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**National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of  
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**Honduras**

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## **I. Methodology for the preparation of the report**

1. The present report describes the progress made by the State of Honduras with respect to human rights in the context of the third cycle of the universal periodic review. The report was prepared with input from the Special Response Group on Human Rights, which is comprised of the institutional teams responsible for giving follow-up to international recommendations and providing information to the Honduran System for the Monitoring of Recommendations.<sup>1</sup>
2. The Ministry of Human Rights<sup>2</sup> held five workshops for the preparation of the report. It organized training on human rights for State officials with a view to strengthening the Special Response Group. A total of 10 civil society organizations participated in workshops.

## **II. National system for the protection of human rights**

3. The activities of the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights are guided by the action plan for 2014–2020, which is entitled *Vanguardia de la Dignidad Humana* (“At the Forefront of Human Dignity”), and by the strategy for local social transformation, which is designed to promote solidarity and well-being at the municipal level.<sup>3</sup> The Office has an enhanced presence in the communities and territories through its regional and departmental branches. Its mobile ombudsman service has made 266 visits in 77 municipalities, where 255 activities have been conducted to promote human rights, deal with complaints and provide guidance. Between 2015 and 2019, the Office’s budget increased by 29 per cent. It is also noteworthy that, in 2019, the Office was granted category A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.

4. In 2019, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment<sup>4</sup> was given greater autonomy and its budget was increased by 81 per cent. There are currently 10 local boards that carry out aspects of the Committee’s mandate in detention facilities. In addition, under the applicable legislation, a civil society representative was elected and is currently in post.

5. In 2017, the Ministry of Human Rights<sup>5</sup> was established, with a mandate to advise the government and other relevant institutions on their efforts to comply with national and international human rights obligations and responsibilities and to coordinate related activities. The Ministry’s work is focused on two main areas, namely promotion of human rights and protection of human rights, for each of which a technical directorates was put in place.

6. The legislative branch has the Commission on Justice and Human Rights and the judicial branch has the Department of International Relations and Human Rights.

7. The Public Prosecution Service has an Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights and an Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials.<sup>6</sup>

8. Between 2015 and 2019, with the aim of upholding, protecting and promoting human rights, the State approved a number of treaties, laws, regulations and public policy measures, including:

(a) Civil and political rights:<sup>7</sup> creation of new criminal courts;<sup>8</sup> creation of the Judicial Commission on Access to Justice;<sup>9</sup> amendment of the Code of Criminal Procedure with regard to individual electronic monitoring and virtual hearings;<sup>10</sup> creation of the National Electoral Council and the Electoral Court;<sup>11</sup> establishment of a number of Special Prosecutor’s Offices<sup>12</sup> and investigation units;<sup>13</sup> reform of the National Police;<sup>14</sup> ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty;<sup>15</sup> Act on the Control of Firearms, Munitions, Explosives and Related Items;<sup>16</sup> amendment of the Responsible Parenting Act and the accompanying regulations;<sup>17</sup> creation of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders;<sup>18</sup> creation of an inter-agency commission to monitor investigations of violent deaths of women and cases of femicide;<sup>19</sup> and regulations for the implementation of the principle of parity and a

mechanism whereby male and female candidates must appear in alternating positions on electoral lists;<sup>20</sup>

(b) Economic, social, cultural and environmental rights:<sup>21</sup> ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>22</sup> and conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between Honduras and the Republic of Korea;<sup>23</sup> Labour Inspectorate Act;<sup>24</sup> School Meals Act;<sup>25</sup> Act on Debt Relief for Workers;<sup>26</sup>

(c) The executive has adopted other measures such as the creation of the National Commission for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related inter-agency technical committee;<sup>27</sup> the National Sustainable Development Goals Agenda;<sup>28</sup> the setting of national policies on employment and credit;<sup>29</sup> the Public Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples;<sup>30</sup> the Public Policy on Inclusive Education;<sup>31</sup> the Strategic Plan on Education 2017–2030; the Integrated System for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras;<sup>32</sup> and the National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service.<sup>33</sup>

### **III. Follow-up to recommendations arising from the second cycle of the universal period review<sup>34</sup>**

9. The recommendations arising from the universal periodic review are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, the National Human Rights Action Plan for 2013–2022 and the Government's various public policies, plans and programmes. 10. Of the 152 recommendations, action is being taken on 101, relating to the protection of women, migrants, human rights defenders and public safety. Action has already been taken on another 34 recommendations, relating to human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice officials. Action is pending on the remaining 17 recommendations, most of which relate to the ratification of optional protocols to international treaties.

11. At the request of the Government, a country office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was set up in 2016. Work has been done jointly to consolidate the National System for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, evaluate the institutional capacity of the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights, incorporate international standards into the new Criminal Code, provide capacity-building for justice officials and security forces with regard to a range of human rights issues and embed a human rights approach in the National Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

12. On 10 December 2018, the Ministry of Human Rights and OHCHR signed a letter of agreement to set up five working groups on public policies, human rights education, legislative harmonization, human rights defenders and persons displaced by violence. So far, 9 outputs have been achieved in full and work on the 22 others is ongoing.

13. Honduras collaborates extensively with the special procedures of the United Nations. During the period under consideration, five special rapporteurs and two working groups have visited Honduras.<sup>35</sup> Since the Ministry of Human Rights was established, 26 thematic reports have been prepared. In addition, all reports to treaty bodies, including six follow-up reports, have been submitted in a timely manner, and nine dialogues have been held with treaty bodies.

14. In August 2018, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights conducted an on-site visit to Honduras. Among the progress made in complying with the recommendations, in November 2019 the Commission and the Government of Honduras publicly launched the Special Technical Advisory Board. The Board will provide the Government with technical assistance in areas including human rights defenders, children, women, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. At the regional level, the State has participated in more than eight sessions of the Commission.

15. On 31 May 2018, Honduras requested technical assistance from the United Nations Working Group on business and human rights to explore the possibility of developing a national action plan on business and human rights. In partnership with OHCHR, 14 training

workshops on the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights were held for more than 685 people from all relevant sectors. In August 2019, the Working Group conducted a visit to Honduras at the invitation of the Government.

16. It is important that Honduras take the necessary steps to develop a national action plan on business and human rights, and with the particular care that such an effort requires. With that in mind, the authorities have engaged in preparatory work and ongoing, open dialogue in a multi-stakeholder forum with the Honduran Private Enterprise Council, the National Autonomous University of Honduras, human rights organizations and technical advisers from the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

17. Recently, following technical assistance from the Ministry of Human Rights, the Honduran Private Enterprise Council approved the Institutional Policy on Business and Human Rights.

## **IV. Progress in the promotion and protection of rights**

### **A. Access to justice<sup>36</sup>**

18. The selection process for Supreme Court justices for the 2016 –2023 term of office was conducted in accordance with the mechanism established in the Constitution.<sup>37</sup> The process involved the participation of civil society organizations<sup>38</sup> and public hearings. The results were submitted to the National Congress, the votes of two thirds of Deputies being required for candidates to be elected.

19. The judiciary developed the Institutional Strategic Plan 2017–2021, which sets out actions designed to provide transparent, impartial, modern and effective justice services that promote security and trust for the people of Honduras. The Plan is divided into five strategic areas.<sup>39</sup> In addition, the relevant budget has been increased by 44 per cent between 2015 and 2020.

20. In order to guarantee access to justice, there are 424 magistrate's courts, courts of first instance and mobile courts and 17 appeal courts in 18 departments. To implement the Brasilia Regulations Regarding Access to Justice for Vulnerable People, the Judicial Commission on Access to Justice was created in 2017.<sup>40</sup> The National System of Judicial Facilitators has 2,334 facilitators and conducted 78,424 activities nationwide between 2013 and 2018.<sup>41</sup>

21. Between 2016 and 2019, a total of 8,978 judicial officials and 1,800 members of the National System of Judicial Facilitators were trained by the Judicial Training College, including on human rights issues.

22. With regard to disciplinary proceedings in respect of judges, in 2018 96 ex officio investigations were initiated into alleged non-compliance with the procedures and regulations governing judicial officials. The sanctions imposed ranged from written warnings and fines to dismissals.

23. In 2018, the Public Defence Service provided free legal assistance in 9,098 cases of children in conflict with the law and 2,101 civil, family and domestic violence cases, benefiting 23,466 people.

24. The judicial branch, with assistance from the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras, developed protocols for the appointment of judges, which have been used for recruitment. Regional justice centres have also been strengthened, with a focus on alternative dispute resolution methods.

