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National report submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*

Colombia

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. This national report is being submitted for the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review. It was prepared in accordance with the guidelines contained in Human Rights Council resolution 16/21 and decision 17/199.
2. The Government of Colombia wishes to highlight the importance of the universal periodic review mechanism for providing Governments with guidance in how to promote, protect and guarantee human rights more effectively.
3. The Government of Colombia is committed to fulfilling the mandates deriving from a truly democratic society focused on protecting life, diversity and equality. Hence, one of the key pledges of the current Government is to build “Total Peace”, pursuing an international agenda centred on fighting the climate emergency, securing peace and guaranteeing the dignity of human life.
4. The current Government is taking the steps necessary to accomplish the work in the field of human rights carried out in conjunction with the international community and to promote the strengthening of the United Nations treaty bodies system.

II. Methodology and consultation process

5. The preparation of this report was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Presidential Advisor for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, drawing on input from various national and departmental authorities in Colombia.
6. The compilation of the document necessitated various briefings and institutional dialogue processes. Social media were used to raise awareness of the nature and purpose of the universal periodic review mechanism and highlight its importance for Colombia.
7. The content of the report was discussed during a meeting of the Peace Advisory Commission¹ in which representatives of the Ombudsman’s Office, academia, trade unions and civil society organizations working to safeguard human rights took part. Also discussed were the challenges and opportunities identified during the report’s compilation, which were coincident with some of the challenges identified by civil society and the national human rights institution.
8. The information compilation methodology implemented included the preparation of a technical annex (see annex) that attests in more detail to the progress made towards fulfilment of the recommendations made and voluntary commitments assumed in the last universal periodic review cycle.

III. Legal and institutional framework

9. The Government has committed to maintaining a just and participatory form of government characterized by the separation and independence of powers. International standards and the Colombian Constitution provide the foundations for the construction of an egalitarian, solidary society within which rights are upheld.
10. With a view to opening up new pathways to social change, in the National Development Plan for the period 2022–2026, entitled “Colombia, a World Power for Life”, the Government set forth goals and plans for a redoubling of efforts to guarantee individual and collective rights and transform Colombia into a leader and example in the protection of life, liberty, peace and other rights with a special focus on individuals and their identity, land and natural resources.

A. Acceptance of international human rights norms**Recommendations 121.6, 121.1, 121.2, 121.3, 121.4, 121.5, 121.8, 121.9, 121.10, 121.13, 121.14, 121.15 and 121.16**

11. Progress was made towards the adoption and implementation of international instruments for the protection of human rights in the period under review (see annex).

12. In November 2022, the Government passed a law adopting the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement). In order to complete the international ratification process, a review of the Agreement's compatibility with the Constitution is under way.

13. Also in November 2022, Colombia endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration.

14. With a view to fulfilling the recommendation to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Government submitted bill no. 273 to Congress in February 2023 in order to initiate the ratification process.

15. With respect to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 2022–2026 National Development Plan includes a commitment to move forward with the formalities necessary to ratification of this instrument.

B. Cooperation with international mechanisms

16. By virtue of the standing invitation extended by the State to the United Nations special procedure mandate holders, the Government established a programme of visits that began in May 2023 with the official visit of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The programme includes a visit by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, scheduled for 2024.

17. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made an official visit to Colombia in January 2023 and the Government extended the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Colombia until 4 April 2032, thereby reinforcing their joint efforts to promote, protect and guarantee human rights.

18. To comply with the obligations assumed under international instruments, Colombia submitted and/or engaged in dialogue on eight reports before human rights treaty bodies (see annex).

C. Follow-up and implementation of previous universal periodic reviews**Recommendations 120.6, 120.5 and 120.8 and voluntary commitment 123²**

19. In accordance with the voluntary commitment set forth in paragraph 123 of the second cycle report, follow-up to universal periodic reviews continues to be carried out within the framework of the National Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law System. The Government of Colombia has linked its work plans to two important planning tools, namely, the National Human Rights Strategy and the Framework Plan for Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement (Framework Implementation Plan).

D. Promotion and protection of human rights**Recommendations 120.1, 120.4, 120.3, 120.10, 120.7, 120.11, 120.26 and 120.121 and voluntary commitments 121,³ 122,⁴ 124⁵ and 123.5⁶**

20. Since 2018, Colombia has been strengthening its capacities in the field of human rights, including by incorporating important bodies of law into its legal system (see annex).

21. Articles 186, 234 and 235 of the Constitution were amended by Legislative Act No. 01/2018. Legislation has been enacted to regulate the system of review by a higher judicial body in criminal proceedings initiated in respect of persons subject to special jurisdictional arrangements under the Constitution. This step was taken, among other reasons, in recognition of the need to harmonize the national legal framework with the international obligations established in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (art. 14.5) and the American Convention on Human Rights (art. 8 (h)).

22. The current National Development Plan guarantees citizen participation and prior consultation. It includes safeguards to uphold the rights to autonomy, ethnic and cultural integrity, land and participation. In addition, it focuses the public administration on serving communities by means of: best practices and the formalization of work in the public sector; the transformation of State entities; qualification of human talent; and the strengthening of regional and local government.

23. The 2014–2034 National Human Rights Strategy remains under implementation and is now being coordinated with the Institutional Improvement Plan. Its content has been given effect in the planning instruments and investment plans through which the general public policy for human rights and international humanitarian law is implemented in the different sections of the executive branch nationwide.

24. The Government has drafted a preliminary road map for the construction of a national human rights action plan, the aim of which will be to reinforce the implementation of concrete action to improve the effective enjoyment of rights.

25. With regard to the voluntary commitments set forth in paragraph 121 of the second cycle report and paragraph 123.5 of the third cycle report, both concerning the promotion of a human rights culture, the Government has updated the National Human Rights Education Plan. To do so, it took national and international standards and the recommendations of the universal and inter-American human rights protection systems into account.

26. The aforementioned Plan sets forth 163 lines of action intended to ensure that pedagogical standards and strategies and teaching methodologies designed to protect, promote and guarantee respect for human rights are applied across all levels of education. The Plan is interlinked to the National Human Rights Strategy, specifically the components related to human rights culture and education and peace, and to the Comprehensive National Education Policy.

27. In fulfilment of the voluntary commitment set forth in paragraph 124 of the third cycle report, knowledge and technical assistance on human rights has been shared at the bilateral and regional levels under 21 South-South cooperation initiatives, mostly involving partners in the Latin American region. These projects have for the most part been focused on promoting and guaranteeing the rights to equality, health, well-being, labour, freedom of association and education.

28. To democratize and ensure transparency in public procurement, the State has developed e-government tools and open data systems and platforms that simplify procedures, improve interoperability and foster good governance.

29. Tools have been developed to enhance the understanding and application of standards, concepts and best practice in procurement. The State has made progress towards the construction, through consultation, of a public policy on transparency, integrity, legality and open government.

30. The Counsel General's Office has guided, encouraged and supervised State bodies in the application of the tools for proper and transparent public procurement available within the legal system. In criminal matters, and in response to alleged violations of public procurement rules, the Prosecution Service's Specialized Anti-Corruption Directorate is responsible for conducting the corresponding investigations.

