



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
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REFERENCE: CAT/Follow-up

29 March 2021

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur a.i. for Follow-up to Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture, I have the honour to refer to the follow-up to the examination of the fifth periodic report of Cyprus, in accordance with the Guidelines for follow-up to concluding observations (CAT/C/55/3).

At the end of its 68<sup>th</sup> session held from 11 November to 6 December 2019, the Committee transmitted its concluding observations to your Permanent Mission. The Committee's concluding observations (CAT/C/CYP/CO/5, para. 46) requested the State party to provide within one year further information on the specific areas of concern identified in paragraphs 11 (b), 19 (b) and 33 (c) of the concluding observations.

On behalf of the Committee, allow me to express appreciation for your letter of 4 December 2020 providing your Government's response to the above-mentioned paragraphs (CAT/C/CYP/FCO/5) and to make the following comments:

Fundamental legal safeguards (para. 11 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee appreciates the update provided by the State party about the ongoing efforts to combat police abuse. However, it regrets not having received complete and detailed information on the number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences handed down in cases of torture or other ill-treatment by police since the adoption of the concluding observations. While acknowledging the efforts made by the State party to develop and implement human rights training programmes for law enforcement officials, which include modules on the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, the Committee remains concerned by the lack of information on evaluations of the impact of those programmes (3/B2).

.../...

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Judicial review with suspensive effect for asylum seekers and irregular migrants (para. 19 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations)

Notwithstanding the explanations provided by the State party in its follow-up replies regarding the recent legal changes in this field, the Committee observes with concern that under the Establishment and Functioning of the International Protection Administrative Court (Amendment) (No. 2) Law of 2020 [(L. 141(I) 2020)] the time limit for lodging an appeal before the Supreme Court against a decision of the International Protection Administrative Court has been reduced from 42 days to 14 days (2/B1-E).

Early identification of torture victims, and medical examinations (para. 33 (c) of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee appreciates the information included in the State party's follow-up replies regarding the implementation of a new standard referral form aimed at improving the screening system for identifying vulnerable asylum seekers, such as torture victims; the hiring of over 40 social welfare officers; and, the drafting of a separate standard operating procedure for the identification of victims of torture (3/B1).

Implementation plans (para. 46 of the Committee's concluding observations)

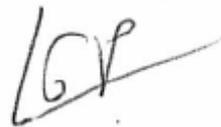
Lastly, the Committee regrets that the State party has not provided information about its plans for implementing, within the coming reporting period, the recommendations included in its concluding observations (C).

The Government of Cyprus is encouraged to provide additional information, if there is any, which would further contribute to the Committee's analysis of the progress made regarding the specific issues of concern cited above. This additional information may be provided in any subsequent report by the State party pursuant to the Committee's request in its concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Cyprus or other future periodic reports.

The Committee looks forward to a continued constructive dialogue with the authorities of Cyprus on the implementation of the Convention.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

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Committee against Torture