

Universal Periodic Review of Norway: **Summary of Recommendations and Responses from the** **Government of Norway**

I. Recommendations Accepted in the Working Group in Geneva, 4 December 2009

1. Consider the possibility of ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) (Argentina);
2. Consider the possibility of signing and/or ratifying (Argentina)/consider (New Zealand, Slovenia, Chile, China, Mexico), with priority, (Italy), ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ensuring its full implementation in domestic law (New Zealand);
3. Consider the possibility of signing and/or ratifying (Argentina)/consider (Chile); ratifying (Chile, Mexico) the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED);
4. Continue its efforts with regard to the gender policy and, more concretely, specialize in programmes in the area of education against gender violence for professionals in law enforcement and the judiciary (Spain);
5. Further strengthen human rights education and training for police officers (Viet Nam);
6. Pursue the integration of human rights education and training in school programmes and other sectors such as the administration of justice and the police (Morocco);
7. Consider implementing, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), human rights treaty bodies and special procedures with respect to asylum-seekers and irregular immigrants, especially children (Jordan);
8. Step up its efforts to adequately address the issues of gender inequality and gender-based violence through appropriate and concrete institutional, structural, cultural and awareness-raising measures (Mauritius);
9. Consider stepping up efforts to combat persisting stereotypical cultural attitudes on the role of men and women and continue improving access to the labour market and education for women (Malaysia);
10. Continue in the advancement of empowering women, particularly to ensure that the representation of women in political and public organs fully reflects the diversity of people in Norway, including migrant workers, migrant women and women who belong to minorities (Cuba);
11. Take steps to address pay gaps between men and women and other forms of discrimination against women (Ghana);
12. Continue paying special attention to the situation of women migrant workers (Colombia);

13. Implement all necessary measures to eliminate discrimination faced by persons belonging to minorities and persons with an immigrant background (Sweden);
14. Continue and intensify its efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of de facto discrimination against immigrants based on ethnicity (Canada);
15. Adopt appropriate measures to comprehensively counter any type of discrimination against migrants (Uzbekistan);
16. Improve the collection of hate-crime data by law enforcement authorities and encourage victims to report hate crimes and incidents (Egypt);
17. Continue efforts to collect and generate disaggregated data on actual manifestations of racism and discrimination with a view to evaluating the situation regarding racial, ethnic and minority groups in Norway (Brazil);
18. Consider continuing to ensure that children are not discriminated against on the basis of their religion or ethnic backgrounds (Malaysia);
19. Strengthen its policies to protect the rights of migrants and minority groups and ensure the integration of those groups into Norwegian society (Netherlands);
20. Continue its process of supporting integration for newly arrived immigrants, particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds (United Kingdom);
21. Improve, with more in-depth efforts, the conditions of young gays and lesbians who live outside large cities and for those who live in multicultural communities (Colombia);
22. Consider to continue addressing allegations of discriminatory treatment, including on the grounds of ethnicity, by law enforcement officials (Malaysia);
23. Strengthen its efforts to ensure that the necessary capacity is provided to make sure that pre-trial detention is dealt with according to international standards (Netherlands);
24. Look into the need for concrete measures, on the basis of detailed statistical data, to reduce the duration of preventive detention (Switzerland);
25. Ensure that all detainees and prisoners, including those who are mentally ill, are given access to appropriate care, including where necessary by being transferred to specialized health institutions (Italy);
26. Strengthen measures to improve the welfare and conditions of detention of children in conflict with the law (Philippines);
27. Take further measures to ensure that rights of children deprived of their liberty are fully protected, including by ensuring that children shall be deprived of their liberty only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time (Sweden);

28. Face up to the challenges and establish appropriate measures to deal with the situation of children in the juvenile justice system, taking fully into account the best interest of the children concerned and ensuring their smooth reintegration into society (Mauritius);

29. Take measures to control domestic violence, specifically for the rights of women (Argentina);

30. Strengthen its preventative measures in the areas of rape and domestic violence, looking more deeply into the statistical data to better understand the causes, developing effective policies and targeted prevention campaigns, education and awareness-raising among young people and adopting measures that are geared to changing the models and patterns that result in stereotyping of women (Belgium);