25. A number of campaigns have been conducted, including the 2018 “Score a Goal against Machismo” campaign, which was designed to promote new perspectives on masculinity and eradicate harmful practices against women, and the 2019 “We Defend You Because It's Your Right” campaign, which was designed to guarantee the right to a defence for persons being prosecuted.

26. The Public Prosecution Service is implementing its Institutional Strategic Plan 2015–2020<sup>42</sup> with the aim of changing organizational culture and making management more effective and professional. There are 938 prosecutors and 322 criminal investigation technicians around the country. To ensure due diligence in investigations and public prosecutions of criminal cases, the Service’s budget has increased by 81 per cent since 2015.

27. The Public Prosecution Service created the Special Prosecution Unit to Combat Impunity for Corruption<sup>43</sup> and submitted 11 applications for prosecution, including 4 high-profile cases, in respect of 72 public officials and 32 other individuals.

28. The Training College of the Public Prosecution Service has provided human rights training for 286 justice officials. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights has trained 2,254 justice officials.

29. In 2018, with assistance from the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras, the Judicial Training College and the Training College of the Public Prosecution Service provided training to 143 prosecutors, investigators and analysts from the Special Prosecution Unit to Combat Impunity for Corruption, as well as judges with the competence to hear corruption cases.

30. In 2017, the Office of the Under-Secretary for Justice was created within the Ministry of the Interior, Justice and Decentralization with the aim of promoting a culture of compliance with the law, consolidating the range of justice services available, bringing justice closer to the people and facilitating access to justice, especially for the most vulnerable persons, in order to uphold their rights. At the local level, five conflict resolution centres were created, and 95 per cent of the cases submitted have been resolved.

## B. Public safety<sup>44</sup>

31. In the sphere of public safety, Honduras is focusing its efforts on three areas, namely preventing crime by reclaiming public spaces, combating crime and all forms of violence and providing professional and technical training for police officers and human rights training, as set out in the Violence Prevention Policy and the Comprehensive Policy on Harmonious Social Relations and Public Safety 2011–2022.

32. Violence prevention activities have strengthened the capacity of 65 youth outreach centres around the country in terms of creative use of free time, employment training and school support. With the assistance of local partners, community leaders and 1,300 volunteers, 35,000 children and adolescents have received support.

33. As part of the “Parks for a Better Life” programme, public spaces have been reclaimed and 100 parks have been created in 17 departments.<sup>45</sup> These spaces have a focus on social inclusion. Approximately 14 per cent of park visitors are older persons, and 80 per cent of the parks are accessible for persons with disabilities and have play equipment suitable for children with disabilities.<sup>46</sup>

34. Under the Safer Municipalities programme, the Local Councils for Harmonious Social Relations and Public Safety were strengthened in the 30 municipalities with the highest crime rates. Projects were set up to prevent situational and social violence, and Harmonious Social Relations and Public Safety Plans were approved.

35. These policies and strategies are strengthened through initiatives such as GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training),<sup>47</sup> which is designed to prevent juvenile crime, violence and membership of gangs. As of 2019, there are 235 instructors working in 39 teams around the country. Training has been provided to 487,905 children and adolescents and at 2,048 education centres. In addition, initiatives such as “Young Honduras”, “My Neighbourhood” and “Second Chance” provided seed capital and training for young persons, with support from the Tegucigalpa Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

36. As part of the fight against organized crime and all forms of violence, the authorities have engaged in efforts to tackle the drug trafficking cartels operating in the western and Atlantic areas of the country. As a result of land, air and naval operations, between 2018

and 2019, 445 individuals were arrested for unlawful possession of weapons and more than 1,340 for drug trafficking. In addition, 3,361 kilograms of cocaine, 28,267 pounds of marijuana, 529,000 marijuana plants, 2,877 grams of crack cocaine and 5,852 cocaine rocks were seized.

37. As of 2018, the Public Prosecution Service seized cash and property valued at 1.182 million lempiras (L) in the fight against drug trafficking, corruption and gangs.

38. In compliance with the general principle of international law of *aut dedere aut judicare*, 18 individuals have been extradited to the United States of America in connection with drug trafficking offences.

39. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life has been strengthened and trained personnel has been hired to work in the unit responsible for investigating high-profile deaths. The unit employs 35 prosecutors, as well as 14 investigative agents in Tegucigalpa and 12 in San Pedro Sula.

40. With regard to technical professional training for police officers and human rights training, under the plan for strengthening the National Police, by 2022 there will be a minimum of 26,183 police officers. The training programme for new police officers has been extended from 3 to 11 months, plus 1 month of work experience. During the period under consideration, approximately 9,823 police officers have been trained in new skills, compared to 2,373 between 2010 and 2014.<sup>48</sup> International cooperation agencies provided support for all of these activities.

41. In addition, the National Police has an in-service training model under which 11,099 police officers and 1,091 other officials have received training since 2015 in human rights, the use of force, conflict resolution and non-discrimination.

42. As part of the Honduras component of the Public Safety Project in the Northern Triangle of Central America, 30 officials and 200 police officers were trained as trainers for the national community policing model.

43. Between 2015 and 2019, the Ministry of Human Rights provided training on human rights, prevention of torture and the use of force to 25,087 members of the Armed Forces and the Public Order Unit of the Military Police. In addition, the human rights training curriculum has been updated.

44. As part of the overall process to strengthen the National Police, 3,077 agents and officials were removed from their posts as a result of a purge ordered by the Government. With the strengthening of the National Police, the Armed Forces will reduce their involvement in public safety activities in the medium and long term, in line with the reduction of levels of violence seen in the various municipalities.

45. The State focused its efforts on the creation of new infrastructure, including the construction of the Police Institute, two new scientific research laboratories for the National Police and police stations, thanks to an increase of 70 per cent in the national security budget between 2015 and 2020.

## C. Freedom of expression<sup>49</sup>

46. Offences against freedom of expression are included in the guidelines accompanying the general investigation protocol of the Public Prosecution Service.<sup>50</sup> Manuals have been developed for officials responsible for investigating and trying these cases, and training has been provided to prosecutors, judges, police and officials in other sectors.

47. As of December 2018, 42 investigations of freedom of expression offences had been registered in Honduras. Of those, 25 cases had gone to trial, resulting in 9 convictions and 6 acquittals.

48. During 2019, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials registered 28 complaints of violations of the right to freedom of expression, 21 of which are being investigated.

49. In connection with the policy on access to public information,<sup>51</sup> the Public Information Institute trained 10,927 persons to promote the right to information. Honduras also joined the International Anti-Corruption Academy on 5 December 2018.

50. In order to promote the Open Government Partnership 2018–2020, the role of civil society organizations, the private sector and academia play a significant role in monitoring compliance with the Government’s commitments.<sup>52</sup>

#### **D. Truth and Reconciliation Commission<sup>53</sup>**

51. The 84 recommendations and the related monitoring activities have been incorporated into the National Human Rights Action Plan that is in place until 2022. The recommendations provided a starting point for the working group on human rights, which was set up as part of the political dialogue initiative launched after the 2017 elections. The 169 agreements that resulted from the dialogue were sent to the National Congress.

#### **E. Promoting economic growth and decent work<sup>54</sup>**

52. The economic and social development of Honduras is promoted through the Vision for the Country 2010–2038, the Plan for the Nation 2010–2022 and the Strategic Government Plan 2018–2022. These plans, which are designed to improve the lives of all Hondurans, incorporate human rights in a cross-cutting manner in all efforts to support vulnerable population groups.<sup>55</sup>

53. To guarantee the right to work, the actions taken within the framework of the 2017 National Employment Policy were focused on boosting job creation and developing human capital through programmes including “Honduras 20/20”, “Life is Better with a Job”, “Green Code”, “Digital Job Listings”, community work initiatives and employment initiatives aimed at young people. A total of 229,618 jobs were created between 2016 and 2019.

54. Since 2018, more than 32,268 inspections have been carried out and the number of infringements addressed have increased by 81 per cent, benefiting 433,304 workers.<sup>56</sup>

55. The National Financial Inclusion Strategy focuses on workers, micro- and small traders, entrepreneurs, small-scale agricultural producers and recipients of remittances and conditional transfers. Priority is given to vulnerable groups such as women and indigenous and Afro-Honduran persons.

56. The social economy is promoted by providing credit and technical assistance to micro-entrepreneurs through the Presidential Programme for Solidarity Credit. In 2019, L 1.5 billion was invested through the distribution of 172,000 credits to small-scale entrepreneurs.