E. Conscientious objection

Recommendation 121.23

31. Citizens can exercise their right to conscientious objection, with various safeguards, by applying to the Ministry of Defence's Interdisciplinary Committee for Conscientious Objection to compulsory military service. The application procedure is set forth in Act No. 1861 of 2017. A total of 1,281 applications have been received to date and 854 of them were recognized as grounds for exemption from compulsory military service.

F. Peacebuilding

Recommendations 120.2, 120.12, 120.42, 120.48, 120.18, 120.9, 120.17, 120.14, 120.15, 120.13, 120.154, 120.155, 120.45, 120.43, 120.171, 120.174, 121.22, 120.16, 120.68, 120.82, 120.83, 120.151, 120.161 and 120.164 and voluntary commitments 123.2⁷ and 123.3⁸

32. Colombia has made far-reaching progress and acquired valuable experience in peacebuilding processes, so fulfilling the voluntary commitments set forth in paragraphs 123.2 and 123.3 of the third cycle report. It created the Office of the Presidential Advisor for Stabilization and Consolidation in 2019. However, in 2022, this Office was disbanded and the Unit for Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement was created within the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace.

33. New instruments of various forms, including legislative decrees, regulatory decrees, public policy documents and administrative decisions have been added to the legal armoury in order to guarantee implementation of the Final Peace Agreement.

34. For example, Legislative Act No 02/2021 created 16 transitional seats for peace in the House of Representatives for the period 2022–2026 and a constitutional amendment enacted by legislative act in July 2023 provided for the creation of an agricultural and rural judicial authority that will have a key role in tackling the historical cause of the internal armed conflict, namely disputes over land.

35. The Government has provided the resources necessary for the effective operation of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, allocating a budget of over \$2,000,000,000 (USD).⁹

36. The Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition – composed of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition and the Special Unit for the Search for Persons deemed as missing – contributes to the clarification of the truth and the search for persons deemed missing and works to secure reparation for the effects of the internal armed conflict and advance the fight against impunity via judicial and extrajudicial channels and through the investigation and sanction of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Government respects the independence and autonomy of the three bodies that make up the Comprehensive System.

37. Since the creation of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, 10 macrocases have been initiated to investigate and shed light on the most serious violations committed during the internal armed conflict and punish those responsible at the highest level.

38. Decree No. 588/2017 provided for the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition to operate for three years, ending in 2021. However, owing to the restrictions caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Constitutional Court extended its mandate for a further nine months, to June 2022, when the Commission issued its final report and its mandate was passed on to the committee tasked with following up on and monitoring the implementation of its recommendations.

39. Colombia has a peace budget tracking tool that identifies the financial resources allocated to implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. The Colombia in Peace Fund is the financial vehicle through which the resources allocated to implementation of the Final Peace Agreement are administered, coordinated, targeted and applied (see annex).

40. Approximately \$11,400,000,000 has been invested, exceeding the initial estimate by \$1,450,000,000,000. The pace of public investment is being stepped up following the allocation of additional resources under the 2023 General Budget Act.

41. The Framework Implementation Plan consists of the set of action lines, strategies, outputs, tracking targets and indicators necessary for implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and is the point of reference for the inclusion of peace-related components in national development plans. An integrated post-conflict information system has been created to monitor the implementation process. The Framework Implementation Plan includes more than 30 indicators related to respect for the human rights essential to sustainable peace.

42. Since 2022, the National Government has been taking steps to expedite the execution of the Framework Implementation Plan. These steps have included the revitalization of bodies and systems created under the Final Peace Agreement with the determined intent of ensuring coordinated action to reduce violence and crime throughout the country. The seven bodies that make up the Comprehensive Security System for the Exercise of Politics have been strengthened and revitalized.

43. In the area of information and communications technology, there have been a number of advances that contribute to peace. For example, the infrastructure necessary for Internet access has been rolled out in 1,108 municipal centres, 170 of them municipalities benefiting from local development programmes. Support has been provided for communities in regions historically affected by the internal armed conflict, particularly communities of minority ethnic groups, in the form of technical assistance for the start-up of community radio services and the production of audiovisual content promoting a culture of peace. Free-to-air television channels broadcasting content related to the rights of vulnerable sections of the population, peace with social justice and reconciliation have also been launched.

44. In 2022, the Government announced that talks with the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional) were being reinitiated. There are six items on the initial agenda for the negotiations: (i) the participation of society in peacebuilding; (ii) democracy for peace; (iii) transformation for peace; (iv) victims; (v) ending the internal armed conflict; and (vi) implementation. On 2 August 2023, a bilateral ceasefire agreed with the National Liberation Army began, fulfilling the voluntary commitment set forth in paragraph 123.3 of the third cycle report.

45. Statutory Act No. 2272 on human security and total peace, which provides for the establishment of mechanisms for dialogue and consensus-building with illegal armed groups, was adopted in 2022. The Act establishes the search for peace, as embodied in peace agreements signed and any that may be agreed in future and in measures adopted to dismantle high-impact organized criminal armed groups and bring them to justice, as State policy.

46. The concept of “Total Peace” is an expression of the voices of communities that continue to be affected by violence unresolved by either military or judicial intervention and of those that have changed or been transformed as a consequence of unsuccessful peace processes. The Government’s objective – specifically, to give new momentum to implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and establish “Total Peace” – is predicated, among other things, on the lessons learned and the conclusions of the final report of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition, which highlighted the historical and structural causes of the conflict.

47. Colombia has set an international benchmark for women’s participation in peacebuilding and has earmarked resources specifically for closing gender equality gaps. The Framework Implementation Plan has 54 women- and gender-related indicators. The digital tool named “This is how women advance in peacetime” (Así Avanzan las Mujeres en la Paz) analyses and compiles data attesting to the advances in the area of gender achieved under the Final Peace Agreement. Over 70 per cent of the indicators have been met or else attest to significant progress.

48. The guidelines for mainstreaming gender in the plans and programmes established under the Final Peace Agreement include strategic guidance for the participation of women in the definition and implementation of all measures.

49. The Special Women's Agency is in direct consultation with the Commission for the Follow-up, Advancement and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. The Commission has seven members, four of whom are women.

50. The Framework Implementation Plan has a section dedicated to Indigenous groups, the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero population and the Roma, the content of which was agreed upon following prior consultation processes. The Commission for the Follow-up, Advancement and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement has made significant efforts to coordinate its work with that of the High-level Forum of Ethnic Peoples.

51. The Office of the current Vice-President of Colombia has committed to strengthening and revitalizing the ethnicity-related aspects of the Final Peace Agreement in order to overcome obstacles encountered in its implementation. In addition, support from the international community has been requested for this purpose.

52. Decree No. 1444/2022, issued to further compliance with the Final Peace Agreement and with a view to adopting a public policy of reconciliation, coexistence and non-stigmatization for the Agreement's implementation, has 4 thematic focuses and contains 151 lines of action, 8 of them related to the participation of children in peace and coexistence strategies.

53. Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes developed specifically for demobilized children and adolescents include the Different Life Path Programme (Programa Camino Diferencial de Vida), which continues to be implemented and provides specialist support for children and adolescents released from camps of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP) pursuant to the protocols approved in the Framework Implementation Plan. In total, 124 adolescents and young persons, 103 of whom were minors at the time, have taken part in the Different Life Path Programme.

