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Guyana

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Introduction

1. Guyana considers the UPR as a beneficial process in engaging with other States to review and constructively assess its progress in recognizing and protecting fundamental rights and freedoms on its domestic plane. To this end, Guyana welcomes the third cycle of UPR and is pleased to present its national report for the period under review. Guyana confirms its continued commitment to this process.
2. Since the presentation of its report to the 2nd UPR, Guyanese have undergone historical political changes including the election of a coalition government immediately following a 23-year rule of the Peoples Progressive Party/Civic political party. Political history marched on when on 21st December, 2018, the coalition government lost a vote of no-confidence at the 111th sitting of the National Assembly. Having fully employed the judicial system to define the Constitutional requirements as the political system entered uncharted waters, General Elections have now been fixed for 2nd March, 2020.
3. In the midst of the exciting political developments, Guyana has remained firm in its commitment to ensure the continued and progressive enjoyment and protection of citizens' human rights. The Republic is also pressing forward with its Green State Development Strategy Vision 2040 which includes human rights' focused goals such as healthy, educated and socially cohesive population; transparency, accountability and citizen participation; and preservation of land rights of Indigenous Peoples.¹
4. During the last UPR process, Guyana confirmed its support for 88 recommendations and noted 55 recommendations for consultation and/or consideration. It continued its engagement on issues such as the abolition of the death penalty, abolition of corporal punishment, and the legal position on sexual relations between adults of the same sex.
5. This Report follows the format as recommended in the 3rd Universal Periodic Review National Report – Guidance Note. **Part A** provides information on the Methodology and Consultation together with an update on the Challenges, Risks and Threats encountered during the preparation of this report. **Part B** focuses on the implementation of recommendations from previous cycles and is divided into four subsections as follows: Section I provides information on full implementation of supported recommendations and impact, Section II treats with partial implementation of supported recommendations, Section III provides an update on pending recommendations and, Section IV provides an update on Noted Recommendations.

Part A

Methodology and consultation

6. In preparation of the National Report for the 3rd cycle of the UPR, various ministries and Government-affiliated institutions provided reports on the steps taken within the relevant entities to, consistent with their individual mandates, implement supported recommendations and consider recommendations which were noted for review.
7. The consultation and review process continued from the preparation of Guyana's Report for the 2nd UPR cycle, with specific guidance from the recommendations of the Working Group following the submission of the National Report in the foregoing cycle.
8. As with all international law and policy matters, the President, Prime Minister and Ministers of Government are required to and did consider, report on and to take deliberate steps relative to the matters raised on the recommendations of the Working Group so far as those matters fell within the purview of their various ministries at weekly Cabinet meetings. Human Rights considerations are pivotal to cabinet inter-ministerial planning and deliberations. The work of the ministries and government-affiliated institutions include public participation via civil society groups and other stakeholders re various consultation processes. This is the general path to implementation across government.

9. The media, NGOs and religious groups are among those who have actively and without the need for the government's stir hosted and/or participated in public discussions on issues such as corporal punishment and LGBT-related matters.

10. The standing coordinating apparatus for reporting is the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in consultation with the various technical experts within various ministries. Ministries provide reports regarding actioning recommendations (both supported and noted). In 2019, ministries and statutory bodies provided updated reports on the progress of their implementation of the relevant recommendations so that the National Report could be compiled.

Advances, challenges and threats

11. According to the 2012 National Census Guyana's population is 747,884 persons living within 215,000 square kilometers.²

12. The Green State Development Strategy 2040 aims to achieve 8 development objectives which includes Economics Restructuring and Diversification; transition to Renewable and Clean Energy; Healthy, Educated and Socially Cohesive Population; Sustainable Management of Natural Resources; Resilient Infrastructure and Green Towns; Internationally Competitive Trade and Investment; Good Governance and Strong Institutions; and Sound Fiscal Policy.

13. Guyana's police force has committed to reducing crime and violence and has outlined priorities in its Strategic Plan 2013-2017, which includes modernization of the force. The plan's operational priorities addressed the issues of drugs, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, and human trafficking.

14. The Government of Guyana has legislation in place that could help combat drug trafficking and money laundering more effectively. In January 2015, a new strategic plan to combat drugs in the 2015-2020 period was implemented.

15. The government is making major efforts to fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, for which it launched an action plan in 2014. A new national plan has been created for 2019–2020.

16. In 2015, the overall unemployment rate was 6.9%; this rate was higher among youth (25.1%). Some 18.3% of children between the ages of 5 and 17 performed some type of child labour.³

17. The main health problems that Guyana faces are non communicable diseases, mental disorders (suicide), HIV infection and tuberculosis, vector-borne diseases, and not enough trained health workers.⁴

18. The New York-based stock market, Nasdaq, made note of Guyana's projected growth rate of 16.3% during the four-year period 2018–2021. It said that with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) size of \$3.63 billion (2018 Rank: 160), a growth rate of 4.1% in 2018 and 4.6% in 2019, Guyana's economy is expected to grow by 33.5% and 22.9% in 2020 and 2021 respectively. According to the report, with a per-capita income of \$5,194, Guyana is a middle-income country and is covered by dense forest. It made mention of here being home to fertile agricultural lands and abundant natural resources. Gold, bauxite, sugar, rice, timber and shrimp are among its leading exports.⁵ Most notably and most recently, the International Monetary Fund noted that the Guyana economy was projected to grow by 86% in 2020.

19. ExxonMobil (U.S.), Esso (U.S.), Hess, Repsol (Spain), Anadarko (U.S.), Total (France), Tullow Oil (UK), and CGX Energy (Canada) have been a part of exploration and drilling activities over the years.

20. In 2008, ExxonMobil initiated oil and gas exploration activities in Guyana, collecting and evaluating substantial 3-D seismic data that led to the company safely drilling its first exploration well in 2015, Liza-1.⁶

21. Ahead of the 2020 projection for ‘first oil’, on December 20th, the production of oil began. December 20th was declared National Petroleum Day by the Honourable President.⁷

22. On Friday, December 21, 2018, the government was defeated on a vote of no-confidence that was tabled by the opposition. The motion was tabled by the People’s Progressive Party (PPP/C) which has 32 MPs in Guyana’s 65-seat National Assembly, as against 33 MPs on the APNU+AFC Coalition’s government benches. The Court of Appeal ruled the motion invalid; the final Court of Appeal subsequently ruled it valid and advised all constitutional actors to consult and pave the way for elections. Parliament was dissolved on the 30th December, 2019 to make way for General Elections on March 2nd, 2020.

