep concern over the lack of progress on democratization, referring to the post-election violence on both sides, significant lapses in respect for human rights, including numerous arrests and detentions without due process, and continued restrictions on freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly.

92. Uruguay praised the advances made since the previous review in the areas of trafficking in persons and birth registration. It encouraged further efforts in regard to women's and children's rights, particularly in order to eradicate violent and forced marriages.

93. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela praised the reform in regard to preventing and combating human trafficking, particularly of children. It welcomed the measures taken to combat poverty. It mentioned the second national health-care promotion plan, which included the establishment of mandatory medical insurance for all.

94. Viet Nam welcomed the strengthening of institutions, the fight against poverty, the professional integration of persons with disabilities, and the launching of the process to develop the Children's Code.

95. Zambia commended Gabon for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the laws against domestic violence and rape, the provisions in the Criminal Code to prevent and combat female genital mutilation, and measures against the trafficking of children.

96. Zimbabwe noted a number of amendments to laws that were aimed at bringing the national legislation into line with several United Nations human rights instruments, which included the Children's Code. It highlighted the development of a universal national health insurance scheme, the expansion of school infrastructure, social protection measures for the

most disadvantaged people, and the setting of quotas on women's access to senior civil posts.

97. Algeria underlined the progress that Gabon had made in its fight against human trafficking and poverty, in the prevention of torture, and in access to health care and education. It praised the initiatives to provide human rights training in various sectors.

98. Angola commended the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in 2014. It praised Gabon for its social assistance policies in the areas of health care and education.

99. Argentina congratulated Gabon on ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

100. Armenia commended the implementation by Gabon of the National Gender Equality and Equity Strategy and the improvements to the education system. It appreciated the commitments to ratify various legal instruments and encouraged Gabon to pursue measures taken in terms of combating human trafficking.

101. Australia noted the importance of reviewing the outcomes of the preliminary examination by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court of the post-election violence of 2016. It urged Gabon to rapidly proceed with legislative elections and fully respect the rights of all Gabonese citizens to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in the lead-up to the new elections.

102. Azerbaijan congratulated Gabon on ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as recommended in the previous universal periodic review cycle.

103. Belgium commended Gabon for extending a standing invitation to the special procedures. It welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

104. Benin praised the inclusion of civil society, Parliament and the Senate in the preparation of the national report of Gabon. It encouraged Gabon to pursue the process already under way to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

105. Botswana noted the efforts to amend the Criminal Code, with the introduction of penalties for domestic violence and trafficking in persons, legislative and judicial measures to fight and discourage ritual murders and the amendment of the Children's Code to become law.

106. Brazil welcomed the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It praised the continuous efforts to combat trafficking in persons, to promote gender equality, to fight poverty and to provide universal access to health care and education.

107. Burkina Faso hailed the high level of implementation of the 2012 universal periodic review recommendations. It encouraged Gabon to put into practice the measures mentioned in its national report.

108. Burundi praised the efforts made in the field of children's rights, such as the capacity-building workshops and the elaboration of a Children's Code. It noted with satisfaction the health-care scheme for all, and the efforts of Gabon to combat human trafficking and eradicate gender discrimination.

109. Canada commended the respect of religious communities in Gabonese society. It noted the implementation of a national study on gender-based violence, and encouraged Gabon to share the measures it intended to take to improve that situation.

110. The Central African Republic highlighted the efforts made by Gabon for the adoption of several legal instruments aimed at strengthening the mechanisms for promoting and protecting human rights.

111. Chad commended Gabon for its cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms. It noted the progress made to align the national legislation with United Nations human rights instruments, and the elaboration of the Children's Code.

112. With regard to a national preventive mechanism, the delegation of Gabon noted that, in September 2017, a workshop had been organized to identify the challenges that lay ahead. A road map had been developed and a working group established to engage in dialogue with a range of national bodies, including the Constitutional Court. The road map called for the adoption of a law by 2018 at the latest and the establishment of a national body in November 2018.

113. In connection with the concerns of the United States of America regarding the post-election events, the delegation reiterated that Gabon respected the right to freedom of conscience, thought, opinion and expression and the freedom to practise religion provided that public order was maintained. The Government thus had to intervene when incidents such as the setting of the National Assembly on fire disrupted the public order. Nevertheless, following political dialogue, legislative measures had been taken to improve arrangements at public gatherings.

114. With regard to the situation of women, and following the recommendations made during the second universal periodic review, a bill on domestic violence had been drafted and preventive legislation had been adopted to put an end to genital mutilation and to ensure respect for the inheritance rights of women.

