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Universal Protection of Human Rights and Central Europe: Slovakia

- **ABSTRACT:** *The protection of human rights is a fundamental principle that underlies democratic societies and international law. This article examines the universal protection of human rights through the lens of the Slovak Republic, analysing its commitment to international standards. The perspective of domestic human rights law established mainly by the Constitution will be completed by the research concerned with the implementation of human rights documents. The focus will be on the position of the most influencing human rights conventions, such as The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.*
- **KEYWORDS:** *Slovak Republic, human rights protection, UN treaty system, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*

1. Introduction

Human rights are essential to the dignity of every individual and form the bedrock of democratic governance. The Slovak Republic, as a member of the European Union and the United Nations, recognises the necessity of safeguarding these fundamental human rights. Since its creation achieved by the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, Slovakia has made significant strides in aligning its legal framework with international human rights standards. Its commitment to universal human rights is reflected in its constitutional provisions, legal statutes, and

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its participation in international human rights treaties. This article explores the multi-layered approach Slovakia employs in safeguarding human rights, guided by international treaties, national legislation, and societal engagement.

The concept of human rights, which emphasises dignity, freedom, and equality, has been articulated and evolving over centuries. In Slovakia, the journey towards recognising and institutionalising human rights is multifaceted, influenced by historical events, cultural contexts, and international frameworks. The evolution of human rights reflects the region's sociopolitical transformations through various historical periods. The key phases in the historical development of human rights in Slovakia were strongly influenced by the interplay between domestic and international factors. From its origins in the medieval era to contemporary developments following independence in 1993, Slovakia's human rights framework has been shaped by European influences, national movements as well as the demands arising from global human rights norms.

Generally until the 1920s a complex human rights framework was missing in the region of Slovak republic.¹ Nonetheless, the roots of human rights in Slovakia can be traced back to medieval practices and local customs that emphasised individual rights within community structures. During the medieval era, various laws and charters promoted certain rights related to land ownership, personal liberties, and local governance. The first records of Slavic law show an approximate view of the first human rights on the territory of Slovakia. The so-called *Zakon sudnyi lyudem*, which is the result of the work of the Christian believer Method, is one of the first that can be considered an indication of human rights. The eclogue with 33 articles regulated property and marital relations. Later on in the 16th century, the more well known historical document was created, known today as István Werböczy's *Opus Tripartitum*, through which several rights were codified that today can be considered the predecessors of human rights.² The Hungarian legal tradition, under which Slovakia was governed for centuries, also included codifications that provided some protection for individual rights. Concretely, the Golden bull from 1222 is today understood as bringing development and new rights to the region.³ Later on, in the Renaissance era, ideas of individual liberty began to blossom, influenced by the humanist way of thinking that was permeating across Europe. Slovak thinkers contributed to discussions on rights and governance, culminated in the need for societal structures that respected basic human dignity.⁴

1 A more complex catalogue of human rights was first introduced by the Constitutional document of Czechoslovak republic in 1920, which was inspired by natural law theories, the Constitution of USA and the Declaration of rights of Man and of the Citizen.

2 See Beňa and Gábriš, 2008.

3 Gábriš and Švecová, 2009, pp. 35–36.

4 Beňa and Gábriš, 2008, p. 41.

The period following World War II, was characterised by the socialistic system including frequent human rights violations. Even though Czechoslovakia emerged from the conflict as a winner country, after the Communist party won in the 1946 parliamentary elections, the new party has dramatically altered the human rights framework. The new regime prioritised state control, often at the expense of individual freedoms. A new constitution was adopted in 1948, stipulating rights in a theoretical fashion. The emphasis seen in the text was put on equality between citizens, social and economic rights. However, in practice, the repression of dissent, censorship, and violations of human rights became prevalent.⁵

Attempts at regime change were occasionally visible on the rise of some civil movements. The most well-known being the Charter 77 movement which emerged in the 1970s and advocated for respect of human rights as outlined in international agreements. This civic initiative called for the government to uphold its commitments derived from international human rights instruments. Although faced with severe repression, it played a critical role in raising awareness and fostering a culture of human rights advocacy.⁶

The Velvet Revolution in 1989 marked a turning point for human rights in Slovakia and Czechoslovakia. Mass protests against the authoritarian regime led to a peaceful transition to democracy. The new government emerged with a renewed focus on human rights, reinstating civil liberties and aligning itself with European human rights standards. By the constitutional amendment n. 23/1991, in 1991 the country created the charter of fundamental rights and freedoms including fundamental rights such as basic political rights, the rights of minorities, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to a fair trial.⁷

Following the fall of the socialist regime, the idea was to recreate the former constitutional scheme of Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, the aftermath on a political level was proven to be clouded in conflict, which was represented by an absurd “hyphen war”, dealing with the name of the new country. However, the conflict starting with the fight for a proper name of the country presented a clash of priorities. The peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic defined the birth of the Slovak human rights framework.⁸

2. Legal framework for human rights in Slovakia

The constitutional catalogue of human rights and freedoms in the Slovak Republic is abstract and general, thus it is able to cover a variety of situations and the social

5 Wagnerova, 2009, pp. 330–362.

6 Bure et al., 2012, pp. 141–146.

7 See Dančák and Šimíček, 2001.

8 Lukáš, 2013, p. 126.

realities of society. It can be assumed that a situation will not arise in society where it would not be possible to subsume part of the new social reality under the existing law or freedom enshrined in the constitution. This is done through the interpretation of law, which does not understand the catalogue of rights as closed and static, but as a dynamic and constantly developing and changing system together with social reality and the progress of society.⁹ The wide interpretation of the rights and freedoms enables to recognise rights which are not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution as well as to derive other new rights from the existing wording of the text.¹⁰