Part B

I. Full implementation of recommendations

Persons with disabilities

Recommendations 130.71, 130.72 and 130.73

23. Pursuant to the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010, the National Commission on Disability (NCD) has been the main driver of development in this area and has taken consistent action to ensure the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010. The NCD is a policy advisory and advocacy body that pursues a multi-sectoral approach towards fulfilling the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWD). Among its objectives under its 2015-2019 National Strategic Plan, the NCD aims to monitor the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010.

24. The Director of Disabilities and Rehabilitation confirms that the NCD has commenced a National Household Survey of Persons with Disabilities and has completed its survey in five (5) of Guyana’s ten (10) administrative regions. It is continuing work on this project. By this survey, the NCD has sought to ascertain the needs, capacities and living conditions of PWD in order to effectively advise the Government of Guyana and other stakeholders of what steps may be taken to meet the needs of PWD.

25. Additionally, the NCD has taken its work to the public by conducting several sensitization workshops at private, public, government and non-governmental agencies such as Regional Democratic Councils, Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, religious entities and commercial entities. The workshops were aimed at equipping persons with knowledge on issues relevant to PWD and to encourage inclusion of PWD. The content of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010 was discussed and the ‘Disability Etiquette Poster’, an original poster, was utilized to encourage a movement away from offensive terms used to describe or relate to PWD and replacement with more acceptable terms and phrases.

26. The NCD is also collaborating with the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) in order to address the rights of PWD to housing. The “Housing Solution Programme” is a project based on providing suitable housing for PWD by development of appropriate designs and specifications to meet the needs of PWD. The NCD undertook to assist PWD throughout the housing application process.⁸

27. The needs of children with disabilities has received specific focus from the NCD. A Special Education Needs Policy Document has been created and while it has not yet been adopted by the Ministry of Education, there has already been partial implementation by Schools which specifically cater to children with disabilities.

28. Additionally, the Government of Guyana has created a Regional Centre for the Stimulation of Development in Children, Adolescents and Young Adults with Special Needs Associated Disabilities. While this Centre was a direct result of commitments arising from the Fourth CARICOM Summit in 2011, it is expected that the nation will benefit greatly from its work on social inclusion, participation, access to social services and employment of PWD.

29. Students at the David Rose, Ptolemy Reid, Diamond and Lenora special schools benefit from work of speech and language pathologist and rehabilitation assistants, who pay attention to students with speech challenges, autism, dysphonia, dyslexia and impairments in fine motor skills.

30. The Ministry of Public Health provides daily transportation for persons to attend the National Vocational Centre in Sophia and the Ptolemy Reid Special School. Additionally, transportation is provided for children living with microcephaly to attend the Diagnostic Centre housed at the Cyril Potter College of Education.

Corporal punishment

Recommendations 130.48, 132.51, 132.52, 132.53 and 132.54

31. Although corporal punishment is not prohibited in private homes, it is prohibited in institutional residences⁹ and juvenile correctional institutions.¹⁰ In June, 2018, Guyana enacted the Juvenile Justice Act 2018 which prohibits all forms of corporal punishment of children in penal institutions and as a sentence for a crime.

32. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has introduced a policy which prohibits the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary method in dealing with children in schools.¹¹ Additionally, MoE utilizes the services of Welfare Officers and Guidance Counsellors to work with the administration of various schools to ensure that they practice positive discipline. Parent sensitization sessions are also held with parents to present positive discipline as a more favourable approach than corporal punishment.

Water

Recommendations 130.63 and 130.64

33. Throughout the period under review the Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI) has consistently worked to improve access to drinking water and sanitation and has undertaken and completed countless projects aimed at providing basic sanitation facilities in areas throughout Guyana.

34. Between October to December, 2015, over 1,875 residents located in Georgetown, the East Coast of Demerara and East Berbice for the first time benefitted from installation of standpipes, upgrades in existing facilities and installation of distribution mains. GWI continued to provide first time access to water in communities within all ten (10) administrative regions by drilling wells, installing new water mains, providing standpipes, distributing/installing filters, interconnection of pipelines, installation of chlorine injection systems and expansion of water distribution networks. GWI has taken its work to small and remote communities including those located in the hinterlands such as Aishalton, Achwaib and others who now have access to water for the first time.

2015 (October–December)

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Activity</i>
A section of North Sophia, Georgetown (after some 30 years)	Approximately 375 residents	Installation of standpipes
Ann's Grove, East Coast Demerara	Approximately 900 residents	Upgrade works were conducted
Tucberg, Savannah Park and No. 68 Village, East Berbice	More than 600 residents	Installation of distribution mains

2016

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Activity</i>
'D' and 'E' Fields, Sophia, Georgetown	Approximately 20,000 residents	Installation of transmission lines from rehabilitated wells in North Ruimveldt and Turkeyen resulted in residents benefitting from potable water access after many years
Dutch Cab & Dazzell Housing Schemes, Vryheid's Lust, Golden Grove, Melanie, Victoria, Le Ressouvenir, Lusignan and Ann's Grove - East Coast Demerara	More than 1300 residents	Installation of distribution mains
Barnwell/Mocha, Yarrowkabra, Friendship Squatting Area & Kuru Kururu- East Bank Demerara	Approximately 580 residents	Installation of water supply systems
Ross Village, No. 30, 40, 41 & 42 Villages, Lovely- Lass, Lichfield, Esau/ Jacob - West Coast Berbice	In excess of 2,000 residents	Installation of new mains
Tarlogie, Stanleytown, Nigg, No. 53, 72 & 74 Villages, Budhan Scheme & Angoy's Avenue- Region 6	Approximately 6,500 persons	Installation of new mains
Byderabo- Region 7	More than 300 persons	Installation of a new water distribution system
Warawatta village, Kamarang Primary and Nursery Schools, Kako village, the Upper Mazaruni, Kamarang District Hospital and Quebanang Primary School- Region 7	Approximately 300 persons	Jerry Can filters were distributed and C2 filters installed
Monkey Mountain Section 2- Region 7	Approximately 750 residents	Installation of 2800 meters of pipes, construction of a catchment area, Photovoltaic system, water trestle and stand pipes
Campbelltown, Mahdia- Region 8	600 residents	Drilling of a new well and installation of distribution pipes, a Photovoltaic system, stand pipes and construction of a trestle
Princeville- Region 8	Approximately 2000 persons	Installation of a new Water Supply System
Culvert City- Region 9	More than 500 residents	A new potable water well was drilled
Green Valley, Amelia's Ward and Blueberry Hill- Linden	More than 300 residents	Installation of new mains

