



General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 June 2021

Original: English

Seventy-sixth session

Item 118 (d) of the preliminary list*

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 14 June 2021 from the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations has the honour to refer to the candidature of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Human Rights Council for the term 2022–2024 at the elections to be held in New York in October 2021.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution [60/251](#), the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations has the further honour to transmit herewith the voluntary pledges and commitments reaffirming that the promotion and protection of human rights are a priority of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations would be grateful to have the present note verbale and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 118 (d).

* [A/76/50](#).



Annex to the note verbale dated 14 June 2021 from the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Kazakhstan to the Human Rights Council, 2022–2024

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/251](#)

1. On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of its independence, Kazakhstan has the honour to present its candidacy to serve on the United Nations Human Rights Council for the period 2022–2024, in view of the forthcoming elections scheduled for October 2021 in New York.
2. Upholding universal human rights has been a priority commitment of Kazakhstan since the inception of its statehood, soon after which the country joined the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other relevant United Nations human rights conventions. Comprehensive national legislation was adopted in keeping with the highest international standards, and Kazakhstan has seen their realization by working very closely with the entire United Nations system.
3. Attaching high importance to the work of the Human Rights Council, Kazakhstan has always been guided by the vision of advancing universal respect for all human rights for all peoples, based on the principles of impartiality and objectivity. The country has demonstrated its steadfastness to these fundamental values throughout its term on the Council from 2013–2015.
4. Although it has not been a member thereafter, Kazakhstan continues to contribute actively to the Council's work by promoting and furthering the highest norms of equality and non-discrimination in every dialogue and in its cooperation with all regional groups and international forums.
5. Aimed at advancing human rights at home, in the wider region and globally, Kazakhstan commits to ensuring national compliance with the international instruments it has ratified and to continue its close collaboration with all treaty bodies.
6. In 2010, 2014 and 2019, Kazakhstan successfully passed the universal periodic review procedure under the Human Rights Council. During its last universal periodic review, in 2019, it accepted most of the recommendations it received and thereby confirmed its readiness for constructive deliberations with the concerned United Nations mechanisms.
7. Kazakhstan actively cooperates with United Nations treaty bodies and submits periodic reports on obligations it has fulfilled under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and all instruments under the wider human rights law.
8. Currently, Kazakhstan is in the process of joining the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

9. In order to expand the means of protecting the rights of its citizens at the international level, Kazakhstan has recognized the competence of four United Nations committees to accept individual petitions from citizens concerning violations of their rights: the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Human Rights Committee.

10. Kazakhstan has also decided to recognize the mandate of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is in the process of acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

11. In 2009, Kazakhstan became one of the States to have extended a “standing invitation” to the special procedures of the United Nations. It has since received many independent experts and 10 special rapporteurs.

12. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has endeavoured to strengthen the national human rights protection system. One of its key elements is the Commission on Human Rights. Every year, the Commission prepares and publishes reports on the protection of human rights in Kazakhstan and makes them available to the public.

13. At the same time, direct access to all branches of the government to raise significant issues and influence human rights policy has been made possible through the designation of the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Children’s Rights.

14. Measures are currently being undertaken to strengthen the mandate of the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Children’s Rights. By the end of this year, it is planned to adopt a separate Law on the Ombudsman, together with opening regional representative offices as an outreach measure of justice throughout the country.

15. Since 2014, the Republic of Kazakhstan has had a national preventive mechanism against torture and ill-treatment based on the Ombudsman+ model.

16. In order to promote human rights in a range of specialized areas, the institution of Ombudsmen with special mandates has been developed. Thus, the Commissioner for the Protection of Entrepreneurs’ Rights, the Investment Ombudsman, the Banking Ombudsman and the Insurance Ombudsman have likewise been appointed to ensure the protection of rights in the commercial and fiscal sectors, thereby further widening the protection of citizens’ rights.

17. Currently, Kazakhstan is implementing a major package of political reforms with a focus on human rights that open a new stage in its social and political life.

