



Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
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Compilation on Lebanon

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a compilation of information contained in reports of treaty bodies and special procedures and other relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies^{1, 2}

2. Various treaty bodies recommended that Lebanon ratify the two Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;³ the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;⁴ the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;⁵ the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict;⁶ the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;⁷ the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure;⁸ and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.⁹

3. Treaty bodies also recommended that Lebanon ratify the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization, on decent work for domestic workers;¹⁰ the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees; the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;¹¹ and the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.¹²

4. UNESCO encouraged Lebanon to ratify the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.¹³

5. The Committee on the Rights of the Child urged Lebanon to fulfil its reporting obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the initial report of which had been overdue since 2006.¹⁴



III. National human rights framework¹⁵

6. The United Nations country team noted that in 2016, the parliament adopted Law No. 62 on the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights.¹⁶ In 2018, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon expedite the appointment of the members of the Commission, which also oversees the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. It also recommended that the State party ensure that both institutions be provided with the resources necessary to guarantee their independence in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).¹⁷ The country team also recommended that sufficient budget be allocated to both the Commission and the national mechanism so that they could operate effectively and independently.¹⁸

7. In 2016, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged Lebanon to expedite the adoption of a national human rights plan and the activation of the post of mediator.¹⁹ The recommendation was reiterated in 2017 after the Committee's consideration of the follow-up report submitted by Lebanon.²⁰

IV. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

A. Cross-cutting issues

1. Equality and non-discrimination²¹

8. Regretting the lack of anti-discrimination legislation, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon ensure that its legal framework contain a comprehensive list of grounds for discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity, and provide for access to effective and appropriate remedies for victims of discrimination.²² The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination made a similar recommendation, and it also recommended that Lebanon reverse the burden of proof in civil proceedings involving racial discrimination once a prima facie case of racial discrimination had been made.²³

9. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommended that Lebanon explicitly prohibit and sanction any form of racist expression on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national and ethnic origin, when it clearly amounted to incitement to hatred or discrimination.²⁴

10. The United Nations country team recommended that Lebanon ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities were afforded their full right to freedom of opinion and expression without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.²⁵ It also recommended that the State party explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and repeal article 534 of the Criminal Code.²⁶

2. Development, the environment, and business and human rights²⁷

11. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights noted that a considerable part of the public budget for health and education was spent on contracts for the delivery of services by private actors.²⁸

12. The same Committee was also concerned about pervasive corruption, resulting in a considerable loss of resources needed for the implementation of the Covenant, the lack of transparency and effective oversight in public affairs, as well as the presence of nepotism and clientelism in politics. It recommended that Lebanon expedite the adoption of draft laws implementing the United Nations Convention against Corruption.²⁹

3. Human rights and counter-terrorism³⁰

13. Expressing concern about the recruitment and training in Lebanon of children as young as 11 by armed groups and their subsequent trafficking to fight in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict called for the immediate cessation of that practice.³¹

B. Civil and political rights

1. Right to life, liberty and security of person³²

14. Welcoming the fact that Lebanon had not carried out any executions since 2004, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon maintain the moratorium on executions and give due consideration to the legal abolition of the death penalty. It also recommended that, pending the abolition of the death penalty, Lebanon should review relevant legislation to ensure that the death penalty was imposed only for the most serious crimes.³³

15. The United Nations country team positively noted that, in June 2020, the Council of Ministers approved the composition of the National Commission for Missing and Forcibly Disappeared Persons. The Commission was established pursuant to Law No. 105 of 2018, on missing and forcibly disappeared persons. It was tasked with investigating enforced disappearances and given the power to access and collect information, carry out exhumations and identifications of burial sites, and hand over to relatives the remains of their loved ones. The Law also enshrined the “right to know”, for all families without discrimination.³⁴

16. Concerned about thousands of unresolved cases of disappeared and missing persons during the civil war and the absence of any prosecutions for such acts, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon criminalize enforced disappearances, ensure that that crime was outside the scope of any amnesty laws, investigate all unresolved cases and provide victims and their family members with full reparation.³⁵

