



**International Convention on the
Protection of the Rights of
All Migrant Workers and
Members of Their Families**

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**Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All
Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**

**Second periodic report submitted by the Niger
under article 73 of the Convention, due in 2021^{*, **}**

[Date received: 20 March 2025]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** The present document was submitted pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure. It contains the responses of the State party to the Committee's list of issues prior to reporting (CAT/C/NER/QPR/2).



I. Introduction

1. On 26 July 2023, the Niger entered a new era in its history, marked by the assumption of power of the National Council for the Safeguarding of the Homeland (Conseil national pour la sauvegarde de la patrie). The Council has reaffirmed its attachment and commitment to respecting human rights, as defined by the treaties and conventions that the Niger has freely signed. As part of this commitment, the Ministry of Justice has been elevated to the status of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.
2. Being committed to respecting human rights, the Niger has ratified almost all the relevant legal instruments and is working tirelessly to implement them. These instruments include the Convention, which it ratified on 18 March 2009.
3. Pursuant to article 73 of the Convention, the Niger presented its initial report on 30 and 31 August 2016. Its next periodic report was due in December 2023, but unfortunately could not be submitted on time.
4. The present report has been drawn up in accordance with the guidelines on the form and content of periodic reports and the simplified procedure, which the Niger has accepted and which involves replying to a list of issues drawn up by the Committee.
5. This report is the fruit of an inclusive and participatory approach in which all stakeholders were involved in the various stages of the drafting process, namely State bodies, civil society organizations, specifically those working in the field of human rights, and regional and international technical partners.
6. It provides information on the progress made in implementing the recommendations contained in the concluding observations on the initial report. Despite the difficult security situation in recent years, the Niger has taken measures to protect and promote the rights of all migrant workers in its territory and of its nationals living abroad.
7. In accordance with Committee's guidelines for preparing State Party reports, the purpose of this periodic report is not to repeat the detailed information already provided in the initial report and the common core document submitted in 2021 but to present the changes introduced to the country's laws, policies, programmes and practices between 2016 and 2024 to implement the Convention.
8. Its preparation was coordinated at every stage by the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up on the recommendations of treaty bodies and the universal periodic review. This body, which reports to the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, is made up of representatives from several sectoral ministries and other government bodies.
9. The draft report was approved at a workshop held from 26 to 30 August 2024 in Niamey that was open to all stakeholders, including representatives of State bodies (sectoral ministries, defence and security forces, and others) and non-State bodies (civil society organizations, international organizations and others). It was then submitted to the Government and adopted by the Council of Ministers on 18 March 2025, pursuant to Decree No. 2025-151/P/CNSP/MJ/DH.
10. The report is divided into three sections, based on the Committee's list of issues. The first contains general information and information relating to the implementation of the Convention. The second concerns developments in the legislative and institutional framework. The third deals with statistics, official estimates and other available information.
11. The report shows that the Niger has carried out a number of reforms to its legal and policy framework since the submission of its previous report with a view to promoting and protecting human rights in general and those of migrants in particular. While the Government is pleased to report on this progress, it is aware that challenges still lie ahead.

II. Replies to the questions raised in the list of issues prior to submission of the report (CMW/C/NER/QPR/2)

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 1

12. Concerning the measures taken to bring the legislation of the Niger into line with the Convention, in particular to define the terms “migrant worker” and “members of the family of a migrant worker”, it should be noted that the forthcoming revision of the Labour Code will take these matters into account.

13. Since the previous appearance of the Niger before the Committee, the following measures, among others, have been taken:

(a) The adoption of Decree No. 2017-682/PRN/MET/PS of 10 August 2017 on the regulatory part of the Labour Code of the Republic of the Niger;

(b) The adoption of Act No. 2019-29 of 1 July 2019 on the civil status regime in the Niger;

(c) The adoption of Decree No. 2020-744/PRN/MISP/D/ACR of 28 September 2020 on the National Migration Policy for the period 2020–2035 and its action plan;

(d) The adoption of the Inter-Trade Collective Agreement on 7 May 2022;

(e) The ongoing development of the National Employment Policy.

14. The National Migration Policy is currently in the process of reform to take account of environmental and climate change issues. This process will provide an opportunity to further develop the concepts of migrant workers and members of their families.

15. The Niger has signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements to protect migrant workers’ rights in transit and destination countries, especially with respect to social security and repatriation, expulsion and family reunification procedures. The following table contains a list of the agreements concluded.

Table 1
List of agreements relating to migration

<i>Bilateral cooperation</i>		
<i>Memorandums of understanding</i>	<i>Implementation status</i>	<i>Observations</i>
Cooperation between the Niger and Türkiye	Draft memorandum of understanding between the Governments of Türkiye and the Niger on agricultural cooperation	The ministry responsible for employment forwarded observations and amendments relating to these documents with reference to letter No. 7610/DGAJ/A/DA/BILI/ADA of 19 July 2021.
Cooperation between the Niger and Algeria	Memorandum of understanding on labour, employment and social security between the Niger and Algeria	Memorandum signed on 16 March 2017 in Niamey. Appointment of a focal point from the ad hoc technical committee to the bilateral border committee. Forwarding of the list of proposed members of the joint technical committee responsible for monitoring implementation of the memorandum of understanding on labour, employment and social protection. Managers from the Niger are currently undergoing training under a master’s degree scholarship programme offered by Algeria.

<i>Bilateral cooperation Memorandums of understanding</i>	<i>Implementation status</i>	<i>Observations</i>
Cooperation between the Niger and Libya	Signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation relating to labour exchange on 30 November 2021 in Niamey	The practical details of its implementation are currently being discussed by experts from both countries. In this connection, two technical meetings between the two parties were held in Istanbul, Türkiye, with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
Cooperation between the Niger and Saudi Arabia	Signing of an agreement on the recruitment of domestic workers on 5 June 2015	This agreement was suspended after being implemented for three years because of certain difficulties that arose and shortcomings in the agreement, notably in the area of social protection. However, the process has been relaunched with a view to revising the agreement.
Cooperation between the Niger and Morocco	Draft memorandum of understanding between the two countries	Representatives of the Niger proposed a draft memorandum of understanding between the Governments of the Niger and Morocco on labour and social protection. They also expressed the hope that the draft agreement between the National Social Security Fund of the Niger and the Deposit and Management Fund of Morocco would be signed at the next session of the Council of Ministers of the Joint Cooperation Commission. This cooperation covers a broader framework, including a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in employment, labour and social protection and agreements between the employment agencies and between the employment observatories in the two countries. The ministry responsible for employment forwarded the new version of the document, which incorporates observations and amendments proposed by the representatives of Morocco, by letter No. 0699/MET/PS/DEP/of 15 September 2020.
Cooperation between the Niger and Spain	Memorandum of understanding on the free exercise of remunerated activities by dependants of diplomatic and consular personnel in the two countries	The ministry responsible for employment forwarded observations and suggestions on this agreement by letter No. 1197 of 22 October 2018. The Spanish side agreed to the observations of the Niger side concerning the memorandum signed on 30 October 2018, in Niamey, at the proposal of the Spanish side, on the sidelines of the joint meeting of ministers. By letter No. 007454/MAEC/DGAJ/BILI/AAH of 24 May 2021, Spain completed the constitutional procedures necessary for the entry into force of the agreement between the Niger and Spain signed on 29 October 2018.
Cooperation between the Niger and Tunisia	Memorandum of understanding on cooperation	The memorandum of understanding on cooperation on vocational training and employment dates back to 1998. On 26 and 27 April 2007, in Tunis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A cooperation agreement on public administration was signed between the two countries; (ii) Both parties expressed an interest in fostering cooperation in the area of employment;

*Bilateral cooperation
Memorandums of
understanding*

Implementation status

Observations

(iii) A cooperation agreement relating to social security was signed between the National Social Security Fund of the Niger and the National Social Security Fund and the National Health Insurance Fund of Tunisia.

Source: Directorate of Studies and Programme Planning, Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment.

16. With regard to the strengthening of measures taken to protect and assist nationals of the Niger abroad, diplomatic and consular missions take measures to support them. In this regard, the Government has taken a number of steps, including:

- (a) Establishing the Directorate of Nationals of the Niger Abroad;
- (b) Establishing the High Council of Nationals of the Niger Abroad;
- (c) Facilitating access to civil status documents issued abroad, in accordance with national regulations, by diplomatic and consular officers authorized for this purpose by Act No. 2019-29 of 1 July 2019 on the civil status regime in the Niger.