57. Through the Dry Corridor Partnership and with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Special Programme for Food and Nutritional Security was established. The Programme has generated development opportunities for 13,139 rural producers through the creation of 10 new farming technologies.

58. In order to promote microenterprise and self-management as a way to help participants exit the Better Life voucher scheme, 21,495 mothers who are heads of household and 2,991 ninth-grade graduates were given loans between 2015 and 2019.

#### **F. Social protection<sup>57</sup>**

59. The Government of Honduras, through the Social Protection Framework Act and the Social Protection Policy, implements plans and programmes that constitute the social protection floor.<sup>58</sup> The National Centre for Information on the Social Sector is responsible for registering beneficiaries, with a view to ensuring that the Social Protection Policy is properly coordinated and targeted.

60. Measures such as the Better Life Platform have been adopted to create equal opportunities and improve people's lives. As part of the Platform initiative, between 2015 and 2019, 4.8 million people received support in the areas of basic foodstuffs, access to health care, promotion of school enrolment, school attendance and retention, and creation of opportunities and skills improvement to boost participation in the labour market and financial inclusion. Of the beneficiaries, 62 per cent are female and 38 per cent are male, 64 per cent are children and approximately 10 per cent identify as indigenous or Afro-Honduran.

61. In order to ensure adequate housing conditions, 591,000 people have been provided with 605,000 benefits including 216,000 eco-friendly stoves designed to eliminate certain health problems, mainly among women, 72,000 water reservoirs, 47,000 water filters and 61,000 latrines to ensure access to safe water and sanitation, 173,000 hygienic floors and 34,000 roofs to prevent respiratory, intestinal and vector-borne diseases, and 3,000 homes.

62. The National Commission on Housing and Human Settlements launched social housing programmes and improved access to housing for families living in poverty by providing 246,478 housing units, in three different configurations, and 21,300 housing bonds.<sup>59</sup>

63. Under the Better Life conditional cash transfer scheme, the cycle of intergenerational poverty<sup>60</sup> is being broken by making the Government and beneficiary families jointly responsible for keeping school-age children in the education system and ensuring that children under 5 years of age receive check-ups in line with the Health Protocol. Between 2014 and 2017, 1,903,690 grants have been made available from national and external funds.<sup>61</sup>

64. The impact assessment of the Better Life conditional cash transfer scheme found that, in the 2016–2017 period, child malnutrition had decreased by 26 per cent and school enrolment and attendance had increased by 5 per cent. It also found that, using the poverty threshold method, there had been a reduction of 4.3 per cent and 8.2 per cent in the dimensions evaluated in the Multidimensional Poverty Index in respect of persons in receipt of the cash transfers.

## **G. Inclusive, high-quality education<sup>62</sup>**

65. In order to guarantee universal access to education, the Basic Education Act and the Strategic Plan for the Education Sector provide for free education from 5 years of age until secondary level, extending the average length of time spent in education from 9 to 13 years. The Ministry of Education saw its budget increase by 21 per cent between 2016 and 2019, thus providing it with the human and financial resources needed to meet the educational needs of the population.

66. In 2019, 1,964,000 children and adolescents were enrolled in the education system. The Ministry operates a number of programmes to promote inclusion, home schooling, radio-based learning, community education and special programmes for gifted and talented students. In addition, there are inclusion programmes focused on the development of life skills, including the high school certificate in agribusiness and entrepreneurship projects in secondary schools.

67. To prevent school dropout and uphold the right to adequate food,<sup>63</sup> 1,300,915 students in the public education system received regular healthy meals. Some 300,000 schoolchildren in vulnerable areas such as the Dry Corridor and La Mosquitia received additional food.

68. A Technical Commission was created to monitor the application of the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model,<sup>64</sup> including critical pathways, with support from indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples and other relevant sectors of society.<sup>65</sup> As of 2019, there are 2,955 teachers. Between 2015 and 2019, enrolment increased by 40 per cent, to 90,690 students in 919 schools. In order to provide support and help strengthen the Model, the Government established a national council and 15 departmental committees, in which nine organizations of indigenous and Afro-Honduran persons participate.

69. In compliance with the Public Policy on Inclusive Education, an accessibility assessment was carried out in 9,285 educational centres around the country. In total, eight agreements were signed, and budgets were allocated to institutions providing care for children and adolescents with disabilities. In addition, teachers from 22 educational centres were trained in dealing with persons with disabilities.<sup>66</sup>

70. To uphold the right to education for girls who are pregnant or have children, and to help keep them in school, the Multisectoral Plan for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy provides for such girls to participate fully in school.<sup>67</sup> Under the “Thousands of Hands” programme, 45,000 young persons received instruction on reproductive and sexual health and pregnancy prevention.<sup>68</sup> In addition, 14,000 teachers were trained to use comprehensive sex education guides, and an online platform was set up to train teachers to provide comprehensive sex education.<sup>69</sup>

71. To enable young people to gain access to higher education and professional development opportunities, in 2019 the Honduras 20/20 Presidential Scholarship Programme provided assistance amounting to more than L 307 million<sup>70</sup> to 16,000 university scholars and 880 graduate students at universities abroad.<sup>71</sup>

72. As an alternative for young persons not wishing to continue with formal secondary education, between 2017 and October 2019, the National Institute for Vocational Training trained 139,598 individuals aged between 14 and 19 years. Of these, 53 per cent were women and girls taking technical and vocational courses. Through this initiative, demand for vocational training is being met and public-private partnerships and tripartite participation have been strengthened. From 2016 to 2019, 335,046 young persons aged between 20 and 29 years, 51 per cent of them women, took courses in tourism, commerce and services, industry and agriculture.

73. In line with the national training plan for volunteer and technical instructors drafted by the National Commission for the Development of Alternatives to Formal Education, in 2017, in partnership with national public institutions, private development entities and municipal corporations, 40,194 young persons and adults joined education, literacy, basic needs, community development and social development programmes.<sup>72</sup>

74. The Ministry of Human Rights has provided support to the National Commission in reviewing and updating the training programmes of human rights education initiatives provided by civil society organizations.

## **H. Healthy living<sup>73</sup>**

75. In order to guarantee the right to health and reduce exclusion from health services, the State is implementing the new National Health Policy, with a priority focus on pregnant women, children under the age of 5 years, older persons, infectious, vector-borne and non-communicable diseases and morbidity in general.

76. As part of the process of transforming the national health system in order to guarantee access to health services and universal coverage and to incorporate a human rights approach, a health sector workplan for 2019–2022 was approved. The plan sets out short-term impact initiatives, as well as measures to ensure the supply of medicines and medical and surgical materials, reduce waiting times for operations and deal with epidemics. There are currently a total of 1,652 health facilities, namely 8 national hospitals, 6 regional hospitals, 17 local hospitals, 447 doctor-led health centres, 1,097 nurse-led health centres, 74 maternity and child clinics and 3 satellite clinics.<sup>74</sup> Between 2016 and 2019, the budget of the Ministry of Health increased by 27 per cent.

77. As part of the strategy for 2018–2022, a number of chronic diseases have been made a priority focus, namely diabetes mellitus, high blood pressure, uterine cancer, lung cancer, stomach cancer, breast cancer and chronic kidney disease, owing to their high morbidity and mortality rates. In 2019, approximately 11,778 persons were reported to have received antiretroviral treatment.

78. In 2018, approval was given for a programme designed to improve the management, quality and responsiveness of maternity and neonatal care.

79. The Salud Mesoamérica Initiative is being implemented to improve the coverage and quality of maternity care, health care for children and nutrition and services for women of childbearing age, as well as access to such services, among the target groups in the poorest municipalities. Data for 2019 showed that the number of hospital births had increased by 80 per cent. In addition, 94 per cent of women with obstetric complications received treatment that met the latest standards, 79 per cent of treatment for complications were carried out according to hospital standards and 55 per cent of newborns received neonatal care within the first three days of life.

80. The Government and the Inter-American Development Bank signed several agreements for the expansion of three hospitals and the construction of a trauma hospital to increase capacity to treat moderate and severe injuries, as well as to improve the quality of care for patients who sustain injuries in accidents.

81. The national vaccination programme includes 20 vaccines that are administered at different life stages, to children and adolescents, young persons, pregnant women, older persons and at-risk groups of all ages. In May 2019, a National Vaccination and Deworming Day was held, and 315,477 persons of all ages were vaccinated. A total of 1,532,831 doses of seasonal influenza vaccine were administered. During the five-year period under consideration, vaccination coverage among children and adolescents has reached 90 per cent.