17. The Committee against Torture considered that the definition of the offence of torture introduced by Act No. 65/2017 did not cover acts of torture committed with the aim or purpose of obtaining information or a confession from a third person or acts intended to intimidate or coerce persons other than the victim. The Committee also noted that the definition was only applicable to acts of torture committed “during an inquiry, a preliminary investigation, a judicial investigation, or during legal proceedings and the enforcement of sentences”, and that penalties foreseen in the Act were inappropriate for acts of torture. The Committee also regretted that the crime of torture was still subject to a statute of limitations.³⁶

18. The same Committee was also concerned about allegations of harassment, arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment of men suspected of being homosexual held in custody by Internal Security Forces officers.³⁷

19. Reiterating its previous recommendations under the inquiry procedure, the same Committee recommended that Lebanon establish an independent complaints mechanism to investigate promptly, impartially and effectively all reported allegations of and complaints about acts of torture and ill-treatment against law enforcement officers.³⁸ It further recommended that all victims obtain redress, including compensation and rehabilitation.³⁹

20. The Committee urged Lebanon to ensure that no one was held in secret detention on its territory, including by non-State actors, and it recommended that Lebanon bring its legislation and practice on solitary confinement into line with international standards, particularly rules 43 to 46 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).⁴⁰

2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law⁴¹

21. Expressing concern about the political pressure reportedly exerted on the judiciary, and about allegations that politicians used their influence to protect supporters from prosecution, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon ensure that the procedures for the selection, appointment, promotion and removal of judges were in

compliance with the principles of independence and impartiality, as set out in the Covenant.⁴² The United Nations country team made a similar recommendation.⁴³

22. The Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon remove, without further delay, the jurisdiction of military courts over civilians, which currently also extends to children, investigate all reported violations by military officials and provide victims with effective remedies.⁴⁴ The United Nations country team and the Committee against Torture made similar recommendations.⁴⁵

23. The Committee against Torture recommended that Lebanon repeal the amnesty laws of 1991 and 2005 that impeded the investigation and punishment of past human rights violations.⁴⁶

24. The Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon eliminate overcrowding in places of detention, including by increasing the use of non-custodial alternative measures to detention.⁴⁷ The Committee against Torture had made a similar recommendation, drawing attention to the Nelson Mandela Rules and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules).⁴⁸ Also citing the Nelson Mandela Rules, the same Committee recommended that Lebanon abolish imprisonment with hard labour.⁴⁹

25. Reiterating its previous recommendation under the inquiry procedure, the same Committee recommended that Lebanon adopt formal regulations authorizing human rights non-governmental organizations, medical professionals and members of local bar associations to undertake independent visits to places of detention.⁵⁰

26. The United Nations country team positively noted that, in line with efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, some 600 persons had been released from places of detention and that the World Health Organization was coordinating the COVID-19 response in central prisons, together with other actors. Additionally, an action plan had been developed and was being implemented by all partners: the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, the Internal Security Forces, the Ministry of Public Health, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Lebanese Society for Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology.⁵¹

3. Fundamental freedoms⁵²

27. The United Nations country team, in the context of nationwide demonstrations that began in October 2019, recommended conducting prompt and impartial investigations into alleged excessive use of force and ill-treatment by security forces in the context of the protests and the adoption of all necessary steps to ensure the safety of peaceful protestors and the creation of an enabling environment for demonstrators without fear of intimidation, reprisals and violence.⁵³

28. The United Nations country team noted that by the end of April 2020, some protests had turned violent, with a number of banks in Beirut, Saida, Tripoli and Tyre having been vandalized and targeted by Molotov cocktails.⁵⁴

29. The Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon decriminalize blasphemy, insult and criticism of public officials; consider the complete decriminalization of defamation; ensure that the concept of cybercrime was interpreted consistent with the freedom of expression; and refrain from suppressing the expression of dissenting opinions or censoring artistic expression.⁵⁵ UNESCO made similar recommendations.⁵⁶

30. UNESCO also recommended that Lebanon ensure that journalists and media workers were able to practice the profession freely and safely, and encouraged the Government to investigate all attacks on journalists and media workers.⁵⁷

31. Concerned at curfews imposed by municipalities on refugees, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommended that Lebanon ensure that restrictions to freedom of movement conformed to the strict tests of necessity and proportionality and did not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, racial background, ethnicity or refugee status.⁵⁸

