



TIPS FOR CRAFTING EFFECTIVE HUMAN RIGHTS NARRATIVES

 International Service
for Human Rights



TRY TO DO LESS OF...

- Focusing on the **persecution** inflicted on people who defend human rights
- Leading with **policy detail**
- Focusing on what you are **against**
- Talking about all of the things that are **broken**
- Describing **human rights defenders** as a separate category of people
- Positioning human rights as being about an **individual's rights and entitlements**
- Focusing exclusively on **government failings or corporate abuse**
- Talking about **human rights** as something which **is given to people**
- Talking about human rights as things that are **taken away** from people
- Describing the **UN** as **ineffective**
- Describing trends in **ambiguous** terms like "shrinking civil society space"
- Leading with **statistics** or facts
- **Reacting** to your opponent's agenda

TRY TO DO MORE OF...

- + Focusing on what people who defend human rights are trying to **achieve**
- + Leading with the **values** at stake
- + Focusing on what you are **for**
- + Talking about creating **solutions**
- + Explain that anyone and **everyone can help** protect and promote human rights
- + Position human rights as an expression of how we want to treat each other or the type of **society we want to live in**
- + Explaining and describing what **good government or business behaviour** looks like
- + Talking about **human rights** as something 'we do' or 'use' to make our lives better. They are something that **we make happen**, tools we develop and apply both as individuals and in groups, as well as a society at large
- + Talking about **authorities or corporations** violating, infringing or not respecting people's human rights
- + Reminding people that the quality of the discussions and decisions at the UN are decided by the participants. The **UN** is only **as good as its members**
- + Being **specific** about who or what is causing the problems
- + **Personalising examples** before generalising with statistics
- + Making time, resources and capacity to **conduct your own proactive agenda**