2017

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Yarakita- Region 1	300 residents	Drilling of a new well.
Lima Sands- Region 2	2600 residents	A new well and water supply system
Ridge Wakenaam, Region 3	Approximately 400 residents eligible to receive potable water	Drilling of a new well.
Silverhill, Waiakabra and Hillfoot on Linden Soesdyke Highway- Region 4	More than 2000 residents	New water systems were constructed
Timehri North- Region 4	More than 500 residents	A new water supply network was installed
Bladenhall Railway Embankment- ECD	100 residents	An extended water network was installed
Onderneeming- Region 5	47 residents	Installation of Distribution lines and new service connections
Angoy's Avenue- Region 6 and improved service to other sections	More than 1000 residents	New mains were installed
Molsen Creek- Region 6	More than 200 residents	New mains were installed
New Amsterdam- Region 6	Approximately 7000 persons (first time access to 24 hours treated water)	Upgrade of water supply system
Locaber, East Canje- Region 6	320 residents	Installation of distribution mains
Karrau - Region 7	Approximately 200 residents	A new well was drilled and new water supply system was constructed
Baracara - Region 7	More than 100 residents	A new water filtration system
Tiger Pond and Semonie- Region 9	Some 557 residents	New systems were constructed
Kumu, Rupertee, Wowetta, Shulinab and Aranaputa- Region 9	More than 1000 persons	New wells were drilled
Andy Ville- Region 10	More than 100 residents	Installation of distribution

2018

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Rincon, Koko & Kamwatta- Region 1	1,800 residents	Construction and expansion of water supply systems
Koberimo- Region 1	Approximately 400 residents	A new water supply system was constructed

Mabaruma & Barbina -Region 1	1,800 residents	Installation of new chlorine dosing injection system
Zeelugt, Phase 3, East Bank Essequibo- Region 3	403 residents & infrastructure is now in place to provide access to an additional 2000 customers	Installation of distribution mains
Best Sea Dam- Region 3	Some 100 residents	Installation of standpipes at strategic locations.
Providence, Phase 3 – Region 4	Approximately 340	Interconnection of pipelines
Paradise Village, DeHoop, Onverwagt, Good Faith and Ithaca	300 residents	installation of new mains
Lighttown, Highbury, DeKinderen and Deutchem- Region 6	Some 180 residents	Reactivation of the Edinburgh well station and installation of a distribution network
Wayaleng- Region 7	Some 200 residents	Construction of a water supply improvement system
Chinoweing- Region 7	Some 375 residents	Construction of a new water supply improvement system
Yurong Paru- Region 9	More than 300 residents	Construction of a new water supply system and installation of a treated water supply system

2019 (January to date)

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficialies</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Canal Bank – Region 1	Approx. 300 Residents	Drilling of new well & interconnection of existing system
Lanaballi – Region 3	Approx. 49 households (after more than a decade)	Reactivation of well and installation of PV system
Roseanna Park Region 3	250	Laying of distribution mains
Covent Garden- East Bank Demerara	290 households	Network interconnection, leak repairs etc
Barnwell North, Friendship squatting area, Waiakabra, Kuru Kuru, Great Diamond, Timehri North, Kalicharran, Latchmansingh and Chan Sand roads- East Bank Demerara	Over 4000 households	Installation of distribution mains
D’urban Backlands, Georgetown	Close to 3000 residents	Installation of 24 standpipes
Campbelltown, Region 8	750 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Paramakatoi, Region 8	1,200 residents	Construction of a new water supply system
Aishalton, Region 9	450 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Beneficialies</i>	<i>Activity</i>
		service connections
Karaudarnau- Region 9	250 plus the health post, nursery & primary school, village office, village shop, food processing unit, church and library.	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Achawib- Region 9	140 residents	Drilling of new well and installation of distribution network
Awarewanau- Region 9	115 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Bashaidrun- Region 9	75 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Maruranau- Region 9	125 plus the village shop, village office & playfield	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Shea- Region 9	175 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Churikadnao- Region 9	90 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Yupukari- Region 9	200 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Kaicumbay- Region 9	125 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Massara- Region 9	225 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Sand Creek- Region 9	Approx. 1020 persons	Drilling of a new well and installation of distribution network
St Ignatius- Region 9	175 residents	Drilling of new well, installation of distribution network and new service connections
Lethem- Region 9	535 residents	Expansion of the water distribution network

First time access through GWI projects

35. Additionally, GWI undertook and completed special projects throughout Guyana which led to the improvement in services and access to water. Proactive leak inspection led to better service for residents in the East Coast in 2015. In 2016, GWI continued its work and among its achievements are the rehabilitation of water treatment systems in three (3) villages in Region 3, provision of 24 hour supply of water in Georgetown for the first time, a 2.5 million dollar project in Region 6 which saw service connection upgrades in several

communities and the Wisroc Water Treatment Plant in Linden received a new backup disinfection system. The work continues in 2017 and 2018 with several water treatment systems being installed in different areas in Guyana. The increased momentum in improving access to water and the quality of the service provided has continued in 2019.

Education

Recommendations 130.46, 130.70, 132.62, 132.63 and 130.69

36. The Government of Guyana remains committed to the protection and enjoyment of the right of children to education by enforcement of the prohibition against child labour.¹² Given that illegal child labour is usually symptomatic of the inability to meet the financial requirements invariably connected with children attending school, the Ministry of Education seeks to ensure that there is access to the free education from Nursery to Secondary School. Additionally, the Government of Guyana assists parents by the provision of uniform vouchers, free books for students, school feeding programmes and transportation assistance.

37. Steps have also been taken to specifically and directly combat child labour such as having Welfare Officers and Labour Officers visit work sites on a random basis to ensure compliance with the labour laws which prohibit employment of children.

38. In 2017, the Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF, participated in the Global out of School Children Survey aimed at understanding factors leading to exclusion of students in order to improve participation and the overall quality of education. It was found that the main profiles of out-of-school children are those from the lowest socio-economic quintile, boys of lower secondary school age, low education achievement of mothers, children who experience poor relationships with peers and adults at school, and children living in remote areas.

39. The Ministry of Education has used the information gleaned from the former study to develop its Education Sector Plan 2019 -2023 which includes *inter alia* enhancement of social welfare programmes to positively impact participation and access to education, expansion and upgrading of education facilities, and preventative programmes to address violence, bullying, drug use, mental health issues and other social issues.

40. A total of \$221 billion Guyana dollars has been allocated to the Ministry of Education from 2015. The total of schools throughout Regions 1 to 10 are 440 Nursery Schools, 407 Primary Schools and 225 Secondary Schools.¹³

Housing

Recommendation 130.65

41. During the period under review the CHPA executed a number of projects and programmes for the country's low and middle income population. The allocation of land and homes has been focused on low and middle income families, who have now benefitted from subsidized lands under the Government of Guyana Housing Programme. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of all lands allocated from 2015 to November, 2019 have been for low and middle income families.