17. The Government has taken a number of measures to facilitate returns and reintegration, including:

- (a) Establishing a reception and guidance centre within the Directorate of Nationals of the Niger Abroad;
- (b) Drawing up guidelines for the diaspora of the Niger as part of a pilot project on strengthening the diaspora's mobilization capacities, supported by IOM, as part of the process of integrating the diaspora into the Economic and Social Development Plan; this tool is a means of providing information to nationals of the Niger living abroad to facilitate their return and socioeconomic reintegration;
- (c) Adopting order No. 035/PM of 16 April 2024 on the establishment, mandate, composition, organization and operation of the interministerial steering committee and the technical committee responsible for repatriating nationals of the Niger in certain countries; under article 2 of the order, the interministerial committee is responsible for:
 - (i) Conducting a survey of nationals of the Niger abroad who are eligible for repatriation;
 - (ii) Managing operations relating to their return, reception, transport to host communities and reintegration into society.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 2

18. The new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part, known as the Samoa Agreement, was signed on 15 November 2023 in Apia. The original signed and initialled text has been available to the States Parties since the end of June 2024, enabling them to begin the ratification procedure. However, certain provisions of this agreement have already been in force since January 2024, in accordance with its article 98 (4).

19. With regard to return and readmission, the new Samoa Agreement (art. 74 (1)) requires the Niger to cooperate on return and readmission, and to ensure that the rights and dignity of individuals are fully protected and respected, including in any procedure initiated to return illegally staying migrants to their countries of origin. In this regard, the only formalities required relate to the implementation of verification processes using the most appropriate and most efficient identification procedures with a view to ascertaining the nationality of the person concerned and to issue appropriate travel documents for return

purposes. However, nothing in the agreement prevents the return of a person by means of formal or informal arrangements between the State to which an application for readmission is submitted and the requesting State.

20. With regard to the sustainable reintegration of migrants, article 75 of the Samoa Agreement provides for the possibility of the Parties cooperating and promoting voluntary return and facilitating the sustainable reintegration of returned persons, including, where relevant, through sustainable reintegration programmes, while paying particular attention to the needs of returning persons in vulnerable situations, such as children, older persons, persons with disabilities and victims of trafficking.

21. The purpose of the Migration Protection Return and Reintegration Programme, which is implemented with the support of IOM, is to support returning migrants. It has enabled thousands of returning migrants and members of their families to receive individual, collective and community support.

22. The realization of capacity-building for border police provided an opportunity to raise awareness of international protection, referral procedures, support partners and the conduct to be adopted in assisting vulnerable persons seeking protection. The right to freedom of movement is recognized by asylum law applicable to refugees, who can settle in the areas of their choice throughout the country. Documents that facilitate their movements are made available to them.

23. With regard to other measures for improving cooperation between the police, the gendarmerie and the national security services, and promoting freedom of movement and establishment and the sharing of skills and experience, on 13 March 2017, the Niger set up a joint investigation team made up of police officers from the Niger, France and Spain. The National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons, in collaboration with its partners, organized the following:

(a) Between 2018 and 2022, five workshops on harmonizing a criminal justice policy on the implementation of Act No. 2015-036, involving 75 police officers, gendarmes and agents of regional offices of the National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons;

(b) The establishment in 2021 of a joint Niger-Nigeria task force that brings together the border police and the immigration police;

(c) One workshop on the Convention in 2022 for 30 judges, police officers and gendarmes;

(d) Five workshops on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants for 89 female officers of the defence and security services;

(e) The signing on 16 August 2022 of a declaration of intent to cooperate between the agencies responsible for combating trafficking in persons of the Niger and Morocco;

(f) The signing on 21 February 2023 of a declaration of intent to cooperate between the agencies to combat trafficking in persons of the Niger and Mauritania.

24. At a meeting of the Consultation Framework on Migration, a recommendation was made to set up a joint investigation unit consisting of police officers, gendarmes and guards to combat trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 3

25. Data is collected using both physical and biometric methods. Data on refugees is collected and stored in the proGres database.

26. Among the measures taken to collect data from diplomatic and consular missions relating to registered and unregistered migrants, the Futures Studies and Analysis Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in accordance with its official remit, writes to all diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Niger abroad to request an activity report for each semester of the year in question.

27. A migration data platform was set up within the National Surveillance Directorate in 2017, bringing together, on a quarterly basis, the National Institute of Statistics, the delegation of the European Union in the Niger, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the Air and Border Police and the division responsible for migration data, established pursuant to order No. 508/MI/SP/D/ACR/DGPN of 19 August 2016.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 4

28. There is no single government agency that is exclusively responsible for coordinating the work of the various institutions involved in implementing the Convention. This is a cross-cutting matter involving institutions attached to a number of sectoral ministries, including:

(a) The different departments of the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment, such as the labour inspectorates, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and the National Social Security Fund;

(b) The Directorate General of Civil Registration, Migration and Refugees of the Ministry of the Interior, Public Security and Territorial Administration;

(c) The National Agency for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons and the National Coordinating Commission for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights;

(d) The Directorate of Nationals of the Niger Abroad and High Council of Nationals of the Niger abroad of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and the Diaspora;

(e) The Directorate of Humanitarian Assistance and Early Recovery of the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 5

29. The ministry responsible for labour, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, sent letter No. 00111/MET/PS/SG/DGT/PS/DNIT of 3 February 2022 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recommending that the declarations provided for in articles 76 and 77 of the Convention should be made.

30. With regard to International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, the Niger ratified the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), on 14 May 2015. The Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), and the Protocol of 1995 to the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), have not yet been ratified by the Niger. Consultations on the matter are ongoing.

31. The Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Protection, with technical and financial support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and ILO, has organized training and awareness-raising workshops with the aim of improving knowledge of the rights of domestic workers and thus further strengthening the protection of the rights of this category of workers. The workshops took place in four administrative centres (Niamey, Dosso, Tahoua and Zinder) and were attended by some 30 participants from each of the eight regions.

32. The general aim of the workshops is to familiarize trainees with the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). More specifically, the workshops involved:

(a) Raising awareness of the rights and duties of domestic workers among trade unions, employers and other civil society organizations;

(b) Raising awareness of ILO Convention No. 189;

(c) Formulating recommendations for decision makers.

33. With regard to strengthening the National Human Rights Commission by providing it with sufficient financial, human and technical resources, it should be noted that the Commission was dissolved following the events of 26 July 2023 and replaced by the National Observatory for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which will be launched shortly.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 6

34. The Niger is a transit country for migrants and refugees from the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) region, who are heading for Algeria, Libya and Europe in particular. It is also a transit and destination country for nationals of the Niger and other ECOWAS citizens who are returning to the country or are repatriated. According to the available data, as of 31 August 2018 there were 149,471 internally displaced persons, 25,799 asylum-seekers, 177,333 refugees, 14,546 returnees and 33,695 repatriates (source: Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization/Consultation Framework on Migration permanent secretariat).

35. In 2023, 361,593 internally displaced persons were registered in five regions, as follows: 140,593 in Diffa; 15,128 in Maradi; 5,102 in Niamey; 72,022 in Tahoua; and 128,748 in Tillabéri. As of 23 May 2024, there were 237 unaccompanied and 1,133 separated refugee children. These children claim to have left their countries of origin because of insecurity.

36. In addition, the Niger experiences internal migration. It is also the source of circular migration to other countries in the subregion. Due to the difficulties faced by migrants in funding their migration plans and in migrating to other countries, transit through the Niger can last for several months or years. Emigration from the Niger is relatively low, accounting for only 3.8 per cent of the population according to the 2011 migration survey and is mainly directed towards other countries in West Africa.

37. In accordance with the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, migrants and victims of trafficking may not, in principle, be detained for offences directly relating to their migration status. However, they may be prosecuted for ordinary offences.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 7

38. With support from the migration policy advice project backed by the German Agency for International Cooperation, the Government has developed and validated a training module on the rights of migrant workers and members of their families, which is aimed at specialized higher education institutions, including:

- École Nationale d'Administration (National School of Administration)
- École Nationale de Police et de la Formation Permanente (National School of Police and Continuing Education)
- École de la Gendarmerie Nationale (National Gendarmerie School)
- Centre d'Instruction de la Garde Nationale du Niger (National Guard Training Centre)
- École de Formation Judiciaire du Niger (Judicial Training School)

39. As part of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the ministry responsible for employment received support under the migration policy advice project in September 2020. This support took the form of:

(a) A diagnostic study of the capacity of the labour inspectorates to protect the rights of migrant workers, accompanied by an action plan whose results were validated at a national workshop; the study highlighted a lack of knowledge of the Convention and other

legal instruments for the protection of human rights among labour inspectors, a lack of resources limiting their intervention and a need for capacity-building among labour inspectors;

(b) A workshop to review the draft national employment policy in order to incorporate migration issues and ensure consistency with the National Migration Policy for the period 2020–2035, adopted in September 2020;

(c) The participation of the ministry responsible for employment in discussions concerning training needs and the development of training modules on the rights of migrant workers and members of their families aimed at actors in the criminal justice system;

(d) Support for civil society organizations in writing their alternative report on the implementation of the Convention;

(e) Training for 141 labour inspectors and supervisors on international legal instruments for the protection of human rights in Dosso (bringing together participants from Niamey, Tillabéri and Dosso), Zinder (the regions of Maradi, Diffa and Zinder) and Tahoua (Agadez and Tahoua).