31. Maintain a strong focus on the issue of domestic violence and implement systematic measures to protect the victims of domestic violence (Italy); strengthen efforts to combat domestic violence and violence against women (Ghana);

32. Pursue efforts to counter trafficking in women and children (Belarus);

33. Evaluate its 2006-2009 national plan of action against trafficking of women and children to determine which actions were effective and should be continued in the future (France); evaluate the measures taken with regard to the action plan concerning combating human trafficking and strengthen its efforts in this regard through follow-up measures (Netherlands);

34. Ensure that foreign students are not being arbitrarily deprived of the right to education in universities on their own free choice and interest (Islamic Republic of Iran);

35. Take further steps to adopt special and concrete measures to ensure the adequate development and protection of the Sámi people (Denmark);

36. Implement effectively the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Islamic Republic of Iran);

37. Respect the rights of refugees, especially the principle of non-refoulement (Congo);

38. Take measures to guarantee proper and genuine analysis of each refugee petition on a case-by-case basis (Argentina);

39. Respect freedom of expression and religion and non-stigmatization of some sectors of society in combating terrorism (Congo);

40. In the context of measures taken to counter terrorism, pay closer attention to the right to privacy in the legislative process (Switzerland);

41. Continue its efforts in the domain of development aid, in particular in favour of the least developed countries (Morocco);

42. Continue to support developing countries in fighting poverty through its development assistance (Bangladesh);

43. Continue providing assistance and sharing its experiences with other countries in the area of human rights education and training (Viet Nam);

44. Continue to engage with human rights civil society groups in the follow-up to the universal periodic review (United Kingdom);

II. Recommendation Not Accepted in the Working Group in Geneva, 4 December 2009

1. Consider the possibility of signing and/or ratifying (Argentina)/consider the ratification of (Azerbaijan)/consider acceding to (Algeria)/consider positively acceding to (Mexico)/ratify ICRMW (Chile, Nigeria), as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Mexico, Nigeria);

III. Responses to Recommendations examined by Norway to be presented at the 13th Session of the Human Rights Council, 17 March 2010

1. Sign and ratify the newly adopted Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (OP-CESCR); consider the possibility of signing and/or ratifying (Argentina)/sign and ratify (Portugal) OP-CESCR (Argentina), allowing individual complaints of alleged violations of these rights to be heard by the Committee (Portugal);

Norway converts this recommendation into a voluntary commitment, as follows:

“Norway will consider the possibility of signing and ratifying the protocol after having completed a study of its legal implications. The study is expected to be completed within a year.”

2. Ratify (Chile, Mexico) as soon as possible (France) the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and create an independent national mechanism for monitoring detention centres (France);

Norway converts this recommendation into a voluntary commitment, as follows:

“Norway is currently in the process of considering ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This matter is a high-priority task for the Government.”

3. Consider adhering to the principles of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW) (Mexico);

Not accepted

Norway has ratified all the key human rights instruments and the ILO core conventions on workers' rights. These also apply to foreign nationals resident in Norway.

Norway decided not to ratify the UN Convention on Migrant Rights in 2002. Norway gives high priority to efforts to improve labour standards, which are also crucial in the context of migrants' rights.

4. Engage in national consultations with relevant stakeholders to consider the possible ratification of the ICRMW (Philippines);

Not accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 3

5. Consider the possibility of signing and/or ratifying (Argentina)/ratify (Chile) the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

Accepted

6. Withdraw reservations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), within the context of Human Rights Council resolution 9/12(Brazil); consider lifting its reservations in respect of article 10 (2) (b) and (3) of ICCPR (South Africa); reconsider its reservations to ICCPR, especially with regard to article 10(2) (b) and its compatibility with article 37(c) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with regard to the separation of children from adults in detention centres (Spain); withdraw the reservations to ICCPR (Portugal);

Not accepted

The imprisonment of juvenile offenders is used only as a last resort. As stated in Norway's UPR report, a guiding principle of Norwegian penal policy is that convicted persons should serve their sentences in close proximity to their homes. Due to Norway's geography and demography, the very few juveniles who are imprisoned would be placed in almost total isolation if the principle of separating juveniles from the adult population were to be adhered to, along with the principle of proximity. It is the view of the Government that total isolation is not in the child's best interest; cf. CRC Article 37 (c). Hence, the reservations are being upheld. Norway is currently establishing separate prison units for young offenders with multidisciplinary staff and close follow-up on release with a view to further limiting the number of juvenile offenders serving together with adults.