42. In addition to land allocation, the Programme has also led to the construction of 297 housing units for low and middle income households.

43. The 'Sustainable Housing for Hinterland Programme' which is funded jointly by the Government of Guyana and the IDB, has as a key component the improvement of living conditions for low income families in hinterland communities through better access to housing, potable water, and such like. To date 177 beneficiaries of this programme have received new homes and many have received training in building and construction so as to assist in employment. Additionally, the 'Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Programme' aims to improve the quality of life in urban and peri-urban Georgetown through better access to adequate housing, basic infrastructure and mobility services. A

useful aspect of this programme is the Home Improvement Subsidy which is granted to persons who need financial assistance to effect repairs to their homes.

Trafficking in persons

Recommendations 130.51 and 130.50

44. This matter has actively engaged the attention of the Ministry of Social Cohesion. It is noted that there has been one conviction in 2014 for the crime of trafficking in persons and there have been no reports of official complicity in this crime. The legislative provisions under the Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005 continue to apply in equal measure to all individuals.

45. In the last quarter of 2016, the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons conducted training/ capacity building sessions with the Major Crimes Investigations Unit of the Guyana Police Force and frontline officials from multiple regions across Guyana. Training continued in 2017 with the training of media officials, police prosecutors, police officers and other stakeholders in Region 1, immigration officers, village councilors and Toshaos. Additionally, the International Organisation for Migration conducted a Training of Trainers Course for multiple stakeholders including Task Force Members and another course for medical practitioners.

46. Mines officers, the Corps of Wardens, diplomats, foreign services officials, interpreters, community policing groups, immigration, citizenship and police intelligence officers received training in 2018, and the Ministry of Social Protection held a training course for labour officials and occupational health and safety officers in areas such as victim identification. Trainees included persons from remote areas and various administrative regions.

47. From 2016 to 2018, three police investigations, two immigration officers and three police prosecutors also underwent a series of trafficking in persons regional training courses conducted by Interpol.

48. The Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Social Protection has made significant strides in its establishment of care facility services. In particular, one safe house and two transitional facilities have been established. Increasing subventions have been provided to NGOs which manage shelters. Victims of trafficking in persons are provided with healthcare, psychological and other support services by the Ministry of Social Protection.

Health

Recommendations 130.59, 130.60, 130.63, 130.64, 130.66, 130.67, 130.68

49. The Ministry of Health, together with its partners and stakeholders, continues to implement the national HIV/AIDS and STI strategy, HIVISION 2020. In accordance with this strategy, the ministry has steadily expanded the access to all essential HIV and STI prevention, control, treatment and care packages to vulnerable persons and groups such as adolescents and young adults, migrant populations and other groups at risk. The program is focused on the achievement of the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets to end the global epidemic of HIV.

50. The most recent evaluation of the targets indicated that Guyana, ahead of the 2020 time-line, has achieved the first "90". In particular, of the estimated 8,200 persons living with HIV in 2018, 93% already know their status and close to 735 are already receiving antiretroviral treatment. All essential HIV medicines are provided free of charge to all relevant persons under a "Treat All" national strategy. Steady progress is also being made on ensuring that the final "90" (achievement of viral suppression) with 69% of those examined are already demonstrating viral suppression. Additionally, the national program focuses on the elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV and other STIs.

51. The Ministry, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and with the approval of Cabinet, launched the National Reproductive Health Policy and strategic plan to address access to comprehensive reproductive health services to all including adolescents, indigenous and rural population and disadvantaged groups.

52. In 2019, the Ministry of Education commenced the final biannual implementation of its national health strategy "Health Vision 2020." This strategy in its final phase focuses on the improving health status of all persons living in Guyana. Priority areas include the maternal and child health services, control of communicable diseases, mental health, accidents, injuries and violence, and nutrition. Services are delivered by the five (5) levels of health care infrastructure in all ten administrative regions, using a referral network.

53. The expanded Health Services Network allows for the deployment of health professionals, medicines and health commodities, health technologies and health education and health promotion to all population groups with an effort to eliminate poverty.

54. The Ministry of Health works in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture to improve food security and the Ministry of Education to improve health literacy through the Health and Family Life Education curriculum (HFLE). Through collaboration with the Ministry of Social Protection, workers' health and safety programs are implemented. The "We are at your door" Service conceptualized by the Minister of Public Health, offers essential health screening diagnosis and treatment services to all work places.

55. The Central Board of Health (CBH), works closely with the Ministry of Communities and the Guyana Water Incorporated (GWI) to ensure safe drinking water and sanitation services are provided nationwide. Further, the Environmental Health Unit and the Regional Health Departments (with support from the Government Analyst, Food and Drug Department (GA-F&DD)) monitors all drinking water sources to ensure safe water is provided.

56. Through several partnership programs, the Government continues to improve the safe water network and to ensure that even in remote areas sanitation issues are addressed. When compromises are detected as in the case of floods and contamination, active domestic water treatment initiatives are implemented with the provision of chlorine tablets.

57. Through funding from the Inter American Development Bank (IDB), the government commenced a nationwide program for the construction of sanitary facilities and septic tanks to manage sewage. The Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with the National Bureau of Standards (GNBS), has developed new standards for the construction of ventilated pit latrines to ensure further access to safe sanitation services in rural areas.

58. The Family Health Program continues to implement the national Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Strategy to ensure access to all essential MCH services. The Strategy focuses on the protection against preventable diseases, through a rigid recommended EPI program to deliver sixteen (16) vital vaccines to all children.

59. It should be noted that in a global evaluation of Effective Vaccine Management (EVM) systems, Guyana was ranked third for good cold chain management and efficient vaccination delivery systems. Even though outbreaks of both yellow fever and measles have occurred in neighboring countries, Guyana remains free of these disease due the high immunization coverage above 95% in 2018.¹⁴

60. Additionally, the strategy allows for the timely detection using the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) of priority life-threatening childhood illness such as acute gastroenteritis, acute respiratory infection, malaria and malnutrition are detected and treated appropriately.

61. The Strategy is supported by the provision a data management system and an Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) consisting of a wide cross section of stakeholder including the UN Health Agencies, Civil Society and national authorities, oversee the smooth and efficient execution of the programs.

62. Under Health Vision 2020, the Ministry continues to expand and implement a range of health services through its networks of Health Post, Health Centers, District and Regional Hospital and national referrals centers.

63. Over the last 4 years, 14 health facilities were rehabilitated and 5 are currently under construction, using a SMART Hospitals Initiative of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). The Ministry is actively addressing the issue of Universal Health Care ensuring that everyone has access to a health facility within 5km of their home. Regular outreaches are done to provide basic and advanced medical services including surgeries to persons in remote areas.