54. In addition, the special programme for restoration of the rights of child and adolescent victims of unlawful recruitment has assisted 67 adolescents and young persons. Upon reaching the age of majority, the young persons were referred to the Reintegration and Normalization Agency. The support provided to the last three young persons assisted under this programme came to an end in 2020.

55. The National Reintegration Council – the body responsible for monitoring the process of reintegrating former members of FARC-EP into lawful life – has been strengthened. It has made progress in areas including: the implementation of early reintegration initiatives; the establishment of regional reintegration councils and the Special Comprehensive Programme for Restoration of the Rights of Children and Adolescents; and the formulation of guidelines for reintegration, for incorporating a gender and ethnic perspective in Agency processes and for project evaluation, among other aspects.

56. At the regional level, regional reintegration councils are being established to assume responsibility for coordinating inter-institutional management and relationships between public, private and social sectors. As at December 2022, 70 per cent of the regional reintegration councils planned had been created and were operational.

G. Comprehensive support and reparation for victims

Recommendations 120.80, 120.63, 120.39, 120.53, 120.36, 120.170, 120.181, 120.183 and 120.72

57. Upon its enactment, the Victims and Land Restitution Act (No. 1448/2011) was given a period of validity of 10 years. However, after it became clear that the Act's expiry would have major repercussions for fulfilment of the Final Peace Agreement, for the support provided to victims of the internal armed conflict and for efforts to guarantee their rights, its period of validity was extended until 10 June 2031.

58. According to the Central Register of Victims, in the period 2018–2022, 1,105,870 persons were added to the database. Of this number, 566,418 were women and 537,234 were men, 2,115 self-identified as LGBTIQ+ and 50 as intersex, 332,755 were

children and adolescents, 137,245 belonged to an ethnic group and 50,392 were persons with disabilities.

59. The Government continues to make progress in providing comprehensive reparation in five areas: satisfaction, rehabilitation, compensation, restitution and guarantees of non-repetition.

60. As a result, 54 comprehensive collective reparation plans have been completed, with all of the actions envisaged thereunder implemented and 72 persons receiving collective compensation.

61. In 2018, the Government began implementing a collective protection scheme that takes ethnicity, gender and regional circumstances into account. More than 300 requests for protection have been processed and protection measures were recommended in 152 of them.

62. At the individual level, 492,826 persons, almost of quarter of whom belong to and/or self-recognize as belonging to an ethnic group, have received compensation.

63. In total, 215,416 victims have benefited from measures of satisfaction and 153,910 have had access to psychosocial rehabilitation. A total of 122,836 households that had been victims of forced displacement, 18 per cent of which belong to and/or self-recognize as belonging to an ethnic group, received assistance in exercising their decision to return.

64. The Reparation Fund for Victims managed by the Attorney General's Office collected assets with a value of over \$215,000,000, representing the largest asset intake registered since implementation of the Justice and Peace Act began.

65. A total of 13,832 women victims of sexual violence during the internal armed conflict have been identified and have received assistance. The "Revitalize Yourself" (Vivificarte) strategy – a programme of psychosocial care designed with a women-centred and gender perspective – was rolled out in 2022 and helped 4,437 women victims of sexual violence.

66. Through the "Ombudsman to hand" (Defensoría a la Mano) strategy, the permanent presence of the Ombudsman's Office has been increased in the 170 municipalities where local development programmes are being implemented. The aim of this increase is to strengthen the Office's ability to address problems related to migration, forced recruitment and social conflict in the municipalities with the greatest concentration of individual and collective victims.

67. To strengthen the Government's presence in rural areas and prevent forced displacement, efforts to dismantle organized armed groups and organized criminal groups and to replace unlawful economic activities with lawful ones have been intensified. Members of the Clan del Golfo and the National Liberation Army (known as los Pelusos) were particular targets for these efforts and the Caparros group has been disbanded.

68. Aerial military operations and reconnaissance of land, sea and river regions under the State's jurisdiction have been carried out in order to prevent the use of these areas by the various actors responsible for causing instability and forced displacement. A directive was issued to ensure that the strategies adopted by the Colombian Air Force met security requirements in the context of the return and relocation of victims of forced displacement.

69. Conscious of the multiple variables that affect the sustainability and speed of land restitution processes, the State draw up a work plan for finalizing historical applications with formalities outstanding. Land restitution processes have been continuously improved and the bodies and mechanisms created for the purpose of assessing security conditions, identifying risks and facilitating operational coordination have been strengthened.

70. Colombia has developed innovative georeferencing mechanisms, methodologies, equipment and tools that have proved 80 per cent effective in the field. An electronic applications system had been introduced, guaranteeing the prompt processing of judicial restitution processes and facilitating the verification of information for judges and magistrates.

71. Land restitution judges and magistrates have adjudicated 3,967 individual claims, ordering the restitution and/or provision of compensation in respect of more than 93,147 hectares. There was a 25 per cent increase in the number of judgments issued relative

to the number recorded in the 2014–2017 report. A total of \$25,684,904 has been invested in a total of 4,386 productive projects, 3,128 of them family projects.

72. The Special Jurisdiction for Land Restitution has received 41 applications for interim measures to ensure that black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero communities are able to exercise full autonomy in self-government and safeguard their right to occupy, exploit and enjoy their collective land.

H. Rehabilitation and reintegration of landmine victims and education on mine risks

Recommendations 120.54 and 120.165

73. A total of 767 victims of antipersonnel mines have been registered in the Central Register of Victims. To ensure health care for mine victims, a follow-up and monitoring strategy has been implemented that encompasses victim identification, the opening up of communication channels and liaison between local authorities and basic and complex health-care institutions. The strategy sets forth a pathway to recovery and covers first aid, evacuation, emergency treatment, comprehensive care in health facilities and ongoing psychological support.

74. In total, 306 children and adolescents have been affected by antipersonnel mines. In these cases, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, the Comprehensive Victim Support and Reparation Unit and non-governmental organizations have provided additional support and the pathway to recovery envisaged under the follow-up strategy has been activated.

75. Efforts to educate the population about mine risks have continued, with more than 41,262 aware-raising activities organized. Working in coordination with the Directorate of Mine Action in Colombia, a unit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, educational establishments in areas affected by antipersonnel mines, unexploded ordnance and/or booby traps organize such events whenever the presence of mines is suspected or confirmed. The Rehabilitation and Disability Programme, which operates according to a biopsychosocial, user-centric care model under which the beneficiary has control over his or her rehabilitation, continues to run.

I. International cooperation to protect and safeguard human rights in border areas

Recommendation 120.182

76. The Government response to migration and the support and protection provided for migrants and their human rights are guided by the National Strategy for International Cooperation. A total of 525 international cooperation projects in the 11 border departments and three regional migration response plans and three humanitarian response plans in the regions most affected by migration have received follow-up.

77. Colombia has formulated annual bilateral border security plans with Brazil, Ecuador, Panama and Peru involving coordinated, joint, combined and transnational action to promote lawfulness at borders.