Slovakia's Constitution, adopted in 1992, lays the groundwork for the protection of human rights. It guarantees fundamental rights, such as the right to life, personal freedom, and equality before the law. These rights are further supplemented by international treaties which were ratified and became part of the Slovak legislative framework. Generally, the Constitution in Art. 1(2) acknowledges and adheres to the general rules of international law, the international treaties by which it is bound, and its other international obligations.¹¹ The first article is further supplemented by the wording in Art. 7, which sets the basic understanding of the relationship between the Slovak legal order and international law, by stipulating that international treaties enjoy the power of precedence over the domestic law ('*zákony*') of the country, i.e. there is no general prevalence over the Constitution. The power to prevail over domestic laws is possible only in cases of ratified and properly promulgated international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, international treaties that do not necessitate exercising a law, and international treaties that directly confer rights or impose duties on natural or legal persons.¹²

The Constitution of the Slovak Republic belongs to the constitutions that refer to the modification of a part of defined basic rights and freedoms into laws. Therefore, for its application and interpretation, it is important that the founder of the constitution committed the legislator to a rule-making activity, from which laws would emerge, enabling the subjects of constitutional rights and freedoms to realistically exercise even those basic rights and freedoms that they could claim only within the limits established by the law authorised by the constitution to implement them.¹³

According to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, two categories of international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms are distinguished,

9 Lalík, 2010, p. 1307.

10 Cibulka, 2014, p. 83.

11 Art. 1(2) of the Constitution of the Slovak republic. Law n. 460/1992.

12 According to Art. 7(4) the validity of different international treaties for whose exercise a law is necessary or for which directly confer rights on persons, require the approval of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Parliament) before their ratification.

13 Drgonec, 1997, p. 57.

which have been ratified and declared in the manner established by law and have priority over the law, respectively by the laws of the Slovak Republic. In both categories, these are legally binding documents, such as international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, which were ratified and declared in the manner established by law after 1st July 2001 and are assessed in accordance with Art. 7, para. 5 of the Constitutions of the Slovak Republic. These have priority over the laws of the Slovak Republic, regardless of the extent of constitutional rights and freedoms they grant. International treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, which were ratified and declared in the manner established by law before 1st July 2001, are assessed in accordance with Art. 154c of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, i.e. they have priority over the law, only if they ensure a greater range of constitutional rights and freedoms.¹⁴ Art. 154 c included in the ‘big amendment process’, and concluded before the country’s accession to European Union treaties claims that those international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, that have been ratified and promulgated in the manner laid down by law, hold prevalence over the Slovak legislation. Nevertheless, they are equally part of the legal order.¹⁵

Nevertheless, in addition to the domestic legislation, Slovakia is a party to several key international human rights instruments. On the web page of the Ministry of foreign affairs it is stated that the country ratified more than 50 human rights treaties including their protocols.¹⁶ Understood as the most important are the following:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): The principles stemming from the Declaration are fully accepted and after the creation of new democratic states in 1989 they were explicitly part of the Constitutional Act no. 23/1991, known as the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Later the text of the Charter was introduced as part of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR): Ratified by the socialist predecessor by notification n. 120/1976. Later on, succeeded by the Slovak Republic.
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Ratified as the ICCPR, reinforces its obligation to uphold civil and political rights.

14 Document of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic. Generally binding legal regulations in the field of human rights in Slovakia, Annex 2., p. 1.

15 Art. 154 c of the Constitution of the Slovak republic. Law n. 460/1992. See Šmigová, 2023, p. 285.

16 Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, no date.

- The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees: The Federal Assembly of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic ratified the document on 26th November 1991.
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: On behalf of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the convention was signed in New York on 7th March 1966.
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: On behalf of the former Czechoslovakia, the Convention was signed in Copenhagen on 17th July 1980. After the approval of the Federal Assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic, it was ratified by the President of the Republic with the exception of Art. 29, para. 1 The reservation was later revoked in 1991.
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Federal Assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic signed the treaty in 1988 and implemented it into its legal order under No. 143/19788 Coll.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child: On behalf of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republics, the Convention was signed in New York on 30th September 1990.
- The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families: Not signed by the Slovak Republic.
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Convention was approved and signed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Parliament) on 9th March 2010. The document is implemented into national law under no. 317/2010 Coll.

Together with numerous other human rights agreements¹⁷ this framework creates a robust mechanism for the protection and promotion of human rights in Slovakia. The following chapters will be devoted to the analysis of the application of these treaties. Several regional human rights instruments require states to file periodic reports on the measures taken to fulfil its obligations including their success and difficulties they had during the process. The subchapters will cover the most influencing elements in this respect, i.e. the mentioned reports and/ or existing landmark cases tied to Slovakia.

17 The author deemes it necessary to mention in the European Convention on Human Rights, which was signed on 21 February 1991, in Madrid on behalf of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic. Slovakia succeeded to this agreement and implements the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights thoroughly. The Convention and the jurisprudence of its court has a tremendous impact on the human rights framework of the country.