64. Finally, through the Reproductive Health Policy family planning services are promoted to expand the access to contraceptives. Efforts to expand access includes provision of free contraceptives at all primary health care facilities.

65. Training and implementation on culturally sensitive and appropriate intervention in promotion of contraceptive have been carried out in partnership with local private sector, NGOs and Civic Society Organizations such as the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association.

Domestic and sexual violence

Recommendations 130.31, 130.40, 130.41, 130.43, 130.38, 130.35, 130.36

66. Since the Coalition Government came into power, there has been no extrajudicial killings. Police officers are being trained regularly.

67. The Sexual Offences Act of Guyana is fully implemented and enforced. The Sexual Offences Court was established in 2017. Since its inception in November 2017, the court has heard 44 cases, and seen 31 convictions with 13 acquittals. Sentences for those convictions ranged from nine years to life.¹⁵ A handbook on the Sexual Offences Act was also published.¹⁶

68. In 2017, under the Ministry of Social Protection, the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Policy Unit (SO&DVPU) is responsible for raising awareness on the effects of sexual offences, gender-based violence and domestic violence.

69. The 2017-2021 national plan of action for the implementation of the sexual offences and domestic violence 2010 Act is intended to be implemented throughout Guyana by the sexual violence unit of the Ministry of Social Protection, under the guidance of the National Task Force on Sexual and Domestic Violence.¹⁷

II. Partial implementation of recommendations

Indigenous peoples

Recommendations 130.54, 130.75, 132.64 and 132.19

70. By Article 212T (f) of the Constitution of Guyana, the Indigenous Peoples' Commission is required to "promote consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples especially with regard to their participation in national decision-making and other decisions that affect their lives".

71. The Government of Guyana remains committed to ensuring that indigenous peoples are active and informed participants in decision-making relative to matters specifically affecting them. The Government has taken appropriate steps in order to facilitate meaningful engagement with Guyana's Indigenous peoples through adherence to the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent in accordance with international law instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 61/295. It is noted that Guyana is yet to ratify the ILO Convention 169.

72. The Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs and the Indigenous Peoples' Commission, pursuant to the Constitution of Guyana¹⁸ and the Amerindian Act No. 6 of 2006, carry out the mandate of engaging indigenous peoples and providing support to Villages. Capital Investments are made based on collective positions advanced by members of Villages, to support agricultural and technological pursuits.

73. One of the main avenues used for the engagement of indigenous peoples is through the National Toshao's Council (NTC). This Council meets annually to discuss issues affecting the indigenous population of Guyana, based on direct insight from their respective Villages. The NTC receives a subvention from the Government and financial support from the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs. The Ministry and Commission are active in voicing the collective concerns of the indigenous peoples and have continued to engage indigenous peoples on various issues such as the Amerindian Land Titling Project, in respect of which a number of Workshops have been held in Villages sharing information on, inter alia, how to acquire a Certificate of Title.

74. In 2015, during its engagement with the NTC, the Government of Guyana discussed Village Improvement Plans which are intended to inform national action plans for improvement of the lives of Indigenous Peoples. The Village Improvement Plans are intended to be produced by the indigenous people and so reflect their vision for their development. With the Village Improvement Plans produced, the Government will then further consult with the NTC to identify priorities, materialize ideas and consider opportunities for investment where possible.

75. In November, 2019, the Indigenous Peoples' Commission submitted its Reports for the years 2013 to 2016 to the Speaker of the National Assembly, including therein recommendations for revisions to the Amerindian Act.

76. The challenge of decentralization continues to stymie the ability of the Government to have legal services accessible to indigenous communities. As an interim measure, the Ministry employs two attorneys who assist indigenous persons so far as is practicable. Additionally, the welfare department of the ministry continues to assist persons so far as is possible.

Human rights institutions and treaty obligation

Recommendations 130.6 and 132.23

77. The constitutional rights Commissions¹⁹ – the Ethnic Relations Commission²⁰ and the Human Rights Commission²¹ bear the responsibility of monitoring and reviewing all existing legislation, policies and measures for compliance, and reporting the need for amendment to any legislation to the National Assembly. By Constitutional design and regulation of the appointment and election of members, these Commissions are set up to function independently and impartially. The Commissions are funded by a direct charge on the Consolidated fund, congruent with the Paris Principles.

78. The Indigenous Peoples' Commission is one of the four (4) rights commissions established under Article 212G of the Constitution of Guyana. This Commission's mandate is to empower the indigenous population of Guyana as well as advocate for their economic, social and cultural enhancement.

79. In October, 2015, the Fiscal Management and Accountability (Amendment) Act 2015 was passed in the National Assembly. This act ensured that constitutional bodies were financially independent to allow for autonomy in management of their affairs. This Commission proposed a budget of \$66,346,430.00 GYD to realize its plans and projects for 2016. The Commission was allocated \$23,346,000.00 by the Government of Guyana and was able to utilize these funds and still return a portion to the Consolidated Fund.

80. The Commission was represented on the Representative Platform established to develop guidelines for the Amerindian Land Titling Project and participated in the resuscitated Inter-Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking-in Persons. The Commission also

expanded its human resources by employing a new Administrative Assistant on 1st August, 2016.

81. In 2017, the Commission accepted invitations from the Office of Climate Change and the ICT Access and E-Services for Hinterland, Poor and Remote Communities as a part of the monitoring and oversight team and the board respectively.

82. In 2018, the Commission used its allocated funds of \$23,239,990 in focusing on capacity building and public awareness. Workshops continued in 2019 with workshops for village leaders on capacity building and empowerment of village council members. The workshops focused on governance, leadership, management, communication, financial skills and employment.

83. Between 2016 to 2019, administrative measures were put in place to increase the financial resources for the adequate functioning of the Women and Gender Equality Commission. This Commission employed an Investigative Officer in 2019 to investigate complaints of, or initiate investigations into violation of rights under its purview.

84. The Rights of Child Commission is governed by Article 212V of the Constitution. The Commission receives funds from the Ministry of Finance. The Government of Guyana recognises that it will need to take into consideration its capacity to provide for their full implementation from the point of view of financial, physical and human resources, within available resources. Despite the challenges, RCC works along with the available resources and support from UNICEF and agencies such as the Child Care and Protection Agency.

85. To date there is still no Human Rights Commission as required by Article 212G of the Constitution nor is there a Rights Commission Tribunal as required by Article 212K of the Constitution. The Government has been able to ensure that all other rights commissions are fully functional, independent and well-resourced and continues to work towards the Human Rights Commission by way of the bipartisan parliamentary committee on appointments.

86. In 2017, the Government of Guyana announced its intention to re-establish the Ethnic Relations Commission after several years of dormancy. Article 212A of the Constitution of Guyana provides for an Ethnic Relations Commission with functions including promotion of elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity.