40. The ministry responsible for employment supported civil society organizations in writing their alternative report on the implementation of the Convention. The mechanism for drafting reports and following up on the recommendations of treaty bodies and the universal periodic review also participates in the drafting of alternative reports by civil society organizations. Meanwhile, civil society organizations are consulted and involved at different stages in the preparation of the State Party's report prior to its adoption, especially the data collection and validation stages.

Reply to the question raised in paragraph 8

41. In its (suspended) Constitution of 25 November 2010, the Niger affirmed the primacy of international conventions, treaties and agreements over national legislation. Article 171 states that “duly ratified treaties or agreements shall, following their publication, take precedence over national laws, subject, in respect of each agreement or treaty, to its application by the other Party”.

42. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of an international human rights treaty and those of a statute, the provisions of the treaty must be applied over those of the statute. The events of 26 July 2023 did not disrupt this hierarchy of norms, despite the suspension of the Constitution (Ordinance No. 2023-02 of 28 July 2023 on the organization of public authorities during the transition period, arts. 1 and 3).

43. There have been no court decisions in which the Convention has been directly invoked but efforts to train and raise awareness among judges continue with a view to making this possible.

44. Among the courts competent to investigate and rule on complaints from migrant workers in a regular or irregular situation and members of their families, there are courts of general jurisdiction and specialized courts. Individual labour disputes between migrant workers and their employers are handled by the labour courts. These courts are specialized courts established within each of the 10 high courts in the country. Prior conciliation is possible through the labour inspectorate. Appeals are lodged with the Court of Appeal and cassation appeals with the State Court.

45. Collective disputes are subject to an administrative procedure overseen by the labour inspectorates.

46. With regard to complaints from migrants and victims of trafficking in persons, where these offences are transnational in nature, the perpetrators are tried by the court specialized in the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime. Other disputes, including criminal, civil status, family and business disputes, are brought before the ordinary courts (i.e. the civil, criminal, administrative and commercial courts).

47. There are no available statistics on the number and nature of the complaints considered by these courts since the adoption of the previous concluding observations or the outcome of these complaints.

48. Legal aid is legally, and often automatically, granted to victims of smuggling and trafficking in persons, and to women and children, regardless of their nationality and the offence for which they are being prosecuted. Act No. 2011-42 of 14 December 2011, which sets out the rules on legal and judicial assistance and establishes a public administrative body known as the National Agency for Legal and Judicial Assistance, provides in article 18 that legal aid is automatically granted to the following persons, without any requirement to prove indigence:

- Minors prosecuted for a crime, offence or infraction
- Minor victims brought before a criminal court
- Defendants with disabilities or parties claiming damages unable to defend themselves due to their disability
- Accused persons appearing before a criminal court
- Female victims of violence under chapters II, III, VI and VIII of title III of the Criminal Code
- Women seeking the payment of alimony, the settlement of an estate or the custody of a child

49. Article 30 of Ordinance No. 2010-86 of 16 December 2010 on combating trafficking in persons reaffirms the automatic right to legal representation for defendants and victims, whether they are natural or legal persons. Act No. 2015-36 of 26 May 2015 on the smuggling of migrants abolished the requirement of payment of security for costs (*cautio judicatum solvi*) by migrants (art. 28 (1)).

50. There are no specific court decisions granting compensation to the victims of violations of rights enshrined in the Convention, but they are entitled to invoke the Convention before the courts under article 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

51. Under the asylum law, foreign nationals have the same access to justice as nationals. The criminal investigation police are aware of the rights and duties of refugees and asylum-seekers. Complaint procedures have been put in place through hotlines to allow cases of abuse to be reported. Complaint management committees have also been set up at refugee reception sites. These committees are made up of members of the refugee community, members of the host community and internally displaced persons in places where these three communities live alongside one another.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 9

52. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) had had an impact on the movement of refugees and asylum-seekers, but the borders had never been closed to persons seeking international protection or wishing to voluntarily return to their countries of origin. All hygiene measures had been taken to allow the reception and processing of applications for refugee status to continue. Staff working conditions were reviewed in accordance with the protective measures imposed by the pandemic.

53. Under the asylum law, refugees and asylum-seekers have the same rights as nationals regarding access to health services. They frequent the same health services as the host population and are granted access without discrimination. In the case of deceased refugees and asylum-seekers, their remains are delivered to relatives present on site or buried with the consent of relatives who remain outside the host country.

54. On 15 September 2021, the Ministry of Public Health, Population and Social Affairs launched the following two projects with support from IOM and the European Union:

- Project to strengthen health systems along migration routes
- Project to support the national vaccination campaign against COVID-19.

55. These two projects also provide care for migrants with HIV or tuberculosis. The Niger has health control units at each of its 39 ports of entry.

Reply to the question raised in paragraph 10

56. Documented migrant workers have the same rights as nationals regarding work and social security. There is no specific anti-discrimination legislation concerning migrant workers and members of their families. The main legislation for the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers remains the Labour Code and its implementing decree. Article 4 of Decree No. 2017-682 of 10 August 2017 on the regulatory part of the Labour Code prohibits any discrimination in employment and occupation.

57. Discrimination is understood as any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, age, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, disability, sickle cell anaemia, HIV/AIDS, membership or non-membership of a trade union or the exercise of trade union activities, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation, or any other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation. Moreover, article 5 provides that workers in all companies have the right to express themselves regarding the content, conditions and organization of work through workers' representative institutions.

58. The Government undertakes to consider the observations made by the Committee during the next review of the Labour Code and its implementing decree.

59. Article 10 of the asylum law (Act No. 97-016 of 20 June 1997 on the status of refugees in the Niger) provides that "refugees lawfully admitted to the Niger are to receive the same treatment as nationals with respect to access to education, health, housing, security of person and property and freedom of residence and movement". Therefore, the provisions governing the management of refugees are completely non-discriminatory.

60. The National Commission on Eligibility for Refugee Status, its divisions and partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs) carry out identification procedures and individual needs assessments and provide support services. An identification and referral mechanism has been set up through a memorandum of understanding.

61. Articles 6 and 7 of the asylum law provide that:

"Applicants for refugee status and recognized refugees may not be expelled, returned or extradited from the Niger except for reasons of national security or public order. Refugees may not be expelled, returned or extradited to a territory where their life or freedom would be threatened on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions."

"The expulsion of a refugee lawfully admitted to the Niger may take place only in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with due process of law."

Except for reasons of national security or public order, a refugee may only be expelled after the commission referred to in article 5 has issued an opinion and after all remedies have been exhausted.

Under the same conditions, the decision to expel a refugee should allow them a reasonable period to seek legal admission to another country."

62. The tables below present the results of the refugee status eligibility sessions held by the Commission.

Table 2
First-instance sessions of the Commission

<i>Description</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>
Number of sessions held	1	8	3	3	3	2	2
Number of cases studied	10	437	593	568	224	252	123

Description	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of positive decisions	6	355	406	511	195	230	87
Number of negative decisions	4	82	183	53	41	21	33
Adjourned	0	0	4	4		1	3
Cases of refolement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: National Commission on Eligibility for Refugee Status.

Table 3
Appeal sessions of the Commission

Description	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of sessions held	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Number of cases studied	0	0	20	58	0	112	0
Number of positive decisions	0	0	11	1	0	0	0
Number of negative decisions	0	0	0	55	0	112	0

Source: National Commission on Eligibility for Refugee Status.

63. Concerning the measures taken to mitigate the impact of the effects of climate change, including natural disasters, in addition to the ongoing review of the National Migration Policy to consider environmental factors and climate change, the Niger adopted Act No. 2022-61 of 19 December 2022 on the fundamental principles of disaster risk management. This legislative framework goes beyond risk management to cover disasters themselves through a participatory approach in accordance with article 10 of the Act, which states: “An integrated information system for risk prevention shall be set up at the national level, bringing together the various existing mechanisms and ensuring the consolidation of the data held by each participant and the dissemination of a summary of the useful information produced.”