7. Incorporate the content of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) in the Human Rights Act of 1999 (Islamic Republic of Iran) and ensure that its provisions prevail over inconsistent domestic legislation as highlighted by the relevant treaty bodies (Islamic Republic of Iran); incorporate both CEDAW and ICERD in the Human Rights Act (Azerbaijan);

Partly accepted

Accepted with regard to CEDAW. CEDAW was incorporated into the Human Rights Act in 2009. Not accepted with regard to ICERD. ICERD has been incorporated into Norwegian law through the Anti-Discrimination Act. Currently, the Government has no plans to incorporate ICERD into the Human Rights Act.

8. Give due attention, in the welcome and trend-setting constitutional revision exercise, to the need to ensure maximum coherence, in conformity with international law, between the human rights obligations of Norway and its other international obligations, such as trade obligations undertaken at the level of the World Trade Organization (Mauritius);

Not accepted

Norway takes all its international obligations seriously, including international human rights obligations and those undertaken as a member of the WTO and party to international trade conventions. However, the constitutional revision exercise referred to in the recommendation is initiated by the Storting. The Government has no influence on the content of this report.

9. Further incorporate, as appropriate, its international obligations under human rights instruments into domestic law (Jordan);

Accepted

Norwegian law is based on a dualistic system. Therefore, in each individual case, the Government considers whether and how an international convention should be incorporated into Norwegian law.

10. Incorporate anti-discrimination provisions in its Constitution, especially relating to race, ethnicity or religion, to ensure the necessary protection for persons who would be mostly affected by those discriminatory practices (Qatar);

Not accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 8. The Government will come back to this issue when the Committee's work is finalised in 2012.

11. Strengthen legislation and improve understanding within society of the issues relating to disability discrimination (United Kingdom);

Partly accepted

Norway attaches great importance to providing protection against disability discrimination in its legislation. Effective legislation is already in place through the Anti-Discrimination and Accessibility Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2009.

Norway agrees on the importance of promoting a general understanding of issues relating to disability discrimination. The action plan for universal design and increased accessibility 2009-2013 is intended to support implementation of the new Anti-Discrimination and Accessibility Act, the new Planning and Building Act and other new legislation dealing with universal design. Furthermore, the organisations representing

disabled persons help to promote a general understanding of these issues. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud plays a central role in this respect.

12. Amend the Action Plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination (2009-2012) and the Action Plan to Improve Standards for Roma People (June 2009) to contain policies that specifically address labour market inequalities based on ethnic origin (United States of America);

Not accepted

The recent action plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination already contains measures that address labour market inequalities based on ethnic origin. Norway will not amend the plan at this stage. Norway's main priority for the next three years is to implement the plan in close cooperation with the social partners. An evaluation will be carried out in 2013.

Several measures in the Action Plan for improving the situation of the Roma in Oslo are designed to eliminate labour market inequalities based on ethnic origin. At this stage the focus is on implementation. An evaluation of the action plan will be carried out.

13. Work with the Ombudsman for Children and relevant civil society organizations to create programmes to educate law enforcement officials on how to proactively address the problem of adolescents from ethnic minority backgrounds feeling stigmatized by and lacking trust in the police (United States);

Not accepted

Several measures are already being undertaken with the aim of improving the level of trust between the police and adolescents from ethnic minorities. An ongoing project in several police districts focuses on policing in a multi-ethnic environment. The project will be evaluated and the results will be used as a basis for further training in this area.

14. In the future, ensure the timely provision of replies to thematic questionnaires received from special procedures (Russian Federation);

Accepted

Norway attaches great importance to the work of the Special Procedures and will ensure prompt responses to urgent appeals as well as timely replies to thematic questionnaires according to applicability.