4. Prohibition of all forms of slavery⁵⁹

32. While noting the establishment in 2016 of a special unit to combat human trafficking within the Directorate General of Public Security and the approval of a sectoral plan by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended the development of an anti-trafficking strategy and plan of action. It also recommended amending Law No. 164, on punishment for the crime of trafficking in persons, to ensure that children trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation or other illegal activity were not detained or punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of having been subjected to trafficking.⁶⁰

33. The same Committee also urged the social reintegration of child victims, and the implementation of standard procedures for the identification of child victims of trafficking among vulnerable populations, such as migrants, refugees and domestic workers.⁶¹ The United Nations country team made similar recommendations, including in support of the establishment of a fund to assist victims of trafficking.⁶²

34. Concerned about the same issue, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Lebanon revise the artist visa scheme of 1962 to ensure that it was not misused for the sexual exploitation of women.⁶³

5. Right to family life⁶⁴

35. Remaining concerned that religion-based personal status laws discriminated against women in matters such as marriage, pecuniary rights, divorce, child custody and inheritance, and with reference to its previous concluding observations, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon adopt a unified personal status act that would apply to all persons, regardless of religious affiliation.⁶⁵ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made a similar recommendation.⁶⁶

36. The Human Rights Committee and the United Nations country team recommended that Lebanon provide for the option of civil marriage and the legal recognition of such marriages, and set the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years.⁶⁷ During his visit to the country in 2015, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief also recommended that Lebanon introduce civil marriage as an option available to all Lebanese citizens.⁶⁸

37. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Lebanon establish an appeals mechanism to oversee religious court proceedings and require religious sects to codify their laws and submit them to the parliament for a review of their conformity with the Constitution.⁶⁹

38. The Human Rights Committee was concerned about the fact that the 1925 Nationality Act did not allow Lebanese women to pass on their nationality to their children and foreign spouses, and recommended that Lebanon amend that Act.⁷⁰

C. Economic, social and cultural rights

1. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work⁷¹

39. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was concerned about the very high level of unemployment, especially among young people and women, including university graduates, and about the lack of effectiveness of policies and programmes targeting unemployment.⁷²

40. The same Committee recommended that Lebanon index the minimum wage with the cost of living so as to enable a decent standard of living for workers and their families.⁷³ It also recommended that Lebanon expand the Labour Code to cover all categories of workers, including domestic workers, agricultural workers, and those working in unregulated sectors and the informal economy; review relevant laws with a view to abolishing arrangements such as the *kafala* (sponsorship) system and oral contracts; and increase the capacity and coverage of the labour inspectorate.⁷⁴

41. The same Committee recommended that Lebanon bring its laws and regulations on the right to strike into conformity with international standards.⁷⁵ Noting with concern that civil servants and foreigners were not allowed to form trade unions, it also recommended that Lebanon bring the requirements for the negotiation of collective agreements by trade unions into line with article 8 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.⁷⁶

2. Right to social security⁷⁷

42. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed concern that only an inadequate proportion of the State party's population received social security benefits, and that the social security system was fragmented, providing coverage for a limited number of social risks.⁷⁸

43. The United Nations country team recommended the provision of cash-based social assistance based on a transparent and socially acceptable targeting mechanism of vulnerable groups.⁷⁹

3. Right to an adequate standard of living⁸⁰

44. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights noted with concern the increasing number of persons living in poverty, recommending that Lebanon adopt a rights-based approach to its poverty alleviation programme.⁸¹ The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Lebanon increase financial support to families in situations of poverty, with a view to reducing the institutionalization of children.⁸²

45. The United Nations country team reported that the grave economic situation had increased financial hardship for many households in the country, and recommended that Lebanon ensure the security of tenure of tenants and that it adopt a national housing policy, including a rent policy to ensure equitable access to housing by different income groups.⁸³ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon bring its laws and regulations on evictions into conformity with international standards.⁸⁴

46. The United Nations country team noted that housing challenges had increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had hit Lebanon at a time of dire socioeconomic meltdown and thus the impact on the human rights situation of the two crises could not be separated. The country team also noted that the pandemic had brought to light the importance of having an adequate home as a basic human right. Vulnerable communities living in dire conditions did not have the access to decent living conditions as a means of protection from the pandemic.⁸⁵

47. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon take measures to prevent waste management crises, in view of their hazardous impact on health in densely populated areas, and that it ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation without discrimination.⁸⁶

4. Right to health⁸⁷

48. The United Nations country team warned that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated the situation for the Lebanese public health system, which had already been suffering significant shortages – especially with regard to medical imports – due to the prevailing economic and financial crises. The inability to afford medical costs was a major barrier to accessing health-care services. Job cuts had decreased people's ability to meet basic needs, in particular access to urgent health care. It had also reduced their ability to afford the cost of consultations at health centres, including subsidized costs, and the cost of transportation to health facilities. Such barriers in accessing health care increased the risk of a major outbreak of communicable diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles and polio. In addition, given the reduced ability to access primary health-care centres, caregivers of children under 5 years of age and of pregnant and lactating women were not undergoing regular malnutrition screenings.⁸⁸

49. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights called on Lebanon to aim to correct the uneven geographic distribution of health facilities and secure adequate resources for public health facilities.⁸⁹

50. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Lebanon address the high rate of infant mortality among Syrian refugees; strengthen the national immunization programme; continue to improve access to clean water and sanitation for disadvantaged communities; strengthen the availability of mental health services; and undertake a comprehensive study as a basis for future policies and programmes on adolescent health.⁹⁰

51. Concerned that articles 539 to 546 of the Criminal Code criminalized abortion, except in the event of grave danger to the life of the woman, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon amend its legislation to ensure effective access to safe and legal abortion.⁹¹ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made a similar recommendation.⁹²

5. Right to education⁹³

52. UNESCO recommended that Lebanon enshrine the right to education for all, without discrimination, in its Constitution. It also recommended that Lebanon introduce a mandatory year of pre-primary school for all, and that it improve access to drinking water in school buildings.⁹⁴

53. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended introducing age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health in the curricula at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels of education.⁹⁵

54. The Committee on the Rights of the Child remained concerned about inadequate funding for public schools; high dropout rates; insufficient access to education by non-Lebanese children, including children of migrant workers; and insufficient access to early childhood care and education, in particular in areas outside Beirut and Mount Lebanon.⁹⁶ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon improve the quality of education in public schools so as to prevent discrimination on the basis of socioeconomic status.⁹⁷ The United Nations country team recommended that Lebanon address regional disparities in the number of teachers by ensuring a decent living wage and the provision of training and capacity-building for teachers.⁹⁸

55. Noting with concern the number of circulars restricting the admission of non-Lebanese pupils to public schools, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged Lebanon to refrain from restricting access to education on the ground of nationality or migration status.⁹⁹

56. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon amend Act No. 150 of 2011, with a view to making basic education free and compulsory, including for non-nationals.¹⁰⁰ UNESCO made a similar recommendation.¹⁰¹

57. The United Nations country team stated that the economic crisis in Lebanon had had significant consequences for the country's education system. As parents struggled to pay private school fees, many had resorted to transferring their children to public schools. However, public education facilities were overstretched and struggling to absorb the uptick in students. As a result, it was expected that the dropout rate would increase in the next academic year. The situation had also placed increased pressure on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees education system for refugee children.¹⁰²

58. The United Nations country team noted that owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, 1.2 million children had been affected by school closures and had seen their learning routine disrupted.¹⁰³

D. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women¹⁰⁴

59. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomed the adoption of the national strategy for women for the period 2011–2021¹⁰⁵ and recommended the adoption of a plan of action regarding the strategy, supported by a comprehensive data-collection system.¹⁰⁶

60. The same Committee reiterated its previous recommendations to include in the Constitution a provision defining and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, and urged Lebanon to repeal laws that discriminate against women.¹⁰⁷

61. The Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon step up its efforts to achieve the equitable representation of women in the public and political spheres, including in legislative and executive bodies, if necessary through appropriate temporary special measures.¹⁰⁸ The United Nations country team stated that women and girls were disproportionately affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as evidenced by increased reports of domestic violence and abuse. High levels of violence against women in Lebanon had already been compounded by quarantines and social isolation, and job and income losses had exacerbated individual, family and societal stresses. Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse was incorporated across the local health-care response.¹⁰⁹

