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**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination****Concluding observations on the thirteenth to fifteenth periodic reports of Maldives\***

1. The Committee considered the combined thirteenth to fifteenth periodic reports of Maldives (CERD/C/MDV/13-15), submitted in one document, at its 3169<sup>th</sup> and 3170<sup>th</sup> meetings (see CERD/C/SR.3169 and 3170), held on 18 and 19 November 2025. At its 3187<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 1 December 2025, it adopted the present concluding observations.

**A. Introduction**

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined thirteenth to fifteenth periodic reports of the State party under the simplified reporting procedure. It expresses its appreciation for the opportunity to renew its constructive dialogue with the State party's high-level delegation on the measures taken during the reporting period to implement the provisions of the Convention. The Committee thanks the State party for the oral responses provided by the delegation and for the supplementary information provided to it in writing.

**B. Positive aspects**

3. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the following international human rights instruments:

(a) The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances on 31 July 2023;

(b) The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on 23 December 2020;

(c) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure on 27 September 2019.

4. The Committee further welcomes the following legislative, institutional, and policy measures taken by the State party:

(a) The Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Industrial Relations Act in 2024;

(b) The Birth and Death Registration Act, which now regulates the Issuance of Birth Certificates and Maldivian National Identity Cards, in 2022;

(c) The fifth and sixth amendments to the Penal Code, aimed respectively at criminalizing incitement to hatred and violence based on race, colour and origin and addressing cyber-crime, in 2021 and 2024;

(d) The Anti-Human Trafficking Act, in 2013;

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its 116th session (17 November - 5 December 2025).

- (e) The National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up, in 2020;
  - (f) The Migration Health Policy, in 2025.
5. The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party that has started the process to make a declaration under article 14 of the Convention.

## **D. Concerns and recommendations**

### **Statistics**

6. While the Committee welcomes the State party's efforts in conducting a Housing and Population Census, as well as an Economic Census in 2022, it remains concerned about the insufficient information provided regarding the demographic composition of the population, particularly disaggregated data based on colour, descent, and national or ethnic origin. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of detailed and comprehensive information on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic groups and non-citizens. This gap prevents a proper assessment of the extent of racial discrimination in the State party (art. 1).

7. **Recalling its previous recommendation<sup>1</sup> and general recommendations No. 4 (1973), No. 8 (1990) concerning the interpretation and application of article 1, paragraphs 1 and 4 of the Convention and No. 24 (1999) concerning article 1 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Establish a comprehensive national framework to ensure the regular collection, analysis, and publication of disaggregated data, including through national censuses and socio-economic surveys;**

**(b) Include, in its next periodic report, reliable, updated and comprehensive statistics on the demographic composition of the population, based on the principle of self-identification, including on ethnic groups and non-citizens, such as documented and undocumented migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons;**

**(c) Produce disaggregated statistics on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic groups and of non-citizens, on their access to education, employment, healthcare and housing, with a view to creating an empirical basis for assessing the equal enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Convention.**

### **Incorporation of the Convention in the domestic legal order**

8. While noting that the State party has a dualist legal system, the Committee is concerned that the State party has not taken sufficient and appropriate measures to incorporate all the provisions of the Convention into its domestic law in order to ensure its direct applicability (art. 2).

9. **The Committee recommends that the State party incorporate all of the substantive provisions of the Convention into its domestic law, with a view to ensuring comprehensive protection against racial discrimination.**

### **Legal framework**

10. While noting that article 17 of the Constitution of Maldives prohibits discrimination, including on the grounds of race, national origin, and colour, and that non-discrimination clauses have been incorporated into several laws, the Committee is concerned that these provisions do not include a clear prohibition of racial discrimination in line with article 1 of the Convention, which limits the State party's ability to adequately address racial discrimination. The Committee also regrets that the State party has changed its previous position and no longer plans to enact an anti-discrimination act (art. 1, 2 and 6).

11. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation containing an explicit definition of racial discrimination on**

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<sup>1</sup> CERD/C/MDV/CO/5-12, para 7

**all the grounds enumerated in article 1 of the Convention and expressly prohibiting structural, direct, indirect, and intersecting forms of discrimination in both the public and private spheres. The Committee invites the State party to make full use of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations when preparing this act.**

#### **Constitutional requirements on nationality and religion**

12. The Committee reiterates its previous concern<sup>2</sup> and regrets that the discriminatory provisions in the Constitution, which require all nationals to be Muslims and thereby exclude non-Muslims from obtaining citizenship or accessing public positions, remain unchanged. These provisions disproportionately affect the right to nationality and the rights to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion of persons of different national or ethnic origins living in the State party, particularly given that, according to the information provided, 25.7% of the population is of foreign origin (arts. 2 and 5).

13. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation<sup>3</sup> and draws the attention of the State party to its General Recommendation No. 30 (2004) on discrimination against non-citizens, the Committee urges the State party to ensure that particular groups of non-citizens are not discriminated against with regard to access to citizenship or naturalization and to ensure that all persons enjoy their right to freedom of religion without any discrimination. The Committee also urges the State party to consider amending the discriminatory constitutional provisions to align them with the Convention, through a process that involves broad and participatory consultations with local communities, religious leaders, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders.**

#### **Human Rights Commission**

14. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation on the measures taken to strengthen the Human Rights Commission of Maldives. However, the Committee notes that the Commission continues to be accredited with B status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. The Committee remains concerned about the requirement that only Muslims are allowed to be members of the Commission (art. 2).

15. **Recalling its previous recommendation<sup>4</sup> and its general recommendation No. 17 (1997) on the establishment of national institutions to facilitate the implementation of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party to take steps to ensure that the composition of the Human Rights Commission reflects diversity and plurality, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles). The Committee also encourages the State party to continue strengthening the Commission's independence, including by providing adequate human, financial and technical resources to enable it to fully carry out its mandate.**

#### **Hate speech**

16. The Committee notes the provision in the Penal Code, which stipulates that a person commits an offence if they cause injury to another person or incite injury on the basis of race, national origin, colour, or political opinion. However, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The amendments introduced in the Penal Code, which do not fully align with article 4 of the Convention, and do not cover all grounds recognized in article 1 of the Convention;

(b) The absence of adequate and effective measures to monitor and address hate speech in the media, on the Internet, and on social media platforms;

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, para 10

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, para 9

(c) Reports of xenophobic sentiment against non-citizens, particularly migrant workers, portraying them as threats to jobs, culture, or religion, and being used as a political tool;

(d) The lack of information on the number of cases and investigations carried out regarding hate speech and hate crimes (arts. 1, 4 and 6).

**17. Recalling its General Recommendation No 35 on Combating racist Hate Speech, the Committee recommends that State party:**

**(a) Ensure that the offences introduced in the Penal Code, which criminalize causing or inciting harm to another person on the grounds of race, national origin, colour, or political opinion, fully comply with Article 4 of the Convention and encompass all grounds recognized in Article 1;**

**(b) Adopt comprehensive measures to monitor and address hate speech in traditional media, on the Internet, and on social media platforms, including by establishing effective mechanisms for reporting and removing racist content online;**

**(c) Collect and publish disaggregated data on hate speech and hate crimes, including the number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions, and convictions, and provide this information in its next periodic report;**

**(d) Provide training for law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and judges on identifying, investigating, and prosecuting hate speech and hate crimes, and ensure that victims have access to effective remedies;**

**(e) Develop and implement strategies to combat xenophobia and negative stereotypes against non-citizens, including migrant workers, with particular attention to prejudices targeting individuals from specific countries, such as India and Bangladesh;**

**(f) Carry out public awareness campaigns promoting tolerance and diversity and ensure that political discourse does not incite racial hatred or discrimination.**

#### **Discrimination against migrant workers**

18. While the Committee takes note of the measures adopted by the State party to combat discrimination against migrants, including migrant workers, it remains concerned about numerous reports indicating that migrants continue to face discrimination in the enjoyment of their access to the rights to work, to just and favourable conditions of work, housing and health care. In particular, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) In 2022, the implementation of the minimum wage obligation was indefinitely postponed only for migrant workers, increasing the risk of underpayment and workplace discrimination, and that many continue to experience wage non-payment;

(b) Despite the legal prohibition, employers continue to confiscate the passports of migrant workers;

(c) Many migrant workers are required to pay exorbitant fees to recruitment agencies both in their country of origin and in the State party to secure employment;

(d) The absence of adequate mechanisms to establish quotas for employers in the recruitment of migrant workers has led to the practice of “quota trading,” where migrant workers are subcontracted to third-party employers, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation;

(e) Living conditions for migrant workers are, according to available information, unsafe and overcrowded, with limited access to drinking water and sanitation, as well as other basic services;

(f) Migrant workers face significant barriers in accessing healthcare, including limited insurance coverage and accessibility issues, while undocumented migrants remain excluded from healthcare services, with no alternative mechanisms in place to address their needs (art. 2 and 5).

19. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure the immediate implementation of the minimum wage obligation for migrant workers and adopt effective measures to prevent underpayment and workplace discrimination;**

(b) **Ensure strict enforcement of the legal prohibition on employers confiscating passports, including imposing sanctions that are proportionate and dissuasive;**

(c) **Prohibit the charging of excessive recruitment fees to migrant workers and strengthen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to hold recruitment agencies accountable;**

(d) **Establish clear and transparent mechanisms for employer quotas in the recruitment of migrant workers and take measures to eliminate the practice of “quota trading,” ensuring that migrant workers are employed directly by authorized employers;**

(e) **Improve living conditions for migrant workers by enforcing standards on safety, adequate space, access to drinking water, and sanitation in accommodation facilities;**

(f) **Effectively implement the Migration Health Policy to address systemic barriers and discrimination in access to healthcare, ensure that migrants, particularly undocumented migrants have access to essential healthcare services, and take into account the Committee’s General Recommendation No. 37 on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.**

#### **Detention of Migrants**

20. The Committee is concerned that migrants, particularly undocumented migrants deemed to be in violation of the Immigration Act, can be held in detention. According to information received the operations aimed at identifying undocumented migrants, such as the operation Kurangi, have reportedly been used to detain or deport migrants without providing them adequate legal safeguards. It notes with concern reports indicating that migrants are often not presented before a judge to review the legality of their detention and that they do not have access to adequate legal assistance and interpretation services. The Committee is further concerned that decisions regarding their release sometimes depend on negotiations between employers and immigration authorities, placing migrants at heightened risk of abuse and exploitation (art. 2 and 5).

21. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that immigration detention is used only as a measure of last resort, for the shortest possible period, and subject to judicial oversight;**

(b) **Ensure that all operations aimed at identifying undocumented migrants fully comply with international human rights standards and guarantee that no migrant is detained or deported without due process, including prompt judicial review of detention;**

(c) **Guarantee that all migrants, including undocumented migrants, have access to legal assistance, interpretation services, and information on their rights in a language they understand;**

(d) **Establish clear procedures to review the legality of detention and prohibit informal or ad hoc detention arrangements that depend on negotiations between employers and immigration authorities;**

(e) **Adopt measures to prevent abuse and exploitation of migrants in detention, including by strengthening independent monitoring and complaint mechanisms;**

(f) **Collect and regularly publish disaggregated data and statistics on the prosecution and detention of non-citizens, including migrant workers.**

**Women migrant workers**

22. The Committee expresses its concern regarding the situation of women migrant workers in the State party, particularly those employed in domestic and care work within private households, who face intersectional forms of discrimination. The Committee notes with concern reports indicating that women migrant workers are exposed to exploitative practices, including forced labour, unpaid wages, confiscation of passports, and unsafe or overcrowded living conditions. Furthermore, many women migrant workers are subjected to excessive workloads and prolonged working hours without adequate rest, which exacerbates their vulnerability and undermines their fundamental rights (art. 2 and 5).

23. **In line with its General Recommendation No. 25 on Gender-related Dimensions of Racial Discrimination, the Committee recommends that the State party adopt effective measures to address intersecting forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, colour, descent, and national or ethnic origin faced by women migrant workers. In particular, the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Adopt effective measures to ensure that the existing legal framework, including the provisions of the Employment Act and the Sexual Harassment Act, aimed at protecting women migrant workers from abuse and exploitation, are effectively enforced,**

(b) **Strengthen labour inspection mechanisms, ensuring that they cover domestic work settings;**

(c) **Provide accessible, safe, and effective complaint and redress mechanisms for migrant women workers without fear of retaliation;**

(d) **Ensure that all allegations of exploitation, abuse, and violence against women migrant workers, in particular domestic workers, including physical, verbal, and sexual violence, are promptly investigated and that perpetrators are held accountable;**

(e) **Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to combat racial prejudice, xenophobia, and gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women migrant workers.**

**Rights of refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons**

24. The Committee notes with concern that the State party does not have a legal framework and effective mechanisms for the protection of asylum seekers and refugees. The Committee is concerned about the lack of an effective procedure to ensure the respect of the principle of non-refoulement and about the lack of adequate measures to address statelessness in the State party (art. 2 and 5)