J. Prevention of recruitment

Recommendations 120.154, 120.156, 120.161, 120.162, 120.163, 121.27

78. Colombia has developed various programmes focused on the prevention of recruitment, some of them centred on developing children's skills, knowledge and abilities in safe and protective environments. Examples include the "Future Generation Prevention Strategy", "Join for me" (Súmate por mí), "Open your Eyes" (Abre tus Ojos) and "Mambro is not going to War" (Mambro no va a la Guerra). This last programme has been implemented in 29 of the country's 32 departments, reaching 85 of the most remote and forgotten municipalities and benefiting 2,800 children and adolescents directly and around 14,250 indirectly.

79. The intersectoral commission for preventing the recruitment and exploitation of, and sexual violence against, children and adolescents by illegal armed groups and organized criminal groups has provided technical assistance on 1,472 occasions in 476 municipalities, prioritized according to level of risk, in order to strengthen local capacities for countering, reducing and eliminating risk factors and the threat of recruitment. The formation and reinforcement of immediate action teams tasked with ensuring the application of recruitment prevention strategies have been encouraged.

80. The defence sector dealt with 161 reports of illegal recruitment and organized strategic communications activities and large-scale events that benefited 7,520 persons.

81. Colombia is currently maintaining a recruitment risk probability index. Accordingly, it has implemented its strategy for preventing the illegal recruitment, use and exploitation of children and violence against them in municipalities where the probability of occurrence is highest, working in coordination with the institutions responsible for upholding the rights of children and adolescents both nationwide and at the regional level.

82. For investigations and prosecutions related to children and adolescents recruited by armed groups, the State relies on the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Organized Crime.

83. By Order No. 029/2019, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace initiated case No. 007 to investigate the recruitment and use of children and adolescents in the armed conflict and other conduct likely to have placed their lives, physical and/or psychological integrity and the development of their rights at risk. A total of 8,839 victims of recruitment have been identified and 37 former FARC leaders have been charged with this offence.

84. A specialized care programme for restoration of the rights and support for the comprehensive reparation of child and adolescent victims who have left or been removed from illegal armed groups has been implemented. In the period 2018–2022, 920 children and adolescents entered the programme.

K. Persons deprived of liberty

Recommendations 120.27, 120.28, 120.29, 120.47, 121.21 and 121.19

85. In application of its crime and prisons policy, the State continues to strengthen the institutions responsible for guaranteeing adequate access to justice and due process.

86. To overcome the problems affecting prisons, legislative measures have been adopted in the area of criminal policy, security and coexistence. Decree No. 4082/2022 of the National Economic and Social Policy Council, which set forth strategies for investment in the construction and extension of infrastructure to create new places in the country's prisons. An institutional human rights policy that sets out strategies for promoting and monitoring human rights, preventing violations and fostering a differential approach has been formulated.

87. More than 1,000 prison officers have received training on human rights and the use of force. A workshop on the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) designed for officers of the criminal investigation police, and to ensure that they are able to identify and report acts of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment, has been running since 2018. Additionally, since 2019, 2,126 officers have completed an online training programme on the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons deprived of their liberty.

88. Various institutional and external channels have been established to facilitate the reporting of conduct that might constitute ill-treatment. Since 2019, 380 criminal complaints have been submitted to the Attorney General's Office and 67 internal disciplinary investigations have been referred to the Counsel General's Office.

89. Forums that provide a space for ongoing dialogue with persons deprived of liberty have also been established, as well as internal prison committees that take a differential, human rights-based approach and are composed of representatives of the various minority groups present in each prison.

90. Under the 2019–2022 Plan for a More Humane Prison System, 6,710 prison places were made available, 3,142 of them new places and 3,568 refurbished spaces in existing prisons. In addition, 1,478 service agreements providing for investment of \$68,262,833,312 in the improvement of infrastructure and maintenance of detention facilities were concluded.

91. According to the prisons system’s integrated information system, the period 2020–2022 saw a decrease in prison overcrowding, from 51.49 per cent to 19.9 per cent, a level representing an all-time low.

L. Trafficking in Persons

Recommendations 121.28, 120.96, 120.89, 120.91, 120.92, 120.87, 120.85, 120.86, 120.88, 120.90, 120.93, 120.94 and 120.95 and voluntary commitment 125¹⁰

92. Improving the training of public officials and strengthening public policies and internal mechanisms for combating trafficking in persons have been one of the greatest challenges for the State, given the various forms that the crime can take.

93. In the period 2019–2022, training on regulations and protocols for the identification of possible victims of the offence of trafficking in persons were provided to 2,539 public officials working at immigration checkpoints and immigration service centres run by Migration Colombia. This included training provided to members of the security forces in 2021 and 2022 under a cooperation agreement with the United States of America.

94. The National Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons set forth strategies for mitigating the risk and vulnerability factors associated with the crime. To implement the Plan, the State entered into a strategic partnership for the prevention of trafficking with operators in the tourism sector.

95. The national agencies responsible for anti-trafficking policy and the provision of protection for victims of the crime undertake joint investigative work within the framework of international cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the Police Community of the Americas (AMERIPOL) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol).

96. The Government has entered into nine memorandums of understanding providing for simultaneous action to address human trafficking and gender-based violence, led by INTERPOL and AMERIPOL, which serve to strengthen relationships with police forces around the world.

97. In 2020, Migration Colombia launched LibertApp, a digital tool designed to ensure that citizens have direct access to information and can file reports and request assistance and that the authorities can intervene immediately in trafficking cases.

98. The Inter-Agency Operational Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons receives accounts of events that have occurred first-hand, which facilitates the initiation of investigations and the repatriation of possible trafficking victims as well as inter-agency coordination.

99. A protocol for identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking in migration contexts was adopted in 2022.

100. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute has implemented the following programmes: “Working to prevent the crime of trafficking” (En la jugada para la prevención del delito de trata); the Social Mobilization Strategy for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons; the Dreamcatcher Strategy (Estrategia Atrapasueños); and the “Generation of Peace” home for children and adolescents.

101. In fulfilment of the voluntary commitment contained in paragraph 125 of the third cycle report, the Government adopted the 2020–2024 National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which establishes guidelines, campaigns and programmes for preventing and investigating the crime and bringing the perpetrators to justice, addressing the

scourge from a differential, regional, human rights- and gender-based perspective. Child labour is covered in the strategy as a form of trafficking in persons.

102. Under the National Strategy, data on victims of trafficking reported to the Anti-Trafficking Operations Centre is systematized in the National Information System. This system is being further developed so that it can be used all regional bodies involved in the collection and systematization of data on victims of trafficking.

103. Through Decision No. 0-0261/2022, the Attorney General's Office adopted a strategy for addressing the crimes of trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling and other associated offences that is intended to ensure the allocation of institutional resources sufficient to address them with the necessary diligence. The strategy has been acknowledged in reports issued by the United States Department of State.

M. Human rights defenders and social leaders

Recommendations 120.65, 120.66, 120.67, 120.57, 120.60, 120.55, 120.56, 120.73, 120.30, 120.81, 120.71, 120.77, 120.51, 120.58, 120.59, 120.62, 120.64, 120.69, 120.70, 120.72, 120.74, 120.75, 120.76 and 120.78 and voluntary commitment 123.1¹¹

104. The Government is working to improve human security and better protect social leaders and human rights defenders by taking a differential individual and collective approach that places preservation of the lives of leaders and their communities at the centre of the country's concerns.