62. While welcoming the repeal in 2017 of article 522 of the Criminal Code that exempted a rapist from criminal liability if he married the victim, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon ensure the criminalization of domestic violence and the explicit criminalization of marital rape and sexual harassment. The Committee also recommended that Lebanon amend articles 505 and 518 of the Criminal Code to ensure that perpetrators of rape incurred criminal responsibility without exception and regardless of the age of the victim.¹¹⁰

63. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that Lebanon ensure that all allegations of assault and rape by members of the security forces were investigated by an independent judicial authority.¹¹¹

64. The same Committee expressed concern at the lack of adequate legal aid services for women and the lack of knowledge and sensitivity on the part of justice officials regarding women's rights.¹¹²

2. Children¹¹³

65. With reference to its previous concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Lebanon establish and implement a comprehensive policy on children and provide the Higher Council for Childhood with a mandate and authority to coordinate all activities related to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹¹⁴

66. The same Committee recommended that Lebanon intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against children of migrant workers, refugee children and children in marginalized situations, including Dom and Bedouin children and children with disabilities.¹¹⁵

67. The same Committee urged Lebanon to engage with the religious authorities to prohibit child marriages¹¹⁶ and recommended the adoption of a national strategy on child marriages.¹¹⁷

68. The same Committee recommended that Lebanon amend its legislation, including article 186 of the Penal Code, to prohibit corporal punishment.¹¹⁸ Concerned about statistics showing that most children experienced violent “discipline” at home and in school, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights made a similar recommendation.¹¹⁹

69. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Lebanon improve its data collection system, including by establishing a uniform system to document cases of child exploitation, violence and abuse.¹²⁰ It also recommended that the State party establish a

national database on all cases of domestic violence against children; establish a free, adequately staffed child telephone hotline; and increase the number of shelters for child victims of abuse and neglect.¹²¹

70. The same Committee urged Lebanon to adopt and implement the national plan of action to combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children; ensure mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse and exploitation; conduct awareness-raising and education programmes, including among children; ensure that all professionals working with and for children were provided with the necessary training; establish shelters for victims and ensure the development of programmes for the recovery and social reintegration of child victims.¹²²

71. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon raise resources to provide preventive and rehabilitative services to street children, and enforce legislation aimed at combating child labour.¹²³

72. Similarly, while noting the 2016 launch of a national plan of action to combat the worst forms of child labour, the Committee on the Right of the Child was seriously concerned about the persistence of child labour, in particular in the North and in the Beqaa Valley, and among Palestinian and Syrian refugee children. It recommended the enforcement of the minimum age for hazardous work and the strengthening of labour inspectorates and monitoring mechanisms in the formal and informal sectors.¹²⁴

73. The United Nations country team recommended that Lebanon raise the minimum age for labour from 14 to 15, in order to align it with the age of compulsory education, which was 6 to 14 years.¹²⁵

74. The United Nations country team noted that during the first phase of the country lockdown resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, child protection partners had reported a considerable decrease in the number of children in the labour sector, as a result of overall business closures and the withholding of activities in the informal sector. However, the ongoing economic crisis coupled with the country's gradual lift of the lockdown and the ongoing school closures registered a strong resurgence of child labour. It was projected that children would engage in work with lower pay rates, longer working hours and worsened conditions, including hazardous work and the worst forms of child labour.¹²⁶

75. The Committee on the Rights of the Child was concerned about the low age of criminal responsibility, which was 7 years of age; lack of due process, including access to legal aid; conditions in detention facilities; and reports of torture and ill-treatment of children in detention, in particular at the Roumieh and Moubadara prisons. It recommended that Lebanon ensure that all children under 18 years of age were protected by the juvenile justice system, including when arrested for terrorism charges, and that detention was used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time.¹²⁷

76. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict recommended that all children allegedly associated with armed groups be treated as victims.¹²⁸

77. The Committee on the Rights of the Child urged Lebanon to strengthen implementation of the national plan of action to prevent and address the involvement of children with armed violence in Lebanon.¹²⁹ The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict made a similar recommendation.¹³⁰