64. Article 16, on information specific to environmental management, states: “Development activities or projects led by the public authorities or private individuals which, due to their scale or their impact on the biophysical and human environment, may cause harm, are subject to an environmental and social impact assessment.” Taken together, these provisions demonstrate the State’s interest in dealing effectively and efficiently with climate change impacts in a non-discriminatory manner.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 11

65. No cases of racism and xenophobia, discrimination, ill-treatment and violence, including gender-based violence, against migrant workers and members of their families have been formally registered by the Niger.

66. In the Niger, racism, xenophobia, discrimination, ill-treatment and violence in any form are prohibited and are punishable by law. Any infringement will be punished proportionately to the acts committed, whether they target a resident or a migrant worker or member of their family.

67. With regard to the regulatory and institutional measures adopted to prevent and combat all forms of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, ill-treatment and violence, including gender-based violence, the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and the Protection of Children reviewed the National Gender Policy in 2017 in order to incorporate issues relating to migration, climate change, peace and security and humanitarian emergencies. This policy sets out to work with all stakeholders to build a society without discrimination in which men and women and girls and boys, have the same opportunities to participate in the development of this society and to enjoy the benefits of its growth.

68. The National Gender Policy for the period 2017–2021 gave rise to the National Strategy for the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Abuse and Exploitation,

which was reviewed in 2023. The objective of the strategy is “a country free from gender-based violence in which men and women and girls and boys, live in peace, security and harmony, and without discrimination”. Its immediate effect is to establish a legislative framework in line with regional and international standards and rules against gender-based violence, abuse and sexual exploitation, including in vocational learning environments, which better protects women and men and girls and boys.

69. In that respect, the National Gender Policy and the National Strategy exclude no one, including migrant women and girls in the Niger. Once the action plans for both documents had been implemented, an evaluation was carried out to assess the degree to which the planned actions had been implemented. Based on this, the two documents were revised and reframed.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 12

70. There are no available data on the complaints brought by migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, that have been dealt with by the competent courts.

71. Migrant workers have access justice under the same rules as nationals. Numerous NGOs and trade unions work to raise awareness of the legal remedies available to migrant workers when their rights are violated.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 13

72. Article 4 of the Labour Code prohibits all forms of forced or compulsory labour, in line with the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the Protocol of 2014 thereto and the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), all of which have been ratified by the Niger.

73. Article 158 of the decree implementing the Labour Code prohibits, under penalty of criminal prosecution, the employment of children under the age of 18 years in any form of labour that comprises:

(a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment for use in armed conflict;

(b) The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;

(c) The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs, as defined in the relevant international treaties signed and ratified by the Niger.

74. Article 159 prohibits the employment of children under the age of 18 years in work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm their health, development, safety or morals, on pain of the penalties for endangering the lives of others set forth in the Criminal Code.

75. The Labour Inspectorate is the institution responsible for detecting cases of illegal employment of migrant workers. Labour inspectors decide whether a job is hazardous and have no qualms about imposing penalties on any employer who violates the above provisions.

76. There are no statistics available on migrant workers coerced into the practices described above, the number of complaints filed in that respect and the results of the investigations of those complaints, including prosecutions, sentences and compensation obtained by the victims.

77. With regard to the matter of accession to the 1926 Slavery Convention, as amended by the 1953 Protocol amending the Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926, the Niger made a notification of succession to this instrument on 25 August 1961.

78. With respect to the management of irregular migrant flows, the National Surveillance Directorate reported that the situation was as follows in 2017:

- 10,574 people returned
- 2,373 people arrested and deported
- 2,208 people referred to IOM for voluntary return. A system has been put in place to handle irregular migration, in particular through the two control centres established in Abalak, along the Tahoua-Agadez route, and Tanout, along the Zinder-Agadez route.

79. The following tables contain a breakdown of the most recent figures available, which are from 2022:

Table 4

Border entries and exits in the first half of 2022

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Entries</i>	<i>Exits</i>	<i>Total</i>
Nationals of the Niger	252 445	261 264	513 709
Foreign nationals	199 412	187 258	386 670
Total	451 857	448 522	900 379

Source: National Surveillance Directorate.

Table 5

Returns at the borders of the Niger in the first half of 2022

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>To the Niger</i>	<i>To a foreign country</i>
Nationals of the Niger	11 468	
Foreign nationals	7 265	1 777
Total	18 728	1 777

Source: National Surveillance Directorate.

80. According to a recent study by IOM, women and girls account for 69 per cent of victims and survivors of trafficking in the Niger. The study on the profile of victims of trafficking in persons in the Niger, which is the first of its kind, highlights those profiles and the patterns they revealed.

81. Between 2017 and 2021, 666 victims of trafficking were assisted at the IOM transit centres for vulnerable migrants in the Niger, the government-run centre in Zinder or other locations. Victims were mainly registered in Zinder, Agadez, Arlit, Dirkou and the Niamey region.

82. According to the study, trafficking in persons is a gender issue, since it disproportionately affects women and girls. Men and boys accounted for 31 per cent of victims. Victims ranged from 4 months to 66 years of age, with an average age of 20 years. Most of them were adults (62 per cent were 18 years and over).

83. The study also reveals that most victims came from Nigeria (56 per cent), the Niger (23 per cent) and other sub-Saharan African countries. Victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and intended sexual exploitation made up the majority of cases (38 per cent). Victims trafficked for labour exploitation, forced labour and intended labour exploitation accounted for 21 per cent of cases, while 23 per cent of victims were trafficked for the purpose of forced begging.

84. IOM has assisted vulnerable migrants and contributed to the protection of their rights since 2006. In 2019, IOM supported the National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons to open the first reception centre for victims of trafficking in the Zinder region. IOM also provides structural support to establish government-run facilities where victims can receive the assistance they need. This support is complemented by capacity-building for law enforcement, government and civil society actors to enhance their migration management skills and promote a coordinated and strategic response. IOM provides

tailored assistance to migrant survivors of trafficking in its transit centres and engages with communities to inform the public about the risks of irregular migration and the services available to victims of trafficking.

85. The statistical yearbook of the Ministry of Justice contains information on the proportion of offences that were prosecuted by the courts between 2016 and 2020.

Table 6

Number of persons prosecuted for the smuggling of migrants and related offences

<i>Offence</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Trafficking in persons	24	59	-	5	3
Trafficking in children	-	54	-	-	-
Exploitation of the prostitution of others	1	-	23	3	4
Forced begging	-	-	9	4	4
Forced child labour	-	-	-	1	1
Domestic servitude	-	-	2	1	1
Slavery and similar practices	2	1	-	1	1
Smuggling of migrants	55	180	-	122	96
Early and/or forced marriage	5	10	-	-	2
Procuring	-	6	7	3	6

Source: Statistics department, Ministry of Justice.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 14

86. With regard to refugees and asylum-seekers, a monitoring mechanism has been set up at borders and major stations to identify and refer persons in need of international protection, including unaccompanied children. A tripartite memorandum of understanding between the Niger, IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been signed and implemented, which has enabled the Government to provide assistance and protection to several hundred unaccompanied children. Such children receive special support in a number of areas, including education, vocational training, resettlement in third countries (in the case of unaccompanied children who have applied for refugee status) and voluntary return for the purpose of family reunification.

87. The National Action Plan to Combat Child Labour is still being drawn up with assistance from ILO. A project to reduce child labour in agriculture was run from 2016 to 2018. The project's overall objective was to reduce the proportion of children forced into child labour in agriculture and to contribute to the emergence of decent rural employment and the fight against rural poverty in the regions of Niamey, Dosso, Tahoua, Tillabéri and Maradi. The activities organized as part of the project included information and awareness-raising workshops on the topic of child labour in agriculture, which were held in the above-mentioned regions for officials from ministries dealing with the rural sector.

88. Training sessions and workplace and data collection visits were organized under the supervision of a consultant, in collaboration with the regional agriculture and livestock services. One training day and three field visits were arranged in each region. A total of 26 farms were visited, and 48 children were interviewed. The results of the survey were presented at a national workshop, where they were analysed alongside the relevant recommendations.