105. In fulfilment of the voluntary commitment contained in paragraph 123.1 of the second cycle report, in the period 2018–2022 the Government took steps to promote respect and develop safeguards for the work of human rights defenders. A dedicated action plan (contained in Decree No. 2137 of 2018) and public policy (contained in Decree No. 4082/2022 of the National Economic and Social Policy Council) were adopted to this end.

106. Decree 1139/2011, adopted in response to the violence faced by human rights defenders, social and community leaders and journalists, set forth a plan for timely action in which it was established that the National Protection Unit would review the Protection Programme with a view to reducing response times, merging the Preliminary Assessment Group and the Committee for Risk Assessment and Recommendation of Measures and adjusting internal processes, protocols and institutional tools.

107. The Ombudsman's Office participates in discussions of the Committee for Risk Assessment and Recommendation of Measures as a permanent guest invitee, although it does not have voting rights, and provides technical assistance from a human rights perspective, aiming to ensure a differential approach in the implementation of measures.

108. The Strategy for the Protection of Vulnerable Population Groups has been implemented in institutional actions to prevent violence against and provide support for social leaders and human rights defenders carried out in coordination with the Elite Police Corps of the National Police. Other relevant programmes include the Comprehensive Programme of Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders and the Coordinated Plan to Ensure the Safety of Leaders of Communities with Crop Substitution Agreements.

109. The Government has embarked on a process of review and adjustment of all instruments and mechanisms related to at-risk population groups, specifically the Programme for the Protection and Security of Communities and Organizations and the National Commission on Security Guarantees (including the policy for dismantling criminal organizations).

110. Since 2016, the Attorney General's Office has been implementing a strategy for the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed against human rights defenders. The strategy envisages several lines of action for recognition of the work of human rights defenders. With regard to homicides, the Office reports that progress has been made towards

resolution in 73.14 per cent of the cases known to and reported by OHCHR and in 42.82 per cent of the cases by the Ombudsman's Office since the start of 2021.

111. In 2018, the National Working Group for the Investigation of Threats against Human Rights Defenders and other Specific Population Groups was instrumental in obtaining 9 convictions, 7 deferred judgments, 26 requests for arraignment, 12 arraignments, 13 arrest warrants and the initiation of 34 trials still under way. The team was strengthened in 2021 in order to continue this progress at the procedural level.

112. The National Police has strengthened its regional criminal investigation units, adding 232 investigative officers and 14 standing committees nationwide. These bodies are in charge of investigating and apprehending those responsible for the killing of trade union, political, Indigenous and environmental leaders and human rights defenders.

113. The guidelines set forth in Directive No. 002 of 14 June 2017 of the Counsel General's Office continue to be applied. Formulated in consultation with civil society organizations, the Directive provides guidelines for protecting the rights of human rights defenders and ensuring that they are able to carry out their activities and calls on the country's public servants to ensure ongoing respect for its provisions.

114. In 2022, the Ministry of the Interior established central command posts for the protection of life, responsible for coordinating preventive and protective action to safeguard the lives of social leaders, human rights defenders and signatories of the peace agreements, in 65 municipalities and 14 departments of the country.

N. Investigate, prosecute, punish and combat impunity

Recommendations 120.35, 120.40, 120.41, 120.33, 120.135, 120.30, 120.143, 120.134, 120.175, 120.141, 120.46, 120.49, 120.31, 120.34, 120.32, 120.50, 120.37, 120.55, 120.56, 120.73, 120.130, 120.51, 120.58, 120.59, 120.62, 120.70, 120.72, 120.75, 120.78, 121.20AN,¹² 120.52, 120.44, 120.148 and 120.76 and voluntary commitment 120¹³

115. The 2021–2025 National Criminal Policy Plan sets forth actions and strategies for addressing crime in its various forms, including approaches to preventing and addressing gender-based violence and attacks on persons of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity and on children and adolescents.

116. Awareness-raising and training in the incorporation of a gender perspective for public officials and civil servants is helping to build and strengthen the ways of thinking necessary to administer justice of a high quality with a gender-differentiated approach. In total, 1,804 persons have taken part in talks and training workshops and 6,857, including many judicial officials, have taken part in online videoconferences.

117. The Attorney General's Office has prioritized the investigation of criminal offences deemed serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law: a total of 429 cases involving 593 victims fell within this category. In the period 2020–2023, charges were brought in respect of 75,896 acts constituting criminal offences attributed to paramilitary organizations, which was more than double the number of acts in respect of which charges were brought in the period 2005–2019. In addition, 80 per cent of reports of criminal acts attributable to self-defence groups that were pending definition were processed. Regarding the search for missing persons, 1,844 bodies have been exhumed, of which 962 have been returned to the families.

118. The National Police is moving forward with a revision of the police disciplinary regulations. The update of the regulations provides for the creation of a publicly accessible system of safeguards for the formulation, consultation and follow-up of complaints by citizens.

119. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Criminal Matters has established a central unit to coordinate the activities of criminal prosecutor's offices involved in justice and peace proceedings nationwide. There are 83 criminal prosecutor's offices in total. In addition, 110 special agencies attached to criminal prosecutor's offices have been established. The

Public Prosecution Service determines and accredits the parties eligible for collective reparation and the corresponding measures and oversees compliance with the orders established in sentences.

O. Equality, non-discrimination and respect for identity

Recommendation 120.25

120. The National Statistical Plan provided for the incorporation of a differential and intersectional approach in the compilation and publication of statistics. A guide for adoption of this approach has been put together for State agencies to enable them to incorporate it in their respective information systems. The reactivated Gender Affairs Observatory has conducted a pilot census of the LGBTIQ+ population through voluntary registration and the compilation of diversity-related data has been enhanced through the “Social Pulse” survey of the LGBTIQ+ population and their well-being.

Campesinos

Recommendation 120.173

121. The Government has expressed its support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. It has enacted a constitutional amendment that recognizes campesinos as political subjects with rights entitled to special constitutional protection.

Ethnic and Afro-descendant groups: equality, non-discrimination and prevention of violence

Recommendations 120.21, 120.22, 120.166, 120.169, 120.167, 120.168, 120.176, 121.17, 121.18, 120.19, 120.20 and 120.178

122. The 2022–2026 National Development Plan provided for prior consultation with ethnic peoples and communities in order to guarantee their right to political participation and ensure the inclusion of an ethnic perspective in public policies.

123. Decree No. 820 of 2023 created the National Cross-Sectoral Commission for Historical Reparation with a remit to provide reparation for the effects of racism, racial discrimination and colonialism on the country’s ethnic peoples and establishes rules for its operation.

124. Since 2022, the Attorney General’s Office has been implementing a support strategy for the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero population designed to ensure access to justice with a differential approach for members of these population groups.

125. The State has established the Observatory against Racial Discrimination, has made progress in formulating regulations with an ethnic focus in order to eliminate structural gaps, has developed educational and awareness-raising initiatives to combat the various forms of discrimination, has followed up on cases of discrimination and has designed and implemented public policies aimed at improving regional and central government management processes.

