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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Uzbekistan***

1. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Uzbekistan¹ at its 13th, 15th and 17th meetings², held on 22, 23 and 24 February 2022, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 30th meeting, held on 4 March 2022.

Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the third periodic report by the State party, and the supplementary information provided in the replies to the list of issues.³ The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue with the State party's high-level and inter-ministerial delegation.

Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the legislative, institutional and policy measures taken by the State party to enhance the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, as referred to in the present concluding observations. In particular, the Committee welcomes the adoption of the Act on Combating Corruption (No. LRU-419 of 03.01.2017) and the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Agency.

Principal subjects of concern and recommendations**Domestic application of the Covenant**

4. While noting that the Covenant forms an integral part of the national legal framework according to the Constitution and that courts are competent to refer to the Covenant, the Committee remains concerned that provisions of the Covenant are rarely invoked in courts (art. 2 (1)).

5. **The Committee recommends the State party to raise public awareness about the Covenant and provide capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors and lawyers, to allow them to invoke and apply economic, social and cultural rights in domestic courts. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 9 (1998) on the domestic application of the Covenant.**

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-first session (14 February – 4 March 2022).

¹ E/C.12/UZB/3.

² See E/C.12/2022/SR.13, E/C.12/2022/SR.15 and E/C.12/2021/SR.17.

³ E/C.12/UZB/RQ/3.

Independence of the judiciary

6. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the measures taken to reform the judicial system, including through the establishment of the Supreme Judicial Council and the new procedures for the selection and appointment of candidates to judicial offices. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about various shortcomings in relation to the independence of the judiciary, such as the interference by the executive and the legislative branches in the selection of the judges of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court and the appointment of judges (art. 2 (1)).

7. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to ensure the independence and impartiality of the judiciary as a means of safeguarding the enjoyment of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, by strengthening the mandate of the Supreme Judicial Council and to prevent interference by the executive and the legislative in the judiciary, particularly in the selection and appointment of the judges. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthens its efforts in implementing the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers in his mission report to Uzbekistan (A/HRC/44/47/Add.1).

National human rights institution

8. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the mandate and activities of the *Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis for Human Rights (Ombudsman)*. The Committee is however concerned about the lack of a transparent process for the selection and appointment of Ombudsman and the inadequate level of resources, which adversely affects its functioning (art. 2 (1)).

9. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to bring the Ombudsman into full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), including by further strengthening its independence and by providing it with adequate financial and human resources to effectively and independently carry out its mandate, including the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights.

Civil society

10. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the efforts to draft the Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations Bill. The Committee however remains concerned about the administrative and procedural burdens for the registration of new civil society organizations, their inability to operate freely due to restrictions and the low number of newly registered organizations, notwithstanding the recent reforms (art. 2 (1)).

11. The Committee recommends that the State party accelerate the consultation process for adoption of the Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations Bill, with effective and meaningful participation of civil society organizations. The Committee also recommends that an enabling environment including an effective registration procedure is provided to non-governmental organizations engaged in the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights. The Committee refers the State party to its statement on human rights defenders and economic, social and cultural rights (E/C.12/2016/2).

Corruption

12. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Policy (2021–2022), the mandate of the Anti-Corruption Agency and the introduction of the system for mandatory declaration of income and property for public officials. However, the Committee is concerned about the information that corruption remains prevalent and the lack of information on the availability of safe and accessible channels for reporting corruption (art. 2 (1)).

13. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to combat corruption by:

(a) **Ensuring effective implementation of the Act on Combating Corruption (No. LRU-419 of 03.01.2017) and strengthening the role of the Anti-Corruption Agency, including with provision of adequate financial and human resources, ensuring its independence and expanding its inspection and monitoring role;**

(b) **Developing and adopting a comprehensive and long-term strategy on combating corruption, including at the local level;**

(c) **Establishing safe and accessible channels for reporting corruption and adopt measures to ensure protection of anti-corruption activists, whistle-blowers and witnesses.**

Business and human rights

14. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party during the dialogue on the efforts to prepare an action plan of business and human rights. The Committee is however concerned about the lack of information on the regulatory framework in place to ensure that business entities respect rights under the Covenant and apply human rights due diligence (art. 2 (1)).