87. In January, 2018, the National Assembly approved the appointment of a new 10 member Ethnic Relations Commission which has begun engagement with the public through the launch of its Harmony Campaign, and has embarked on discussions with the Ministry of Education to participate in the ongoing curriculum reform and the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2019 -2030.²²

88. The Green State Development Strategy Vision 2040 seeks to undertake a comprehensive review on the performance of National Human Rights institutions. In the case of the Human Rights Commission, the current structure will be revisited. Further changes would be effected through reform of the Constitution. A Bill to operationalize a constitutional reform commission was put to a bipartisan committee of parliament in 2017 to pave the way for constitutional reform.

Non-discrimination and LGBT groups

Recommendations 130.25, 130.26, 130.27, 130.58

89. Based on reports from the National Care and Treatment Centre, the Government of Guyana reviewed its National Stigma and Discrimination Policy in 2018. The policy aimed as *inter alia* preventing discrimination against men who have sex with men, sex workers and transgender persons when accessing health care for the treatment of HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Health care workers benefitted from training sessions titled "Partnership defines quality of service" which led to development of a policy statements against stigma and discrimination, a suggestion box and a logbook for receiving reports of discrimination. The training programme was then repeated with probation officers, law enforcement officers and other key groups within the population.

90. At present, advertisements have been published seeking a consultant to develop curriculum and training tools for pre-service health care workers on stigma and discrimination and sexual minorities. Additionally, advocates for the LGBT community championed the recent case of Quincy McEwan and Ors v The Attorney General of Guyana in which the laws prohibiting ‘cross dressing’ were struck down and found to be unconstitutional.

Justice and security sector reforms

Recommendations 132.56, 130.55, 130.56, 130.57

91. Under the Police Complaints Authority Act²³ (PCA), any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a member of the force is guilty of any misconduct (includes being guilty of an unlawful or unnecessary exercise of authority- one component of which is the unnecessary use of violence to any prisoner, or other person with whom he may be brought into contact in the execution of his duty) can make a report to the Authority.

92. Generally, complaints must be investigated as soon as practicable by a member of the Police Force not below the rank of sergeant and of higher rank than the member of the Force who is alleged to have committed the offence. The complete investigation procedure can be found in the Police (Discipline) Act²⁴ read in conjunction with the PCA.

93. In 2018, the Authority reported that it received a total of 513 complaints against members of the Force. Of those complaints, 159 were rejected, 276 were closed, 98 were pending investigation and 5 were referred to the Police Service Commission or the Police Disciplinary Authority for advice.

94. The Prison Act²⁵ provides for measures to safeguard the rights of prisoners. Section 14 of that Act mandates the Director of Prisons, as often as may be necessary, to visit and inspect all prisons and make an annual report to the Minister on the administration and condition of the prisons, the conduct and treatment of prisoners and such other matters relating to the prisons or to prisoners as he may think fit.

95. Additionally, there is a mechanism of ‘Visiting Justices’ under sections 46 and 47 of the Prison Act. Section 46(1) stipulates that there shall be in respect of each prison in Guyana, a Board of Visiting Justices, and the Minister may appoint for such time as may be specified in the appointment such and so many justices to be members of such Board. Subsection (2) goes on to state that all judges of the High Court and magistrates shall be ex-officio visiting justices for each of the prisons of Guyana. Section 47 (1) makes provision for a visiting justice to at any time visit any prison in respect of which he is a visiting justice, and to inspect any part of such prison, enquire into and examine the food, diet, clothing, treatment and conduct of prisoners, may question any member of the prison staff or prisoner, hear complaints from any prisoner, enquire into any abuses and irregularities in any prison. That section also states that a Visiting Justice shall ascertain as far as possible whether the provisions of the Act and the Prison Rules are being complied with, and may make a report upon any such matters to the Minister.

Children

Recommendations 130.7, 130.2, 130.39, 130.44 and 130.45

96. The Gender Affairs Bureau (GAB) of the Ministry of Social Protection continues to work relentlessly on the issue of Gender Based Violence (GBV). The GAB has conducted national public education and awareness campaigns on the issue of GBV in all 10 regions of Guyana.

97. The Rights of the Child Commission may receive complaints, investigate complaints of, or initiate investigations into violation and/or omission of the rights and interest of the child under its purview, as provided for under Section 212J (2) and 212V of the Constitution of Guyana. These Rules shall be construed and applied to provide for just, prompt and effective resolution of such complaints, in the best interest of the child.

98. The Child Protection Agency continues to embark on a systematic public education and awareness programme on sexual abuse, abuse and neglect. Public Education and Awareness is a component of the Work Plan of the agency with a budgetary allocation.

99. The legislative framework for the protection of children and children's rights has been enhanced, with the enactment of the Juvenile Justice Act. The Children's court established deals with juveniles, sexual offences, domestic violence and other sensitive matters eliminates re-victimisation and trauma for victims, as well as the speedy disposal of the cases, where backlog of cases still exists.

100. A Sexual Offences Registry is in the process of being assembled by a multi-stakeholder committee and will be implemented after review by all the necessary parties. This registry will contribute to the advancement of the identification of sexual predators and the prevention of sexual predation on children by said predators.

101. The Child Care and Protection Agency collaborated extensively with key stakeholders at the district level in the dissemination of information and in its awareness campaign. District childcare officers continue to forge relationships with school teachers, medical personnel, police force, and indigenous leaders to aid in outreaches and in the dissemination of the targeted messages to the various communities.

102. The Ministry of Public Security in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Community, Family, and Youth Resilience (CYFR) programme, carried out the training session for magistrates in November 2019.²⁶

103. The Ministry of Social Protection with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 2017, developed a National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Acts. Protocols were designed to provide Police Officers with the necessary guidelines and procedures required to improve their overall response to the needs of victims of sexual violence. These include but are not to be limited to conducting professional interviews with the victims; providing effective referrals to various institutions that provide support and give assistance to victims (e.g. medical attention, counselling etc.); paper committals during trials. In 2019, there were a number of training sessions conducted for police Officers facilitated by the Ministry of Public Security.

Women

Recommendations 130.19, 131.1, 130.18, 130.53, 130.12, 130.17 and 130.37

104. Guyana seeks to build a country in which women and girls live in safety, and are protected from different forms of abuse, such as trafficking in persons, domestic violence and workplace hazards. It continues to make great strides towards achievement of the internationally agreed development goals relative to gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly in mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes, ensuring equal pay for equal work, enhancing education and training opportunities for women and girls, and increasing women in leadership positions.