126. Progress has been made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Security and Protection Programme for Rural Communities and Organizations, from which 41 organizations have benefited. Work to formulate or update the comprehensive prevention and protection plans of these organizations and communities is under way in the field.

127. In the area of education, diploma courses and seminars have been organized, agreements have been concluded with universities and international organizations and guidelines and policies on ethnic education have been strengthened in order to promote inclusive, intercultural education for ethnic groups.

Women: equality, non-discrimination, prevention of violence

Recommendations 120.130, 120.148, 120.144, 120.146, 120.31, 120.114, 120.132, 120.150, 120.124, 120.128, 120.138, 120.147, 120.125, 120.126, 120.127, 120.142, 120.131, 120.133, 120.136, 120.123, 120.129, 120.135, 120.143, 120.134, 120.137, 120.141, 120.140, 120.139, 120.145, 120.149, 120.61 and 120.79

128. Colombia is taking determined steps towards achieving gender equality and equity. Its strategies for achieving parity include strengthening the legal and institutional framework, ensuring women's increased participation and implementing training and awareness-raising strategies to counter machismo. The most important initiatives under way include:

- The creation of a coordinating mechanism to manage the cross-sectoral response of entities responsible for ensuring prevention, support and access to justice, using information systems on violence against women
- The establishment of the 155 telephone hotline to provide psychological and legal assistance to women victims of violence and the creation of various channels of communication between entities in order to facilitate access to support pathways

129. Update of instruments on the prevention of sexual violence and support for victims and monitoring compliance with the Act on access to justice for victims of sexual violence.

130. Adoption of National Economic and Social Policy Council Decree No. 4080/2022, entitled "Public Policy on Gender Equity for Women: towards the Sustainable Development of the Country".

131. Creation of the National Initiative for Equity in Rural Sectors, the "Ask for Angela" programme to prevent gender-based violence in public establishments and the "Binas Strategy" providing specialized support for victims of gender-based violence.

132. A total of \$1,977,829 has been allocated to the implementation of measures to assist women victims of gender-based violence, including funding for shelters, hostels, refuges and hotel services and cash allowances.

133. Some 42 homes have been opened under the "Homes for Empowered Women" (Casas de Mujeres Empoderadas) initiative. More than 130,000 women have benefited from access to a comprehensive range of services.

134. The Attorney General's Office and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace have prioritized processes and investigations focused on the needs of women, child and adolescent victims and LGBTIQ persons, applying a differential approach in all phases of proceedings. They have called for confidential consultations to collect more extensive information on the differential treatment that victims experienced in the context of recruitment and employment because of their gender.

135. The Attorney General's Office has created a special working group on gender-based violence tasked with improving access to justice for children and women, placing special emphasis on conduct that has a disproportionate effect on them, and has designated prosecutors to focus specifically on strengthening the investigation and prosecution of conduct that affects children and adolescents. The "Don't you dare" ("No se Atreva") campaign has been implemented to promote access to justice.

136. Protective measures were put in place for 80.72 per cent of the 1,286 women deemed to be at extreme or extraordinary risk. Technical assistance was provided to 289 regional bodies through programmes for the protection of women leaders.

137. By Order No. 103/2022, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace announced the initiation of the process of grouping cases of sexual violence, reproductive violence and other gender-based crimes.

138. The School for Women's Political Participation was created to strengthen women's skills in the areas of political leadership and public representation. As a result of this and other initiatives, a record high number of women have been elected to political office.

139. Since 2022, technical assistance for the delivery of the health services necessary for voluntary termination of pregnancy has been provided throughout the country to give effect

to Constitutional Court ruling No. C-055 of 2022, which decriminalizes abortion up to 24 weeks of gestation and permits abortion after 24 weeks on specific grounds.

Children and adolescents

Recommendations 120.141, 120.140, 120.159, 120.160, 120.153, 120.158, 120.152, 120.157, 120.164, 120.97, 121.24, 121.25 and 121.26

140. The Children and Adolescents' Code provides the legal framework for the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents and their families, guaranteeing the full exercise of the rights enshrined in international instruments, the Constitution and other legislation. The rights enshrined in the Code are inviolable and inalienable and the principles and rules set forth therein have precedence over the provisions of other laws.

141. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute runs various programmes for the promotion of children's rights, prevention of risk, resolution of conflict and promotion of healthy coexistence in the home. It engages in a range of actions to ensure inclusion and combat discrimination against children with disabilities and eradicate racism and racial discrimination.

142. With the aim of accessing international best practices to prevent violence, in 2019 Colombia joined the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children. The 2021–2024 National Plan of Action to Combat Violence against Children includes 184 initiatives aimed at enhancing the individual circumstances and protective environments in which children and adolescents grow and develop. In addition, 62 per cent of the country's departments have their own action plans.

143. Colombia is making progress in the construction of plans for strengthening the child protection networks in 170 municipalities prioritized for their levels of violence and poverty.

144. Act No. 2089/2021 prohibits the use of physical punishment, cruel, humiliating or degrading treatment and violence of any form as a means of disciplining children and adolescents. Accordingly, the National Pedagogical and Prevention Strategy for the period 2022–2030 was designed to prevent violence of this type. To ensure the strategy's implementation, technical assistance has been provided to family ombudsmen's offices, providers of protection services and foster families at the regional and local levels.

145. The Child and Adolescent Protection Strategy now under implementation is focused on prevention, monitoring, investigation, coordination and shared responsibility in dealing with criminal offences and social phenomena affecting children and adolescents. Additionally, the "Strong Families, Love and Limits" (Familias Fuertes Amor y Limites) programme is designed to reduce violence in social environments that has an impact on children and adolescents.

146. Children and adolescents have access to the 141 telephone hotline, which has psychosocial and legal teams ready to deal with cases of violence.

147. To prevent sexual violence, the National Early Warning System has been reinforced and children and adolescents, their families and social and community actors have received training in identifying relevant support pathways. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute has specific support programmes for children and adolescents who are victims of sexual violence and, through the "My Voice and My Rights Count" and "Future Colombia" strategies, works to identify, prevent and encourage the reporting of sexual violence and to ensure that criminal action is possible.

148. With regard to the fight against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, in 2021, there was a 180 per cent increase in the number of web pages containing this type of content blocked. In 2021 and 2022, there was a 12 per cent increase in the blocking of content showing child sexual abuse and 187 talks were organized to raise awareness among children and adolescents of the appropriate use of social networks and of criminal responsibility for adolescents.

149. Colombia forms part of the Regional Initiative: Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour. To address child labour and ensure the comprehensive protection of adolescent workers, a public policy for the period 2017–2027 and an integrated information

system for the identification, registration and classification of child labour have been created. Awareness-raising campaigns and a communications strategy have been developed and the inter-agency committees for the elimination of child labour have received technical assistance from the central Government. These and other actions have led to a reduction in rates of child labour, from 6.1 per cent in 2018 to 3.4 per cent in 2022.

150. In order to achieve comprehensive protection for children and adolescents in child labour and/or street situations, the 33 regional directorates of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute and the local governments of the country's departmental capitals have established more than 50 comprehensive protection teams.