115. With respect to the concerns of France regarding the need for a modern civil society, the delegation emphasized that civil society maintained a legal and physical presence in Gabon, although it appeared at times to align itself with and be guided by political opinions.

116. Education was compulsory in Gabon and was guaranteed in the Constitution. Considerable efforts had been made in that regard. The budget allocated to education represented between 30 and 35 per cent of the national budget, and a fierce campaign had been mounted against trafficking in young people in the public procurement system.

117. In conclusion, Gabon thanked the countries that had contributed to the debate and reiterated its commitment to implementing the recommendations it accepted following the session.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

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

118.1 **Fully implement the outcomes of the 2017 political dialogue, particularly measures to improve health and social protection, gender equality, education, training and job creation (South Africa);**

118.2 **Continue its efforts to implement the outcomes from the political dialogue in 2017 (Sudan);**

118.3 **Favour national unity through dialogue as a guarantor for security, without which there can be no development (Central African Republic);**

118.4 **Facilitate the development, in law and practice, of a safe and enabling environment in which both civil society and human rights defenders can operate free from fear, hindrance and insecurity (Ireland);**

118.5 **Continue to promote programmes for human rights education and awareness-raising (Pakistan);**

118.6 **Fully implement certain recommendations to which it has committed itself (Madagascar);**

- 118.7 Continue to mobilize resources and necessary support to enhance its capacity to fulfil its human rights obligations (Nigeria);
- 118.8 Establish a National Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (Portugal);
- 118.9 Make efforts to accelerate the process of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Burundi);
- 118.10 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Mali) (Portugal) (South Africa);
- 118.11 Ratify the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption (Honduras) (Togo);
- 118.12 Ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol) (Honduras);
- 118.13 Ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity (Armenia);
- 118.14 Consider the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Côte d'Ivoire) (Namibia);
- 118.15 Ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Ghana);
- 118.16 Ratify and implement the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled (Ghana);
- 118.17 Proceed with measures to ensure transparent and credible legislative elections no later than 2018 (Australia);
- 118.18 Adopt the draft law amending the Penal Code, which incorporates the sanctions related to domestic violence and trafficking in persons which is currently in Parliament (Côte d'Ivoire);
- 118.19 Continue the dynamic of aligning the national legislation with a number of United Nations human rights instruments, such as the launching of the process to develop the Children's Code (Chad);
- 118.20 Complete the process of adopting the Children's Code currently under examination by the State Council and the criminal laws sanctioning domestic violence and trafficking in persons (Burkina Faso);
- 118.21 Take all necessary measures for the optimal application of these texts (Burkina Faso);
- 118.22 Approve the Children's Code and give greater diffusion to the new regulatory and legislative measures for the protection of widows and orphans (Cuba);
- 118.23 Finalize the Children's Code, which is aimed at, among others, curbing child marriages and ritual crimes (Namibia);
- 118.24 Continue national efforts to ensure harmonization of national legislation with international human rights law (Libya);
- 118.25 Continue implementing the designed road map, with a view to putting in place a national mechanism for the prevention of torture (Ethiopia);
- 118.26 Finalize the process of establishing a national mechanism for the prevention of torture (Georgia);

- 118.27 **Assign the necessary economic, technical and financial resources to accelerate the implementation of the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture (Honduras);**
- 118.28 **Accelerate the establishment of a national preventive mechanism against torture and the process of creating an integrated and permanent national anti-trafficking structure (Mali);**
- 118.29 **Speed up the process of setting up the national mechanism on the prevention of torture (Togo);**
- 118.30 **Set up the national mechanism for prevention of torture (Morocco);**
- 118.31 **Take measures to limit the use of pretrial detention and improve conditions of detention (France);**
- 118.32 **Take further measures to protect the rights of detainees, above all those on pretrial detention (Brazil);**
- 118.33 **Put an end to overcrowding and bad prison conditions, by building new prison facilities and restricting the use of pretrial detention (Spain);**
- 118.34 **Improve detention and prison conditions by, among other things, ensuring detainees receive adequate nutrition, and by reducing overcrowding in places of detention (Canada);**
- 118.35 **Redouble efforts to improve prison conditions, significantly reduce prison overcrowding and ensure that minors are separated from adults and that remand prisoners are separated from convicted prisoners, and women are separated from men (Zambia);**
- 118.36 **Improve the conditions in prisons and review the extraordinarily long period of investigation (up to 18 months) as well as the limited access to visit prisoners, as previously recommended (Germany);**
- 118.37 **Seek to improve prison conditions in Gabon including the availability of appropriate medical care for prisoners and access of prisoners to legal counsel and family (Australia);**
- 118.38 **Continue the reforms of the judicial system already initiated and strengthen measures aimed at combating behaviour in the judiciary that may impede independent, impartial and adequate investigations and trials (Guatemala);**
- 118.39 **Abide by its international obligations with regard to the procedures for arrest and detention, to guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and to exercise the task of governing with due respect for the rule of law (Netherlands);**
- 118.40 **Adopt laws to combat ritual crimes, punish appropriately the instigators and perpetrators of such offences, and put in place a comprehensive strategy to eliminate them (Sierra Leone);**
- 118.41 **Intensify the fight to put an end to ritual crimes, including through long-term awareness-raising campaigns (Spain);**
- 118.42 **Ensure fair trial guarantees for prisoners subject to criminal prosecution, including those detained after last year's presidential election (United States of America);**
- 118.43 **Continue undertaking measures to fight against trafficking in human beings (Azerbaijan);**
- 118.44 **Deepen anti-trafficking measures, in particular by ensuring investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of such crimes (Argentina);**

