

Summaries of Proceedings of Human Rights Monitoring Bodies

(Covering the Period September 2017–August 2018)

Denise Venturi and Silvia Venier

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Bahrain – Adoption in the plenary session (A/HRC/36/2, 14 June 2018)

Bahrain received 175 recommendations during the UPR cycle and supported 139 of them, while only took note of the remaining 36 for being either in consistent with Islamic law or not complying with national legislation and/or requiring further study. Bahrain's Head of Delegation reaffirmed the country's commitment towards human rights and listed some major achievements in this field, such as the 2017 Family Law in line with CEDAW. In general, States praised Bahrain on their commitment to the UPR process and expressed appreciation for the high rate of supported recommendations. States' attention mainly focused on women's rights and advancement of the rule of law. With particular regard to the former, States underlined Bahrain's positive engagement in working towards gender equality, as reflected particularly in the country's National Plan, which is also aimed at empowering women and boosting their access to business. States encouraged Bahrain to further undertake steps in this area, for example by protecting migrant working women through the ratification of ad hoc human rights and labour conventions. NGOs and other stakeholders expressed concern at Bahrain's record on rule of law and freedom of expression, underlining the sheer number of recommendations focusing on this area and called for comprehensive reform in this regard. Notably, Bahrain's commitment to the UPR was also put into question, considering the issues and setbacks in the aforementioned areas. Criticism of Bahrain was expressed mainly with regard to crackdown on dissent and human rights defenders, also considered was an issue that the country had denied access to UN special procedures. Bahrain dismissed these allegations as being false and reiterated its commitment to the human rights system, as proven by the number of international instruments ratified.

Indonesia – Adoption in the plenary session (A/HRC/36/2, 14 June 2018)

Indonesia expressed appreciation for the UPR process and the vast participation and engagement it benefitted from. It also pointed out that the review in May had been the occasion to conduct a series of awareness-raising activities. In this cycle, Indonesia received 225 recommendations, 150 of which were immediately accepted and a further 17 were endorsed at a later stage, concerning in particular ratification of human rights treaties, protection against discrimination, prevention of intolerance and better implementation of laws and regulations. The remaining 58 recommendations were, however, not accepted, since they were not considered in line with Indonesia's priorities in the area of human rights, such as those focused on LGBTI rights and death penalty. The delegation of Indonesia admitted the existing gaps in human rights commitment; on the one hand it noted the challenges in fulfilling economic and social rights, on the other hand it stressed the Government's efforts in pursuing inclusive policy and measures, especially for the most disadvantaged ones. States praised Indonesia for its engagement in the UPR process as well as for the steps undertaken in the ratification of human rights treaties. The latter was echoed by UN Women who commended the Country for showing support towards international instruments aimed at improving women's participation in public life; at the same time, it recommended to repeal discriminatory legislation against women and girls and take a firmer stance against Female Genital Mutilation. Another area on which States concentrated their attention was measures taken by Indonesia vis-à-vis children's rights, encouraging the Country to strengthen programmes on education and social policies and welcoming the ratification of the Optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As for other stakeholders, their comments related to the worrying situation of human rights in the province of Papua, as well as the necessity to guarantee freedom of expression, freedom of religion and abolish death penalty. LGBTI rights were another area in relation to which the Indonesia received concerned comments and calls for taking initiative against hate speech, violence and discrimination.

India – Adoption in the plenary session (A/HRC/36/2, 14 June 2018)

India praised the UPR mechanism, underlining its peer review nature and reiterating the country's commitment toward the process. During its UPR cycle, India received 250 recommendations; 152 of them enjoyed the Country's support, while the remaining 98 were noted. States commended India for its engagement in implementing the recommendations received, despite the