■ 2.1. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

The starting point and the most important internationally valid human rights document are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10th December 1948. Slovakia fully accepts the principles stemming from the Declaration, and after the fall of the socialist regime in 1989 it defined the rights enhanced in the Declaration in more detail in the Constitutional Act No. 23/1991 Coll, known as the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Later on, with the creation of an independent country these articles were integrated to the Constitution of the Slovak republic.¹⁸

Nevertheless, when the Declaration was being created, representatives of the predecessor country Czechoslovakia were present and active during discussions. Mr. Nosek the representative of Czechoslovakia claimed that the key element of Article 24 was its definition of the right to a standard of living. The representation that was regarding the discussion of the wording of Art. 24 lobbied for the approval of the amendment proposed by the USSR regarding social insurance. The reason behind this was the country's Constitution of that time, which included an article with the right to rest and leisure, guaranteed through holidays with pay and regulated working hours. Hence, Mr. Nosek declared, that if the mentioned amendment had been included, the article would have been more comprehensive and progressive, and better aligning with the spirit of Article 55 of the UN Charter. He also pointed out the work of the International Labour Organization, which interpreted the standard of living as aspects including consumption level, social services, education, recreation, health facilities as well as rest and leisure.¹⁹

The Czechoslovak representation was likewise active during the drafting in the later stages. Mr. Augenthaler, a Czech Diplomat, openly articulated his sadness and regret that the proclamation of the Declaration would not be a grand event, acclaimed by the masses as it would be anticipated and in place. He declared that all contemporary declarations of human rights reflect the aspirations of a truly progressive society, they are forward-looking and unambiguously highlight the shortcomings of declining powers. However, the declaration before the Assembly lacked that revolutionary spirit and had been surpassed by the constitutions of numerous other member and non-member States. The representative then referenced a passage from the preamble of the Czechoslovak Constitution, which asserted that Czechoslovakia was a popular democratic State where the people enacted laws of their own choosing, and where the national economy was designed to promote public wellbeing, prevent economic crises, and ensure the equitable distribution of national income, ultimately aiming to eliminate the exploitation of individuals. The Czechoslovak delegation had consistently advocated for the first universal declaration of human rights to include commitments for its immediate

¹⁸ See Korn, 2015.

¹⁹ Schabas, 2013, p. 2713.

and progressive implementation, yet it claimed that the majority seemed primarily focused on declarative aspects.²⁰ Generally, while the representatives of the predecessors of the current countries (Slovak Republic and Czech Republic) discussed and also criticised decisions during the drafting process, even then some concerns had arisen regarding internal matters within Czechoslovakia.²¹

Today, according to the decision of the CC of SR, from 1997, the Declaration has the nature of a political document. It was not declared according to Art. 11 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and § 1 and § 4(3) of the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 1/1993 Coll. on the Collection of Laws of the Slovak Republic. Hence, this declaration does not grant persons the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the constitution. Therefore, even though the rights enshrined in the Declaration were included in the Constitution during its drafting process, it is not expressly part of the legislative framework of Slovakia. Accordingly, a petition or part of a petition of a person objecting to a violation of the right recognised by the relevant Declaration cannot be accepted for proceedings before the CC of SR.²²

■ 2.2. *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

At a universal level (ie: The United Nations) Slovakia is bound by key international treaties in the field of human rights, to which it succeeded on 28th May 1993 with effect from 1st January of 1993. Slovakia's ratification of this covenant reinforces its obligation to uphold civil and political rights.

Decisions of UN treaty bodies in the position of quasi-judicial bodies play an important role in enforcing measures aimed at further support and protection of human rights. The Slovak Republic currently recognises the jurisdiction of seven UN treaty bodies (the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on rights of the child) to receive and assess complaints from individuals, groups of individuals or non-governmental organisations under its jurisdiction, who object to the violation of the rights stipulated in the conventions by the Slovak Republic.²³

The Human Rights Committee presented its concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia in 2016. Firstly, it emphasised the necessity to draw

20 Ibid. Continuation of the discussion on the draft universal declaration of human rights: report of the Third Committee (A/777), pp. 3045–3046.

21 While the proposals concerning the protection of minorities were on the table some concern in the subject matter were raised regarding the Czechoslovak minorities, namely the Sudeten Germans.

22 ÚS SR Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic, no. II. ÚS 18/97 of 25 March 1997.

23 See Král', 2004.

attention of legal professionals to have the immense knowledge about the Convention as such, including the need to ensure its application on domestic courts.²⁴ Furthermore, the Committee recommended that its concerns connected to multiple discrimination as a form of discrimination should be addressed. This was advised to be done by raising awareness and enforcing the existing legal framework established mainly by the Anti-Discrimination Act, as well as undertaking the analysis of the small number of disputes and small amount of compensation issued.²⁵ The Committee issued a warning regarding the existence of hate speech, adding the need to develop and implement procedures which would be compatible with the provisions of the Covenant.²⁶ In its further points there are mentions of necessity to strengthen the effort to adopt measures which fight against the discrimination of Roma children and proper inclusion of the members of the Roma community or of persons with disabilities.²⁷ Additionally, the Committee feels the need to emphasise the country's obligations with regard to the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment connected to the excessive use of force. The mentioned recommendation was based on the Committee's concerns regarding allegations of the use of excessive force by Slovak law enforcement officials.²⁸

The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review presented its report regarding Slovakia in 2024. During the review the working group performed interactive dialogue, where 88 delegations made statements. Several recommendations were included as part of the countries' statements, such as: to consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; to further consider the possibility of ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, or to consider withdrawing the reservation to Article 27 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, as well as to consider the development of the National Plan of Action on Statelessness.²⁹

The Human Rights Committee has dealt with numerous cases concerning the violation of rights by Slovakia. In the case of *Drobek v Slovakia* the applicant, an Australian citizen who was born in Slovakia, made the complaint that he was ineligible for the restitution of property removed from his ethnic German family

24 Human Rights Committee. Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia. CCCPR/S/SVK/CP/4. 22 November 2016, paras. 6–7.

25 Human Rights Committee. Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia. CCCPR/S/SVK/CP/4. 22 November 2016, paras. 10–11.

26 Human Rights Committee. Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia. CCCPR/S/SVK/CP/4. 22 November 2016, para. 15.

