

## **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**

### **45th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

#### **Item 6: Universal Periodic Review - Outcome Adoption of Kiribati**

Oral statement delivered by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)

Monday, 28 September 2020

The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) commends the Government of the Republic of Kiribati for accepting 88 recommendations fully, and one partially, out of the 129 recommendations received during its third UPR cycle. We appreciate its legislative efforts on issues such as climate change and disaster risk management as well as access to quality and inclusive education. However, we regret that it has noted 40 recommendations during this UPR cycle.

While appreciating the role of the National Human Rights Task Force in facilitating the country's engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms, we call on the Government of Kiribati to further ensure the Task Force's independence and enhance its capacity with technical assistance from regional and UN bodies. We welcome the completion of the scoping study for establishing a National Human Rights Institution in the country.

We commend the efforts by Kiribati to eliminate discriminatory societal stereotypes against women. However, we underline that it has merely noted the recommendation calling for broadening the Constitutional definition of "discrimination" which does not include 'sex' or 'gender' as prohibited grounds. We urge Kiribati to intensify its efforts to remove structural barriers to the right of women to transmit their nationality to their children and foreign spouses on an equal legal basis with men; to ensure equal rights of women to land ownership and inheritance; and for exercising their agency by having access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including by decriminalising abortion.

We call on the Government of Kiribati to take proactive measures to create community awareness about the remedies available to the victims and survivors of domestic and gender-based violence. We urge Kiribati to decriminalise consensual same-sex relations between adults and to amend its penal code to criminalise human trafficking in line with international standards, including trafficking within the State's borders.

Lastly, we call on Kiribati to continue its commitment towards implementing the UPR recommendations in a robust and time-bound manner.

Thank you.