89. There is some debate surrounding the employment of children aged 12 and 13 years, since such children might be engaged in what is known as "socializing work", which involves boys working with their father in the field and girls working alongside their mother to prepare meals. Nonetheless, some work, such as that done by young kitchen hands, assistant cooks, houseboys, house girls or childminders, increases the vulnerability of children, regardless of how light the tasks might be. The children may be subjected to insults, beatings and other forms of emotional or physical abuse.

90. In view of certain shortcomings in the national framework for the protection of children's rights, the ministry responsible for that matter is working tirelessly to develop a new national child protection policy, which will cover groups including unaccompanied migrant children, *talibé* children and child victims of labour exploitation, with a view to ensuring that they receive adequate and specialized care that is tailored to their needs.

91. The measures taken to ensure respect for the rights of migrant children include:

- (a) The consideration of this population group in migration policy;
- (b) The strengthening of the skills of actors working in this field to address the various aspects of the migration problem;
- (c) The creation of transit centres in Agadez;
- (d) The organization of informational and awareness-raising activities;
- (e) The observance, on 12 June each year, of the World Day against Child Labour;
- (f) The development of specific operational procedures for the protection of migrant children.

92. The measures taken to give effect to ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), include:

- (a) The integration of provisions on the worst forms of child labour into the regulatory part of the Labour Code;
- (b) The ongoing development of a national action plan to tackle child labour;
- (c) The establishment of a steering committee to oversee the plan;
- (d) The creation of a national child labour directorate;
- (e) The organization of capacity-building for actors involved in addressing this scourge.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 15

93. A hotline has been set up at the one-stop refugee service to enable people to report rights violations. In 2023, 117 complaints were registered. The number of complaints received as at 30 June 2024 was 133. There are no data on proceedings initiated against members of the defence and security forces in response to allegations of harassment, corruption and abuse of authority.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 16

94. Failure to comply with immigration law may result in administrative and criminal penalties. Refoulement or expulsion orders are issued by the administrative authority (the border police or the Minister of the Interior) and communicated to the foreign national.

95. Criminal offences include:

- Failure to hold or renew a residence permit
- Irregular entry
- Facilitation of illegal entry

96. As is the case for nationals of the Niger, it is a requirement for migrants who are under investigation or stand trial to be assisted by an interpreter. Migrants have the right to be assisted by a lawyer of their choice when appearing before any public body (Regulation No. 5/CM/UEMOA on the harmonization of the rules governing the legal profession in the West African Economic and Monetary Union, art. 3).

97. Pursuant to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the national authorities are required to notify the consular or diplomatic authorities of a migrant worker's country of nationality of any prosecution or

arrest so that the latter can provide diplomatic protection. Public prosecutors routinely send notices of prosecution to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Minister then forwards this information to the appropriate parties. Every effort is made to facilitate contact and communication between diplomats and nationals from their country. The Ministry of Justice has issued several circulars to remind the relevant national authorities of this obligation.

98. Minors who are victims of trafficking, including unaccompanied children, are heard in all proceedings that concern them so that they can give their opinion. They are automatically provided with legal and judicial assistance. The prosecutor is required to assign them a legal guardian or statutory representative.

99. The proposed amendments to the asylum law include a provision on the right of unaccompanied minors to be assigned a guardian.

100. The Government has already taken certain operational measures in order to address the vulnerabilities affecting migrants in general and women and child migrants in particular. These measures include:

(a) The validation, in 2016, of a national strategy to prevent the risky migration of children from Kantché to Algeria;

(b) The establishment, in 2018, of a transit and orientation centre for unaccompanied children on the move in Agadez;

(c) The establishment, in 2018 and 2019, of three prevention, promotion and child protection centres in Mainé Soroa, Diffa and Kantché;

(d) The tracing, by IOM, of the families of unaccompanied children.

101. From 2019 to 2021, the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection ran a project on children on the move, with the main aim being to provide temporary care to and promote the social reintegration of such children in the Agadez, Tahoua, Maradi and Zinder regions. Two outcomes were pursued as part of this project:

(a) Increasing the range of temporary care services available to children on the move in the Agadez region;

(b) Strengthening family tracing and reintegration mechanisms for children on the move in the Tahoua, Zinder and Maradi regions.

102. The beneficiaries of the project were:

(a) Unaccompanied migrant children entering or leaving the Niger who were in transit along the Niger-Algeria and Niger-Libya migration routes;

(b) Unaccompanied migrant children who had returned to the Niger, mainly from Algeria and Libya;

(c) Unaccompanied internal migrant children;

(d) Other child victims or vulnerable children in contact with the protection services.

103. Giving effect to the obligation in article 16 (7) of the Convention is one of the duties of diplomatic and consular missions, in accordance with article 3 (1) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and articles 5 (a), (e), (g) and (i) and 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. The Niger is already a Party to these Conventions, which form part of the national legal order and take precedence over all other domestic laws.

104. In practice, it is the responsibility of the relevant diplomatic mission and/or consular post accredited to the Niger to express interest in communicating with detained nationals from their country by sending a note verbale to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and the Diaspora to this effect. That Ministry refers the matter to the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, which then approves the request and puts the diplomatic mission and/or consular post in touch with the relevant technical directorate. Migrants from the Niger who are abroad receive protection and assistance from the consular services of

the country's diplomatic missions and consular posts, in accordance with the above-mentioned Vienna Conventions, Decrees No. 99-452/PCRN/MAE/IA of 5 November 1999 on the special status of diplomatic and consular staff and No. 2024-09/P/CNSP/MAE/C/NE of 4 January 2024 on the organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Order No. 000030/MAE/C/DGAJ/C/DAJ of 14 April 2023 on the organization and responsibilities of the bodies of that Ministry.

105. Where necessary, the consular services of the diplomatic missions of the Niger receive support in discharging their duties from the High Council of Nationals of the Niger Abroad, the Directorate of Nationals of the Niger abroad and the Legal Affairs Directorate.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 17

106. As part of efforts to implement the PROMIS project for the protection of migrants, a number of measures have been taken to ensure that migrant workers and members of their families who have violated immigration law are detained only as a last resort and for a short period of time. Steps have also been taken to introduce alternatives to immigration detention. In December 2019, the Judicial Training College of the Niger trained 40 judges from district and regional courts on access to justice and the protection of migrants' rights. In October 2020, 75 officials and officers from the defence and security forces working in the field of migration received training on human rights at international borders. The participants included 21 officers from the defence and security forces (police officers, customs officers, gendarmes and members of the national guard) who work at the border posts of Assamakka (border with Algeria), Yassane (border with Mali), Mainé Soroa, Gaidam and Konni (border with Nigeria), Gaya (border with Benin), Pétèl Kolé and Makalondi (border with Burkina Faso) (one representative per unit at each post), in addition to two representatives from the Directorate General of the National Police, two representatives from the High Command of the National Gendarmerie, two representatives from the division of the Ministry of Health responsible for enforcing health laws and two representatives from the Directorate General of Legal and Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in view of their respective supervisory responsibilities).

107. Asylum-seekers and refugees are identified through the border monitoring system so that they can be referred to the appropriate care facilities. The capacities of border police officers have been strengthened through training workshops on the international protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. The officers were given guidance on working with officials responsible for monitoring borders, to whom they must refer cases. Such efforts have helped ensure compliance with the principle of non-refoulement.

108. The bill on the amendment of Act No. 2015-036 is no longer relevant given that this law has been repealed.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 18

109. The Niger has no specific detention centres for migrants who have violated immigration law. In the event that migrants are prosecuted or convicted, they are held in the same facilities as nationals and have the same rights and obligations. National law does not criminalize migration in itself.

110. As indicated above, victims of trafficking are identified and provided with adequate protection and redress.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 19

111. Expulsion orders are administrative decisions that can be appealed before the State Court on grounds of *ultra vires*. The Council of State was replaced by the State Court under Ordinance No. 2023-11 of 5 October 2023, determining the organization, duties and operation of the State Court, which inherited the Council's powers in this regard (arts. 21 (2) and 90 (a)). An appeal against the decision must first be made to the administrative authority that issued the order or a higher authority before one can be brought before the State Court.

112. Appeals on grounds of *ultra vires* have suspensive effect only in the case of appeals against decisions refusing to grant refugee status, expelling a person who has been granted such status or establishing the loss of such status.

113. The urgent applications judge may order a suspension of action or a suspension of some of the effects of the decision when doing so is justified by the urgency of the situation and when a claim is made that is likely, given the state of the investigation, to raise serious doubts about its legality. Similarly, any applicant who can show that he or she has lodged an administrative appeal requesting the administration to annul a decision may, in urgent cases, ask the urgent applications judge to suspend that decision. In cases where the suspension is granted, the applicant has two months from the date of notification to file a request for annulment of the contested decision.