27 Human Rights Committee. Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia. CCCPR/S/SVK/CP/4. 22 November 2016, paras. 16–21.

28 Human Rights Committee. Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia. CCCPR/S/SVK/CP/4. 22 November 2016, paras. 28–29.

29 Human Rights Council. 57th session. Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. Slovakia. A/HRC/57/13, 2024, agenda item 6.

by the Czechoslovak government after the Second World War. He was claiming that his rights arising from Arts. 2, 17 and 26 of the ICCPR were violated. At the time of his complaint, Slovak law only provided for the restitution of property removed by the Communist government. Hence, the law applied only to individuals whose property was confiscated after 1948 and thus excluded the applicant from compensation with respect to property taken from ethnic Germans by a 1945 decree of the pre-Communist regime. The Committee has consistently held that not every distinction or differentiation in treatment amounts to discrimination and decided that there was no violation of the articles.³⁰

Another landmark case based on the individual complaint is from the year 2002, when the Committee dealt with the indictment of István Mátyus v Slovakia. The case concerned a complaint regarding the passive voting rights of Mr. Mátyus in the Town Council of the city of Rožňava. He claimed that based on the Slovak Law no. 346/1990 Coll. on elections to municipal bodies, “in every town, multi-mandate voting districts shall be established in which representatives shall be elected to the village or town council proportional to the number of inhabitants in the town, and at most 12 representatives in one electoral district”. The applicant failed to acclaim a seat at the council based on his failure to properly follow the rule of proportionality to the number of inhabitants. After several failed attempts to seek justice through domestic courts, the applicant filed a complaint claiming that Art. 25 (a) and (c) of the ICCPR were violated, as he was not given an equal right to take part in the conduct of public affairs. The Committee observed that the CC of Slovakia determined that the establishment of election districts for the same municipal council, which resulted in significant disparities in the number of inhabitants per elected representative, violated the equality of electoral rights mandated by the State party’s constitution. This occurred despite the election law’s requirement that voting districts be proportional to the population. In light of this ruling, which referenced a constitutional principle akin to the equality requirement in Article 25 of the Covenant, and given that the State party did not provide any explanation for the variations in the number of inhabitants or registered voters per elected representative in different areas of Rožňava, the Committee concluded that the State party infringed upon the author’s rights under Article 25 of the Covenant.³¹

However, the Committee recognised that cancelling elections after they have occurred may not always be the most suitable solution in cases of electoral inequality, particularly when such inequality stems from laws and regulations established prior to the elections, rather than from irregularities during the elections themselves. Additionally, in the context of this specific case and considering

30 Human Rights Committee. *Peter Drobek v. Slovakia*, Communication No. 643/1995, 31 May 1994, CCPR/C/60/D/643/1995.

31 Human Rights Committee. *Istvan Matyus v Slovakia*, Communication No. 923/2000, CCPR/C/75/D/923/2000, para. 9.2.

the time that had elapsed since the elections in December 1998, the Committee believed that its determination of a violation serves as a sufficient remedy on its own. The State party has a duty to prevent similar violations from occurring in the future. Electoral systems should avoid allowing significant disparities in the number of voters across different constituencies. Such disparities suggest that States should not implement positive discrimination measures that aim to enhance political representation for disadvantaged groups or minorities. For example, Scottish and Welsh voters benefit from less populated constituencies in elections for the Westminster Parliament, while electoral boundaries in Western Australia have been designed to favour rural populations.³² General Comment 25³³ indicates that such measures are not permissible. Although some form of positive discrimination may be allowed under Article 25, the language of General Comment 25 does not appear to permit it regarding the value of an individual's vote.³⁴

In conclusion it was unavoidable to address the question of the acceptance of the Committees resolutions in the country. Since recently the questions regarding the applicability of the opinions of certain respected committees had arisen, it was necessary to sum up with the current point of view of the Slovak CC. The CC of SR had in its decision in 2018 explicitly dealt with the nature of those resolutions which were created by the UN Human Rights Committee, as an example of a quasi-judicial international body. In the pertinent ruling the Court stipulated that these resolutions have a non-binding character even though they may be well respected. The aforementioned non-binding force is additionally supported by the interpretation of scholars which generally agree with such nature of the resolutions.³⁵ Hence, even though the outcomes of the work of the Committee are generally understood, as well as respected, Slovakia reserves its right to turn to different solutions.

■ 2.3. *The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural*

The Slovak Republic is a State party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was signed on behalf of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on 7th October 1968. As the legal successor to the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the country became a State party to the Covenant on 28th May 1993, with a retroactive effect from 1st January 1993. In its capacity as a State party to the Covenant, it submits periodic reports to the Committee on Economic, Social

32 See *McGinty v Western Australia*, 1996, 186 CLR, p. 140.

33 ICCPR General Comment 25, 1996.

34 See *Partsch*, 1981, p. 240.

35 Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak republic. N. II. Ús 319/2018 from 30 August 2018.

and Cultural Rights regarding the implementation of the Covenant in accordance with Articles 16 and 17.³⁶

By ratification of the Covenant the country reflected its commitment to ensure not only civil liberties but also socio-economic rights. In connection with the adoption of the legislation necessary to ensure its obligations arising from its text, several questions arose during the Slovak constitutional discourse. The primary concern was regarding whether the legislator was obliged or only authorised to accept legal regulation according to Art. 51, para. 1 of the constitution, which mainly concerns economic, social and cultural rights. The reasoning of the CC of SR, as well as a large part of the doctrinal statement, expressed itself clearly, namely that it is a constitutional obligation of the legislator to adopt a law, the fulfilment of which can be assessed by the Constitutional Court. Thus, the legislator would violate the constitution if they did not adopt the legislation. The legislator's obligation to adopt legal regulations applies to the area of substantive as well as to the area of procedural law. That is, the positive commitment of the state to adopt an adjustment in both matter and form.³⁷

