

Facts Sheet

Areas of Focus of the Recommendations Submitted to Jordan in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Human Rights (Fourth Cycle)

Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies

Findings:

- The preliminary analysis of the areas of focus from the recommendations accepted by Jordan shows that the priorities for reform for the international and local community are civil and political freedoms (12%), women's rights (12%), the right to life, liberty, personal security, and freedom from torture (11%), and the administration of justice and the rule of law (9.4%). However, Jordan's support for these recommendations was partial; it accepted a large portion of them but reserved its position on others, particularly those related to radical changes required to implement these rights, such as developing or amending laws, policies, and regulations. There is a contradiction in its reservations on recommendations that have shared content with those it accepted.
- Jordan still shows reluctance in accepting a significant portion of recommendations related to international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms, despite their importance to the international community. This may be due to potential additional administrative, financial, and political commitments. Jordan only accepted 5.5% of the recommendations related to this context and noted 22% of them.
- Jordan accepted all recommendations related to the rights of persons with disabilities (8%), development and the environment (6%), and the prohibition of all forms of slavery, including human trafficking (3%). This reflects a strong commitment from Jordan and indicates that these recommendations align with national policies and ongoing reforms.
- The acceptance of recommendations initially noted by Jordan, specifically related to removing restrictions on civil society work and amending the associations law and foreign funding regulations, is a progressive step and indicates the government's willingness to show flexibility and adapt to the desires of both the international and local community to enhance the freedom of civil society in Jordan.

- It is not clearly and specifically evident that there are any recommendations related to the rights of the elderly, nor were there many recommendations made in the context of cultural rights and the right to an adequate standard of living. This indicates an urgent need for increased focus and greater attention to these rights by the local and international community.
- There are some recommendations that Jordan has noted for cultural, social, and political reasons. Jordan reserved its position on recommendations related to the rights of gender identity minorities for social and religious reasons. It also reserved its position on all recommendations made by the occupying state of Israel due to its political stance against it, which is related to its support for the Palestinian cause and its rejection of the Israeli occupation. This reservation represents a strategy to avoid granting legitimacy to Israel in the international human rights arena.
- Jordan's reservation on all recommendations regarding the rights of stateless persons, which accounted for 6% of the recommendations made to it, indicates its continued concerns about the potential demographic and political impacts of granting citizenship to a number of groups.

Background

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a process that aims to review the human rights records of the 193 member states of the United Nations approximately once every four and a half years. This mechanism provides each country with the opportunity to announce the measures it has taken to improve human rights conditions and to overcome the challenges it faces, while also sharing best practices worldwide. Additionally, this mechanism aims to provide technical support and enhance the capacity of countries to effectively address human rights challenges.

The purpose of this paper is to present key preliminary facts about the recommendations that Jordan has accepted and noted, in general, according to the documents published on the official page of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR).

The Fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Human Rights for Jordan

On January 25, 2024, Jordan appeared before the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva to review its human rights record. In this session, the Jordanian government reported on the progress it has made in promoting and protecting human rights, including the efforts undertaken in this context. Jordan received 279 recommendations from UN member states and initially accepted 196 of them. It later accepted 8 additional recommendations, bringing the total number of accepted recommendations to 204, representing 73% of the recommendations made. Jordan noted reservations for 75 recommendations, representing 27% of the recommendations directed to it, indicating that it agreed to most of the recommendations directed to it by 100 countries in this session.

Table No. (1): Number/Percentage of Recommendations in Previous Universal Periodic Review Cycles for Jordan

Cycle	Number of recommendations presented to Jordan	Number/percentage of accepted recommendations	Number/percentage of recommendations Jordan expressed reservations regarding.
First cycle (2009)	94 Recommendations	59 recommendations (about 63%)	35 recommendations (about 37%)
Second Cycle (2013)	173 Recommendations	126 recommendations (about 73%)	47 recommendations (about 27%)
Third Cycle (2018)	226 Recommendations	149 recommendations (about 66%)	77 recommendations (about 34%)
Fourth Cycle (2024)	279 Recommendations	204 recommendations (about 73%)	75 recommendations (about 27%)

