

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO BELGIUM

CZECH REPUBLIC

- In which time frame does Belgium expect ratification of the OP CAT (signed in 2005), to which it committed in the first cycle of UPR?
- What measures does Belgium take to improve conditions in prisons and address the problem of prison overcrowding?
- Does it consider withdrawing its reservations to the ICCPR?

GERMANY

- How does Belgium plan to substantially reduce prison over-crowding and what measures are taken to decrease the number of detainees to significantly less than 10,000 nationwide?
- How does Belgium support victims of domestic and sexual violence, particularly with regard to encouraging them to report crimes to relevant authorities?

MEXICO

- Could you share information on the policies adopted since the last UPR cycle to promote equal access to education aimed at the inclusion of children from poor, foreign and minority families?
- What measures have been taken to decrease or eliminate the systematic detention at the border of asylum-seekers and migrants in an irregular situation? Are there legal provisions to limit to exceptional cases the deprivation of liberty of asylum-seekers during the period of the determination of their request for asylum?
- What measures have been taken to afford sufficient legal safeguards to ensure that complaints by foreigners do not have negative consequences regarding their stay in the country as well as to implement penal provisions relative to acts of xenophobia and racial discrimination and to investigate and effectively sanction human rights violations committed against foreigners or persons belonging to minorities?
- Is Belgium considering to adhere to the Marrakech Treaty?

NETHERLANDS

- Is the Belgian delegation willing to elaborate on the establishment on the state of play of the National Human Rights Institution and indicate if it will be fully compliant with the Paris Principles?
- With a view of the hard work of Belgium to improve its prison system, including by reducing overcrowding, could the delegation elaborate specifically on the measures taken for treatment of offenders with mental health problems?
- Could Belgium indicate if the terrorist threat has led to ethnic profiling within the police organization? And if so, is Belgium willing to develop, in consultation with stakeholders, measures to prevent and combat ethnic profiling? The Netherlands is willing to share experiences in this regard.
- Is Belgium willing to continue to give priority attention to domestic and gender-based violence and to ensure sufficient budget is allocated for the effective implementation of the National Action Plan against gender-based violence?
- Is Belgium willing to abolish sterilization and gender reassignment surgery requirements, as well as mandatory psychiatric assessment, as preconditions for legal gender recognition of transgender persons?

NORWAY

- In its 2011 UPR, Belgium accepted the recommendation by Norway and other countries to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) as well as to establish a National Preventative Mechanism in accordance with the Optional Protocol. What are the main obstacles to the ratification of the OPCAT and the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism, and how do you intend to move forward in this matter?
- Belgium has a comparatively high number of unimplemented judgements from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). What does Belgium intend to do in order to better fulfil its obligation under the European Convention of Human Rights?
- Belgium's detainment of prisoners in psychiatric wards under the social defence law without offering treatment has been subject to a number of judgements by the ECHR, and does, according to the Council of Europe, manifest structural problems in the Belgian legal system. What does Belgium intend to do to prevent future violations in this field?
- Over the past year, the government has announced several measures to better deal with the threat of terrorist attacks. What kind of mechanisms will Belgium put in

place to ensure that current or new counter-terrorism law, policies and practices are in compliance with international human rights law? Are there plans to launch human rights assessments of counter-terrorism legislation and practise?

SLOVENIA

- As a follow up to information provided during the first-cycle UPR of Belgium, we would like to ask what activities have been undertaken to establish a definition of the term "national minority" and what has been their outcome? Has Belgium considered applying other known methods (for example self-identification) as the search for a national agreement on the term is proving to be protracted?

SPAIN

- Regarding paragraph III.8. of the Belgian national report, can Belgium give further information about the steps taken to establish a national human rights institution?
- In addition to what has already been done to improve the situation in prisons and detention facilities, what is planned to keep on making progress in this field?
- When does Belgium expect to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- What specific steps is Belgium taking to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture?
- With reference to paragraphs 8 and 9 of the National Report, could Belgium clarify the actions it has taken to establish an independent national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles by the end of the current legislative period (2019)?
- How has legislation on child sexual abuse and paedophilia, which Belgium last modified in 2014, strengthened the protection of children from sexual abuse, and what further legislative and policy measures are planned, particularly to protect children from trafficking for sexual purposes?"
- In light of Belgium's introduction of electronic monitoring and surveillance, community rehabilitation and the opening of several new prisons and forensic psychiatry centres, by when does Belgium expect to reduce prison overcrowding and achieve its target reduction to a prison population below ten thousand?

- How will the Belgian Government work to prevent hate speech, extremism, discrimination and xenophobia?

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- What steps has the Government of Belgium taken to address instances of racial and religious discrimination against migrants and people of African descent in Belgium?
- What steps has the Government of Belgium taken to address discrimination against persons of Middle Eastern descent?
- What steps is the Government of Belgium taking to alleviate discrimination against Muslim women in employment, schools, and public spaces?
- What steps has the Government of Belgium taken to address hate crimes against members of the Jewish community?
- How has the Government of Belgium attempted to address discrimination and unlawful racial profiling in the context of heightened security in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Paris?
- What steps has the Government of Belgium undertaken to alleviate the trafficking of persons within its borders?