82. In 2019, funding of more than L 400 million was provided. There have been no vaccine shortages for a decade. The Government's efforts in this area have helped to reduce the incidence and mortality rate of vaccine-preventable disease. Diphtheria, poliomyelitis, measles, congenital rubella syndrome and rubella have been eradicated.

83. Medicines are purchased with funding from the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Fund; 84 per cent of national requirements for medicines and surgical supplies is thus met.

84. The Ministry of Health has developed guidelines for sentinel surveillance and control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV in men who have sex with men and in transgender persons and sex workers.

## **V. Promotion and protection of vulnerable groups**

### **A. Children<sup>75</sup>**

85. In 2019, the Integrated System for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras was created as a holistic approach to upholding the rights of children and adolescents. The System applies a multisectoral model to prevention, promotion, protection, guarantees and reparations in relation to the rights of children and adolescents,<sup>76</sup> and is comprised of coordinating bodies at the three territorial levels, namely 140 municipal committees tasked with upholding the rights of children, 3 departmental committees and 1 national committee,<sup>77</sup> as well as specific mechanisms for the participation of civil society organizations working on children's issues and institutions of the three branches of government.

86. In order to guarantee the protection of children's rights, and with a view to preventing institutionalization, in 2018 the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families conducted a survey of centres providing permanent residential care for children and identified 354 organizations caring for 7,612 children and adolescents. The survey was the first stage in the process of certifying the centres, with a view to converting them into temporary family shelters.

87. The Directorate's budget increased by 59 per cent between 2015 and 2020. In addition, coordination activities were conducted with other institutions and organizations involved in the protection of children and adolescents.

88. Within the framework of the public policy on comprehensive early childhood development,<sup>78</sup> the directorate responsible for executing the “Parenting with Love” strategy within the Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion works with families in the most underprivileged areas of the country, based on the “Parenting with Love” guide. In 2019, 92,289 families received support.

89. The Office of the First Lady and the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families launched a 100-day child protection campaign designed to prevent violence, provide alternatives for street children and reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy. The campaign involved the broadcast of radio and television advertisements, as well as outreach activities conducted in schools and on the streets by the municipal committees tasked with upholding the rights of children.

90. With regard to the right to a name and nationality, two campaigns were conducted, one designed to foster a sense of belonging and identity and one aimed at promoting school enrolment. Outreach activities on the importance of civil registration were conducted with schools and national civil society organizations.

91. In 2018, five new branches of the National Registry Office were opened, making it possible to expand registration services. Registrations rose by 20 per cent as a result. In addition, four new help desks were set up at a number of hospitals. Between 2016 and 2018, the 18 help desks reported 85,900 registrations.<sup>79</sup> A total of 561,000 birth registrations were recorded during the same period.

92. With regard to adolescents in conflict with the law, the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders was created in 2016 with a mandate to manage the specialized justice system. A total of 350 children are under the care of the Institute in juvenile detention centres. The children receive support through four programmes dealing with prevention, rehabilitation and social reintegration, alternative measures to detention, formal and informal education and health and well-being.

93. Under the education programme, formal education opportunities and informal arts and crafts classes are available. By 2019, 75 per cent of the children and adolescents in juvenile detention centres were enrolled in formal education programmes.

94. Under the health programme, medical and health-care services are provided at the centres, including comprehensive and follow-up care and dental, psychological, psychiatric and social assistance services. In 2019, the children and adolescents in the centres each used the medical services an average of three times per month.

95. Since its establishment, the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders has reduced the number of children and adolescents in detention by 17 per cent, with 1,344 individuals benefiting from alternative measures.

96. Every year, the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families monitors 116 children and adolescents in detention centres who have been victims of gangs. The Directorate conducts quarterly visits to centres to ensure that rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are being operated in line with international standards.

## B. Women<sup>80</sup>

97. Regarding women’s rights, the National Institute for Women is implementing the National Policy on Women and the Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan 2010–2022. The Policy and the Plan are promoted and monitored by the Gender Units and the municipal offices for women. The Institute’s budget rose by 88 per cent between 2015 and 2020.

98. In order to incorporate a gender perspective in public administration policies, plans and budgets, new articles in the general provisions of the budget instruct institutions to identify specific actions and resources to close gaps and address inequality between men and women.

99. The Cities for Women programme<sup>81</sup> contributes to violence prevention, victim support and the development of skills to achieve autonomy and improve living conditions through the provision of comprehensive services focusing on financial independence, sexual and reproductive health, protection of the rights of women and adolescent girls, community education and children. The programme, which was elevated to the rank of State Policy,<sup>82</sup> operates five centres located in the main cities, as well as a mobile unit. Between 2016 and 2019, the Cities for Women centres provided 379,550 services to 325,272 women.

100. In order to address the multiple forms of violence against women, in 2018 the National Institute for Women conducted a local and cross-border survey of risks and protective factors relating to violence against women, human trafficking and femicide, with a view to launching political advocacy initiatives and institutionalizing public policies on preventing violence against women and girls.

101. In order to strengthen the capacities of health facilities, the Ministry of Health prepared a manual on providing comprehensive care for women who are victims or survivors of gender-based violence. The manual sets out the steps to be followed by health professionals in caring for such women, including with respect to legal services.

102. To prevent violence and to protect women from it, there are seven shelters in the main cities which provide psychosocial and legal assistance to women who are victims of violence. Four of the shelters are funded by municipalities; the remaining three are self-funded. The National Institute for Women also provides financial support to two of the shelters.

103. One of the tasks of the joint services of the 911 National Emergency System is to receive complaints of violence against women<sup>83</sup> and direct them to the relevant victim-response services. In 2019, reports of domestic violence rose by 52 per cent, demonstrating a shift in the culture surrounding the reporting of violence against women.

104. In the framework of the Strategic Plan of the Public Prosecution Service, 18 specialized comprehensive support units were set up. Between 2016 and September 2019, the units received 11,541 complaints of domestic violence. Currently, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Women has 73 prosecutors at the national level.

105. The special domestic violence courts, through the specialized comprehensive support units, imposed safety measures to protect women who have been victims of violence. Between 2016 and 2018, the special courts handed down 21,742 final judgments against perpetrators of domestic violence. In areas where there are no special courts, magistrates' courts are responsible for hearing domestic violence cases.

106. The Honduran Inter-Agency Commission for the Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons approved the 2016–2022 Strategic Plan to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons. The Plan is designed to prevent, investigate and punish trafficking in persons and ensure the provision of comprehensive care and protection for victims. A protocol has been developed for the rapid response team responsible for providing support to victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons in Honduras.<sup>84</sup> The regulations to accompany the Trafficking Act have also been drafted.

107. In 2018, the Inter-Agency Commission provided assistance to 302 victims, 85 of whom were new referrals. Of the remainder, 133 received follow-up support and 84 completed their rehabilitation process. Microcredit was extended to 27 victims, and 75 victims enrolled in formal or non-formal education programmes. Approximately 20,000 instances of psychological, social, legal and medical support, education, vocational training and assistance with documentation, asylum, housing and addiction treatment were provided to victims. In 2018 and 2019, the Commission also provided assistance with the rescue of 37 victims and the repatriation of 23 victims.

108. To date, the Commission has set up 24 local committees around the country and has conducted eight awareness-raising campaigns to reach some 250,000 people. It has also trained more than 17,681 individuals and obtained commitments to the Code of Conduct against Trafficking from 298 companies.<sup>85</sup>

109. In 2018 and 2019, thanks to the efforts of the unit within the Public Prosecution Service that is responsible for tackling trafficking in persons, commercial sexual exploitation and people smuggling, 41 individuals were sentenced for trafficking and sexual exploitation and 14 were sentenced for people smuggling. In 2018, 23 alleged traffickers were prosecuted, while in 2019, criminal proceedings were instituted against 41 persons accused of trafficking and 26 persons accused of people smuggling.

110. To improve accountability and coordination among institutions, in 2018 an inter-agency commission was established to monitor investigations of violent deaths of women and cases of femicide. Designed to provide a forum for dialogue with civil society organizations working to prevent femicide, the commission has issued its regulations, set up a data-recording system and allocated L 40 million to the unit responsible for investigating violent deaths of women and femicide, which is part of the Technical Investigation Agency.