- 118.45 Ensure to all child and adolescent victims of trafficking the protection of their rights, access to justice and psychosocial rehabilitation (Chile);
- 118.46 Continue working actively for the creation of an integrated and permanent national structure to combat trafficking in persons (Cuba);
- 118.47 Finalize the measures undertaken for the amendment of the national legislation related to trafficking in children (Egypt);
- 118.48 Improve enforcement and coordination of national legislation and policies on the trafficking of persons, especially women and children, and to raise the awareness of this issue amongst the public (Iceland);
- 118.49 Take effective measures to prevent and combat trafficking in women and children and to provide an adequate legal framework to protect victims and prosecute traffickers (Belgium);
- 118.50 Develop the necessary legislation to criminalize all forms of human trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation, forced labour or slavery (Iraq);
- 118.51 Reach bilateral agreements with the countries of origin of the children who are victims of trafficking, particularly Benin, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, and reinforce the internal legal framework to effectively combat this crime (Mexico);
- 118.52 Increase efforts to combat trafficking in persons, especially in women and children (Italy);
- 118.53 Intensify its efforts in combating and preventing trafficking in persons, especially women and children (Nigeria);
- 118.54 Continue efforts to combat all forms of human trafficking (Lebanon);
- 118.55 Expedite the adoption of the national legislation on human trafficking and the draft national policy on special protection that was finalized in 2013 (Botswana);
- 118.56 Establish a permanent, integrated, national structure for combating trafficking in persons (Sudan);
- 118.57 Take all necessary measures to fight internal trafficking of children (Portugal);
- 118.58 Expand the remit of the interministerial child trafficking committee to include adults, ensuring adequate human and financial resources to support national efforts (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 118.59 Criminalize human trafficking, especially child trafficking, while providing protection and assistance to the victims (Republic of Korea);
- 118.60 Ensure protection and assistance to all victims of trafficking (Timor-Leste);
- 118.61 Act more intensively against trafficking of children for sexual exploitation and guarantee their separate detention from adults (Spain);
- 118.62 Adopt a law that combats discrimination comprehensively and guarantees effective protection and equal opportunities for all people (Honduras);
- 118.63 Enhance efforts in achieving gender equality (Zambia);
- 118.64 Further widen its scope of assistance to women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, in this regard (State of Palestine);
- 118.65 Take measures to better protect vulnerable populations, by promoting the integration of young people and by combating violence against women and gender disparities in terms of professional integration — in line

with the development of the framework for the organization of the justice system (France);

118.66 Further strengthen measures aimed at combating all forms of discrimination against women (Georgia);

118.67 Better fight against discrimination against women (Senegal);

118.68 Implement policies that reverse the inequality of opportunities and treatment between women and men in terms of access to employment (Mexico);

118.69 Fast-track the implementation of Acts Nos. 09/2015 and 010/2016, on setting quotas for women's access to senior civil service posts and on combating harassment in the workplace, respectively (Namibia);

118.70 Adopt the necessary and appropriate measures to ensure that all branches of the government, Parliament and judiciary apply the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and harmonize domestic legislation with that Convention ensuring that discriminatory dispositions against women are repealed (Uruguay);