Regarding the latest report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights performed in 2019 the Committee had several recommendations based on its principal subjects of concern. First of all, it reiterated its previous recommendation from 2012 demanding to increase the knowledge of numerous law professionals related to the Covenant, as it observed the lack of its application in domestic court decisions.³⁸ Furthermore, it expressed its concern regarding the functioning of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights. The Committee claimed that the Centre was not appropriately independent as required, according to the Paris Principles, that it was not fully transparent regarding the recruitment processes, and that it lacked proper funding. The main concern was the effective cooperation of the national human rights protection bodies, such as the mentioned Centre, the Public Defender of Rights, the commissioner for persons with disabilities and commissioner for children.³⁹ Moreover, the Committee suggested the amendment of the anti-discrimination act from 2004, by removing the obstacles for a judicial remedy for victims, and drawing attention to the possibilities of protection provided by the act towards numerous minority groups.⁴⁰ With regards to discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, the

36 Economic and Social Council. Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Second periodic reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant. N. E/C.12/SVK/2. 14 January 2011. paras. 1–2.

37 Drgonec, 1996, p. 10.

38 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, n. E/C.12/SVK/CO/3, 14 November 2019, paras. 4–5.

39 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, n. E/C.12/SVK/CO/3, 14 November 2019, paras. 6–7.

40 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, n. E/C.12/SVK/CO/3, 14 November 2019, para. 13.

Committee suggested to develop legal institutions, such as registered partnerships or civil unions, as Slovakia did not recognise these forms of cohabitation and provided no legal background for same-sex relationships.⁴¹ The Committee observed that a small number of men took paternity leave, which correlates with the lack of appreciation regarding unpaid care work. Lastly, it is necessary to mention that the Committee sounded a warning with regards to issues related to violence against women, by recommending the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and emphasised that it was necessary to ensure a national strategy preventing and resolving several issues concerning the Roma minority, including homelessness, preschool education, segregation and reproductive health.⁴²

3. Slovakia's relationship with other conventions

The notification of succession to numerous UN human rights multilateral conventions took place on 28th May 1993 with a retroactive effect from the creation of the country on 1st January 1993. The notification of succession is published in the Collection of Laws under number 53/1994 Coll.

■ 3.1. *The 1951 Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees*

The Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees from 1951 (signed in Geneva) together with its Protocol from 1967 (signed in New York) are considered the main sources of refugee law. Both documents reflect basic human values and are the first and only instruments at global level that specifically regulate the treatment of those forced to leave their homes due to the severance of ties with their country of origin. The Federal Assembly of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic ratified the document on 26th November 1991, and it entered into force for the mentioned predecessor country on 24th February 1992. The Slovak Republic assumed these international obligations as part of the succession immediately after the division of Czechoslovakia.⁴³

The most important law regulating the stay of foreigners in Slovakia, which implements the articles of the Convention, is Act No. 48/2002 Coll. on the residence of foreigners. According to the Act on the residence of foreigners, a foreigner is anyone who is not a citizen of the Republic. However, the stay of citizens of the European Union and the European Economic Area, who are also foreigners from the point of view of the law, is governed by a special regime. A foreigner can apply

41 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, n. E/C.12/SVK/CO/3, 14 November 2019, paras. 15.

42 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, n. E/C.12/SVK/CO/3, 14 November 2019, paras. 29–51.

43 Pytelová, 2009, p. 149.

for a permit for one of three types of residence: permanent residence, temporary residence or tolerated residence.⁴⁴

More recently, in 2024, the country celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Slovakia, where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised that over the past three decades the UNHCR has supported significant activities at the national level to protect refugees and other persons in need. The agreement regarding the legal status, immunities and privileges of UNHCR and its staff in the Slovak Republic was signed on 1st March 1994. For 30 years, UNHCR has worked closely with state authorities, including local and self-governing authorities, UN agencies and national partners.⁴⁵

■ 3.2. *The 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was initially promulgated on behalf of the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in 1966. The National Assembly expressed its agreement with the text of the convention and the president of the republic ratified it on 29th December 1966. The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, depositary of the Convention, on 29th December 1966. It entered into force on 4th January 1969, and on that date, it also became valid for former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (publication in the collection of laws under No. 95/1974 Coll.). As a result of the succession, Slovak Republic became a party to the convention on 28th May 1993, with retroactive effect from 1st January 1993.⁴⁶

The effectiveness of the Convention can be seen on the implementation of several laws, such as the amendment to the Education Act in 2021, which among other things, requires pre-school attendance for all children from the age of five, and hence has had an effect on the Roma minority, as well as the adoption of the Strategy for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation for the years 2021-2030. Since the Convention has been in force, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination made thirteen reports regarding the circumstances in

44 Pytelová, 2009, p. 147.

45 See Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been helping in Slovakia for 30 years, 2024.

46 Presentation report on the proposal to change an article of an international convention. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination – Art. 8, 2006.

the country and decided upon two individual complaints on merit.⁴⁷ In the latest report, published in 2022, the Committee articulated its satisfaction with the amendments of acts, such as the Schools Act or the Act on Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings in 2021, introducing items such as mother tongue, nationality and ethnicity, which can provide reliable statistics on the composition of the population. Nevertheless, it also expressed its concerns and recommendations with regard to the effective implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act and the efforts of the Slovak Centre for Human Rights.⁴⁸