111. Between 2014 and 2018, the murder rate among women decreased gradually from 14.6 to 8.3, a reduction of 40 per cent since 2013.<sup>86</sup>

112. With regard to the right to sexual and reproductive health, within the framework of the Multisectoral Plan for the Prevention of Pregnancy, the Ministry of Health, the Office of the First Lady, the United Nations Population Fund and Canada established the “Adolescent-Friendly Health Services” initiative, which provides services to 300,000 adolescents. There are 91 adolescent-friendly health centres in 17 departments, as well as 58 comprehensive care clinics for adolescents and 8 community youth committees.

113. The Ministry of Education has certified 22,750 teachers and provided guidance to 17,672 students in 1,055 primary and secondary schools with regard to protecting one’s own health and life, sex education for parents and the Ministry’s comprehensive approach to sexual harassment, aggression and rape.

114. More than 60,000 young persons between 12 and 18 years of age received support as part of the “Families Supporting Adolescent Dreams” programme. The methodology developed by the Centro de Prevención de la Violencia (Violence Prevention Centre)<sup>87</sup> was used in conversations with more than 170,000 children and their parents and teachers.

115. In the area of women’s effective political participation, following the elections held in 2017, 79 of the 128 deputies and their alternates (or 28 deputies and 51 alternates) in the National Congress are women. At the local level, 22 mayors, 266 deputy mayors and 628 councillors are women. The plenary of the Supreme Court of Justice is made up of 15 justices, 5 of whom are women. In the executive branch, two of the three presidential appointees in the Office of the President are women.

116. There are currently 201,439 civil servants, 51 per cent of whom are women. Sixty-three per cent of the 26,016 civil servants who work for the executive branch are women. Women hold 298 decision-making positions.

## C. Indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples<sup>88</sup>

117. The Public Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples covers six areas, namely social and political participation, the right to education, health, access to resources, the right to land and territory and access to formal and community justice. The action plan for the implementation of the Policy was developed following a broad participatory process of nationwide consultation conducted by the Directorate for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples with more than 500 representatives of the nine indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples.

118. With the aim of establishing a framework for the inclusive participation of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, the Ministry of General Government Coordination coordinated efforts to promote the plan, adopted in 2016, in connection with the development partnership for La Mosquitia. A letter of intent was signed by the State, local governments in Gracias a Dios, civil society organizations representing indigenous and

Afro-Honduran peoples and aid partners.<sup>89</sup> The development partnership facilitates cooperation and the coordination of efforts relating to priority areas and issues to improve the situation of the peoples of the area.

119. Within the framework of the development partnership, the Territorial Governance Platform was set up, with working groups on justice and governance, economic development and the use of natural resources, and social development and basic infrastructure, with a focus on titling, distribution and regulation of land in the region.

120. With respect to access to land and resources, in 2019 the Inter-Agency Subcommission for the titling, expansion, distribution and protection of the land and natural resources of La Mosquitia was created within the framework of the development partnership. Previously, the National Agrarian Institute had granted title deeds to more than 25,000 families from 12 Miskito Territorial Councils in respect of a total of 1,114,976.24 hectares of land. Between 2015 and 2019, the Forest Conservation Institute also granted 10 title deeds to 2,800 families in respect of a total of more than 371,166 hectares of land.

121. In the area of economic development and use of resources, the development partnership, through the La Mosquitia Business Development Centres, provided 1,000 consultancy services to 457 small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, 38 new ventures were launched, by 22 men and 16 women, and as a result 3,000 jobs were protected and 184 created, for 100 men and 84 women, during 2018 and 2019.

122. As part of the Prawanka project in La Mosquitia, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock provided L 4.164 million in the form of technical assistance for the development of production chains for staple grains, cocoa and fisheries, benefiting 3,750 families and delivering 2,110 free sacks of rice and bean seeds.

123. In the western region, as part of the PRO-LENCA project, more than 1,000 indigenous persons were provided with a range of resources, and L 54 million was provided for 12 investment and development plans set up for 915 indigenous women.

124. With regard to inclusion and effective participation in politics for indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, the Act on Political and Electoral Participation contains provisions concerning cooperation with related organizations. In 2017, the Supreme Electoral Court signed a letter of understanding with the Network of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Women concerning women's participation in electoral processes and training initiatives and their involvement as observers.

125. In the 2017 congressional elections, the number of indigenous and Afro-Honduran deputies increased from 8 to 20. The 9 women and 11 men have formed a cross-party group.

126. The Government conducted a consultation process in the DIUNAT Miskito Territorial Council in Brus Laguna regarding a photovoltaic energy project.<sup>90</sup> The Miskito people were consulted regarding the oil exploitation project on the coast of La Mosquitia with the La Mosquitia Territorial Councils, in line with the Biocultural Protocol of the Miskito People.

127. With regard to the draft decree relating to legislation on free, prior and informed consultation, the National Congress is in the process of analysing the technical proposal and schedule of activities that it requested from OHCHR and which were submitted in November 2019.

128. With regard to the registration of indigenous and Afro-Honduran persons, the National Registry Office and the Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion, with support from the United Nations Development Programme, dispatched a mobile team which registered 343 individuals in La Mosquitia. Approximately 1,000 identity cards were issued under the Universal Civil Identity Program in the Americas run by the Organization of American States. The National Registry Office sent teams to areas bordering Northern Triangle countries to conduct birth registration and identification activities.

129. The inter-agency commission responsible for support and prevention activities regarding the issue of underwater fishing organized outreach sessions for Miskito divers to raise awareness of the Safety and Occupational Health Regulations for Underwater

Fishing.<sup>91</sup> With support from the Ministry of Human Rights, the regulations were aligned with international human rights standards.

130. A total of 177 labour inspections were conducted, leading to reduced occupational risks and improved productivity on vessels used in connection with underwater fishing.

131. Between 2016 and 2019, 148 scholarships were provided to the children of divers with disabilities. In 2015 and 2016, 500 young people received higher education scholarships.<sup>92</sup>

132. To improve services for the Lenca people, a new maternity and neonatal unit was opened at the Intibucá Regional Hospital. The unit, which cost L 88 million to set up, has 120 beds for adults and newborns. For the benefit of the Garífuna people, L 7 million was spent on the expansion of the paediatric unit at the Puerto Cortés Hospital. A hospital was built for the indigenous Tolupán community, and a health facility and a maternity and children's clinic were built in Montaña de la Flor. For the benefit of the Miskito people, a primary care clinic was set up in 2015 to treat decompression syndrome<sup>93</sup> and a protocol was drawn up for the provision of care to persons with decompression sickness.

133. Under the National Human Rights Action Plan, with a view to facilitating access to justice, the Ministry of Human Rights trained and certified 26 community advocates in Gracias a Dios in 2016 and 2017.

134. The Institutional Strategic Plan of the Public Prosecution Service contains guidelines for the application of a differentiated approach to providing victim support. In 2018, 25 training days were held for justice officials, indigenous persons and Afro-Hondurans, and 10 community visits were conducted to register complaints. When investigating offences against indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Ethnic Groups and Cultural Heritage uses the Handbook on Investigations of Violations of the Rights of the Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples. The Public Prosecution Service is currently investigating approximately 54 hydroelectric and mining projects affecting indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities.

#### **D. Human mobility<sup>94</sup>**

135. Between 2015 and 2019, Honduras endeavoured to address the structural causes of irregular migration, to protect migrants in transit and destination countries and to reintegrate returning migrants through the following initiatives: the Partnership for Prosperity Plan, the Regional Protection and Solutions Framework and the Comprehensive Development Plan.<sup>95</sup>

136. In 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the Office of the Deputy Minister for Consular and Migration Affairs with a view to supporting and protecting the rights of Hondurans in transit and destination countries.<sup>96</sup> It also began to work together with the Observatory on Consular and Migration Issues to develop evidence-based public policy.

137. The Office for the Protection of Honduran Migrants provides a broad range of services, including the purchase of medication, food, specialized medical care and airplane tickets. Together with the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families, it assisted with the return of 981 children and adolescents and their reunification with their families.

138. Additional services are now available to Hondurans abroad through the Consular Centres for the Protection of Honduran Migrants in Houston and Mexico City and three new consulates have opened.<sup>97</sup>

139. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a guide on migrants' rights, which also contains a directory of the embassies and consulates of Honduras, as well as contact information for migrants' shelters and helplines in Mexico, the United States of America and Honduras.

140. Support centres for returning migrants have been set up to help migrants reintegrate into the labour market and society. A targeted, inter-institutional approach is used to identify and register people needing protection; funding is provided by the Solidarity Fund for Honduran Migrants.<sup>98</sup> In addition, 14 municipal support centres for returning migrants have been set up in municipalities identified as priority areas, to facilitate the local reintegration of returning migrants.