151. Directive No. 01/2023 provides for a strengthening of military intelligence capacity to obtain information useful in the taking of decisions that make it possible to protect children and adolescents and prevent their exploitation, in accordance with international human rights and international humanitarian law standards. The Directive applies to the military procedure for taking decisions on the use of combat air power.

Persons with disabilities

Recommendations 120.179 and 120.177

152. To improve access to health care for persons with disabilities, the Health Benefits Plan envisages adaptation measures, accessible conditions, support, reasonable accommodation and safeguards. The Ten-Year Public Health Plan provides for differential action with a focus on rehabilitation-related measures.

153. To advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the education system, the Government has formulated regulations and technical, administrative and pedagogical guidelines that have been distributed to 97 local authorities in the country. Institutional coordination in the assessment and classification of persons with disabilities has been encouraged. The progress of the 200,000 students with disabilities enrolled in education nationwide has been monitored.

LGBTIQ+ persons

Recommendations 120.23 and 120.24

154. Through Decree No. 762 of 2018, the Government adopted a public policy to ensure that persons forming part of the LGBTIQ+ community and persons of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity are able to exercise the rights effectively. A group of experts was created to work on ensuring the effective enjoyment of the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons and assume responsibility for promoting, monitoring and evaluating the aforementioned policy.

155. The "Here, everyone is welcome" (#AquíEntranTodos) affirmative action initiative provided for the adoption of measures aimed at preventing discrimination based on diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity and promoting discrimination-free spaces by preventing discriminatory practices affecting access to and the welcome afforded in shops and other establishments open to the public for LGBTIQ+ persons and persons of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

156. In 2021, the Attorney General's Office issued a guide to best practices for the investigation and prosecution of violence based on the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of the victim.

P. Economic, social and cultural rights

Recommendations 120.105, 120.104, 120.98, 120.102, 120.110, 120.108, 120.109, 120.107, 120.117, 120.119, 120.118, 120.112, 120.113, 120.115, 120.106, 120.116, 120.111, 120.122, 120.120, 120.120 and 120.180

157. To enhance access to education, the State has moved forward with an active search strategy that entails locating children who are not in school, organizing education for them and implementing retention strategies to keep them in school once enrolled. It has also made progress with the implementation of flexible educational models including accelerated

learning. The implementation of these models involves training for teachers, the provision of teaching materials, and the delivery of reference books and literature.

158. Literacy strategies based on flexible educational models that can be adjusted to the needs and circumstances of people living in urban and rural areas have succeeded in reducing the illiteracy rate from 5.2 per cent to 4.2 per cent. Forty-seven literacy programmes have been implemented and the teaching materials developed for the Flexible Educational Model for Reintegration has been updated.

159. Colombia has established school hostels for children and adolescents living in rural areas that make it easier for them to enrol and remain in school and contribute to their well-being.

160. Specific programmes implemented include programmes providing support for improvements to educational pathways in targeted rural areas, living environments, coexistence and citizenship for children and adolescents, the aim of which is to bring about a change in school culture, and the National Bilingualism Program.

161. Levels of health-care coverage in Colombia are exemplary. Efforts have been focused on increasing the percentage of the population affiliated to the health-care system and ensuring the continued affiliation of existing members. The overall affiliation rate rose from 94.66 per cent in December 2018 to 99.12 per cent in December 2022. There are 1,156,480 migrants affiliated to the General Social Security Health System in Colombia.

162. Guidelines for the provision of primary health-care services have been drawn up with the aim of ensuring comprehensive care, from health promotion and disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment through to rehabilitation and palliative care, provided in the best possible conditions.

163. The Ten-Year Public Health Plan incorporates a differential, ethnic and intercultural approach and has a section dedicated to ethnic and Indigenous issues. An intercultural health system is under development. Consultations for the development of guidelines for the provision of health care for the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero communities and the Roma/Gypsy population are under way.

164. With respect to the reduction of maternal and perinatal mortality, an acceleration plan has been running in regions prioritized owing to their high concentration of maternal deaths since the second half of 2022. Progress has been made in respect of health insurance in rural areas in particular: a comprehensive health care pathway for the rural population has been launched; technical guidance for the adaptation of services in regions inhabited by ethnic communities has been issued for personnel of the General Health and Social Security System; and a preventive and predictive health model has been developed.

165. To enhance food security, the Food Security Network Programme has been promoting the production of food for self-consumption and healthy eating habits and lifestyles and seeking to strengthen the ethnic and rural aspects of food culture. The programme has benefited 1,015 persons forming part of the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero population and 2,232 persons belonging to Indigenous communities in the Atlantic coastal region and 3,389 persons forming part of the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero population and 893 Indigenous persons in the Pacific coastal area.

166. As part of its drive to ensure equal employment opportunities for men and women, the Government has committed to making a concerted effort to achieve parity in employment within the executive branch. As a result, the percentage of women in management positions has reached a record high of 46 per cent. The average monthly wage gap between men and women narrowed from 15 per cent in 2018 to 8.7 per cent in 2021.

167. The culture sector budget has been increased by 45 per cent, rising from \$94,875,988 in 2018 to \$137,497,942 in 2022. The results are described below.

168. Important initiatives launched include: the National Cultural Coordination Programme, which has provided support for 10,248 cultural development projects and initiatives; the National Incentives Programme, which has awarded 4,016 incentives; the “Share what we are” (Comparte lo que Somos) programme, which has invested \$10,595,288 in cultural actors; “Youth in Movement” (Jóvenes en Movimiento), which has funded

1,836 projects; and the Regular Financial Allowances Programme, which has provided more than 11,609 cultural managers with a permanent income for life in their later years. Approval has been given for the investment of royalties income in 174 cultural projects, 170 of them in municipalities benefiting from local development programmes.

169. The creation of the Colombia Creates Talent Foundation (Corporación Colombia Crea Talento) has made it easier for the private sector to invest in culture and the 2022–2032 National Culture Plan has been reformulated with a view to protecting diversity of life and land. Each year, 32 departments, 1,000 municipalities and 31 cities receive help to strengthen cultural programmes in the form of technical assistance for cultural activities and events and participatory spaces. There has been a 99 per cent increase in resources made available for the acquisition of musical instruments, costumes, equipment and spaces that encourage community-based education in the arts.

170. A total of 141 cultural infrastructure projects have been completed, more than 50 public libraries have been improved and/or expanded and 20 new libraries have been built with the support of international cooperation. In addition, 12 workshop schools (Escuelas Taller) in Colombia have provided 4,523 vulnerable young persons in 151 municipalities with training in traditional trades and entrepreneurship, as well as employment for 237 teachers. Support has been made available for the creation of 209 workshop schools, which will strengthen the workshops of master craftsmen throughout the country.

171. Affirmative action has been taken to safeguard and ensure the exercise of the cultural rights of Indigenous Peoples, black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero communities and the Roma. With the agreement of these communities, the Government is implementing strategies for the recovery and revitalization of their linguistic and audiovisual heritage, cultural practices and traditional trades, protection of their traditional foods and a reinforcement of spaces that dignify memory and history.