■ 3.3. *The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*

Similarly, the Federal Assembly of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had been the original country to agree to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Nonetheless, the President had accepted with a reservation that the Republic, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 29 of the Convention, does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of its Article 29. The Socialist Republic was of the opinion that any disputes regarding the interpretation or implementation of this Convention should be resolved by possible negotiation between the parties to the dispute, or by any other method agreed upon by the parties to the dispute. The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 1982. The Convention entered into force for the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on 1982, to which Slovakia have succeeded.⁴⁹

The country has implemented the obligations stemming from the Convention on different levels of legal regulations. The most influential are the constitutional rights of employees (both women and men) to freely choose a profession and to prepare for it, the right to start a business and perform other economic activities, the right to work and obtain adequate material security in the event of a job loss or the impossibility of employment, and the right to fair and satisfactory working conditions, which are regulated by laws such as Act NR SR no. 387/1996 Coll, The Labor Code, the Act on safety and health protection at work, the Act on wages, remuneration for work readiness and average earnings, as amended or the

47 The first decision on merits is from 2003 where the Committee decided upon communication No. 31/2003, regarding the complaint of Ms. L.R. et. al., Roma ethnicity citizens residing in Dobšiná, claimed that Slovakia had violated their rights stemming in Art. 2, Art. 4, Art. 5 and Art. 6 of the Convention. The Committee in the present case found violation of several mentioned articles. The second merital decision is from 2016, where the Committee decided upon communication No. 56/2014, regarding the complaint of V.S. where a Roma origin national claimed to be a victim of violation by Slovakia of Art. 2 read in conjunction with Arts. 5 and 6 of the Convention. The Committee claimed that the State have violated Art. 2. of the Convention.

48 Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Concluding observations on the thirteenth periodic report of Slovakia, N. CERDPC/SVK/CO/13, 2022.

49 See Decree of the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 13 May 1987 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1987.

Act on salary and remuneration for on-call work in budgetary, and certain other organisations and bodies, as amended.⁵⁰

The body of the Convention, The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women, has until today made seven reports on the situation in Slovakia and one decision on the merits of the individual complaint mechanism.⁵¹ The last report from 2023 recommends the implementation of further measures to redress inequalities between men and women, such as the revision of the Anti-Discrimination Act in order to eliminate any form of discrimination. The Committee in the report promotes the necessity to improve the effectiveness of judicial proceedings to ensure adequate and timely judicial remedies in sex-based and gender-based discrimination cases. Additionally, it recommends the implementation of temporary special measures to achieve the equality of women and men in fields where there is a visible underrepresentation of women. Here, the Committee refers to leadership positions in political and economic life, where there is an obvious gender gap in Slovakia.⁵²

The latest survey of the Statistical office of Slovakia from 2019 claimed that women generally earn a fifth less than men in the country. The smallest wage differences are in sectors such as education, social services and healthcare, whereas the biggest wage disparities appear in financial intermediation, trade and industrial production.⁵³ Besides the UN international treaty, Slovakia has adapted into its legal system all the European Union directives regarding equal opportunities for women and men, including Council Directive no. 75/11/EEC, which concerns the principle of equal pay for men and women. However, the application of this principle in practice and the absence of control and institutional mechanisms at various levels remains a problem.⁵⁴

■ 3.4. *The 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*

Slovakia similarly succeeded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Acts in 1993 as its predecessor signed the treaty in 1988 and

50 See Ministry of Foreign Affairs Appendix to the text of the original report of the Slovak Republic, 1995.

51 The decision is from 2016, where the Committee decided upon communication No. 66/2014, where the victim claimed that she is a victim of discrimination on the grounds of gender and her marital and family status in violation of Art. 2 read in conjunction with Art. 1 and 11 of the Convention. The Committee in the case observes that Slovakia has violated the petitioners' rights.

52 Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report. N. CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/7. 31 May 2023, paras. 9–19.

53 See Publication of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. Structure of wages in the Slovak Republic in 2019.

54 Svoreňová, 2009, p. 62.

implemented it into its legal order by publication in the collection of laws under No. 143/19788 Coll.

Slovakia has implemented the articles of the Convention in through numerous amendments of its legislature. This implementation may be seen in the amendments of the Criminal Code by strengthening the basic legal guarantees; amendment of the Act no. 274/2017 Coll. on the victims of the crimes which established a number of measures aimed at protecting and providing redress and rehabilitation to victims of torture and ill-treatment including the definition of “criminal act of domestic violence”, from 2017; later the amendment of the Criminal Code via Act no. 161/2018 Coll., which mandated the use of technical devices intended for sound recording and image during the interrogation of juveniles, or Act no. 321/2018 Coll., amending the Act on Probation and mediation officers and some laws which are allowed to perform various non-custodial measures.⁵⁵

Slovakia, as a contracting party, is among the countries where, as a rule, there are no proceedings that could be characterised as seriously disturbing or systematically supporting the practice of torture.⁵⁶ According to the latest report on the implementation of the convention by Slovakia from 2023, it can be concluded that the treatment of members of the Roma national minority appears to be the most problematic, in relation to the disproportionate use of force by the police during interventions against the Roma. In the pertinent report the Committee articulated its concerns about reports of the excessive use of force, along with verbal threats and verbal abuse, by law enforcement officials against members of the aforementioned community. Hence, the Committee recommended the State party to carry out an effective investigation of all allegations of the excessive use of force by officials including their following prosecution on the basis of this investigation. The Committee additionally recommends to record on video all actions by the police which could have investigative and preventive advantages.⁵⁷

Although the Committee expressed its concerns regarding the treatment coming from law enforcement officials, so far there has been only one decision made on merit of an individual complaint from 2018. The complainant claims that the State party violated the rights of the petitioner Lucia Černáková under Articles 1, 2 (1), 4 (1), 11, 12, 14 (1) and 16 (1) of the Convention. The complaint was regarding her treatment in a social care facility in Slovakia, as she was a woman with combined intellectual disabilities and an autism spectrum disorder. As there were several issues regarding her behaviour, the institution took the measures of placing her in a cage bed and giving her sedatives. After deliberations covering different aspects of the case, the Committee reached a conclusion that based

55 Committee against Torture. Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Slovakia. N. CAT/C/SVK/CO/4, 7 June 2023, para. 5.