141. A total of 369 consultations were provided; 1,204 cases involving Hondurans deprived of their liberty and 650 cases involving children and adolescents were processed. In total, 312 received financial aid.

142. As part of the work of the Migrant Children Task Force, various mechanisms have been set up to deal with children, families and adults returning to Honduras by road or air, and a procedure has been developed to identify and register them, as well as offer them protection measures, in support centres for returning migrants.

143. As for special protection measures for children and adolescents, the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families has dispatched teams to the north-western reaches of the country to provide services related to protection, follow-up and reintegration of migrant children. Between 2015 and 2019, the support centre for returning migrants in Belén served 268,454 returning migrants, including 218,053 adults and 50,401 children and adolescents.

144. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, apply the Immediate Protection Protocol in order to identify cases that require protection because of violent situations, as part of a holistic approach to supporting children and adolescents. Since 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided 200,280 services to returning children and adolescents, including medical, psychological, legal and follow-up services. In 2019, it handled 1,622 cases of migrant children requiring protection.

145. As part of a programme to protect children and adolescents whose rights have been violated, temporary shelters have been established as an alternative care structure for children and adolescents in vulnerable situations; the 10 centres currently in operation accommodated 1,047 children in 2019.

146. In 2019, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a case management programme for migrant children and their families was rolled out, offering a number of social services and aiming to discourage such persons from reattempting irregular migration. A total of 2,181 cases involving the follow-up and reintegration of migrant children and adolescents were processed.

147. A multidisciplinary body was set up to analyse and resolve cases involving the protection of migrants who are in transit and asylum seekers. The National Migration Institute provides specialized services to such persons through the support centres for migrants in an irregular situation. In addition, a medical clinic was set up to provide migrants with humanitarian assistance. Between 2016 and 2019, support centres for migrants in an irregular situation provided services to 5,690 children and adolescents.

148. The Ministry of Human Rights is responsible for attending to the needs of victims of internal displacement, in coordination with the institutions that make up the Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence.

149. In 2019, a second study on internal displacement by violence in Honduras was published. The follow-up plan involves a pilot project aimed at generating knowledge about and experience in emergency humanitarian assistance for returning migrants requiring protection. Assistance will be provided to 18 cases. A guide on approaches for differentiated care has been developed with a psychosocial focus. Finally, three response plans for displacement, involving sustainable solutions, will be executed in three municipalities designated as priority.<sup>99</sup>

## **E. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons<sup>100</sup>**

150. The Ministry of Human Rights has incorporated a component on preventing discrimination in the army's basic training course, in the basic training of the Public Order Unit of the Military Police and in the human rights course given to public servants. This component covers the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. In addition, a protocol for dealing with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons has been developed for law enforcement personnel.

151. The Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion and the Ministry of Human Rights signed cooperation agreements with civil society organizations, including the Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGBTI ("Somos CDC"), the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender association "Arcoíris", and the Colectivo Violeta, for the capacity-training and awareness-raising of civil servants in the areas of human rights and sexual diversity.

152. The Ministry of Human Rights has trained 7,089 civil servants in the skills and tools needed to prevent discrimination, as a part of basic human rights training. It has also provided training to 210 civil servants through a human rights and sexual diversity workshop, which covered appropriate terminology and differentiated care protocols for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

153. The Ministry of Human Rights, with the support of civil society, is working to promote the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons by developing a research agenda on social inclusion, in order to identify the obstacles to the progressive realization of that community's rights.

154. The National Penitentiary Institute, with the support of the organization Cozumel Trans, has developed training and awareness-raising initiatives on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons deprived of their liberty. Some 400 prison officials and workers received training, based on the methodology set out in the Manual on Human Rights Training for Prison Officials, produced by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

155. To guarantee access to justice, the judiciary and the Eurojusticia programme trained 89 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and certified them as legal facilitators in areas with poorer access to justice. There is a focus on providing services to citizens, especially those who are members of groups in vulnerable situations.

156. The Justice Education Society is training justice officials in investigating gender-based violence and to consider the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community as a priority. Since 2009, there have been 19 convictions for violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

157. As for the right to health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, the Ministry of Health has issued guidelines for non-discriminatory, stigma-free health services, which are applied in all health-care facilities.

## **F. Human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice officials<sup>101</sup>**

158. Since the Protection Act was passed in 2015, the General Directorate for the Protection Framework has registered 384 cases, of which 204 are pending.<sup>102</sup> Of these cases, 40 involve environmental defenders, 21, indigenous persons, 8, Afro-Hondurans and 12, defenders of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Since 2017, a total of 482 analyses and risk reassessments have been referred to the protection mechanism's technical committee.

159. Between 2017 and 2019, a number of analysis tools and manuals were developed with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through Freedom House, and approved by the National Protection Council, in order to make the protection mechanism operational. Flowcharts and a methodology for individual and collective risk assessment were drawn up with the support of the European Union.

160. Rapid protection assessments are used when conducting initial interviews with people requesting protection measures. A differentiated approach, with an intersectional analysis, is applied to individual and collective cases, using technical risk assessment tools. The measures are agreed on with the beneficiaries and the protection mechanism's technical committee and follow-up is ensured thereafter.

161. The General Directorate for the Protection Framework, with the technical assistance of USAID-Freedom House, has developed a methodology for analysing the risk context and for formulating prevention and early-warning plans so as to support the work to defend human rights, freedom of expression and access to justice. There are seven risk context assessments.<sup>103</sup> The aforementioned plans have been drawn up with representative organizations, including indigenous communities, defenders of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, journalists and social communicators, and human rights defenders of southern Honduras and Bajo Aguán.

162. In order to familiarize people with the Protection Act and to help them gain access to protection measures, 31 awareness-raising initiatives were launched, which 900 persons attended, among them defenders of human rights, indigenous communities, Garífuna communities, trade unions, journalists, social communicators and justice officials.

163. Between 2016 and 2019, the General Directorate for the Protection Framework saw its budget increased by 142 per cent; it now has a revolving fund of L 10 million.<sup>104</sup>

## **G. Persons deprived of their liberty<sup>105</sup>**

164. Since 2017, overcrowding in the national prison system has decreased by 46 per cent and prison conditions have improved, thanks to the construction of three new facilities, which increased prison capacity by 3,880 places, and the renovation of other, existing facilities.

165. To help prisoners successfully reintegrate into society, various programmes have been introduced, providing prisoners with training in agriculture, values and development. Training was provided to some 1,400 prisoners in 12 prison facilities. As part of efforts to uphold the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, early release was granted to 850 persons.

166. Over the past three years, in accordance with its mandate, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has promoted guidelines for documenting and dealing with cases of torture. It disseminated the guidelines to the local authorities in 2017 and 2018 and has trained 313 officials on how to apply them.

167. In 2018, training based on the handbook on human rights and absolute prohibition of torture was given to 458 members of the National Police and to 492 members of the Public Order Unit of the Military Police. In addition, 68 training days were held for a total of 2,598 persons (1,698 men and 900 women). Of the attendees, 248 belonged to groups in vulnerable situations.

168. From 2015 to 2018, the Ministry of Human Rights provided training on promoting human rights and a culture of peace to 4,198 persons deprived of their liberty. It also trained 120 public servants of the National Penitentiary Institute to become human rights trainers for public institutions.

169. Between 2016 and 2018, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment conducted, on average, 118 visits per year to detention facilities; it referred 160 complaints to the Public Prosecution Service.

170. With the support of various national actors specializing in the protection of human rights, including the Ministry of Human Rights, the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and civil society organizations, the Government established a special commission, made up of the National Inter-institutional Security Force, to speed up the consolidation and improvement of a new prison

management system, as an exceptional, temporary measure, for a six-month period. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that any decisions and actions retain a human rights focus and comply with international standards for the protection of persons deprived of their liberty.<sup>106</sup>

## **VI. Achievements, best practices and challenges**

171. A number of achievements are worth mentioning: 61 per cent of national courts have no case backlog; the homicide rate has gone down by 30.72 percentage points compared to 2014; there are a number of active forums for dialogue with civil society; poverty has gone down by 8 per cent thanks to the “Better Life” programme; there are 6,207 fewer hospital births to teenage mothers and 37 per cent fewer pregnancies among high school students; and a State mechanism for returning migrants requiring special protection has been strengthened.<sup>107</sup>

172. Honduras has been internationally recognized as one of the nine countries that has introduced a protection mechanism for human rights defenders.<sup>108</sup> It has also been recognized for the Ciudad Mujer initiative,<sup>109</sup> the establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights and the formal status it granted to the Special Response Group on Human Rights.