Q. Reduction of poverty and extreme poverty Recommendations 120.99, 120.103, 120.100, 120.101

172. In 2022, the rate of multidimensional poverty (measured by the educational conditions of the household, children and young persons, health, work, access to public utilities and housing conditions) was 12.9 per cent, 3.1 percentage points lower than in 2021. In departmental capitals, the rate was 8.7 per cent (down 2.8 percentage points) while in population centres in remote, rural areas it was 27.3 per cent (down 3.8 percentage points).

173. The Government has increased funding for and the coverage of programmes designed to meet the basic needs of the country's poorest and most vulnerable inhabitants and has made extraordinary allocations through cash transfers. The most important programmes are:

- The Families in Action Programme, under which health and education incentives have been provided to 11,916,854 persons, benefiting 2.25 million households, including 10,493,192 women, 625,646 persons from Indigenous communities and 70,765 persons forming part of the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero population. The Youth in Action Programme has granted incentives to 2,016,327 higher education students and the Solidarity Income Programme, created to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, has assisted 7,072,516 households.
- The “Older Colombia” Programme, created to provide protection for older adults who have no pension and/or are living in extreme poverty, which has awarded 5,336,816 grants. A pension reform plan is under way to ensure that older adults who do not receive a pension and/or allowances from social programmes receive a cash transfer.

174. The fourth iteration of the system for identifying potential beneficiaries, named Sisbén IV, has been launched and a VAT compensation scheme, a social register of all households and an equity working group responsible for coordinating and developing strategies for social and productive inclusion have been established.

175. Programmes designed to improve housing conditions are making progress. The “Mi Casa” Programme has awarded 197,060 grants to help low-income non-owner households to

acquire social housing in urban areas. The “Free Housing” (Vivienda Gratis) Programme has delivered 14,108 homes in 26 departments. The “Change My Home” (Cambia Mi Casa) Scheme has provided for the issue of 86,512 housing titles and for internal improvements in 9,300 homes and social infrastructure improvements in 58,097. The Seedbed for Owners and Savers (Semillero Propietarios Ahorradores) Scheme has 1,436 beneficiaries in 127 municipalities. Strategies have been developed for pursuing social reforms aimed at reducing the gap between urban and rural areas and establishing different schemes for water and basic sanitation in rural areas.

176. Strategies for narrowing the gap between urban and rural areas have included: “Families on their Land” (Familias en su Tierra), intended to contribute to the socioeconomic stabilization of 77,531 households composed of victims of forced displacement, returnees or persons affected by relocation; the Integrated Rural Intervention Programme, a comprehensive programme with a differential approach involving income generation and community strengthening initiatives that has benefited 25,732 households belonging to ethnic communities, and; the Collective Entrepreneurship Scheme, which has provided support for the launch of productive enterprises benefiting 13,469 persons.

R. Fight against drug trafficking

Recommendation 120.84

177. Through land, maritime and air interdiction and the eradication of illicit crops, the authorities have seized cocaine, marijuana, heroin and related inputs, destroyed drug production infrastructure, including 21,000 laboratories, and eliminated more than 398,000 hectares of cultivation.

178. Colombia is a regional leader in the fight against drug trafficking owing to its ZEUS air interdiction strategy and its lead role in the largest ever cross-border maritime operation, which has grown from initially having 8 countries and 8 institutions participating in naval and river campaigns to involving 41 countries and 106 participating institutions.

179. The Ombudsman’s Office has published a booklet entitled “Cultivation of Illicit Crops, Human Rights and the Construction of Peace Scenarios”, which provides information about the Illicit Crop Substitution Programme and draws attention to the severity of the human rights violations attributable to such crops.

180. Consultations have begun for the formulation of a new drug policy focused on respect for life, the environment, health and well-being. Under this new policy, the drug problem is addressed as a dynamic and complex issue requiring not a single, linear solution but a systemic, region-based approach that guarantees full respect for human rights and a relentless fight against multinational criminal drug trafficking organizations and the crimes associated with this problem.

S. Business and human rights

Voluntary commitment 123.4¹⁴

181. The National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights was drawn up in fulfilment of the voluntary commitment set forth in paragraph 123.4 and was implemented in the period 2020–2022. The Plan was formulated through a consultation process allowing for the perspectives of different State, business and social actors to be taken into account in policy planning, implementation and monitoring. In 2015, Colombia became the first non-European country to adopt a plan on business and human rights and it is now the first country in the region to have a second iteration.

182. The exercise revealed important advances in the actions undertaken by the State as an economic actor and to support companies in the management of human rights. Significant progress has been made in the energy extractive sector, for which a specific human rights policy and risk map have been drawn up.

IV. New and emerging issues, including advances made and challenges faced

183. Colombia has created a new ministry, the Ministry of Equality and Equity, with a remit to strengthen the design, implementation and monitoring of plans, programme and projects that: (i) promote equality and equity and reduce the disparities that separate the most vulnerable population groups from the nation as a whole; (ii) increase the impact of social policies; (iii) promote correlation and coordination between national, regional and local public policies; (iv) specify the social, public and private sector actors responsible for policy implementation, and; (v) ensure greater citizen participation.

184. As part of efforts to give effect to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) and the Safe Schools Declaration, the State has begun the formulation of an action plan to guarantee the protection against attacks and the use of schools and universities for military purposes by parties to conflict that is envisaged in the Declaration.

185. The implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security is helping to ensure that gender equality and women's economic empowerment are central issues in the negotiation of peace agreements. The development of the road map and construction of the action plan for implementation of resolution 1325 has been a Government priority.

186. The Government is making progress with the formulation of a feminist foreign policy that addresses the structural causes of gender inequality. In this way it hopes to influence public policies in such a way that the gender perspective is consistently mainstreamed. The policy will have three key characteristics: it will be pacifist, intersectional and participatory.

V. Challenges that require the support of the international community

187. Colombia values the support and contributions of the international community to the strengthening of human rights. The preparation of this report drew attention to the need for financial and technical support in areas considered strategic in the search for peace in particular:

- Definition and implementation of the preventive component of the Land Protection Policy
- Reparation for victims of human rights violations
- Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and the recommendations set forth in the report of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition. It should be noted that the Human Rights Council has adopted a resolution that will provide Colombia with technical assistance in the field of human rights to advance the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and achieve compliance with the recommendations contained in the Commission's report.

Notes

¹ Commission created in fulfilment of the undertaking set forth in paragraph 5.2.3. of the Final Peace Agreement, on prevention and the protection of human rights: "(...) Creation of an advisory commission convened by the Ombudsman's Office to provide advice and make recommendations to the national Government, State institutions and human rights organizations in relation to human rights and peace. The Ombudsman's Office and representatives of human rights organizations shall agree its composition and operation."

² A/HRC/24/6.

³ A/HRC/24/6.

⁴ A/HRC/24/6.

⁵ A/HRC/24/6.

⁶ A/HRC/39/6.

⁷ A/HRC/39/6.

⁸ [A/HRC/39/6](#).

⁹ Dollar values are approximate and are based on a representative market exchange rate of 4,056 Colombian pesos to 1 United States dollar (USD).

¹⁰ [A/HRC/24/6](#).

¹¹ [A/HRC/39/6](#).

¹² [A/HRC/39/6/Add.1](#).

¹³ [A/HRC/24/6](#).

¹⁴ [A/HRC/39/6](#).