56 See Chrenšť, 2018, pp. 126–131.

57 Committee against Torture. Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Slovakia. N. CAT/C/SVK/CO/4, 7 June 2023, paras. 9–16.

on the State's duty to exercise due diligence, the actions of the facility should be understood as having an effect on state responsibility. Finally, the Committee concluded that there has been a violation of Art. 2 read in conjunction with Art. 16, Art. 4, Art. 11, Art. 12 and Art. 14 of the Convention.⁵⁸

■ 3.5. *The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child*

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was promulgated in the Czechoslovak Federative Republic under Collection of Laws by notification of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs no. 104/1991 of 6 February 1991. Slovakia later in 1993 succeeded to the Convention.

The most visible implementation of the Convention may be seen on the establishment of the Children's Commissioner Office, understood as an independent body that participates in the protection of children's rights by supporting and enforcing the rights granted to children by the Convention. It is established by Act no. 176/2015 Coll. on the Commissioner for Children and the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and on Amendments to Certain Acts as amended.⁵⁹

In recent years, at UN level, Slovakia has made a significant profile in the child rights agenda, when it presented itself for the first time as a leader and coordinator of the process of preparing an international treaty on human rights. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the notification procedure brought a further strengthening of guarantees for the protection of children's rights. It established a notification (complaint) mechanism, due to which it is possible to contact the Committee on the Rights of the Child in cases of the violation of rights arising from the Convention or its substantive optional protocols. Slovakia became a party to the optional protocol as the ninth UN member country.⁶⁰

The Committee on the rights of the child is currently undergoing its sixth periodic report on the situation in Slovakia in 2024. The last known step was the demand to submit additional information to the Committee.⁶¹ Nevertheless, previous report from 2016 recommended that the State ensure that the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality and the Committee for Children and Young People have sufficient authority to coordinate activities related to the implementation of the Convention. Additionally, it recommended to reinstate as a priority, the task of implementing a method for

58 Committee against Torture, Decision adopted by the Committee under article 22 of the Convention, concerning communication No. 890/2018. 21 January 2022.

59 Committee on the Rights of the Child. The sixth periodic report of the Slovak Republic on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. 19.4.2023.

60 National strategy for the protection and support of human rights in Slovakia republic, 2014, p. 10. [Online]. Available at: <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int> (Accessed: 22 August 2024).

61 Committee on the Rights of the Child. Lost of issues in relation to the sixth periodic report of Slovakia. N. CRC/C/SVK/Q/6. 28 February 2024.

tracking resources allocated for children's rights, within the National Action Plan for Children.⁶²

■ 3.6. *The 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was not signed or ratified by the Slovak Republic. The reasoning of the government behind such a decision was, that by ratifying the aforementioned convention, the country would become responsible for obligations beyond the scope of the current national regulation, which was already considered sufficient.⁶³ Nevertheless, many of the rights granted under this convention, which is specifically oriented towards migrant workers, also derive from more general core international human rights instruments.⁶⁴

■ 3.7. *The 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

By notification of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic no. 317/2010 Coll. the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted into the legal framework of the country. It entered into force on 25th June 2010. Since then Slovakia has filed three reports, out of which the second and third are combined and currently ongoing. Concretely, the combined last report was filed on 10th October 2024. As to the first and only concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, the Committee has recommended the country to develop a policy or action plan to implement the Convention among Roma people. Additionally, the Committee has recommended the enactment of disability-based anti-discrimination legislation in all sectors, including proper training in both public and private sectors. The Committee's recommendations regarding specific disabled groups such as women or children inclusive of awareness-raising were also notable.⁶⁵

The implementation of obligations stemming from the Convention can be observed in different ways. In 2016, the Ministry of Justice established an Analytical Centre, with the aim of streamlining the judicial system and increasing the enforceability of the Convention. The analytical centre systematically collects, processes, evaluates and provides relevant data obtained from functional information systems for the purposes of departmental and international statistics. Anti-discrimination disputes are conducted as a separate category, so there should be

62 Committee on the Rights of the Child. Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia. N. CRC/C/SVK/CO/3-5, 20 July 2016, paras. 6–10.

63 National strategy for the protection and support of human rights in Slovakia republic, 2014, p. 13.

64 Moravcová, 2022, p. 152.

65 Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Concluding observations on the initial report of Slovakia. N. CRPD/C/SVK/CO/1, 17 May 2016, paras. 5–28.

no more confusion with consumer or labour law disputes. The courts are obliged to determine in more detail on what basis discrimination has occurred.⁶⁶

Furthermore, by resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 25/2014, the National Program for the Development of the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for the years 2014-2020 was approved. The application of the aforementioned program has been active since its creation prolonged, updated and evaluated every two years. Several of the above-mentioned recommendations were in time included in this National Program. The basic goal of the National Program is to achieve progress in the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities recognised by the Convention through defined tasks and measures and progress in their use. The measures contained in the National Program were compiled by area on the basis of individual articles of the Convention.⁶⁷

4. Conclusion

The Slovak Republic's commitment to the universal protection of human rights is evident in its legal framework and institutional mechanisms. However, the journey towards the full realisation of these rights requires ongoing efforts to address systemic challenges and promote a culture of respect for human dignity. By reinforcing its commitment to international standards and engaging with diverse stakeholders, Slovakia can work towards creating an inclusive society that upholds the principles of universal human rights for all.