25. **Recalling its General Recommendation No 31 on Discrimination against Non-Citizens and the recommendations made by the Human Rights Committee<sup>5</sup>, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a national legal framework for the protection of asylum seekers and refugees through the development of an administrative procedure for asylum adjudication in line with international human rights and refugee law;**

(b) **Ensure respect for the right to seek asylum by enabling effective access to its territory and fully complying with the principle of non-refoulement;**

(c) **Take effective measures to prevent statelessness to ensure that all children born in the State party, including those of undocumented migrant workers, are registered at birth without discrimination.**

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<sup>5</sup> CCPR/C/MDV/CO/2, para 38

### **Impact of climate change**

26. The Committee is concerned about the impact of tourism expansion and large-scale development projects and climate change on marginalized communities, particularly non-citizens. It notes that these factors risk causing climate-induced displacement and loss of livelihoods, disproportionately affecting groups already vulnerable to racial discrimination (art. 2 and 5).

27. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt comprehensive measures to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and protect marginalized groups, including non-citizens, from its negative impacts. It further recommends that the State party consider avenues to provide full support to the communities most affected, taking into account their specific needs, cultural identity, and community cohesion. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to the most recent recommendations of the Human Rights Committee related to the impact of climate change<sup>6</sup>.**

### **Trafficking in persons**

28. Despite the measures adopted, the Committee remains concerned about the continued prevalence of trafficking in persons in the State party. It notes with concern the inadequate enforcement of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act and the lack of effective mechanisms to identify victims of trafficking (art. 2, 5 and 6).

29. **Recalling its previous recommendations and the most recent recommendations made by the Human Rights Committee<sup>7</sup>, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Ensure the full and effective enforcement of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act and allocate adequate resources for its implementation;**

**(b) Establish and strengthen mechanisms for the early identification of victims of trafficking, including among migrant workers, and provide them with immediate protection and assistance;**

**(c) Increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict perpetrators of trafficking, and to investigate the relations of trafficking in persons with corruption of governmental officials, ensuring that penalties are commensurate with the gravity of the crime.**

### **Human rights defenders**

30. The Committee is concerned by reports indicating that civil society organizations, human rights defenders, and journalists are frequently subjected to threats, intimidation, persecution, criminal investigations, and arrests for carrying out their work in support of the protection of migrants and marginalized groups. It is further seriously concerned about restrictions on the freedoms of assembly and association, including the dissolution of the Maldivian Democracy Network and the deportation of migrant workers for participating in peaceful protests (arts. 2, 5 and 6).

31. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Ensure the full protection of civil society organizations, human rights defenders and journalists from threats, harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary criminal investigations and arrests, and guarantee their ability to operate freely without fear of reprisals;**

**(b) Adopt effective measures to safeguard the freedoms of assembly and association in law and in practice, including by refraining from dissolving organizations on arbitrary grounds and by reinstating those dissolved in violation of international standards;**

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, para 30

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, para 36

**(c) Ensure that migrant workers are not subjected to deportation or other punitive measures for exercising their right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.**

#### **Access to justice**

32. The Committee welcomes the information provided by the delegation that an amendment to the Constitution will be submitted to strengthen the independence of the Judicial Service Commission. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned about reports indicating a lack of judicial independence, which may undermine the fair administration of justice, including access to justice and equality before the law for victims of racial discrimination, in particular non-citizens. The Committee is further concerned by reports that non-citizens face discrimination in the criminal justice system and that legal safeguards and due process are not consistently respected (art. 2 and 6).

**33. Recalling its General Recommendation No. 31 on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Ensure the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary, both in law and in practice, including by expediting the constitutional amendment to strengthen the Judicial Service Commission, including by the removal of politicians from the Commission and the adoption of safeguards against undue influence;**

**(b) Guarantee equal access to justice for victims of racial discrimination, including non-citizens, by providing legal aid, interpretation services, and accessible complaint mechanisms;**

**(c) Ensure that all persons belonging to various ethnic groups, in particular non-citizens, enjoy all legal safeguards of a fair trial, due process, and equality before the law, as enshrined in relevant international human rights instruments;**

**(d) Provide training for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials on the Convention and on eliminating racial discrimination, with a focus on protecting non-citizens and other groups exposed to racial discrimination;**

**(e) Continue its efforts to align its Constitutional and legal framework with the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary, adopted in 1985.**

#### **Diversity and tolerance**

34. While noting the programmes conducted by the State party to promote mutual understanding, tolerance, and dialogue among different groups and communities, the Committee remains concerned about incidents of xenophobia targeting migrants who practice religions other than Islam and who are denied the right to publicly express or practice their faith. The Committee is also seriously concerned about reports of the destruction of historical and archaeological sites, including those related to Buddhist, Hindu, and Sufi heritage (art. 2 and 7).