3. Persons with disabilities¹³¹

78. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Lebanon implement the legislative framework and policies for the protection of the rights of children with disabilities, in particular children in situations of poverty, including Palestinian and Syrian refugee children. It also recommended that Lebanon ensure that public and private schools provided inclusive education and were accessible; ensure also that children with disabilities had access to health care; and strengthen support to caregivers of children with disabilities.¹³²

79. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Lebanon bring the definition of disability in Law No. 220/2000 into conformity with international

standards, and also noted with concern that the employment quota system introduced by that law had not been enforced.¹³³

4. Minorities¹³⁴

80. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regretted the lack of clarity with regard to the relevant legal framework on the rights of minorities and recommended that Lebanon promote and protect the cultural rights of all ethnic minorities, including the Dom and Bedouins, without discrimination.¹³⁵

5. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers¹³⁶

81. The United Nations country team observed that the COVID-19 pandemic and bleak economic situation had resulted in grave consequences for migrant workers in Lebanon. From March to June 2020, a total of 94 per cent of migrants who had sought mental health support from Médecins sans frontières were female, 61 per cent of whom were under the age of 30. Of the women seeking mental health care, 42 per cent were identified as survivors of physical and/or sexual violence. Owing to the challenges often encountered in documenting domestic violence, the real numbers were likely to be much higher. For the majority, the abuse had been perpetrated by their employer under the abusive *kafala* system; others experienced abuse perpetrated by an intimate partner or acquaintance.¹³⁷

82. The United Nations country team also warned that panic and fear of COVID-19 was increasing xenophobia and abuse aimed at migrant domestic workers, including abrupt termination of their contracts. In addition, pandemic-induced fear had led some local authorities to apply discriminatory measures in late May 2020, such as an entry ban for migrant workers in certain municipalities.¹³⁸

83. The Human Rights Committee was concerned that migrant domestic workers were excluded from protection under domestic labour law and subjected to abuse and exploitation under the *kafala* system. Concerned about reports of suicides and attempted suicides of migrant workers, arbitrary arrests without access to counsel and deportation, it recommended that Lebanon expand labour law protection to domestic workers, provide access to effective legal remedies for domestic migrant workers and abolish the *kafala* system.¹³⁹

84. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women urged Lebanon to adopt the bill regulating domestic employment with adequate sanctions for employers engaging in abusive practices and to investigate reports of deaths of women migrant domestic workers from unnatural causes and prosecute and sanction any perpetrators.¹⁴⁰

85. The Committee on the Rights of the Child noted with concern reports of mass expulsion of children of migrant workers and their parents, and of delays in issuing residency permits.¹⁴¹

86. While acknowledging the contribution of Lebanon in hosting of a large number of asylum seekers and refugees, and also commending the State party's commitment to the principle of non-refoulement, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Lebanon strictly adhere in practice to such a principle, and that it protect all asylum seekers against pushbacks at the border and deportation.¹⁴²

87. The Committee against Torture noted with concern that Syrian refugees in Lebanon appeared to be at particular risk of sex trafficking and forced labour, mainly due to the strict enforcement of visa and resident permits.¹⁴³ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was concerned about the high number of reported cases of child and/or forced marriage among Syrian refugee women and girls, recommending the establishment of a system to collect data on incidents of gender-based violence against women and of child and/or forced marriage of refugee women and girls.¹⁴⁴

88. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict noted that armed clashes in Palestinian refugee camps had interrupted the provision of services, and urged all parties to protect schools and hospitals from violence.¹⁴⁵

6. Stateless persons¹⁴⁶

89. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was concerned about the lack of official data on the number of stateless persons in the country.¹⁴⁷ According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there were estimated to be tens of thousands of stateless persons in Lebanon, and those individuals faced difficulties, including the inability to move freely, restrictions in accessing public services, and limited access to civil documentation and employment. Children of unregistered stateless persons had no entitlement to registration at birth and were denied the basic right to an identity.¹⁴⁸

90. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that all births of children in Lebanon be registered, in particular children of refugees and asylum seekers, migrant workers and historically stateless communities.¹⁴⁹