15. **The Committee recommends the State party to:**

(a) **Expedite the preparation and adoption of the national action plan on business and human rights;**

(b) **Develop and implement a regulatory framework on human rights due diligence, making it compulsory for companies domiciled in the State party or under its jurisdiction to identify, prevent and address human rights abuses in their domestic and overseas operations;**

(c) **Adopt measures to ensure the legal liability of companies based in or managed from the State party's territory for abuses of economic, social and cultural rights as a result of its their activities, and to provide adequate remedies to victims;**

(d) **Collect information on claims filed by victims of abuses of economic, social and cultural rights committed by business entities;**

(e) **The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 24 (2017) on State obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the context of business activities.**

Climate change

16. The Committee notes the submission of the revised nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement and the adoption of the Strategy for Transition to a Green Economy by 2030. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient adaptation measures taken to address the impact of climate change on the population, especially the projected reductions in water resources (art. 2 (1)).

17. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensures a human rights-based approach in its adaptation strategies aimed at countering the impact of natural disasters and climate change, including the establishment of monitoring mechanisms. The Committee refers the State party to its statement on climate change and the Covenant (E/C.12/2018/1), adopted on 8 October 2018, and to the joint statement on human rights and climate change (HRI/2019/1), issued on 16 September 2019.**

Maximum available resources

18. The Committee notes the information on the reform of the tax system. However, the Committee is concerned that the share of the gross domestic product allocated to public spending remains low, notwithstanding its increase since 2011 (art. 2 (1)).

19. **The Committee recommends that the State party increase the level of social spending at both the national and local levels, while paying particular attention to disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups and to undertake a human rights impact assessment of its macroeconomic and budgetary policies with a view to**

maximizing the resources available to achieve the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

Non-discrimination

20. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the prohibition of discrimination in the Constitution and the legislative framework as well as the information on the drafting of the Equality and Non-Discrimination Bill, which is being considered by the Parliament. The Committee is concerned about the:

(a) Lack of a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and policy frameworks;

(b) criminalization of sexual relations between consenting male adults under article 120 of the Criminal Code and the prevalence of intimidation, harassment, violence and stigma against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex persons, which hinder their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights;

(c) stigma and discrimination faced by persons living with HIV/AIDS face in the areas of medical care, employment and family rights due to the discriminatory provisions in its legislative framework (art. 2 (2)).

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

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the Equality and Non-Discrimination Bill and ensure that it guarantees adequate protection against all forms of discrimination to ensure equal access to all economic, social and cultural rights;**

(b) **Repeal article 120 of the Criminal Code;**

(c) **Review its legislative framework with the aim of eliminating discriminatory provisions against persons with HIV/AIDS;**

(d) **Establish mechanisms to ensure that victims of discrimination can seek redressal, including effective administrative and judicial remedies;**

(e) **Conduct awareness-raising campaigns targeting the public, health-care providers, law enforcement and other public officials to eliminate negative stereotypes and stigma against members of marginalized groups, such as persons living with HIV and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons;**

(f) **Consider its general comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.**

Refugees and asylum seekers

22. The Committee notes the adoption of the Act on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons (No. ZRU-692 of 4 June 4 2021). The Committee is nevertheless concerned about the lack of a comprehensive legal and policy framework for refugees and asylum seekers, which hinder their access to economic and social rights (art. 2 (2)).

23. **The Committee recommends the State party to establish national legal and policy frameworks in line with international standards for refugees and asylum seekers, to ensure their access to employment, social assistance, education and health services. It also recommends that the State Party accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967, as well as to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954 and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961.**

Persons with disabilities

24. The Committee notes the adoption of the Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (No. ZRU-641, 15 October 2020) and other measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. However, the Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities face barriers to access economic, social and cultural rights, due to the lack of effective

implementation of reasonable accommodation, especially in schools, universities and medical facilities (art. 2 (2)).

25. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to public services and facilities, and ensure that they have access to employment, health services and social services. It also recommends strengthening State party's efforts to achieve inclusive education at all levels, including through improving the physical accessibility of schools and universities, by providing adequate transportation, equipping educational facilities with adapted learning materials and providing teachers and educators with adequate training.

