

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

47th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Item 6: Universal Periodic Review - Outcome Adoption of Saint Kitts and Nevis

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

Thursday, 8 July 2021

The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) welcomes the progress made by the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis in relation to ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to tackle gender-based violence. We also appreciate the robust efforts made by the Government to enhance social security and protection, especially to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, we note with concern that the Government has noted a total of 96 out of 165 recommendations on a range of human rights issues, which include ratification of key human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Despite repeated recommendations, the Government has not taken any action on acceding to the Protocol relating to Status of Refugees. It has noted all recommendations on adopting a national system for refugee determination and enacting a legislation for the protection of their rights. We call on the Government to take all necessary measures to reinforce its commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

We further urge the Government to reexamine the recommendations and take steps towards:

- Decriminalising consensual same-sex relations between adults and enacting a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.
- Establishing an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in line with Paris Principles to strengthen and supplement the Office of the Ombudsman.
- Ensuring that its 2018 Freedom of Information Act is effectively implemented and is in line with international standards.
- Creating effective, responsive and inclusive strategies to tackle climate change.
- Harmonising the legal age of sexual consent and the age of majority, in addition raising awareness among adolescents and providing them access to sexual and reproductive health care services.

Thank you.