15. Further address challenges related to the position of women in the labour market and gender representation at all levels of society, in addressing discrimination against persons with an immigrant background (Bosnia and Herzegovina);

Accepted

Norway will continue to address challenges related to the position of women with an immigrant background in the labour market and with respect to their representation at all levels of society, including through the

implementation of the action plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination.

16. Ensure that women are proportionately represented in all aspects of Norwegian political and public life, including migrant and minority women, as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Israel);

Accepted

A wide range of measures have already been implemented as part of Norway's policy on equality and social inclusion, and Norway is working continuously to implement the recommendations of the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against women.

17. Ensure that racial discrimination does not take place by including the criterion of race in the law against discrimination to ensure that victims of such discrimination, especially migrants, are covered (Cuba)

Not accepted

Fight against discrimination and racism is a high priority for the Government. In Norway, the prohibition of discrimination based on ethnicity covers discrimination based on perceptions of a person's race. An important means of combating racism is to eliminate the idea that people can be divided into different races. Thus, the Anti-Discrimination Act does not include the criterion of race.

18. Undertake a comprehensive set of measures to tackle racial discrimination and to combat resolutely all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (Islamic Republic of Iran);

Accepted

Norway has recently launched a comprehensive set of measures against ethnic discrimination. The action plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination addresses racism, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud plays a central role. The provisions relating to hate speech have been strengthened in the new Penal Code. Protection against hate speech must be balanced against freedom of expression.

19. Strengthen the 2009-2012 action plan put in place by the Government to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination against immigrants, their children and national minorities, by supplementary measures to remedy the causes of social disparities of those affected (Algeria);

Not accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 12.

20. Take extra measures to support migrants and implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of Child with regard to migrants (Kyrgyzstan);

Accepted

Norway is working continuously to implement the recommendations from the Committee on the rights of the child. Norway is implementing a wide range of measures to support migrants and their children, as stated in Norway's UPR report, and is continuously working to improve migrants' opportunities in working life.

21. Set up a monitoring system to ensure the rights of migrants and members of their families, especially rights to housing, employment and education (Uzbekistan);

Accepted

Various systems that take into consideration the rights of migrants and members of their families are already in place in Norway, including periodical reviews of the living conditions of the whole population and a specific survey of the immigrant population. The national budget reports annually on the attainment of goals for social inclusion of immigrants and their descendants. In addition, the results of the introduction programme are monitored. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and Tribunal ensure comprehensive monitoring of all forms of discrimination on all grounds. The county councils have an obligation to ensure that all pupils receive education according to the Education Act. In the housing sector overall goals are monitored, such as the goal to prevent exclusion of immigrant groups from the ordinary housing market.

22. Take more effective measures to eliminate discrimination against non-citizens in relation to working conditions and work requirements, adopt legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment and take further measures to reduce unemployment among immigrants (Egypt);

Accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 28. Workers have the same legal rights in the Norwegian labour market, irrespective of nationality. Several legislative measures have been implemented in order to ensure that workers rights are fulfilled.

The supervisory capacity of the Labour Inspection Authorities has been strengthened, and inspection of enterprises to detect poor conditions for non-citizens is a high priority.

23. Strengthen efforts to secure human rights for immigrants in irregular situations (Brazil);

Not accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 24.

24. Increase its efforts to ensure respect for the fundamental human rights for people without legal status (Switzerland);

Not accepted

Applications for residence in Norway are dealt with in accordance with Norway's international obligations. Norway offers assistance to cover the basic humanitarian needs of persons without legal status, such as accommodation and emergency health care. Children are entitled to necessary health care and education.

25. Redouble its efforts to combat discrimination against those of foreign origin in education and employment (Qatar);

Not accepted

Acknowledging the challenges we face in this area Norway has recently intensified efforts to promote equality and prevent discrimination, including in the labour market and in the education sector.

26. Accord particular attention to the protection of the rights of migrant workers (Congo);

Accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 22.

27. Generate data on manifestations of racial discrimination and on the position of minority groups in society, which could help identify patterns of direct and indirect racial discrimination (Canada);

Accepted

Norway works to improve the collection of data that helps to identify patterns of direct and indirect ethnic discrimination. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud publishes annual reports that include data in this field. In addition, Statistic Norway has published several surveys and reports on discrimination and immigrants' living conditions.