173. The main human rights challenges relate to (i) generating disaggregated data; (ii) following up on recommendations in various fields despite the limited specialized technical resources available; (iii) creating a culture of peace and human rights; (iv) increasing the participation of civil society in decision-making; (v) dealing with constant social conflict and polarization; and (vi) reinforcing the human rights dialogue between the State and civil society.

174. Honduras is deeply concerned about climate change, organized crime and drug trafficking, factors that impact on the State’s ability to uphold human rights. Nationally, further efforts are needed to improve access to justice, to reduce impunity, to eradicate poverty and to achieve gender equality.

## **VII. Technical assistance expectations**

175. The State is grateful to all the Governments, international cooperation agencies and civil society organizations in the field that have served as indispensable allies in achieving the progress laid out in this report. It encourages States to continue and, if possible, to increase cooperation assistance to and investment in Honduras.

176. It appeals to the international community generally to forge strong ties with Honduras so that it is able to overcome current and future challenges and to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, leaving no one behind.

177. Considering the experience and capacity of the State in certain fields, we invite our counterparts to examine in further detail the good practices developed over the past five years further to the recommendations arising from the second cycle of the universal periodic review, specifically relating to the protection of human rights defenders, internally displaced persons, the link between human rights policy and civil society, joint initiatives with OHCHR, dialogue between the State and civil society and the implementation of the Honduran System for the Monitoring of Recommendations.

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM 028-2017 Gaceta 34,410.

<sup>2</sup> El SIMOREH es una herramienta que permite el seguimiento en línea de las recomendaciones de los órganos de tratados y procedimientos especiales y la auto asignación, priorización y seguimiento de las mismas a través de 10 mesas de trabajo.

<sup>3</sup> The Municipalities of Solidarity and Well-being are designed to promote a focus on human security in municipal communities and encourage the participation of society and local governments in local transformation with a view to achieving sustainable development.

- <sup>4</sup> Creado conforme al Protocolo Facultativo de la Convención contra la Tortura y Otros Tratos o Penas Crueles, Inhumanos o Degradantes.
- <sup>5</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-055-2017, Gaceta 34,441.
- <sup>6</sup> Acuerdo FGR-002-2018, Gaceta 34,593, se creó en marzo de 2018, otorgándole competencia para investigar los delitos cometidos en perjuicio de las y los defensores de derechos humanos, periodistas, comunicadores sociales y operadores de justicia, incluyendo el delito de amenazas.
- <sup>7</sup> Recomendaciones 124.1, 124.20, 124.24, 124.44, 124.47, 125.1, 125.3, 125.4, 125.13, 126.5, 126.8, 126.12.
- <sup>8</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 89-2016, Gaceta 34,109.  
Acuerdo No. 001-2016, Gaceta 34, 031.
- <sup>9</sup> Acuerdo PCSJ No. 01-2017, Gaceta 34,265.
- <sup>10</sup> Decreto No. 97-2017 y 98-2017, Gaceta 34,473.
- <sup>11</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 200-2018, Gaceta 34,856.
- <sup>12</sup> Acuerdo FGR 009-2017, Gaceta 34,403 Dirección de Lucha contra el Narcotráfico;  
Acuerdo FGR-13-2017 Gaceta 34,447 Unidad Contra la Trata de Personas, Explotación Sexual Comercial y Tráfico Ilícito de Personas;  
Acuerdo FGR 002-2018, Gaceta 34,593 Fiscalía Especial para la Protección de los Defensores de Derechos Humanos, Periodistas, Comunicadores Sociales y Operadores de Justicia;  
Acuerdo FGR 006-2018, Gaceta 34,599 Fiscalía Regional del Aguán; y,  
Acuerdo FGR 009-2017, Gaceta 34,403 Dirección de Lucha contra el Narcotráfico.
- <sup>13</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 106-2016, Gaceta 34,201 Unidad de Investigación de Muertes Violentas de Mujeres y Femicidios.
- <sup>14</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 69-2017, Gaceta 34,463; Decreto Legislativo No. 018-2017, Gaceta 34,463; y, Acuerdo Ministerial No 264-2019, Gaceta 34,867.
- <sup>15</sup> Decreto Legislativo No.140-2015, Gaceta 34,175.
- <sup>16</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 101-2018, Gaceta 34,866.
- <sup>17</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 51-2016, Gaceta 34,162.
- <sup>18</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-061-2017, Gaceta 34,450.
- <sup>19</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 106-2016, Gaceta 34,201.
- <sup>20</sup> Creado mediante Acuerdo No. 003-2016, Gaceta 34,134.
- <sup>21</sup> Recomendaciones 125.6, 125.74, 126.1.
- <sup>22</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 8-2017 Gaceta 34,408.
- <sup>23</sup> Disponible en: <https://sde.gob.hn/2017/08/17/tlc-korea/> consultado el 14 de diciembre de 2019.
- <sup>24</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 178-2016, Gaceta 34,290.
- <sup>25</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 125.2016, Gaceta 34,380.
- <sup>26</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 118-2019 Gaceta 35,093.
- <sup>27</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-064-2018, Gaceta 34,756.
- <sup>28</sup> Disponible en: <http://www.scgg.gob.hn/es/node/236> consultado el 14 de diciembre de 2019.
- <sup>29</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-029-2017, Gaceta 34,333; Decreto Ejecutivo PCM 015-2016, Gaceta 34,016; Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-05-2015 Gaceta 33,672; y, Decreto Legislativo 015-2016, Gaceta 34,016.
- <sup>30</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-027-2016 Gaceta 34,031.
- <sup>31</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-054-2019 Gaceta 35,096.
- <sup>32</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo No. PCM-020-2019 Gaceta 35,006.
- <sup>33</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-034-2019 Gaceta 34,999.
- <sup>34</sup> Recomendaciones 124.3, 124.4, 124.5, 124.12, 124.13, 124.14, 124.15, 125.9, 125.10.
- <sup>35</sup> [https://spinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/SpecialProceduresInternet/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?Lang=sp&country=HND](https://spinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/SpecialProceduresInternet/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?Lang=sp&country=HND) consultado el 11 de diciembre de 2019.
- <sup>36</sup> Recomendaciones 124.11, 124.39, 124.40, 124.41, 124.43, 125.7, 125.24, 125.25, 125.26, 125.29, 125.30, 125.31, 125.32, 125.34, 125.44.
- <sup>37</sup> Artículo 311 de la Constitución de la República de Honduras.
- <sup>38</sup> Disponible en: [https://portalunico.iaip.gob.hn/portal/ver\\_documento.php?uid=Njk5NTk4OTM0NzYzNDg3MTI0NjE5ODcyMzQy](https://portalunico.iaip.gob.hn/portal/ver_documento.php?uid=Njk5NTk4OTM0NzYzNDg3MTI0NjE5ODcyMzQy) consultado el 21 de enero de 2020.
- <sup>39</sup> Los Cinco ejes del Plan Estratégico del Poder Judicial son: 1) Estructura Orgánica Eficiente; 2) Personal Calificado y Motivado; 3) Gestión Judicial Eficaz; 4) Comunicación con la Ciudadanía y; 5) Uso de Nuevas Tecnologías.
- <sup>40</sup> La Comisión es responsable de la promoción, difusión, comprensión, aplicación e incorporación como eje transversal del acceso a la justicia a personas en condición de vulnerabilidad.
- <sup>41</sup> El SNFJ tiene como objetivo garantizar el acceso a la justicia, promover una cultura de paz y fortalecer mecanismos de prevención y resolución alternativa de conflictos en 192 de los 298 municipios. El SNFJ asegura el acercamiento de servicios judiciales a la población en situación de vulnerabilidad; también representa un ahorro a la población de escasos recursos.
- <sup>42</sup> El PEI-MP tiene 7 Objetivos Estratégicos: 1) Liderar la Política contra la Criminalidad; 2) Acción Penal Consolidada y Eficaz que garantice la rapidez en la Investigación; 3) Asegurar la Atención y

Protección eficaz a Testigos y Víctimas del Delito; 4) Promover la Profesionalización de los servidores del MP; 5) Fortalecer la respuesta ante los Delitos contra la Vida, Criminalidad Organizada y Corrupción; 6) Adaptar la Estructura Orgánica del MP y su gestión a los Retos de la Nueva Estrategia y 7) Optimizar el Servicio de Atención a la Población en Beneficio de la Administración de Justicia.