105. National legislation which seek to strengthen and protect women in Guyana includes, inter alia, the Domestic Violence Act, No. 18 of 1996, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1995, the Prevention of Discrimination Act, No. 26 of 1997, the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act No. 19 of 1997, the Representation of People's Act (Section 11B, Articles 5–7), the Combating Trafficking in Persons Act 2005, the Marriage Amendment Act 2006, the Protection of Children Act 2009, the Sexual Offences Act 2010, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010, the Childcare and Development Services Act 2011, the Custody, Contact, Guardianship and Maintenance Act 2011 and the Common Law Union (Amendment) Act of 2012. These laws provide a near comprehensive legal framework for the full implementation of human rights instruments signed and ratified. The Men Empowerment Network (MEN), a precursor to the Men's Affairs Bureau, was formed in 2009 and embarked on programs designed to eradicate domestic violence and suicide. The Network comprised men's organizations and religious leaders who worked through faith-based institutions with adult and young men to improve their attitudes

towards women and encourage responsible parenting. While the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana supported and collaborated with the MEN, it also recognised the need for an institutional mechanism to address men's issues at the national level. As a result, the Men's Affairs Bureau was operationalised in 2010 within the Ministry of Human Services (re named Ministry of Social Protection) to provide continuous gender awareness and sensitisation programmes for men and boys.

106. The Ministry of Social Protection support the efforts of the Government to engage with women and protect their constitutional rights.

III. Pending recommendations

Recommendations 130.10, 132.18, 132.20, 132.1, 132.7, 132.8, 132.9, 132.16, 130.1, 132.51, 132.52, 132.53, 132.54

107. The outstanding Conventions and Optional Protocols listed in these recommendations continue to be under consideration.

Recommendations 130.28, 130.29, 130. 30, 131. 3

108. By Resolution No. 23 of 2012, the National Assembly constituted a Parliamentary Select Committee tasked with engaging with the nation's stakeholders relative to the death penalty. It was confirmed that this issue remains one of particular concern for the majority of Guyanese. As a result, the Government has indicated willingness to have a referendum or other consultative processes to ascertain the will of the Guyanese people on this issue. This process remains on the Government's agenda.

IV. Noted recommendations

Abolition of the death penalty

Recommendations 132.1, 132.2, 132.3, 132.4, 132.5, 132.6, 132. 43, 132.44, 132.45, 132.46, 132.47, 132.48, 132.49

109. Guyana has acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1977 and to the Optional Protocol to that Covenant in 1999.

110. The death penalty continues to exist in Guyana's laws but has been limited in its scope by the Criminal Law (Offences) Act 2010, which was amended to eliminate the mandatory imposition of the death penalty as the sentence for murder. Further, pursuant to Section 100(1)(a) –(e) of the Criminal Law (Offences) Act 2010, a sentence of death may only be imposed where a person is convicted for the murder of a member of the security forces, a prison officer, a judicial officer acting in execution of his duties, or where the murder is directly attributable to a person's status either as a witness of party in a pending or concluded criminal or civil case. Moreover, the aforementioned Section confirms that the arbiter of law in relevant cases has the option to impose a sentence of imprisonment for life rather than impose a death sentence.

111. Notwithstanding the legality of the imposition of a death sentence in the limited circumstances above, in reality, the courts are loathed to impose such a sentence and the state is even less willing to carry out executions. The most telling evidence in support of the former position is the absence of any executions pursuant to a sentence of death since 1997. There were 26 people known to be under the sentence of death at the end of 2018. During the year, two women were issued death sentences and two sentences were commuted. The Death Penalty Project reported that as of November 2018, there were 17 people on death row. The President maintains that there is a strict moratorium on the application of the death penalty. Consultations and Cabinet deliberations are ongoing on this matter.

Prohibition against torture

Recommendations 132.11, 132.12, 132.13, 132.14, 132.15, 132.50

112. In 1988, Guyana signed and ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. However, although Guyana is not a party to the Optional Protocol to this Convention, Guyana has established several mechanisms to ensure the prohibition of torture as required by Article 14(1) of the Constitution of Guyana.

113. Guyana has not requested assistance from Group of Friends of the Convention against Torture Initiative for technical assistance.

Abolition of corporal punishment and other child rights matters

Recommendations 130.47, 131.4, 130.45, 131.2, 132.51, 132.52, 132.53, 132.54, 132.55, 132.57, 132.58, 132.59, 132.60, 130.47, 131.4, 130.45 and 131.2

114. As confirmed during the last review period, the abolition of corporal punishment remains an issue on which views of various sections of society remain “*staunchly and equally divided*”²⁷. As it stands, corporal punishment is sanctioned by Section 9 of the Criminal Law (Offences) Act 1894 and Section 7 of the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Act 1894 which grant guardians and teachers the authority to administer reasonable and proper punishment to children.

115. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the Ministry of Education has introduced a policy which prohibits the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary method in dealing with children in schools.²⁸ Additionally, the Ministry of Education utilizes the services of Welfare Officers and Guidance Counsellors to work with the administration of various schools to ensure that they practice positive discipline. Parent sensitization sessions are also held with parents to present positive discipline as a more favourable approach than corporal punishment.

116. Child marriages are illegal in Guyana. The legal age of consent for sexual activity is 16 years old. Any parent who marries their children (under the age of 16) is guilty of a criminal offence under the laws of Guyana.

117. In April 2019, the Ministry of Social Protection officially launched Guyana’s National Policy on Child Labour and National Policy on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH). Guyana has pledged to work to end child labour in the country by 2025 in keeping with target 8.7 of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

118. Children under the age of 15 years old are prohibited from working unless with family members only. Children between ages 15 and 16 are prohibited from working in mines, quarries, factories, electrical stations and construction. Children over 16 years old are permitted to do certain industrial jobs at night, but only making iron and steel, glass making, paper making, making raw sugar and gold mining, and only under certain conditions.

119. The age of Criminal Responsibility in Guyana, with the introduction of the Juvenile Justice Act, stands at the age of 14 years. However, offences of wandering, truancy and vagrancy has been abolished under the Juvenile Justice Act.²⁹

120. The Child Care and Protection Agency (CPA) Linden branch is on a mission to significantly decrease incidents of child abuse by targeting parents who are neglecting their children thus leaving them vulnerable. For 2018, hundreds of parents from eight communities across Region 10 Upper Demerara-Berbice have benefited from this special parenting training. 86 parents graduated from Coomacka Mines and 56 from the community of Amelia’s Ward. Other communities that benefited were Canvas City, Victory Valley, Old England and Nottinghamshire.³⁰

121. In 2016, through the Early Childhood Unit of the Child Care and Protection Agency, the department launched its Childcare and Development Services Regulations, to monitor

the institutional observance of child rights. As a result, the Agency has a group of Registration and Licensing Officers that go out and monitor childcare facilities to ensure that they are meeting and maintaining the minimum standards set out in the regulations so that they can be issued with licences. In 2018, the Agency issued a total of 131 licenses to childcare facilities. Additionally, it launched its “Back to Basics” reading programme, in an effort to increase parent-infant interaction while encouraging healthy development.