28. Take effective measures for integration of migrants in Norway through, among others, non-discriminatory access to education, housing and employment (Bangladesh); take measures to improve the participation of persons of immigrant background, especially young people, in the labour market, and to improve their access to education and housing (Canada); pursue its efforts to overcome the problems faced by migrants, particularly in having access to education and to the labour and housing markets (Russian Federation); take further measures to address the problems faced in the areas of employment, education and housing by persons with immigrant background (Japan); strengthen action to improve the situation of national minorities and immigrants, especially in the areas of education, housing and employment (Ghana);

Accepted

Non discrimination and integration are a priority for the Government. As described both in Norway's UPR report and in the statement to the Working Group of the Human Rights Council on 2 December 2009, several measures are being implemented to promote integration, further improve access to housing and employment and to strengthen participation in education for migrants and national minorities. Also, immigrants are a central target group of the labor market policy.

29. Take necessary measures to curb the use of violence by the police force against ethnic groups (Argentina);

Not accepted

A number of steps have been taken in recent years to address allegations of ethnically biased policing and discriminatory police stops with the aim of creating trust between minority/immigrant communities and the police. A guiding principle for the Norwegian police, laid down in the Police Act, is that the use of force must only take place as a last resort and when necessary and reasonable. Norway is continuously working to ensure that this principle is upheld at all levels.

30. Take necessary measures to separate incarcerated minors from adults (Algeria);

Not accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 6.

31. Undertake comprehensive reporting and statistical analysis of the scale and character of violence against women and children to determine if Norway's Action Plan to Combat Domestic Violence 2008-2011 is curbing the severity of the phenomenon (Canada);

Accepted

As part of the plan of action to combat domestic violence, a nationwide survey of domestic violence and sexual assault (rape) will be carried out in 2010 and 2011. In addition police efforts to combat domestic violence will be evaluated in 2010.

32. Assess the additional measures required to eradicate domestic violence as a serious problem in Norway by developing and maintaining a comprehensive database containing information on the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence (Israel);

Not accepted

Norway works to increase knowledge relating to domestic violence through research and studies in this field. Norway does not see the need to develop and maintain a comprehensive database on victims and perpetrators. There are strong ethical arguments against establishing such a database.

33. Toughen liability for sexual crimes, rape and child abuse and enhance the training of those working for the protection of children's rights (Belarus);

Accepted

As stated in Norway's UPR report, Norway has already taken steps to toughen liability for sexual crimes, rape and child abuse. The protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse is a continuing priority.

34. Continue efforts to provide appropriate assistance to victims of human trafficking and utilize the

OHCHR recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking as a reference (Philippines);

Accepted

The OHCHR guidelines are in line with the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of the Council of Europe, which Norway ratified in 2008.

35. Take even further measures to continue to address issues of data on trafficking in women and girls in line with recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Finland);

Accepted

Since receiving the concluding comments of CEDAW in 2007, the Norwegian Coordination Unit for Victims of Trafficking has compiled and analysed data on trafficking from relevant agencies and organisations. Further measures will be taken to improve statistics and data in this area.

36. Strengthen the capacity of the criminal police to deal with crimes related to child pornography on the Internet and inform children and their parents about the safe use of the Internet (Islamic Republic of Iran);

Accepted

In order to intensify efforts to prevent offences against children on the Internet, an online police station has been established where people can report directly to the police about sexual exploitation of children, trafficking of human beings and racist expressions on the Internet. The Government cooperates with Internet service providers to block websites that display child abuse images. Section 201 of the Penal Code states that a person who makes arrangements to meet children under the age of 16 with the intention of abusing them shall be liable to fines or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

37. Continue efforts to counter corruption and particularly to look into the opportunity to adopt legislation on corruption in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (Kyrgyzstan);

Accepted

Norway will continue its efforts to counter corruption. Norwegian law is considered to be in accordance with the UN Convention against Corruption which Norway ratified in 2006.