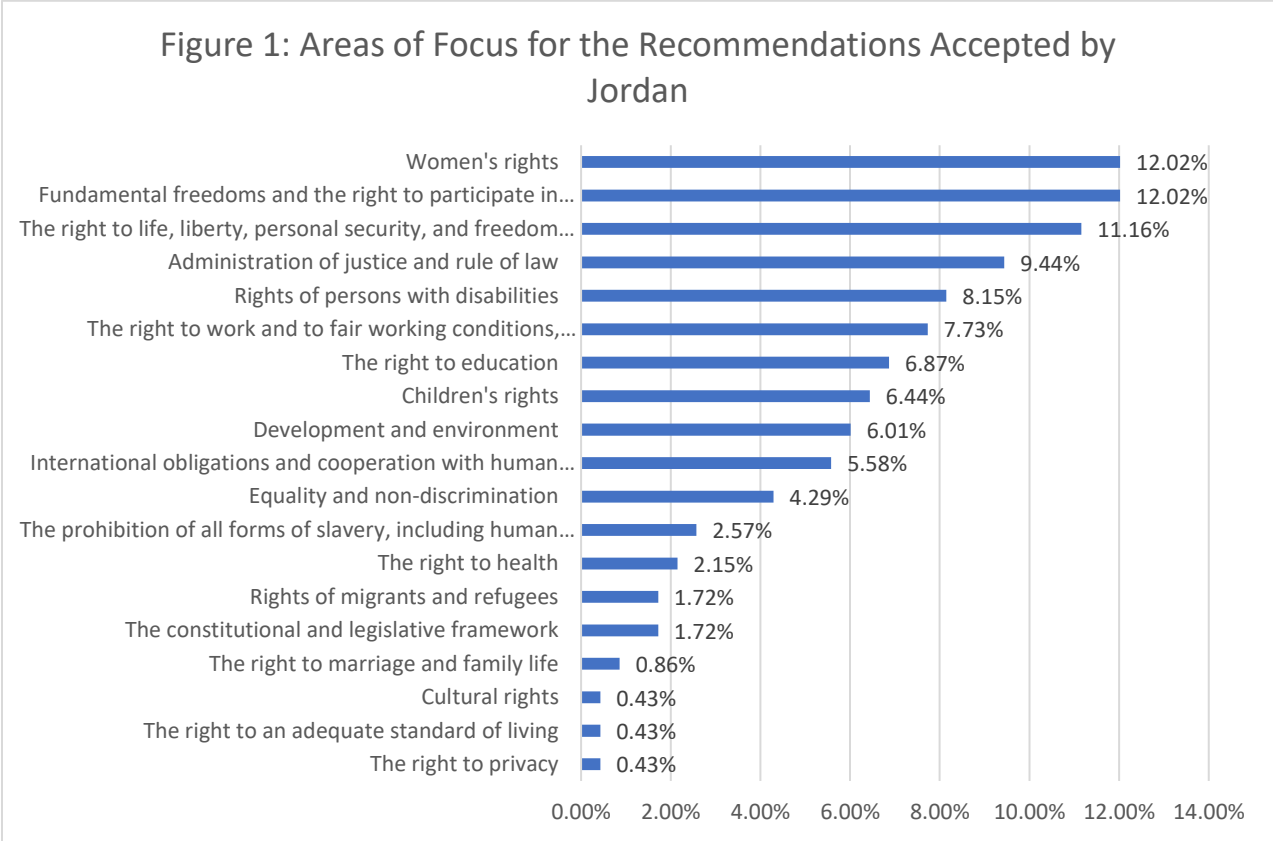
According to Table 1, it can be observed that the acceptance rate of the recommendations submitted to Jordan was generally high in each cycle. This indicates that Jordan consistently adopts a strategy of accepting the majority of the recommendations. However, it is also noted that a portion of the recommendations were merely acknowledged rather than fully accepted across all previous cycles. This suggests ongoing reservations on Jordan's part regarding certain sensitive issues or recommendations that require significant changes to national legislation or policies.

Areas of Focus for the Recommendations Accepted by Jordan

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the recommendations that Jordan has accepted according to their areas of focus. It is notable that certain areas are of high importance, with fundamental freedoms and participation in public and political life at the forefront of the accepted recommendations, at 12%. This indicates an urgent need and interest from the international community in improving civil and political freedoms. The initial analysis of the areas of focus for the recommendations accepted by Jordan reveals that the country supported a significant proportion of the recommendations related to women's rights, reaching 12% of the total recommendations made. However, this also reflects the challenges that women in Jordan face, which require genuine reforms.

11% of the recommendations Jordan accepted were related to the right to life, liberty, and personal security, and the right not to be tortured. It is important to note in this context that Jordan has accepted recommendations that were previously only acknowledged. These recommendations are related to amending the Jordanian Penal Code to align the definition of

torture with the definition provided in Article 2 of the Convention Against Torture, as well as a recommendation on criminalizing the crime of torture in accordance with Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture.