Notes

- ¹ Tables containing information on the scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies for Lebanon will be available at www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/LBIndex.aspx.
- ² For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.1–132.5, 132.11–132.28, 132.56 and 132.62.
- ³ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 6 and 22.
- ⁴ E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 68.
- ⁵ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 24 (f). CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 19; CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 47; E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 69.
- ⁶ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 29 (g), 38 (c) and 46–47; and E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 69. See also the United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of Lebanon, para. 76, and Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict submission to the universal periodic review of Lebanon, p. 1.
- ⁷ CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, para. 46.
- ⁸ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 46.
- ⁹ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 47.
- ¹⁰ CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, para. 43 and CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 38 (b).
- ¹¹ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 53 (d); CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 12 (d); and CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 17 (g).
- ¹² CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 27.
- ¹³ UNESCO submission to the universal periodic review of Lebanon, para. 15.
- ¹⁴ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 48.
- ¹⁵ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.16, 132.35–132.36, 132.42–132.43, 132.48–132.54, 132.56–132.57, 132.60, 132.62, 132.65–132.66, 132.113–132.114, 132.117, 132.135, 132.152 and 132.183.
- ¹⁶ United Nations country team submission, para. 7.
- ¹⁷ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 8.
- ¹⁸ United Nations country team submission, para. 10.
- ¹⁹ CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, para. 16.
- ²⁰ Letter from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, dated 17 May 2017. Available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/LBN/INT_CERD_FUL_LBN_27515_E.pdf. See also CERD/C/LBN/18-22/Add.1.
- ²¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.41, 132.79, 132.82–132.83, 132.85, 132.144, 132.148 and 133.1.
- ²² CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 11–12.
- ²³ CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, paras. 9 (a) and (c).
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 11.
- ²⁵ United Nations country team submission, para. 29.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 66.
- ²⁷ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.63–132.64 and 132.83.
- ²⁸ E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 10.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, paras. 14 and 15 (c).
- ³⁰ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.218–132.219.
- ³¹ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict submission, p. 1.

- ³² For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.15, 132.111–132.112, 132.114–132.116 and 132.119–132.122.
- ³³ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 21–22. See also the United Nations country team submission, para. 12.
- ³⁴ United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 8.
- ³⁵ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 23 and 24 (a), (c) and (d).
- ³⁶ Letter of the Special Rapporteur for follow-up on concluding observations dated 27 June 2019, in response to the follow-up of the Government of Lebanon (CAT/C/LBN/CO/Add.1) to the concluding observations on its initial report (CAT/C/LBN/CO/1). Available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/LBN/INT_CAT_FUL_LBN_35364_E.pdf.
- ³⁷ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 14.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, paras. 39 (a) and 43. See also A/69/44, annex XIII, paras. 38 (o) and (u). In a letter dated 27 June 2019, the Rapporteur for Follow-up to Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture regretted that Lebanon had not yet established a fully independent complaints mechanisms with the authority to investigate promptly, impartially and effectively all reported allegations of and complaints about acts of torture and ill-treatment.
- ³⁹ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 51.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, paras. 19 and 23.
- ⁴¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.16, 132.23, 132.34, 132.115–132.116, 132.119–132.120 and 132.150.
- ⁴² CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 41–42.
- ⁴³ United Nations country team submission, para. 22.
- ⁴⁴ CCPR/C/LBN/3, paras. 43–44.
- ⁴⁵ United Nations country team submission, para. 22; and CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 35.
- ⁴⁶ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 47.
- ⁴⁷ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 36.
- ⁴⁸ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 21 (a).
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 27.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 31. See also A/69/44, annex XIII, para. 38 (cc).
- ⁵¹ United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 5.
- ⁵² For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, para. 132.18, 132.85 and 132.159–132.161.
- ⁵³ United Nations country team submission, para. 31.
- ⁵⁴ United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 12.
- ⁵⁵ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 46.
- ⁵⁶ UNESCO submission, paras. 6 and 12.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 11.
- ⁵⁸ CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, paras. 37–38.
- ⁵⁹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.143–132.148.
- ⁶⁰ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 43.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, paras. 43 (c) and (e).
- ⁶² United Nations country team submission, para. 24.
- ⁶³ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 30 (b) and (d).
- ⁶⁴ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/31/5, para. 132.33.
- ⁶⁵ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 15–16. See also CCPR/C/79/Add.78, paras. 18–19.
- ⁶⁶ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 45–46 (a).
- ⁶⁷ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 16; and United Nations country team submission, para. 64. See also CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 13.
- ⁶⁸ A/HRC/31/18/Add.1, para. 99.
- ⁶⁹ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 46.
- ⁷⁰ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 15 and 16.
- ⁷¹ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.165–132.166 and 132.184.
- ⁷² E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 30.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, para. 34.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, paras. 36 (a), (c) and (d).
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 39. See also the United Nations country team submission, para. 33.
- ⁷⁶ E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 40–41.
- ⁷⁷ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.68 and 132.169.
- ⁷⁸ E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 42.
- ⁷⁹ United Nations country team submission, para. 10.
- ⁸⁰ For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.170–132.171.
- ⁸¹ E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 49–50.
- ⁸² CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 26 (a).
- ⁸³ United Nations country team submission, paras. 37 and 39.