118.71 Adopt concrete measures, in the form of national awareness programmes and campaigns, to eradicate stereotypes, cultural practices and traditions contrary to the fundamental rights of women and girls (Chile);

118.72 Adopt measures to combat discrimination against women in rural areas and to tackle the high mortality rate during childbirth (Spain);

118.73 Enhance efforts to implement the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Equity, including addressing the underrepresentation of women in decision-making bodies and eliminating harmful traditional practices (Rwanda);

118.74 Continue efforts to fight against discrimination against women and all violence against women, especially domestic violence (Tunisia);

118.75 Take all necessary measures to combat violence against women, including discrimination in employment (Djibouti);

118.76 Take the necessary measures to ensure that the Gabonese laws regarding violence against women, including those prohibiting rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence, are implemented and that those responsible are brought to justice (Canada);

118.77 In line with the 2030 Agenda, adopt a policy aimed at putting an end to harmful practices against girls, such as forced early marriage and genital mutilation, among others (Honduras);

118.78 Continue efforts to strengthen the prevention of and fight against female genital mutilation (Angola);

118.79 Continue its efforts on further eradicating poverty and empowering women (Azerbaijan);

118.80 Continue enhancing women's economic empowerment, particularly in the arrangements of income-generating activities (Ethiopia);

118.81 Continue efforts for the promotion and protection of rights of women and devise policies for their empowerment (Pakistan);

118.82 Continue to promote the equal representation of women in political and public life (Turkey);

118.83 Provide free legal aid to women without sufficient means in order to facilitate their access to justice (Sierra Leone);

118.84 Strengthen the measures taken to provide free legal aid to women without sufficient means (Timor-Leste);

- 118.85 Intensify efforts to provide easy and free access to registration of birth to all children (India);
- 118.86 Continue its good cooperation with civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, especially UNICEF, for the full registration of children at birth (Burkina Faso);
- 118.87 Continue efforts to support the rights of the child and protect children from sexual exploitation and trafficking (Tunisia);
- 118.88 Combat sexual violence and exploitation, particularly through the implementation of procedures and policies to prevent such offences, facilitate their reporting and provide care to child victims (Belgium);
- 118.89 Clearly prohibit all forms of corporal, cruel or degrading punishment in all contexts and promote non-violent forms of education and discipline (Belgium);
- 118.90 Expressly prohibit all corporal punishment of children in all settings, including at school and at home (Luxembourg);
- 118.91 Reform the law authorizing the punishment of children, in conformity with international standards (Madagascar);
- 118.92 Enact legislation with a view to prohibiting corporal punishment of children in all settings (Montenegro);
- 118.93 Continue its awareness-raising programmes with a view to putting an end to the use of corporal punishment in schools (Turkey);
- 118.94 Adopt all legislative and policy measures to eradicate child and forced marriages (Chile);
- 118.95 Continue its efforts to improve legislation to ensure that it is in line with international best practices and standards on freedom of expression (Brazil);
- 118.96 Undertake further measures to ensure freedom of the press based on decriminalization of press offences and respect for the rights of the press (Iceland);
- 118.97 Ensure pluralism of the press and respect for freedom of expression and public assembly (France);
- 118.98 Respect the rights of all its citizens to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and the right to participate in public and political life (Iceland);
- 118.99 Ensure the full exercise of the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and take steps to create a safe environment for human rights defenders and journalists (Italy);
- 118.100 Refrain from restricting freedom of expression, whether it is exercised online or offline, and ensure that journalists and media outlets are able to carry out their work without harassment (United States of America);
- 118.101 Respect freedom of peaceful assembly, including when exercised by the opposition (United States of America);
- 118.102 Enhance freedom of expression (Lebanon);
- 118.103 Take measures to guarantee a safe and transparent environment within which civil society can freely operate without fear of repercussions, including by lifting restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 118.104 Ensure that the right to participate in public and political life as well as the freedom of the press are not submitted to undue limitations (Portugal);