Equal rights of men and women

26. The Committee commends the legal and policy measures adopted to achieve gender equality, including the Act on Guarantees of the Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men (No. ZRU-562, 2 September 2019) and the National Gender Equality Strategy. However, the Committee remains concerned about reports that women earn less than men in the labour market and the concentration of women in the informal sector, and the low level of enrolment of women and girls in higher and secondary education. It is also concerned about the low representation of women in decision making and leadership positions (art. 3).

27. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Establish mechanisms to ensure effective implementation of its legislative and policy frameworks on gender equality and to guarantee full access for women and girls to economic, social and cultural rights;

(b) Adopt measures to eliminate gender-role stereotypes and to address the low enrolment of women in secondary and higher education, including through awareness raising campaigns targeting the general public in particular with a view to facilitating women and girls' participation in the economy, the labour market, education and other areas of social and cultural life;

(c) Strengthen its efforts to reduce gender pay gap and provide training and capacity-building for women in non-traditional fields of employment and in areas that will provide them with equal career opportunities;

(d) Strengthen the system of quotas and adopt measures to tackle the underrepresentation of women in leadership and decision making positions, particularly on the local level.

Forced labour

28. The Committee commends the efforts by the State party that resulted in reduction of forced labour, particularly child labour. However, the Committee is concerned about reports indicating that forced labour still exists in the cotton harvest season (arts. 6 and 7).

29. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to eradicate forced labour and remaining forms of child labour, including by ensuring the effective implementation of existing laws and policies prohibiting forced labour, by strengthening the State Labour Inspectorate to ensure proper investigation and prosecution of such cases, and by ensuring the provision of full reparations to victims.

Right to just and favourable conditions of work

30. The Committee notes the information on the annual review of the minimum wage and its increase in the last five years, following the legislative reform. However, the Committee is concerned that the minimum wage remains insufficient to ensure a decent living for workers and their families. The Committee also regrets the lack of information on the criteria of the review process to determine the level of the minimum wage. It is also concerned about the lack of information on the mandate of the State Labour Inspectorate to enforce the minimum wage and carry out inspections in the informal economy (art. 7).

31. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the participation of social partners, in the annual periodic review of the minimum wage and to index it to

the cost of living, thereby ensuring that it enables workers and their families to enjoy a decent living. It also recommends setting up enforcement mechanisms for the payment of the minimum wage, especially for the informal sector, and to ensure safe and accessible channels of complaints. It recommends strengthening the State Labour Inspectorate to enforce the minimum wage and carry out inspections in the informal economy. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work.

Youth unemployment

32. The Committee is concerned about the high rate of youth, particularly among women, who are not in employment, education, or training after secondary education (arts. 6 and 3).

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to reduce the number of youth who are not in employment, education or training by also increasing technical and vocational training opportunities tailored to the labour market, with a special focus on women.**

Trade union rights

34. The Committee notes the information on adoption of the Act on Trade Unions (No. ZRU-588, 6 December 2019). However, the Committee is concerned that trade unions are required to obtain approval by the Ministry of Justice for registration. It is also concerned that there has been no increase in the number of registered trade unions since 2016 and about the low participation level among employees from the public and private sectors in trade unions (art. 8).

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its measures to ensure the right of employees to establish trade unions of their own choosing, by eliminating the requirement of prior authorization by the Ministry of the Justice and removing the administrative obstacles to the formation of trade unions. It also recommends expediting the adoption of the Bill on Rallies, Meetings and Demonstrations, with the effective and meaningful participation of trade unions and relevant stakeholders, while guaranteeing that trade unions can exercise their rights and activities freely and without undue restrictions and intimidation. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work and refers it to its joint statement with the Human Rights Committee on freedom of association, including the right to form and join trade unions (E/C.12/66/5-CCPR/C/127/4), adopted in 2019.**

Right to strike

36. The Committee is concerned about the lack of regulatory framework on the right to strike in the State party (art. 8).

37. **The Committee recommends the State party to accelerate the adoption of the amendments to the Labour Act and to ensure the introduction of the right to strike in accordance with international standards.**

Right to social security

38. The Committee notes the information by the State party on the adoption of the National Strategy for Social Protection (2021–2030) and the implementation of the first stage of the compulsory health insurance system. The Committee is concerned, however, about the lack of coordination among governmental entities regarding different social protection measures and the inadequate level of social benefits and its unavailability to all relevant population groups (arts. 9 and 12).