18. The National Council of Public Trust, established by the decree of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in July 2019, has been a mechanism for developing public dialogue through which political reforms can be adopted.

19. New legal norms further strengthen the values of pluralism of opinions, alternative views, constructive engagement and social responsibility in Kazakhstan.

20. Overall, Kazakhstan considers human rights as the foundation for a peaceful, inclusive and prosperous society. It, therefore, accords high priority for advancing the mutually reinforcing objectives of development, human rights and democracy.

21. In its candidature to the Human Rights Council, Kazakhstan emphasizes the following voluntary pledges and commitments. Kazakhstan therefore commits:

(a) To engage in the work of the Council in good faith, in a constructive and transparent manner;

- (b) To continue supporting the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in fulfilling her mandate;
- (c) To support, beyond the Human Rights Council, the work of the bodies and committees established by international human rights conventions, and also fully endorse and offer assistance to the mandates and duties of the special procedures;
- (d) To provide independent and objective considerations to guide decisions on whether and when the Human Rights Council should respond to a country-specific situation and assume leadership and responsibility in initiating action, when and if, deemed necessary;
- (e) To actively contribute to strengthening the role of the Council as the main body in the United Nations system for the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as to expanding inter-State cooperation in the field of human rights;
- (f) To use the opportunity of the universal periodic review, to which all Member States are subject, to produce constructive recommendations for the reviewed countries and thus enhance standards of operations;
- (g) To contribute to the Council's prevention mandate by supporting technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives;
- (h) To promote the link between human rights and peace and security by encouraging information-sharing between the Human Rights Council and the Security Council;
- (i) To share best practices and challenges in implementing the human rights agenda at the national level in a spirit of mutual learning;
- (j) To strengthen and enhance the capacity and capability of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles and other United Nations recommendations;
- (k) To increase the role and participation of civil society in the protection of all the human rights in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, including by developing public oversight mechanisms in various areas of government in order to protect and respect human rights and legitimate interests;
- (l) To continue to foster successful implementation of the "Listening State" concept, with particular attention to women, children, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups;
- (m) To ensure that human rights protection indicators, as approved by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, are fully implemented and integrated with the Sustainable Development Goals and their indicators.

22. Kazakhstan reassures the international community that, if elected, it will actively engage in the work of the Council to universalize and effectively implement all civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, with particular emphasis on the following priorities:

- (a) Gender equality and women's empowerment;
- (b) The universal abolition of the death penalty;
- (c) The fight against all forms of discrimination (including racism, sexism, xenophobia and hate speech);
- (d) The freedom of religion and belief;
- (e) Human rights in the context of climate change;

(f) The fight against digital inequality, ensuring maximum access to the Internet and high-quality communication for all;

(g) Inclusive and universal education;

(h) Respect for human rights in the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

23. Within this agenda, Kazakhstan commits:

(a) To continue to initiate and support a human rights-centred approach in domestic and international initiatives;

(b) To foster constructive and close cooperation with civil society organizations mandated to speak at the Council and beyond;

(c) To advance sustainable development through strengthening the protection of human rights;

(d) To draw special global attention to critical serious human rights situations and violations, thus endeavouring to eradicate these practices;

(e) To continue to promote a culture of peace and to support activities for fostering dialogue, tolerance and peaceful cooperation among the countries of the world;

(f) To invest in efforts to promote digitalization, and reduce disadvantages due to lack of access to modern technologies, thereby enabling people to exercise their rights more effectively;

(g) To prevent insecurity of children and further promote rights for their equal education, as well as, those significantly exposed to the instabilities in the world;

(h) To combat the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have affected the most vulnerable segments of society and their essential rights, including women, the elderly and persons with disabilities;

(i) To comply by all obligations stipulated in the international environmental protection agreements, leading to a determination of the degree of global enjoyment of human rights.

24. If Kazakhstan is granted the privilege to serve on the Human Rights Council, it will strive to fulfil all the expectations of the international community and make a noteworthy contribution to the mandate of the Council.