114. Since the establishment of the State Court, a suspension of action of an administrative decision may be ordered under article 114 of Ordinance No. 2023-11 of 5 October 2023, determining the organization, duties and operation of the State Court, in the following cases:

“If the contested decision does not concern the maintenance of public order, security or public peace;

If the grounds put forward in support of the request appear to be serious;

If the harm suffered by the applicant as a result of the enforcement of the decision would be difficult to remedy.”

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 20

115. See the replies provided in paragraphs 104 and 105 above.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 21

116. Under article 2 of the Labour Code, “for the purposes of this Code, workers are any persons, regardless of sex or nationality, who have undertaken to place their professional activity, in return for remuneration, under the direction and authority of another natural or legal person, whether public or private”. Article 5 sets out the principle of non-discrimination between nationals and migrant workers as follows: “Except as otherwise expressly provided in the present Code, in any other legislative or regulatory text protecting women and children or in provisions relating to the status of foreigners, no employer may take a person’s sex, age, national extraction, social origin, race, religion, colour, political or religious views, disability, HIV/AIDS or sickle cell anaemia status, trade union membership or non-membership or trade union activity into consideration when making decisions relating, in particular, to recruitment, the conduct and distribution of work, occupational training, advancement, promotion, remuneration, social benefits, disciplinary measures or the termination of the employment contract.”

117. The Interprofessional Collective Agreement of 7 May 2022 provides that, under equal conditions of work, professional qualifications and performance, wages must be equal for all workers, regardless of their origin, age, sex or status. The salary is determined on the basis of the position assigned to the person within the company. Article 55 provides for an expatriation allowance to compensate employees for the additional risks and expenses incurred by relocating to the Niger, to be paid to all workers recruited outside the territory of the Niger and relocated from their usual place of residence. The amount of this allowance is set at 40 per cent of the basic minimum wage for the professional category to which the worker belongs.

118. The requirement for migrant workers to meet preliminary conditions is solely intended to control the number of migrant workers wishing to work in the Niger and to protect the national workforce in view of the difficulties young people face in gaining access to employment.

119. To promote the rights of migrant workers from the Niger living abroad, the Niger prioritizes the conclusion of bilateral agreements with countries that are major destinations for migrant labour from the Niger. The various labour migration agreements include

provisions on social security to facilitate the transfer of social security contributions paid by nationals of the Niger in host and destination countries. For example, article 11 of the memorandum of understanding signed in 2022 by Libya and the Niger states: “Employers in the host country are obliged to comply with laws and regulations relating to social security. Consequently, they are required to register their employees with the social security institution and pay the corresponding social security contributions on a regular basis, in accordance with current regulations. The procedures for implementing the above provision, and those relating to the portability of benefits, shall be discussed and agreed upon jointly by the parties.” Furthermore, it should be noted that negotiations are currently under way on the signature of another bilateral agreement on migration between Libya and the Niger, following the one concluded in 2022.

120. In accordance with the treaty establishing the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare, migrant workers are entitled to pensions and to benefits associated with work-related accidents and occupational diseases.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 22

121. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Protection of Children vigorously fights all forms of gender-based violence against any victim, from any quarter, without discrimination. This is embodied in the National Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Strategy, which aims to establish a legislative framework consistent with international and regional rules and standards to combat gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, including in vocational training centres, to improve the protection of women and men and girls and boys (outcome 2). In terms of survivor protection, the Strategy strives to ensure better access to community-based medical, legal, psychological and socioeconomic reintegration services for survivors (men and women and girls and boys) (outcome 3).

122. Six holistic care centres for survivors of gender-based violence have been set up in Tillabéri, Maradi, Tahoua, Zinder, Diffa and Konni and are open to everyone without discrimination. This also applies to birth registration and newborn care in health centres in the Niger. The Civil Status Act and the civil status regime of 2019 require all persons, including migrants and refugees, to register births. Services are available, free of charge and accessible to all without discrimination. Additional civil registration centres have been set up at migrant and refugee holding centres. Article 10 of the asylum law grants equal rights to education and health care.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 23

123. As part of efforts to promote cooperation in labour migration management, the Niger and Libya signed a memorandum of understanding on labour mobility on 30 November 2021. This initiative aims to establish a formal framework to facilitate labour mobility between the two countries, and to ensure that this framework benefits the country of origin, the destination country and the migrant workers themselves.

124. In implementation of the agreement concluded with Saudi Arabia, the following seven domestic recruitment agencies were licenced to recruit workers of the Niger for placement in Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment:

- Bureau Nigérien pour le Placement de Main d’œuvre
- Société Nigérienne de Placement SARL
- Agence Privée de Placement Sara SARL
- Agence de Placement pour l’Emploi National et International – Al-Izza Solutions
- Agence privée de placement Lyasmin-Lim
- Bureau privé de placement Mazaya
- Bureau privé de placement de main d’œuvre El-Iklass

125. It is nevertheless important to note that, at present, as the implementation of the agreement with Saudi Arabia is temporarily suspended, these agencies are no longer operational, and their respective licenses have expired.

126. As was the case for Saudi Arabia, Libya is considering the establishment of training centres where migrant workers of the Niger can familiarize themselves with the habits and customs of the host country and receive information on admission requirements, jobs and associated rights and obligations. The memorandum of understanding concluded between the Niger and Libya also provides that all placement agencies in the two countries must be accredited by the State, hold a special recruitment licence and have a partner agency in the country of origin.

127. Decree No. 2017-682/PRN/MET/PS of 10 August 2017 on the regulatory part of the Labour Code provides that fees collected by private employment agencies or offices are to be borne in full by the employer. Registration and application fees are to be paid by the employee. The fees charged must be clearly displayed in the offices of the private employment agency or office.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 24

128. The diaspora of the Niger, considered to be the ninth region of the country, has five seats in the dissolved National Assembly. Furthermore, the National Migration Policy action plan includes measures to mobilize the diaspora. Birth certificates and consular cards issued by diplomatic and consular missions abroad and legalized/notarized documents provided to nationals of the Niger by the competent authorities may entitle them to participate in the political and public life of the host communities, so long as they hold a valid residence permit or citizenship of the host country. The right to stand for election or vote is subject to the laws of the host country.

129. The National Committee to Combat the Vestiges of Forced Labour and Discrimination, set up by Order no. 2006-0933/MFPMT of 4 August 2006, is chaired by the minister responsible for labour and made up of 13 members from State institutions and civil society organizations, including trade unions.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 25

130. Refugees and asylum-seekers have the possibility of family reunification. The family unit is at the heart of all aspects of protection. The Red Cross of the Niger facilitates free telephone calls to help vulnerable domestic and foreign migrant workers stay in touch with their families. In addition, branches have been set up at the IOM transit centres in Agadez, Arlit, Assamakka and Dirkou in aid of these migrants. Telephone calls help unaccompanied minors trace and reunite with their families, taking into consideration the best interest of the child.

131. In accordance with the regulations in force, family members of migrant workers who are eligible for a residence permit in the Niger may obtain such a permit for family-related reasons.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 26

132. In principle, income cannot be subject to double taxation. Workers are therefore advised to submit their tax returns to the competent authorities in their countries of work and residence to avoid being prosecuted for tax fraud or another related offence. Failure to produce a tax return may result in penalties for workers who receive their incomes in host countries.

133. In the past, migrant workers faced problems when transferring funds, sometimes facing outright refusal or restrictions. Today, thanks to the development of a wide range of transfer systems, they may send their earnings without any difficulty. Private companies have made it easier to transfer earnings within the region, even from countries known for their restrictions, such as Libya. According to article 12 of the memorandum of understanding between the Niger and Libya: "Workers have the right to send all their savings to their country of origin. The competent authorities of both countries agree to

establish an appropriate, suitable mechanism to facilitate the transfer of savings from the host country to the country of origin.”

134. The treaty establishing the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare provides for the portability of social security benefits, although that provision has not been implemented. With regard to other countries, the matter is regulated through agreements between the National Social Security Fund of the Niger and the social security bodies of migrant workers' countries of employment or origin.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 27

135. Once issued, a residence permit remains valid until its date of expiry. The National Social Security Fund of the Niger provides the following: family benefits, work-related accident and occupational disease benefits and retirement benefits. Therefore, unemployment benefits are not included.

136. Migrant workers may seek alternative employment after their contracts end. The vocational retraining programmes organized by the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment are aimed at citizens of the Niger. The Agency's annual budget is 2,226,248,192 CFA francs (CFAF).