**35. Recalling its previous recommendation<sup>8</sup>, the Committee urges the State party to adopt adequate measures and strategies, including through human rights education programmes and public awareness campaigns, to promote tolerance, respect, and diversity among all communities. The Committee further recommends that the State party ensure the protection and preservation of historical, cultural, and religious sites, including those related to Buddhist, Hindu, and Sufi heritage, and investigate and sanction any acts of destruction or desecration.**

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<sup>8</sup> CERD/C/MDV/CO/5-12, para 13



## **E. Other recommendations**

### **Ratification of other treaties**

36. Bearing in mind the indivisibility of all human rights, the Committee recommends the State party to consider ratifying those international human rights treaties that it has not yet ratified, in particular treaties with provisions that have direct relevance to communities that may be subjected to racial discrimination, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), of the International Labour Organization. The Committee encourages the State party to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

### **Amendment to article 8 of the Convention**

37. The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the amendment to article 8 (6) of the Convention adopted on 15 January 1992 at the fourteenth meeting of States parties to the Convention and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/111.

### **Declaration under article 14 of the Convention**

38. The Committee encourages the State party to make the optional declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention recognizing the competence of the Committee to receive and consider individual complaints.

### **Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

39. In the light of its general recommendation No. 33 (2009) on the follow-up to the Durban Review Conference, the Committee recommends that, when implementing the Convention in its domestic legal order, the State party give effect to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted in September 2001 by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, taking into account the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference, held in Geneva in April 2009. The Committee requests that the State party include in its next periodic report specific information on action plans and other measures taken to implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action at the national level.

### **International Decade for People of African Descent**

40. In its resolution 79/193, the General Assembly proclaimed 2025–2034 the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. Also in that resolution, the Assembly decided to extend the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent adopted in its resolution 69/16, with a view to ensuring continuing efforts in promoting the respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of people of African descent. In the light of this development, the Committee recommends that the State Party implement the programme of activities in collaboration with people of African descent and include in its next periodic report information on the measures adopted in that framework, taking into account the Committee's general recommendation No. 34 (2011) on racial discrimination against people of African descent.

### **Consultations with civil society**

41. The Committee recommends that the State party continue consulting and increasing its dialogue with civil society organizations working in the area of human rights protection, in particular those working to combat racial discrimination, in connection with the preparation of the next periodic report and in follow-up to the present concluding observations.

**Dissemination of information**

42. The Committee recommends that the State party's reports be made readily available and accessible to the public at the time of their submission and that the concluding observations of the Committee with respect to those reports be similarly made available to all State bodies entrusted with the implementation of the Convention, in particular the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up, and publicized on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the official and other commonly used languages, as appropriate.

**Common core document**

43. The Committee encourages the State party to update its common core document, which dates to 2010 in accordance with the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, in particular those on the common core document, as adopted at the fifth inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies held in June 2006 (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I). In the light of General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee urges the State party to observe the limit of 42,400 words for such documents.

**Paragraphs of particular importance**

44. The Committee wishes to draw the attention of the State party to the particular importance of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 11 (Legal framework), 13 (Constitutional requirements on nationality and religion), 31 (Human rights defenders) and 35 (Diversity and tolerance) above and requests the State party to provide detailed information in its next periodic report on the concrete measures taken to implement those recommendations.

**Follow-up to the present concluding observations**

45. In accordance with article 9 (1) of the Convention and rule 65 of its rules of procedure, the Committee requests the State party to provide, within one year of the adoption of the present concluding observations, information on its implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 a) and f) (Discrimination against migrant workers) and 33 a) (Access to justice) above.

**Preparation of the next periodic report**

46. The Committee recommends that the State party submit its 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> combined periodic reports, as a single document, by 24 May 2029, taking into account the reporting guidelines adopted by the Committee during its seventy-first session (CERD/C/2007/1) and addressing all the points raised in the present concluding observations. In the light of General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee urges the State party to observe the limit of 21,200 words for periodic reports and 42,400 words for the common core document.

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