- 118.105 **Adopt appropriate measures to ensure the protection of human rights defenders, journalists and political opponents against acts of violence or intimidation (Luxembourg);**
- 118.106 **Continue promoting economic and social sustainable development to improve steadily the standard of living and to lay a solid foundation for the enjoyment of human rights (China);**
- 118.107 **Continue efforts to combat poverty (Lebanon);**
- 118.108 **Strengthen anti-poverty policies (Algeria);**
- 118.109 **Continue to enhance its social protection programmes, which provide assistance to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged Gabonese (State of Palestine);**
- 118.110 **Continue to strengthen its social programmes with a special emphasis on the fields of education, nutrition, and health, in order to increase the quality of life of its people, particularly those who are most in need, for which international cooperation and technical assistance demanded by the country are important (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**
- 118.111 **Continue efforts to guarantee better access to education and to health care for the people, including for indigenous peoples (Algeria);**
- 118.112 **Take measures to guarantee access to health care for all, and strengthen the public sector, which suffers from difficulties in operating as well as from strong territorial inequalities (France);**
- 118.113 **Continue to expand the coverage of the National Health Insurance and Social Protection Fund to include more disadvantaged persons and those previously without coverage, in accordance with its national plan (Singapore);**
- 118.114 **Step up efforts in order to ensure the right of access to health for all (Viet Nam);**
- 118.115 **Strengthen measures to reduce the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women and mother-to-child transmissions (Indonesia);**
- 118.116 **Take effective measures to cope with the high rate of HIV transmission by strengthening the national strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS (Malaysia);**
- 118.117 **Take further measures to ensure the accessibility of HIV/AIDS-related health services (Malaysia);**
- 118.118 **Strengthen public policies aimed at addressing the high number of people living with HIV/AIDS and not receiving treatment, particularly women, in order to reduce the rates of HIV transmission from mothers to children during childbirth; as well as for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, guaranteeing medical care without discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Mexico);**
- 118.119 **Continue enhancing investment in education to reduce the school dropout rates (China);**
- 118.120 **Establish a strategy to reduce children's school dropout (Angola);**
- 118.121 **Address the root causes of its high school-dropout rates, particularly among girls, inter alia by enforcing a zero-tolerance policy with respect to sexual violence and sexual harassment (Slovenia);**
- 118.122 **Take all necessary measures to significantly increase the enrolment rates and decrease the dropout rates of girls at all levels of education, by the end of the third universal periodic review cycle (Montenegro);**

118.123 **Guarantee access to education for all, and in particular to strengthen the public sector, while access to a continuous and quality education curriculum is deteriorating (France);**

118.124 **Continue to take further measures towards inclusive and quality education (Armenia);**

118.125 **Continue to take necessary measures to ensure the provision of inclusive quality education to all children including children with disabilities and adopt legislation in this regard (Maldives);**

118.126 **Continue its information campaign across the country on the rights of disabled persons in order to ensure the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and their integration into society (Mauritius);**

118.127 **Continue to provide persons with disabilities with equal access to health including free and informed consent with health interventions and take necessary measures to repeal legislation restricting these (Maldives);**

118.128 **Promote and protect more the rights of people with disabilities, in particular of children (Senegal);**

118.129 **Continue to implement policies, and ensure that adequate resources are allocated, to support the integration and active participation of all persons with disabilities in Gabonese society (Singapore).**

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

119.1 **Continue its capacity-building activities and human rights training for defence and security forces by utilizing various international cooperation, including South-South cooperation (Indonesia);**

119.2 **Expand further the efforts and resources allocated to programmes devoted to promoting youth employment, particularly of young people with disabilities (Viet Nam);**

119.3 **Ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization (Guatemala);**

119.4 **Adhere and adapt its national legislation to the Arms Trade Treaty and sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (Guatemala);**

119.5 **Develop the legal framework imposing a prior authorization regime, in order to allow the emergence of a modern civil society (France);**

119.6 **Provide adequate resources to the National Human Rights Commission, regardless of the enactment of an amended bill for the establishment and organization of the Commission (Republic of Korea);**

119.7 **Provide adequate budget for the National Human Rights Commission (Timor-Leste);**

119.8 **Empower the National Human Rights Commission, including by providing adequate budget and office space to conduct sensitization on trafficking and to handle complaints related to trafficking (Zambia);**

119.9 **Strengthen the resources of the National Commission on Human Rights (Senegal);**

119.10 **Continue efforts to ensure the proper functioning and full independence of the Commission on Human Rights, in accordance with the Paris Principles (Djibouti);**

119.11 **Expedite its efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Rwanda);**