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 28

137. Under article 2 of the Labour Code, “for the purposes of this Code, workers are any persons, regardless of sex or nationality, who have undertaken to place their professional activity, in return for remuneration, under the direction and authority of another person, whether natural or legal, public or private”. Article 5 of the Code establishes the principle of non-discrimination between nationals and migrant workers, whether they are cross-border commuters, seasonal workers or itinerant workers. Migrant workers must enjoy equal treatment with workers from the Niger, particularly as regards pay and working conditions.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 29

138. To ensure better working conditions for its nationals, the Niger has signed bilateral agreements with several countries, including payment agreements with:

- The National Social Insurance Fund of Côte d'Ivoire
- The National Social Security Fund of Benin
- The National Social Security Fund of Burkina Faso

139. The National Migration Policy takes into account all the commitments assumed by the Niger in relation to migration. The Niger engages in a range of cooperation efforts in many areas and at many levels, notably with Algeria, Tunisia, Chad, Spain, Saudi Arabia and Malta.

140. The Niger signed the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment in 2018. It also participates in the Pan African Forum on Migration, which aims to deepen inter-State dialogue and intra- and interregional cooperation on migration, particularly the regional economic communities of the African Union, regional consultative processes and other inter-State consultation mechanisms on migration in Africa. The Government has further extended its cooperation by participating actively in the Migration Dialogue for West Africa, which aims to facilitate the coordination of regional migration governance.

141. At the international level, the Niger participates in the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process), which brings together countries of origin, transit and destination along the migration routes crossing West Africa, Central Africa, North Africa and Europe.

142. The Niger also intends to develop its cooperation with the United Nations Network on Migration, with IOM as its coordinator and secretariat. Along the same lines, the Niger

has continued to engage in regional consultation by participating in the meeting held in Dakar from 27 to 28 September 2017 that brought together panellists from West and Central Africa, including representatives of Governments, international bodies, civil society organizations and researchers. The work focused on five themes:

- (a) The causes of migration;
- (b) The rights of migrants;
- (c) The diaspora;
- (d) Irregular migration;
- (e) Trafficking in persons.

143. The Niger participated in the process of drafting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration at the meeting of States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders in migration issues held from 4 to 6 December 2017 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the informal subregional and regional consultations organized by the United Nations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/1 of 19 September 2016 with a view to producing a preliminary draft compact.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 30

144. As part of the implementation of the National Migration Policy action plan, a monitoring mechanism is to be established and made operational through:

- (a) The establishment of monitoring and information committees at the regional and municipal levels;
- (b) The establishment of village information committees;
- (c) Capacity-building for monitoring committees;
- (d) The organization, by the National Agency for Combating Trafficking in Persons, of awareness-raising caravans along the border with Nigeria and in areas where there is significant mobility among women and children.

145. In 2018, the Niger adopted a National Strategy to Combat Irregular Migration, which has been taken into account in the National Migration Policy. Several campaigns have been carried out to raise awareness of the rights and responsibilities of migrants, including by the National Human Rights Commission through its “migrant rights watch” project in 2020. Training modules have been made available to the border police force to enable it to manage migration flows in compliance with national and international law on the protection of migrants.

146. An example of a measure taken to address irregular migration among nationals of the Niger is article 8, third paragraph, of the memorandum of understanding between the Niger and Libya, which provides for “the promotion of cooperation in the area of employment through the establishment of a formal framework to manage the transfer and exchange of labour between the two countries”.

147. Since the events of 2013, when 92 people (33 women, 52 children and 7 men) travelling to Algeria died in the Sahara desert, and given its concern for the rights and well-being of women and children, the Niger has undertaken a vast awareness-raising campaign, aimed at the entire population in general and the population of Kantché Department in particular, to discourage potential migrants and ensure that they are settled in their homelands. Several partners, such as the German Agency for International Cooperation, IOM, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and UN-Women, have participated through projects such as “Making Migration Safe for Women” (migration policy advice project/German Agency for International Cooperation) with a view to consolidating the State’s efforts. These projects are aimed at women and children in particular in order to discourage them from exposing themselves to the risks and dangers associated with irregular migration.

148. The aim of these measures is to rally around returning migrants and prospective migrants with financial, livestock (feed) and agricultural support so that they may settle in. These measures are also aimed at supporting children in terms of school enrolment, health and well-being.

149. The implementation of the Child Protection Policy has generated statistical data on children in situations of mobility and emergency, as shown below.

Table 7

Children in situations of mobility or emergency in 2021

<i>Protection of children in emergency situations</i>											
<i>Age group</i>	<i>Under 6 years</i>		<i>6 to 12 years</i>		<i>13 to 15 years</i>		<i>Over 15 years</i>		<i>Total</i>		
<i>Sex</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Unaccompanied children	95	109	195	128	75	35	15	14	380	286	666
Separated children	31	24	110	35	88	15	38	6	267	80	347
Children associated with armed forces and groups	95	109	195	128	75	35	15	14	380	286	666
Reunited children	23	26	90	84	49	50	25	31	187	191	378
Victims of explosions (grenades) and abduction	2	26	2	97	17	189	5	153	26	465	491
<i>Protection of children in situations of mobility</i>											
<i>Age group</i>	<i>Under 6 years</i>		<i>6 to 12 years</i>		<i>13 to 15 years</i>		<i>Over 15 years</i>		<i>Total</i>		
<i>Sex</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Children returned from Algeria	8	2	26	6	36	5	3	3	73	16	89
Children returned from Nigeria	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	1	14	11	25
Children returned from Libya	245	174	66	71	111	151	116	170	538	566	1 104
Other migrant children	423	391	785	610	718	764	335	645	2 261	2 410	4 671
Total	680	571	879	689	869	924	458	819	2 886	3 003	5 889

Source: Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 31

150. This question has already been partly answered. Articles 63, 64, 74 and 75 of the new Samoa Agreement and the annexes thereto provide some insight in this regard. The following statistics provide further information regarding the scale of migration in the Niger.

Table 8

Change in the number of migrant workers from 2019 to 2023, disaggregated by industry

<i>Industry</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
Agriculture, livestock, environment	1	3	0	0	2	6	0%
Extraction industries	192	52	14	493	572	1 323	27%
Manufacturing	3	18	9	12	18	60	1%
Water, electricity, gas	1	2	2	1	55	61	1%
Buildings and public works	507	119	225	471	80	1 402	29%

<i>Industry</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
Transport, storage and communications	45	152	48	33	42	320	7%
Retail, hotels, restaurants	103	99	50	124	101	477	10%
Banking, finance, insurance, real estate	12	34	22	22	14	104	2%
Social services	173	221	162	341	238	1 135	23%
Total	1 037	700	532	1 497	1 122	4 888	100%

Sources: Directorate General of Labour and Employment, Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment.

Table 9

Distribution of migrant workers according to industry and sex from 2019 to 2023

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Agriculture, livestock, environment	6	0	6
Extraction industries	1 299	24	1 323
Manufacturing	60	0	60
Water, electricity, gas	53	8	61
Buildings and public works	1 383	19	1 402
Transport, storage and communications	292	28	320
Retail, hotels, restaurants	426	51	477
Banking, finance, insurance, real estate	95	9	104
Social services	845	290	1 135
Total	4 459	429	4 888
Percentage	91%	9%	100%

Sources: Directorate General of Labour and Employment, Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment.

Table 10

Distribution of migrant workers according to place of origin from 2019 to 2023

Africa	ECOWAS	977	20%
	Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)	453	9%
	Southern African Development Community (SADC)	129	3%
	East Africa	216	4%
	North Africa (Maghreb)	180	4%
Other	Europe	659	13%
	Americas	85	2%
	Asia	2 189	45%
Total		4 888	100%

Sources: Directorate General of Labour and Employment, Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 32

151. A second action plan on trafficking in persons and one on the smuggling of migrants have been drawn up but not yet adopted. The action plan on trafficking in persons is structured around seven strategic action lines:

- (a) Improvement of the legal and institutional framework;
- (b) Strengthening of preventive measures;
- (c) Promotion of assistance and care for victims;
- (d) Detection, investigation and prosecution of traffickers;
- (e) Strengthening of cooperation and partnership;
- (f) Study and leveraging of best practices;
- (g) Monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the plan.

152. The plan to combat the smuggling of migrants is based on five strategic action lines based on international standards in the fight against the smuggling of migrants:

- (a) Improvement of the criminal justice system as it relates to the smuggling of migrants;
- (b) Protection and assistance for migrants;
- (c) Prevention of the smuggling of migrants;
- (d) Partnerships in combating the smuggling of migrants;
- (e) Arrangements for implementation.