- 84 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 52 (c). See also United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, paras. 29–31, concerning the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on labour rights.
- 85 United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 17.
- 86 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 55 (a)–(b).
- 87 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.86, 132.172, 132.178, 132.185 and 132.190.
- 88 United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 34.
- 89 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 58 (a)–(b).
- 90 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 30 (b)–(c) and 31–32.
- 91 CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 25–26.
- 92 CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 42.
- 93 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.69, 132.139, 132.173–132.177, 132.179–132.182, 132.187 and 132.191–132.193.
- 94 UNESCO submission to the universal periodic review of Lebanon, para. 10 (in French).
- 95 CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 42.
- 96 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 34.
- 97 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 61.
- 98 United Nations country team submission, para. 43.
- 99 CERD/C/LBN/CO/18-22, paras. 35–36.
- 100 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 63. See also CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 41.
- 101 UNESCO submission to the universal periodic review of Lebanon, para. 10.
- 102 United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 19.
- 103 *Ibid.*, para. 20.
- 104 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.79, 132.82, 132.84–132.85, 132.87, 132.126, 132.129 and 132.204.
- 105 CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 5 (b). See also E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 4 (h).
- 106 CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 24 (d).
- 107 *Ibid.*, paras. 18 and 20.
- 108 CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 18.
- 109 United Nations country team submission, annex II, para. 45.
- 110 CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 19 and 20 (a)–(b).
- 111 CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 28 (e).
- 112 *Ibid.*, para. 21.
- 113 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.133–132.134, 132.136 and 132.140–132.142.
- 114 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 7–8.
- 115 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 14 (b).
- 116 *Ibid.*, para. 13.
- 117 *Ibid.*, para. 25.
- 118 *Ibid.*, paras. 19 (a)–(b).
- 119 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 47–48.
- 120 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 10 (a).
- 121 *Ibid.*, para. 20 (c) and (e).
- 122 *Ibid.*, para. 24.
- 123 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, para. 46.
- 124 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 39 and 40 (a) and (d).
- 125 United Nations country team submission, para. 69.
- 126 United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 55.
- 127 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 44 and 45 (a) and (d).
- 128 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict submission, p. 1.
- 129 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 38 (a).
- 130 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict submission, p. 2.
- 131 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.185 and 132.187–132.190.
- 132 CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 29 (a)–(d).
- 133 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 21 and 22 (a).
- 134 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.23 and 132.90.
- 135 E/C.12/LBN/CO/2, paras. 64–65.
- 136 For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/31/5, paras. 132.17, 132.20, 132.74, 132.198–132.199, 132.205 and 132.207.
- 137 United Nations country team submission, annex dated 30 July 2020, para. 62.
- 138 *Ibid.*, para. 63.

- ¹³⁹ CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 39–40. See also the United Nations country team submission, para. 81; and CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 38.
- ¹⁴⁰ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 38.
- ¹⁴¹ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 37.
- ¹⁴² CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 37 and 38 (a).
- ¹⁴³ CAT/C/LBN/CO/1, para. 56.
- ¹⁴⁴ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, paras. 11 and 12 (c).
- ¹⁴⁵ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict submission, pp. 1–2.
- ¹⁴⁶ For the relevant recommendation, see A/HRC/31/5, para. 132.215.
- ¹⁴⁷ CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 11.
- ¹⁴⁸ UNHCR submission to the universal periodic review of Lebanon, p. 2.
- ¹⁴⁹ CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5, para. 17 (b).
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