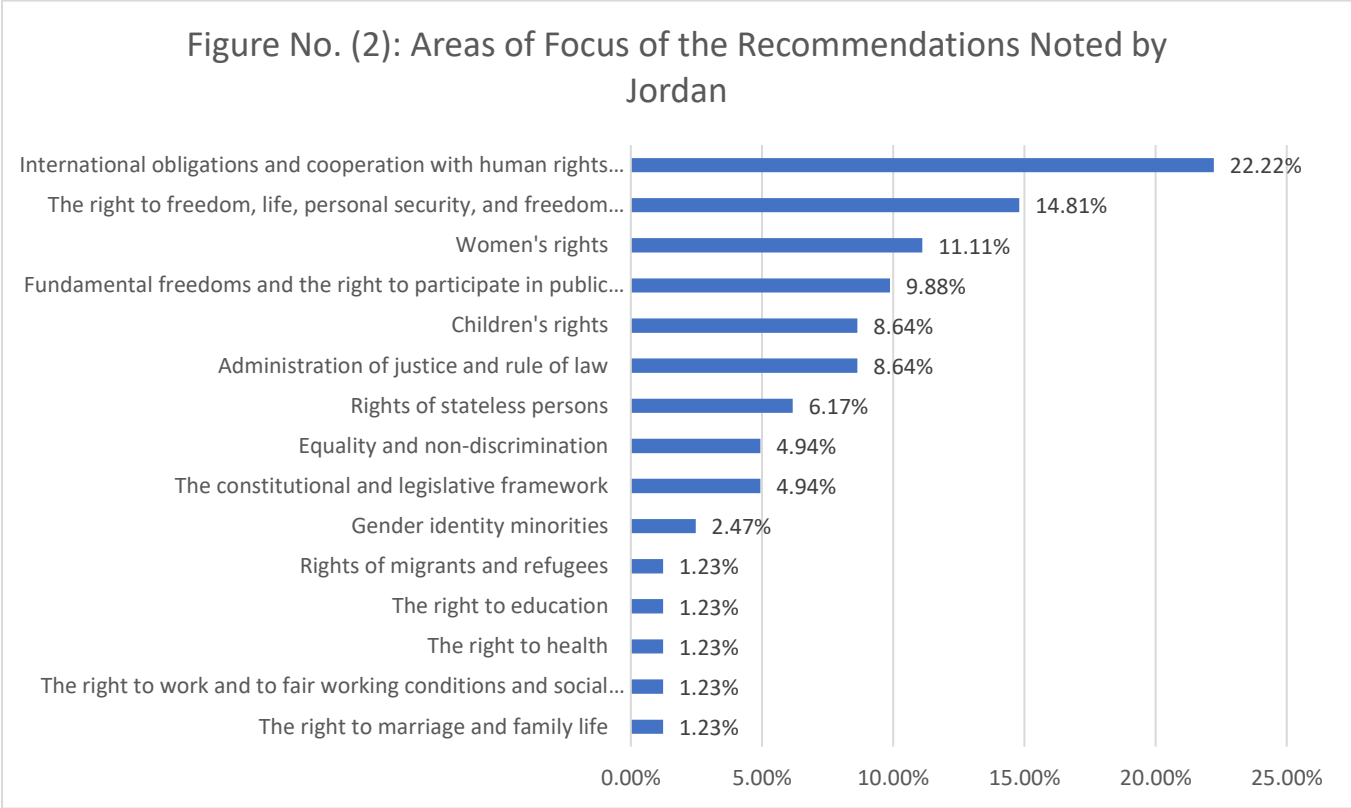


Areas of Focus for the Recommendations Acknowledged by Jordan

International commitments and cooperation with human rights mechanisms topped the list of recommendations acknowledged by Jordan, accounting for 22%, as shown in Figure 2. This indicates a focus by the international community on the need for Jordan to enhance its relationships and commitments with international human rights mechanisms. Jordan’s acknowledgment of a large number of recommendations in this context reflects the challenges and complexities it faces in meeting these recommendations. The reluctance to fully commit may stem from concerns about potential impacts on national sovereignty and independence, as well as the substantial changes in policies or local legislation that international agreements and mechanisms often require.

The right to life, liberty, personal security, and the right not to be tortured comprised 14% of the recommendations acknowledged by Jordan. These rights necessitate profound changes in security policies and procedures, including potential reforms in security and judicial institutions. There may be concerns regarding Jordan’s resource capacity to implement these

recommendations. While Jordan accepted a significant portion of recommendations related to women's rights, 11% of the recommendations acknowledged, were also in this area. These recommendations primarily focused on reforms to ensure changes in laws or policies related to women's rights in Jordan, including withdrawing reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and ratifying ILO Convention No. 190.



Recommendations

The following recommendations require the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders to ensure genuine progress in human rights in Jordan:

Recommendations for the Jordanian Government:

- Develop a national plan for implementing reforms, linked to specific indicators and executive measures. Transparency can be enhanced by setting clear timelines and detailed action plans for these reforms.
- Establish participatory mechanisms with civil society to keep dialogue channels open for civil society suggestions and to improve the monitoring and implementation of accepted recommendations with greater effectiveness and transparency.

Recommendations for the International Community:

- Provide additional technical and financial support to Jordan to assist in implementing recommendations that require substantial changes in legislation and policies. This support could include training programs, legal advice, and financial assistance for the necessary reforms.
- Direct more attention to groups and rights that have not received sufficient or specific recommendations. Encourage member states to offer targeted recommendations for these groups in future cycles.

Recommendations for Civil Society:

- Develop advocacy campaigns for implementing recommendations, particularly those related to the most pressing issues for civil society.
- Engage in legislative reform by providing constructive proposals and alternatives to the government to assist in effective implementation of recommendations.
- Contribute to the drafting of periodic and shadow reports to assess government compliance with recommendations and work on presenting these reports to both the government and the international community.
- Create electronic monitoring platforms to track progress in implementing recommendations and document human rights violations.
- Collaborate with members of the National Assembly (both Deputies and Senators) to raise awareness among candidates about the importance of developing election programs based on a human rights approach and advocate for policies that support the implementation of recommendations.

Authors : Ahmad Awad & Hadeel Al-Qudah