38. Launch, with the participation of all media, a process of reflection on the role and responsibility of the media to combat racism, xenophobia and related intolerance (Egypt);

Not accepted

Editorial independence of the media is a fundamental principle of Norwegian media policy. In accordance with this principle, the Government will forward the recommendation to the relevant media organisations

for consideration. The media, their organisations and their self-regulatory bodies have a corresponding responsibility to maintain, develop and reflect on their own responsibilities and how they are met in practice, based on the role of independent media in democratic societies.

The Press Complaints Commission promotes and monitors compliance with ethical and professional standards in the Norwegian press. The basis for the hearings of the Commission is the Code of Ethics, which emphasises the need to “respect a person’s character and identity, privacy, race, nationality and belief”.

39. Considering the high number of rape cases, take all necessary measures with a view to strengthening the foundation of family and avoid resorting to measures and legislation which endanger the very foundation of the family in society (Islamic Republic of Iran);

Not accepted

Norway does not accept an assumption that there is a link between the recent rise in reported rapes and a threat to the foundation of the family. Nor that existing measures and legislation pose a threat to the foundation of the family.

Norway implements a wide range of measures to deal with the serious issue of rape, as described both in Norway’s UPR report and in the presentation to the Working Group of the Human Rights Council on 2 December 2009. A survey on the incidence of rape in Norway in recent years will be carried out in 2010.

40. Review its practices concerning the removal of children from the family environment and seek alternative solutions, as stipulated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and ensure that all children in foster care have a legal guardian, as well as establishing a unified national guardian system for unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNHCR (Israel);

Partly accepted

The number of children who receive assistance measures in the family has increased substantially compared to the number of children under protective care. Norway will continue to develop effective assistance measures in this field. Thus, at this stage, Norway will not review practices regarding placements out of home.

Norway does not use the term “legal guardian”, but will work continuously to ensure that all children in foster homes have a person who is responsible for supervising them. (Accepted)

Norway also accepts the part of the recommendation regarding unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children. The Government is working on amendments to legislation aimed at meeting the specific needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children with regard to guardians.

41. Introduce more efficient legal regulations obliging employers to respect immigrants’ right to decent working conditions or establish a special monitoring body to support the Decent Work Agenda (Ukraine);

Accepted

Reference is made to the answer to recommendation no. 22.

42. Take effective measures to provide housing units in sufficient numbers for the disadvantaged and marginalized groups (Ghana);

Accepted

Norway is continuously working to increase the numbers of housing units for disadvantaged and marginalised people. The most important means are the housing allowance, and loans and grants from the Norwegian Housing Bank. The Housing Bank also offers the municipalities assistance in planning social housing.

43. Show understanding and flexibility for refugees and asylum-seekers who are often in an irregular situation and face possible expulsion (Algeria);

Partly accepted

Norwegian law and policy call for the practice referred to in the recommendation. Norwegian asylum policy is based on the principle of individual, fair and humane treatment of each applicant, in accordance with the Immigration Act and Norway's international obligations. Asylum seekers are offered free legal assistance, accommodation, food and health services. However, decisions on return must be enforced in order to maintain asylum as an instrument for protection, including the general public's confidence in this instrument

44. Continue to help the least developed countries affected by the world economic and financial crisis, and modify its development assistance to continue to increase the amount allocated for agriculture and stabilize populations in their countries of origin (Algeria);

Partly accepted

Norway accepts the first part of this recommendation. Norway will continue to increase its assistance to the least developed countries. The Millennium Development goals form an important basis for Norway's development policy. The development cooperation is guided by the principle of national ownership, in alignment with the individual recipient countries' priorities and varies according to each country's priorities.

45. Intensify its solidarity efforts for the rights to food and education in countries that cannot afford to ensure this due to a lack of financial resources (Algeria);

Accepted

In its budget for 2010, the Government is allocating 1,09 per cent of gross national income (GNI) to official development assistance. The Millennium Development Goals are an important basis for Norway's development policy. Increased food security is a key element of Norway's support for climate change adaptation, an area where Norway will intensify its efforts over the next four years.

46. Take a lead role in generating global opinion in favour of “promoting human rights through fighting poverty” (Bangladesh);

Accepted

Poverty is one of the greatest human rights challenges facing us today. Norway will therefore continue to promote human rights by fighting global poverty. The overall aim of Norway’s development policy is to reduce poverty and promote human rights.