- 119.12 **Finalize the A-status accreditation and ensure functioning of the National Human Rights Commission (Georgia);**
- 119.13 **Strengthen the role of the National Commission of Human Rights in accordance with the Paris Principles (Morocco);**
- 119.14 **Make further efforts to obtain “A” status in conformity with the Paris Principles for the National Human Rights Commission (Portugal);**
- 119.15 **Accelerate its efforts towards adopting the new law on the organization and functioning of the National Human Rights Commission in order to make it more effective (Zimbabwe);**
- 119.16 **Enact legislation and take the necessary measures to protect people from discrimination, especially women, pygmies and indigenous peoples (Iraq);**
- 119.17 **Provide equal legal protections and access to public services to all its citizens, particularly its minorities and indigenous peoples (Republic of Korea);**
- 119.18 **Ensure indigenous people’s participation in decision-making at all levels, in all matters affecting them, including conservation efforts (Sierra Leone);**
- 119.19 **Take the necessary measures to ensure the right to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, among others, by holding responsible anyone who commits acts of intimidation, harassment or violence against individuals, including human rights defenders, for having exercised these rights (Canada);**
- 119.20 **Accede to the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Iraq);**
- 119.21 **Continue efforts to ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement, and that this principle is applied to all situations, based on individual assessments, case by case and not collectively, particularly in the case of underage asylum seekers (Argentina);**
- 119.22 **Guarantee that refugee and asylum-seeking children have access to appropriate medical services (Turkey).**
120. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Gabon and have been noted by Gabon:**
- 120.1 **Adopt an open, merit-based selection process when selecting national candidates for United Nations treaty bodies elections (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**
- 120.2 **Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Congo) (Egypt) (Sierra Leone);**
- 120.3 **Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Uruguay);**
- 120.4 **Step up efforts in ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia);**
- 120.5 **Ratify promptly the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Guatemala);**
- 120.6 **Ratify the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Spain);**
- 120.7 **Expedite the current preparations in order to specify the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Uruguay);**

120.8 Undertake an independent investigation into the post-electoral violence as well as allegations of human rights violations in the same context, in order to shed light on the involvement and responsibilities of the various actors and bring justice to victims (Luxembourg);

120.9 Open a formal, independent and objective inquiry into the election-related violence and the allegations of serious violations of human rights (Netherlands);

120.10 Investigate alleged arbitrary arrests of demonstrators and excessive periods of pretrial detention that reportedly took place following the election (Australia);

120.11 Ensure effective and systematic application of the principle of prior consultation with indigenous peoples, inter alia in its conservation efforts, including by providing specific regulatory or legislative framework (Slovenia);

120.12 Fully capacitate and support the National Women's Council to better protect and promote the rights of women (South Africa);

120.13 Repeal or amend Law 19/06/2016, which entered into force at the beginning of 2017, in order to guarantee the constitutionally enshrined human rights to freedom of the press and of freedom of opinion and expression, as both are necessary preconditions for a democratic and active society (Germany);

120.14 Review thoroughly and amend the Communications Code to ensure that it is in line with international best practices and standards on freedom of expression (Ireland);

120.15 Ensure that all allegations of exploitation and sexual abuse of children in the Central African Republic by Gabonese soldiers are promptly and effectively investigated, and take steps to prevent this situation in the future (Guatemala).

121. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Gabon was headed by his Excellency Mr. Francis NKEA NDZIGUE, Minister of State, Minister of Justice and Chargé for Human Rights and composed of the following members:

- Mme Marianne Odette BIBALOU BOUNDA, Ambassadrice, Représentante permanente;
 - Mme Aissatou BARRY, Conseillère du Premier Ministre, Chef du Gouvernement;
 - Mme Diane NDONG NGUEMA, Conseillère du Ministre d'État (Ministère de la famille);
 - Mme Pélagie Corine EFFALE NZE, Conseillère du Ministre d'État (Ministère de la justice);
 - M. Guy-Gervais MBONGO OTANDO, Conseiller juridique du Ministre d'État (Ministère du budget);
 - M. Mathieu EKWA NGUI, Directeur général adjoint des droits de l'homme;
 - Mme Edwige KOUMBY MISSAMBO, Première Conseillère;
 - Mme Edna Paola BIYOGOU, épouse MINKO, Directrice de la promotion des droits de l'homme;
 - M. Anicet-Gervais ONDO NGUEMA, Directeur de la protection des droits de l'homme;
 - Mme Christelle Sylvanie EYUMANE ESSAME, Chef de service des associations et des organisations non gouvernementales (Ministère de la justice);
 - Mme Nicole MENGUE, Chef de division de la protection internationale (Ministère des affaires étrangères);
 - Mme Nadège MOUCKETOU-MVOU, Conseillère chargée des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme;
 - M. Roland Steve ENGONE NGYE, Conseiller chargé du protocole;
 - Mme Josette Flore ITOUMBA, épouse MIHINDOU, Directrice du Centre de rétention administrative (Ministère de la justice).
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