153. Specialized training courses on investigation, prosecution and trial techniques have been organized for members of the criminal justice system (judges, prosecutors and criminal investigation officers). Between 2017 and 2022, 417 people were prosecuted for trafficking, 111 were tried and 54 were convicted. In addition, between 2017 and 2022, 779 people were brought to court for the smuggling of migrants, 720 were prosecuted, 331 were tried and 195 were convicted.

154. A reception and protection centre for victims of trafficking has been built in Zinder and has been taking in victims since 2019. Assistance was provided to 271 victims between 2019 and 2022. Over 500 members of the criminal justice system (judges, prosecutors and criminal investigation officers) have been given training on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. Over 100 protection workers have also been received training on trafficking in persons and assistance for victims of trafficking.

155. One of the measures taken to combat smuggling networks is the establishment of a joint investigation team, made up of police officers from France, Spain and the Niger. As part of the Niger-Nigeria project, joint operations have been carried out to dismantle smuggling networks.

156. With regard to the implementation of the national trafficking in persons referral and guidance mechanism, outreach sessions to publicize the mechanism were organized in all regions of the country for regional and departmental directorates for the advancement of women and the protection of children, social workers, civil society organizations working in the field of protection, protection clusters, juvenile judges, regional offices of the National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons, mayors and criminal investigation officers (police, gendarmerie and National Guard). Staff at the Zinder reception and protection centre for victims of trafficking also received training in the mechanism.

157. The regional offices of the National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons are responsible for local implementation.

158. As to measures to prevent women in transit who are stranded in the State Party from being forced to turn to prostitution in order to survive, and to crack down on the exploitation of prostitution, awareness-raising days were held at migrant reception centres to inform them of their rights and the services available (reporting channels and support), and on migration laws and policies in the Niger.

159. Two training courses on trafficking and smuggling were organized for staff of diplomatic missions in the Niger, and several others for law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, labour inspectors, service providers, teachers and media professionals.

160. The Agency does not have a specific budget for the detection and elimination of cases of smuggling and trafficking in persons, or for victim protection. The Ministry of Justice grant to the Agency was CFAF 55 million in 2023 and CFAF 60 million in 2024. In addition to this amount, the State covers the rent of Agency offices, staff salaries and other running costs. The Agency also receives funding from its partners.

161. As part of measures taken to strengthen the collection of data on victims, disaggregated by sex, age and origin, as part of efforts to prevent smuggling and trafficking in persons, the Niger signed a memorandum of understanding with data providers on 28 September 2020 in Niamey and developed a data-collection tool conforming to international standards. Two workshops were held to train trainers in data collection and analysis, and in techniques of reporting on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. Two other training workshops on data collection, analysis and sharing were held for data providers from all regions of the Niger (court clerks, heads of public prosecutor's offices, gendarmes and heads of departments for the advancement of women and child protection).

162. With regard to temporary or permanent residence permits for victims of smuggling and trafficking in persons, according to article 62 of Order No. 2010-86, "the authority responsible for issuing visas and temporary or permanent residence permits shall, where applicable, issue to victims of offences covered by the present Order the documents required to enable them to remain legally in the territory of the Niger for at least the time needed for the investigation, prosecution and trial of the offences established". As to migrants victims of trafficking and smuggling, under article 24 of the recently repealed Act No. 2015-036, "the Minister of the Interior may grant a visa or residence permit to a migrant victim of smuggling in order to facilitate the investigation into or prosecution of an offence under the present Act".

163. As part of efforts to widely disseminate information on smuggling and trafficking in persons, on the risks associated with irregular migration and desert crossings and on assistance to victims, and to combat the dissemination of misleading information on emigration and immigration, 28 September has been proclaimed the annual National Day of Mobilization against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery. It provides an opportunity to raise public awareness of the risks associated with trafficking and irregular migration, and of the methods employed by traffickers and smugglers. World Day against Trafficking in Persons is also marked on 30 July each year, and International Migrants Day on 18 December. In addition, messages are disseminated through sketches and audiovisual communication media.

164. As to measures taken to strengthen international, regional and bilateral cooperation to prevent and combat smuggling and trafficking in persons, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Niger and Nigeria on 16 November 2021 to combat trafficking in persons and smuggling along the border, followed by the creation of a joint task force. Joint meetings and awareness-raising caravans have been organized by the joint task force. The establishment of an operational framework with Benin to combat cross-border trafficking in children is another example of bilateral cooperation.

165. Another measure is the Niamey Declaration signed on 16 March 2018, which aims to improve coordination and operational effectiveness in reacting to these crimes, in part by increasing support for the efforts of countries of origin and transit and strengthening data collection, international judicial cooperation and cooperation between the various law-enforcement agencies.

166. Lastly, declarations of intent on cooperation in combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants have been signed with Morocco and Mauritania.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 33

167. During inspection visits to companies, labour inspectors carry out checks on the workforce. In the case of migrant workers in an irregular situation, the labour authorities generally regularize their situation. In that way, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and the National Social Security Fund can claim their dues.

168. Nationals of the Niger in an irregular situation abroad are entitled to consular assistance in regularizing their situation in the host State, in accordance with article 69 of the Convention. In addition, the new Samoa Agreement and the Africa Regional Protocol thereto contain important provisions for assisting nationals of States Parties who are in an irregular situation in the State of employment.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 34

169. Laws, bills and regulations relating to the protection of migrant workers have already been mentioned in several paragraphs above, as have institutions and their mandates.

170. The National Migration Policy and its action plan have an estimated cost of CFAF 262,847,780,000.

171. With regard to recent comprehensive studies on the situation of migrant workers and members of their families, one was carried out by the National Agency to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2018, on the situation of migrant women in Agadez and Dirkou and another in 2017, on the situation of at-risk migration of women and children in Kantché.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 35

172. The figures for migrants entering or leaving the Niger between 2016 and 2024 are as follows.

Table 11
Migration flows

<i>Year</i>	<i>Entering</i>	<i>Leaving</i>
2016	111 230	333 891
2017	98 306	69 430
2018	88 601	106 766
2019	173 737	202 409
2020	132 561	147 206
2021	248 658	299 265
2022	413 475	474 417
2023	713 635	834 687
2024	835 169	868 041

Source: IOM.

173. As to refugee and asylum-seeking children, as of 23 May 2024, there were 237 unaccompanied children and 1,133 separated children in this group.

174. Emigration by nationals of the Niger is relatively low, accounting for just 3.8 per cent of the population, according to the national survey on migration in the Niger organized in 2011 by the National Institute of Statistics, and is mainly in the direction of other West African countries. Following the study on remittances of migrant workers to the Niger carried out by the Central Bank of West African States in three regions of the Niger, the total amount of transfers received during 2012 was put at CFAF 43.6 billion. The share of transfers received through formal channels is around 59.5 per cent, or CFAF 25.9 billion. However, informal channels remain a relatively significant means of transfer despite the improved financial services offered by banks and microfinance institutions, in partnership with cash-transfer companies. Almost two in every five households prefer informal channels, particularly those involving travellers (27 per cent).

175. These transfers go to the self-employed (34.1 per cent) and, to a lesser extent, the economically inactive (29 per cent) and salaried workers (17.7 per cent). The financial reasons for the transfers are chiefly to assist in everyday consumption (52.1 per cent). Remittances for “other investments”, in particular land purchase and business capital,

account for 17.6 per cent of transfers received. A smaller proportion goes towards family events (8 per cent) and savings (7.6 per cent).

176. Transfers received come principally from Côte d'Ivoire, which accounts for 15 per cent of the total, followed by Belgium (14 per cent) and Nigeria (12 per cent). Funds received are regular (55 per cent) and are recorded on a monthly (61.9 per cent), quarterly (19.5 per cent), half-yearly (10.4 per cent) and annual (8.3 per cent) basis. Occasional transfers, often in connection with special events, are estimated at CFAF 19.8 billion.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 36

177. The most important new development is the adoption of Order No. 2023-16 of 25 November 2023, repealing Act No. 2015-36 of 26 May 2015, on the smuggling of migrants. According to article 2 of the Order, convictions handed down in application of the Act, and their effects, are expunged as of 26 May 2015.

Reply to the questions raised in paragraph 37

178. The first common core document of the Niger under the harmonized reporting guidelines was drafted in 2015. It was updated in 2021 and shared with the secretariats of all the treaty bodies via the Permanent Mission of the Niger in Geneva. The next update is scheduled for 2026.