<sup>43</sup> Ahora Unidad Fiscal Especializada contra Redes de Corrupción, disponible en <https://www.mp.hn/index.php/author-login/150-enero2020/5345-comunicado-ministerio-publico-crea-unidad-fiscal-especializada-contra-redes-de-corrupcion> consultado el 25 de enero del 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Recomendaciones 124.38, 124.48, 125.15, 125.22, 125.23, 125.35, 125.36, 125.40, 125.41, 125.42, 125.43, 125.45, 125.46, 126.11.

<sup>45</sup> La construcción de estos parques es realizada con recursos del Fideicomiso creado en la Ley de Seguridad Poblacional.

<sup>46</sup> Disponible en: <http://www.estrategiaycomunicaciones.gob.hn/?q=content/parques-para-una-vida-mejor-afianzan-la-diversi%C3%B3n-familiar-y-la-paz> consultado el 22 de enero de 2020.

<sup>47</sup> Por sus siglas en inglés, Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT).

<sup>48</sup> Disponible en: <http://www.scgg.gob.hn/es/node/227> consultado el 17 de diciembre de 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Recomendaciones 124.50, 125.5, 126.10.

<sup>50</sup> Acuerdo No. 12-2014 Gaceta 33,428.

<sup>51</sup> A junio de 2019, 145 instituciones cumplieron al 100% la publicación de la información legalmente requerida, que significó un aumento de 74 instituciones más en comparación a 2016.

<sup>52</sup> El Plan de Gobierno Abierto contiene los siguientes compromisos: 1) Aumento a la Integridad Pública; 2) Gestión Eficiente y Eficaz de los Recursos Públicos; 3) Mejora en los Servicios Públicos; 4) Crear comunidades más seguras y; 5) Incremento de la responsabilidad Corporativa.

<sup>53</sup> Recomendación 125.39.

<sup>54</sup> Recomendación 125.68.

<sup>55</sup> Los planes de desarrollo tienen como ejes estratégicos el crecimiento económico inclusivo y protección social, priorizando los pilares de educación, salud y reducción de la pobreza; acceso al crédito, innovación e infraestructura; transparencia y rendición de cuentas.

<sup>56</sup> Las inspecciones laborales se enmarcan la Ley de Inspección del Trabajo, aprobada en 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Recomendaciones 125.63, 125.67, 125.69, 125.70.

<sup>58</sup> El Piso de Protección Social tiene como objetivo principalmente entregar los siguientes beneficios: ingreso básico y acceso a otros bienes y servicios que garantizan el adecuado desarrollo de las y los niños; promoción de la salud integral; promoción del empleo, seguridad alimentaria y nutricional de las familias.

<sup>59</sup> En el marco de la Ley de Beneficios para Proyectos de Construcción de Viviendas.

<sup>60</sup> Para garantizar el mejor uso de los recursos y llegar a las familias con mayores necesidades, la SEDIS cuenta con un mecanismo de focalización que se actualiza permanentemente a través del CENISS.

<sup>61</sup> Disponible en: <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/spanish/document/%C2%BF aumentan-las-transferencias-monetarias-condicionadas-la-participaci%C3%B3n-de-las-mujeres-en-la-toma-de-decisiones-La-evidencia-del-Programa-Bono-10000-en-Honduras.pdf> consultado el 21 de enero de 2020.

<sup>62</sup> Recomendaciones 125.18, 125.20, 125.61, 125.73, 125.75.

<sup>63</sup> En el marco de la Ley de Alimentación Escolar.

<sup>64</sup> Fundamentado en el Convenio 169 de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) y la LFE.

<sup>65</sup> Modelo de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para Pueblos Indígenas y Afrohondureños, 2019.

<sup>66</sup> Informe Sobre la Situación de Derechos Humanos en Honduras 2018, pág. 32.

<sup>67</sup> Incluyendo un Plan de Parto y Puerperio y Cuidados del Niño, Niña. Informe Nacional de Honduras, mayo 2019, Vigésimoquinto Aniversario Declaración y Plataforma de Acción de Beijing.

<sup>68</sup> Informe de Medio Término EPU 2017.

<sup>69</sup> Informe Nacional de Honduras, mayo 2019, Vigésimoquinto Aniversario Declaración y Plataforma de Acción de Beijing.

<sup>70</sup> Disponible en: <https://www.presidencia.gob.hn/index.php/gob/el-presidente/6187-otros-219-jovenes-estudiaran-en-el-extranjero-con-becas-20-20> consultado el 17 de diciembre de 2019.

<sup>71</sup> Disponible en: <https://www.presidencia.gob.hn/index.php/gob/el-presidente/6475-becas-20-20-fuente-de-inspiracion-y-voluntariado-para-miles-de-estudiantes> consultado el 17 de diciembre de 2019.

<sup>72</sup> Disponible en: [https://a15ce943-443f-42a7-b7c2-ed96536798ab.filesusr.com/ugd/2de390\\_4ed31c3ab4eb4a23970188377cdcee40.pdf](https://a15ce943-443f-42a7-b7c2-ed96536798ab.filesusr.com/ugd/2de390_4ed31c3ab4eb4a23970188377cdcee40.pdf) consultado el 17 de diciembre de 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Recomendaciones 125.65, 125.72.

<sup>74</sup> Disponible en: <https://www.presidencia.gob.hn/index.php/gob/el-presidente/6666-presidente-hernandez-sanciona-decreto-de-prestamo-con-bid-para-construir-hospital-del-trauma-en-tegucigalpa> consultado el 16 de diciembre de 2019.

<sup>75</sup> Recomendaciones 124.17, 124.36, 124.37, 124.58, 125.16, 125.21, 125.62, 125.66.

- <sup>76</sup> Con el apoyo técnico y financiero del Gobierno de Canadá y UNICEF.
- <sup>77</sup> A través de los Consejos, se ejecutan los planes de acción incorporando el enfoque de derechos de la niñez y género, incluyendo acciones de prevención de violencia; las rutas a seguir ante estos casos, mediante la formación a NNA, docentes, padres de familia y la comunidad.
- <sup>78</sup> La Política Pública para el Desarrollo Integral de la Primera Infancia para promover el aseguramiento del cumplimiento de los derechos de la primera infancia, la formación del capital humano futuro y el logro de los compromisos asumidos por el Estado de Honduras con este grupo poblacional.
- <sup>79</sup> Mediante el convenio suscrito entre el RNP, OPS, la SESAL y la Organización Ayuda en Acción.
- <sup>80</sup> Recomendaciones 124.9, 124.19, 124.25, 124.26, 124.27, 124.28, 124.29, 124.30, 124.31, 124.32, 124.33, 124.34, 124.35, 124.46, 125.12, 125.14, 125.33, 125.37, 125.38, 126.7.
- <sup>81</sup> Decreto Ejecutivo PCM-031-2016, Gaceta 34,023.
- <sup>82</sup> Decreto Legislativo No. 159-2016 Gaceta 34,409.
- <sup>83</sup> Las denuncias recepcionadas refieren a: violencia doméstica, amenazas, acoso, femicidios, entre otros.
- <sup>84</sup> Acuerdo ejecutivo 487-2016 y Acuerdo Ejecutivo 488-2016, Gaceta 34,204.
- <sup>85</sup> De 2015 a 2019, la SEDH ha abordado a 1,192 jóvenes de diferentes centros educativos de secundaria en materia de prevención de la trata de personas y la migración irregular; incorporando en las actividades a padres y madres de familia y docentes.
- <sup>86</sup> Observatorio de Muertes violentas de mujeres y femicidios. Edición No. 14 enero/diciembre de 2018. Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad (IUDPAS) UNAH.
- <sup>87</sup> Metodología vivencial que facilita de manera diferenciada abordar las diferentes experiencias de los y las jóvenes con la discriminación, el maltrato y la exclusión basados en las diferencias.
- <sup>88</sup> Recomendaciones 124.6, 124.7, 124.8, 124.57, 124.59, 125.8, 125.71, 125.76.
- <sup>89</sup> El Estado agradece a la Organización de las Naciones Unidas y los Gobiernos de Alemania y Suiza.
- <sup>90</sup> En aplicación de los estándares internacionales del Convenio 169 de la OIT y la Declaración de los Pueblos Indígenas.
- <sup>91</sup> Con el acompañamiento y financiamiento de la FAO.
- <sup>92</sup> Mediante el convenio DINAFROH-Universidad Nacional de Agricultura y Ganadería.
- <sup>93</sup> Ubicado en las instalaciones de la Asociación Miskita Hondureña de Buzos Lisiados.