



Promoting Justice / Protecting Rights

Campaign for
Freedom of
Information
in Scotland



Lord Wolfson of Tredegar QC,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
International, Rights and Constitutional Policy Directorate,
UK Government,
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London,
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Sent to: wolfsond@parliament.uk
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8th December 2021

Dear Lord Wolfson of Tredegar QC

ICESCR Reporting Timetable

We are writing to express our concern at the timetable slippage for the UK government's periodic reporting to the United Nations on its compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

We were disappointed that the UK failed to submit its seventh periodic report by 30th June 2021, in accordance with the reporting guidelines adopted by the Committee in 2008 (E/C.12/2008/2).¹ Whilst we understand that the domestic management of the

¹ United Nations, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 14 July 2016
<http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=4slQ6QSmlBEDzFEovLCuW3XRinAE8KCBFogOHNz%2FvuCC%2BTxEKAI18bzE0UtfQhJkxxOSGuoMUxHGypYLjNFkwxnMR6GmqogLJF8BzscMe9zpGfTXBkZ4pEaigi44xqiL>

global pandemic may have caused a slight delay in the timetable agreed in 2016, we are alarmed that there appears to be such a significant time gap and the consequent delays to the UN Committee's procedural review of the UK's delivery of the Concluding Observations as well as addressing new issues, some of which have emerged since March 2020.

As civil society organisations active on human rights across the four jurisdictions of the UK, we value the UN process of treaty review and the opportunities for dialogue with independent experts on remedies for breaches of human rights. Collaboration with the UK Government is key as the preparatory process is an opportunity to identify and address the deliberate steps that still require to be taken for the progressive realisation of rights. Whilst we are currently meeting and active on the issues in our everyday work, the publication of the UK Government's submission to the UN is necessary to expedite agreement of the actions that can be undertaken now to ensure compliance with ICESCR.

We realise that the business of government has been under huge pressure because of the impact of COVID 19 but ensuring human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled must happen in tandem.

We are seeking assurances that the UK report will soon be submitted so the next stage can be scheduled by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. We would also be pleased to receive the timeline you are now working to for the periodic review. This matter will also be raised by us in publicity celebrating International Human Rights Day on 10th December.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

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