For a modern democratic legal state, which the Slovak Republic undoubtedly strives to be and which is finally declared in Art. 1 of the Constitution, it is essential that law is primarily oriented towards the protection of people and their rights and freedoms. The existence of legislative procedural guarantees for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms is a concrete principle of the material rule of law in the conditions of the Slovak Republic.

The 1951 Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees remains foundational, guiding Slovakia's asylum and refugee protections through laws such as the Act on the Residence of Foreigners. Slovakia's 30-year collaboration with the UNHCR further reflects its commitment to addressing the needs of displaced persons within its borders. Meanwhile, the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination has inspired legislative and policy measures aimed at improving conditions for minority groups, including the Roma population, which faces systemic challenges. Recent legislative updates, such as

66 Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by Slovakia under Article 35 of the Convention, due in 2020. N. CRPD/CVSK/2-3, 10 October 2024, para. 9.

67 Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by Slovakia under Article 35 of the Convention, due in 2020. N. CRPD/CVSK/2-3, 10 October 2024, para. 1.

the requirement for pre-school attendance and enhanced demographic tracking, showcase efforts to foster inclusion and counter discrimination.

The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has spurred substantial advancements in gender equality through labour protections, fair wage legislation, and anti-discrimination efforts, though disparities in representation and pay persist. Slovakia's 1984 commitment to the Convention Against Torture underscores its resolve to uphold humane treatment standards, which it has reinforced through amendments to the Criminal Code and victim protection laws. However, recent reports highlight areas needing improvement, particularly in relation to police conduct toward Roma communities. The nation's succession to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child has also influenced child protection laws, establishing independent offices like the Children's Commissioner to safeguard children's rights. Slovakia's leadership in advancing international child rights protections is evident in its support for mechanisms like the Optional Protocol.

The rights of persons with disabilities have been strengthened under the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, guiding Slovakia toward a more inclusive society. With initiatives such as the National Program for the Development of the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities, Slovakia has progressively enacted policies to improve access and equity, though gaps in implementation and discrimination remain. Notably, Slovakia's approach to migrant worker rights reflects a cautious stance; the country has yet to ratify the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, citing existing national regulations as sufficient. This selective engagement highlights both the strides made in areas of direct interest to Slovakia and its pragmatic approach to obligations that may extend beyond its current policy scope.

Despite advancements, Slovakia faces several challenges in fully realizing human rights protections. Issues such as social inequality, discrimination against minorities, and the treatment of refugees and migrants remain persistent problems. Reports from international human rights organisations have highlighted cases of hate speech, police brutality, and inadequate support for victims of domestic violence. To ensure the effective implementation of human rights, Slovakia has established several institutions and mechanisms as well as various programs and initiatives aimed at promoting equal rights for marginalized groups, including the Roma population and women. The government additionally collaborates with non-governmental organizations to enhance advocacy and support for these initiatives.

The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights plays a crucial role in monitoring human rights practices, raising awareness, and addressing complaints from individuals regarding human rights violations. This office is vital for the safeguarding of human rights in Slovakia. The Commissioner serves as an

independent body that monitors human rights issues, raises public awareness, and addresses grievances from individuals. The commissioner's activities include conducting regular assessments and reports on the state of human rights, providing recommendations to government bodies on improving human rights protections or engaging with civil society organisations to amplify advocacy efforts.

Numerous non-governmental organisations in Slovakia are dedicated to human rights advocacy. These organisations focus on various issues, including the protection of minorities, such as the Roma population who often face discrimination and socio-economic challenges, the promotion of gender equality, support for victims of domestic violence, or the advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights and awareness of the challenges this community faces. These organisations often collaborate with international human rights frameworks and local authorities, creating a multifaceted approach to human rights advocacy.

While Slovakia has made progress, certain areas require ongoing attention to ensure a comprehensive protection of human rights. The Roma community in Slovakia is one of Europe's largest ethnic minorities, facing persistent discrimination and social exclusion. Various initiatives aimed at improving education, healthcare, and employment prospects for the Roma population have been launched. However, challenges remain, including access to quality education, which is often hampered by systemic inequalities or representation in local and national governance, where Roma voices are frequently underrepresented. Slovakia has recognised the need for gender equality, but issues such as the gender pay gap, domestic violence, and inadequate support systems for victims remain pressing concerns.

To strengthen the protection of human rights, Slovakia must adopt a multipronged approach, for example strengthening the legal frameworks by revising existing laws and introducing new legislation to address gaps in human rights protections, particularly for vulnerable groups, enhancing education and awareness by implementing national education programs to promote human rights awareness among citizens and encourage civic participation, promoting dialogue and cooperation by fostering partnerships between governmental bodies, civil society organisations, and international human rights agencies in order to ensure collaborative efforts in addressing human rights issues.

International treaties on human rights imply an obligation for the Republic to regularly inform the committees established by these treaties about the progress in the implementation of their provisions at the national level. The conclusions and recommendations of the contracting authorities represent an important guide for improving the actual fulfilment of human rights obligations at a national level. Despite their legally non-binding nature, the recommendations of international organisations can create necessary pressure on national institutions, in order to achieve progress in individual thematic areas of human rights. In the above-mentioned chapters it was regularly mentioned that different Committees refer to

the Anti-Discrimination Act or the Centre for Human rights. Both of these represent an example of a step forward in the human rights protection in the Republic. Consequently, even though the CC explicitly stipulated, that the resolutions of UN Committees have no binding nature, the country on different levels proved that the recommendations are taken into account and are generally accepted.

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