Non-discrimination and LGBT groups

Recommendations 132.29, 132.30, 132.31, 132.32, 132.33, 132.34, 132.35, 132.36, 132.37, 132.38, 132.39, 132.40, 132.41, 132.42

122. Guyana has in place a National Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy (NGESIP) with the objective of promoting development by improving the capacities and opportunities for diverse groups of women, men, girls, boys and other vulnerable groups based on a framework that will foster the dignity of these groups. The Gender Affairs Bureau is responsible for implementation and monitoring of policies to promote gender equality and social inclusion. It also serves in an advisory capacity on gender affairs on established bodies, such as the Women and Gender Equality Commission.

123. The Government of Guyana understands that much more is required to ensure that the LGBT Community is protected. To strengthen its ability to adequately address exclusion, gender inequality, and acknowledge the unique conditions and barriers that limit or deny vulnerable persons and communities access to services, resources or benefits, the Ministry of Social Protection (MoSP), in collaboration with CUSO International, has developed the National Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy (NGESIP) for Guyana.

124. As of January 01, 2016, the responsibilities of both the Men and Women’s Bureau have been merged to form “The Gender Affairs Bureau” (GAB). The role of the GAB is to promote and advance the gender issues to assist women and men in releasing their potentials as citizens of Guyana through the attainment of gender equality, equity, identity and social inclusion.

125. Women’s economic empowerment is facilitated through the Women of Worth (WOW) Loan Programme and the People of Worth Entrepreneurial Resources (POWER) Loan Programme with funding from the Ministry of Finance’s Poverty Alleviation Programme. Apart from the access to soft loans, women benefitted from training in such areas as basic entrepreneurial skills, networking, basic accounting, advertising and packaging. To date, 3,422 loans have been issued to 3,296 persons.

Freedom of expression

Recommendation 132.61

126. Article 146 of the Constitution provides for the protection of freedom of expression. Over the last five years, particularly in response to increased violence against women and girls facilitated through the use of technology, the Cyber Crime Act was enacted in July, 2018. The Act addressed several critical issues such as cyber bullying, child pornography, sexual grooming and luring children into sexual actions.

127. Defamation in Guyana remains a criminal offence under the Criminal Law (Offences) Act.³¹ The Office of the Prime Minister has been working with the Attorney General Chambers towards the decriminalization of defamation and those amendments will be before parliament before the end of 2020.

Special procedures

Recommendations 132.24, 132.25, 132.26, 132.27

128. Guyana will continue to consider these recommendations.

International instruments

Recommendations 132.1 and 132.10

129. Many of the commitments in the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR) are also set out in the United Nations Conventions to which Guyana is already committed.

130. Guyana remains committed to strengthening its legal and institutional framework inclusive of policies so as to effectively and meaningfully meet its human rights obligations under these conventions. A draft Cabinet memorandum has been prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration during the second or third quarter of 2020.

131. With respect to the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has prepared a draft memorandum to be submitted to Cabinet in 2020.

Notes

- ¹ Green State Development Strategy – Vision 2040.
- ² Guyana Population and Housing Census 2012 www.statisticsguyana.gov.gy
- ³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/---sro-port_of_spain/documents/publication/wcms_573539.pdf
- ⁴ PAHO <https://www.paho.org/guy/>
- ⁵ Information taken from <https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/the-5-fastest-growing-economies-in-the-world-2019-06-27>
- ⁶ <https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/Locations/Guyana/Guyana-project-overview#discoveriesInTheStabroekBlock>
- ⁷ <https://dpi.gov.gy/its-official-guyana-now-oil-producing-state/>
- ⁸ <https://www.ncdguyana.org/ncd-meets-c-h-p-a-representatives/>
- ⁹ Child Care and Development Services Act (2011)
- ¹⁰ The Training School (Amendment) Act 2010 and the Juvenile Offenders (Amendment) Act 2010.
- ¹¹ The Ministry of Education produced a Manual of Guidelines For the Maintenance of Order and Discipline in Schools. “Corporal Punishment of Lecturers” may be accessed on the Ministry’s website at <https://www.education.gov.gy/web/index.php/policies/maintenance-of-order-discipline-in-schoole/item/539-corporal-punishment-of-lecturers>
- ¹² Education Act Chap 39:01, Section 17.
- ¹³ Information was provided by the Ministry of Education.
- ¹⁴ https://www.paho.org/guy/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=299:guyana-suriname-launch-vaccination-week-in-the-americas-2017-in-nieuw-nickerie-suriname&Itemid=0
- ¹⁵ <https://dpi.gov.gy/44-trials-31-convictions-at-sexual-offences-court/>
- ¹⁶ Handbook http://www.hands.org.gy/files/SexualOffensesActHandbook_0.pdf
- ¹⁷ <https://dpi.gov.gy/sexual-domestic-violence-2017-2021-action-plan-slated-for-may-implementation/>
- ¹⁸ <http://parliament.gov.gy/constitution.pdf>
- ¹⁹ Art 212G, Constitution of Guyana.
- ²⁰ Art 212A-F, Constitution of Guyana.
- ²¹ Art 212N, Constitution of Guyana.
- ²² <https://dpi.gov.gy/tag/ethnic-relations-commission-erc/>
- ²³ Chapter 17:02 of the Laws of Guyana.
- ²⁴ Chapter 17:01 of the Laws of Guyana.
- ²⁵ Chapter 11:01 of the Laws of Guyana.
- ²⁶ Guyana Standard 22 November, 2019 at <https://www.guyanastandard.com/2019/11/22/magistrates-benefit-from-juvenile-justice-training/>
- ²⁷ Guyana – National Report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to the Human Rights Council Resolution 16/21 dated 19th January, 2015.
- ²⁸ The Ministry of Education produced a Manual of Guidelines For the Maintenance of Order and Discipline in Schools. “Corporal Punishment of Lecturers” may be accessed on the Ministry’s website at <https://www.education.gov.gy/web/index.php/policies/maintenance-of-order-discipline-in-schoole/item/539-corporal-punishment-of-lecturers>
- ²⁹ A guide to the Juvenile Justice Act at

<http://legalaid.org.gy/files/AGuidetotheJuvenileJusticeAct2018.pdf>

³⁰ <https://dpi.gov.gy/childcare-agency-hosts-special-parenting-training-in-region-10/>

³¹ Chapter 8:01 of the Constitution of Guyana.