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party effectively implement its National Strategy on Social Protection, including by establishing a clear coordination and administrative mechanism, with a view to covering all segments of the population, particularly those in the informal sector and to accelerate the roll-out of the compulsory health insurance. It also recommends ensuring appropriate level of social protection**

benefits for persons with disabilities, older persons, Roma/Lyuli, refugees and asylum seekers, and to conduct periodic recalculations of social allowances. The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security and its statement, adopted in 2015, entitled “Social protection floors: an essential element of the right to social security and of the Sustainable Development Goals” (E/C.12/2015/1).

Protection of the family and children

40. The Committee notes the information by the State party on preparation of the Bill on Domestic Violence and the Bill on Social Protection of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care, as well as the implementation of deinstitutionalization policy for children. However, the Committee is concerned about the inadequate level of family-based and alternative care support for families, particularly for children belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of systematic data collection on the situation of children belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups (arts. 9 and 10).

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

(a) **Accelerate the adoption of the Bill on Domestic Violence to criminalize all forms of domestic violence, including marital rape, and to ensure its effective implementation, with a view to protecting all victims and bringing perpetrators to justice and preventing impunity;**

(b) **Accelerate the adoption of the Bill on Social Protection of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care and intensify its efforts to strengthen family-based and alternative care support for children, particularly children with disabilities, while ensuring the effective implementation of its deinstitutionalization policy;**

(c) **Ensure the systematic collection of statistics on children belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups.**

Forced evictions

42. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party on measures adopted related to property and land deprivation. However, the Committee regrets the reports about the expropriation of property, demolition of houses and forced eviction in light of urban development projects. It is also concerned about reports on the non-compliance with the national legal framework on property deprivation, especially the absence of prior consultation with the affected residents and lack or inadequacy of compensation and alternative housing (art. 11).

43. **The Committee recommends the State party to adopt legal and policy measures to:**

(a) **Ensure that evictions are carried out only as a last resort and in accordance with the law and in conformity with the provisions of international Covenants on human rights;**

(b) **If eviction does take place, ensure the respect of procedural protections and safeguards such as conducting genuine consultation, ensuring adequate and reasonable notice, availability of alternative accommodation in a reasonable time, and the provision of legal remedies;**

(c) **Ensure the availability and accessibility to affordable legal aid for affected residents;**

(d) **Prevent homelessness in cases of evictions by ensuring the availability of adequate alternative housing;**

(e) **Consider its general comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.**

Right to adequate housing

44. The Committee takes note of the information on the affordable housing programmes implemented by the State party. However, the Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of social housing especially for members of disadvantaged and marginalized groups and the lack of information on the situation of the residents impacted by the Sardoba Reservoir Dam burst in May 2020 (art. 11).

45. **With reference to its general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing, the Committee recommends the State party to intensify its efforts to provide affordable and social housing, including to residents of the Sardoba region who lost their houses as a result of the flood in May 2020, persons with disabilities, Luyli/Roma, refugees, stateless and asylum seekers.**

Right to food

46. The Committee is concerned about the lack of a comprehensive legislative framework on the right to food. It is also concerned about food insecurity and the nutritional status of the State party's population (art. 11).

47. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a comprehensive legislative framework to guarantee the right to adequate food and to strengthen its efforts in combating hunger and chronic malnutrition, especially for disadvantaged groups. The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food and to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2004.**

Right to health

48. The Committee notes the information on the preparation of the Health Bill. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about reports on the inadequate quality of services provided in the public health sector, limited services available in rural and remote areas and the prevalence of corruption in the health sector. The Committee is particularly concerned about the reports on the high levels of maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate (art. 12).

49. **The Committee recommends the State party to:**

(a) **Intensify its efforts to strengthen and develop the public health care system, including by allocating sufficient human and financial resources and by adopting measures to combat corruption, to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality of health-care services, in particular in rural and remote areas and for persons belonging to marginalized groups;**

(b) **Strengthen its efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates by improving the standard of care provided to women throughout pregnancy and during childbirth in primary health-care facilities. The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health.**

Mental health

50. The Committee notes the information by the State measures adopted to improve the mental health care system. However, the Committee is concerned about the inadequate level of mental health services due to the insufficient number of facilities and professional mental health-care providers. It is also concerned about the high level of suicide rate and self-harm among the population (art. 12).

51. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to increase the availability and accessibility of quality mental health services throughout the State party. It also recommends strengthening State party's efforts to tackle and address the root causes of the prevalence of the high incidents of suicide and to provide individuals**

and groups who are at risk of suicide with effective prevention programmes and support services.

Drug use

52. The Committee is concerned about the repressive laws and policies to deal with the use of drugs, which hinder the access of drug users to employment and prevent them from gaining access to the necessary treatment or harm reduction programmes due to fear of criminalization. The Committee also regrets that the opioid substitution therapy is not available in the State party (art.12).

53. The Committee recommends the State party conduct a review of its legislative framework to ensure a human rights based approach to drug use, by removing the mandatory registration of drug users, and to consider decriminalizing drug possession for personal consumption. It also recommends that the State party develop policies to prevent drug abuse, strengthen harm reduction programmes and provide appropriate health care, psychological support services and rehabilitation to drug users, including by resuming opioid substitution therapy. The State party should also take the necessary measures to combat social stigma against drug users by training law enforcement and medical professionals and by raising public awareness, especially about drug users' right to health.

Right to education

54. The Committee notes the measures adopted to improve access to education, including by increasing preschool coverage and the ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of education. The Committee is concerned however about reports regarding lack and inadequacy of accessibility of persons with disabilities to educational institutions. The Committee is concerned about the low level of enrolment of Roma/Lyuli children in education (arts. 13 and 14).

55. The Committee recommends that the State party enhance its efforts towards achieving universal access to quality education at all levels, including by:

(a) **Strengthening measures to improve the quality of education by allocating sufficient resources to the education sector, increasing the number of qualified teachers and teaching material;**

(b) **Improving the educational infrastructure to ensure the accessibility of persons with disabilities to all schools and universities and to achieve inclusive education;**

(c) **Take effective measures to improve access to education for Roma/Lyuli children, their retention and increase their secondary school completion rates.**

Cultural rights

56. The Committee notes the information on the adoption of measures to increase the protection of cultural heritage sites. However, the Committee is concerned about reports on the demolition of houses and facilities in neighbourhoods near UNESCO World Cultural Heritage sites, in light of the urban development projects. (art. 15).

57. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the management and development of world cultural heritage sites are in line with the best practices recommended by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), including by providing for full participation by the local communities with a view to ensure their wellbeing and with full guaranty of the enjoyment of their cultural rights.

Digital divide

58. The Committee notes with concerns the limited access to the Internet, particularly for the marginalized and disadvantaged groups, which hinder their access to economic, social and cultural rights, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (art. 15).

59. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure accessible and affordable Internet, particularly for the marginalized and disadvantaged groups. The Committee refers the State party to the Committee's general comment No. 25 (2020) on science and economic, social and cultural rights.

Other recommendations

61. The Committee encourages the State party to accede to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

62. The Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

63. The Committee recommends that the State party take fully into account its obligations under the Covenant and ensure the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined therein in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level, including in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would be significantly facilitated by the State party establishing independent mechanisms to monitor progress and by treating beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party support the global commitment of the decade of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Implementing the Goals on the basis of the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind. In this regard, the Committee draws the State party's attention to its statement on the pledge to leave no one behind.

64. The Committee requests that the State party disseminate the present concluding observations widely at all levels of society, including at the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and the provinces levels, in particular among parliamentarians, public officials and judicial authorities, and that it inform the Committee in its next periodic report about the steps taken to implement them. The Committee encourages the State party to engage with non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society in the follow-up to the present concluding observations and in the process of consultation at the national level prior to the submission of its next periodic report.

65. In accordance with the procedure on follow-up to concluding observations adopted by the Committee, the State party is requested to provide, within 24 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations, information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 13 (corruption), 21 (non-discrimination) and 33 (youth unemployment) above.

66. The Committee requests the State party to submit its next periodic report in accordance with article 16 of the Covenant by 31 March 2027, unless otherwise notified as a result of a change in the review cycle. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/268, the word limit for the report is 21,200 words.