



*Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office
and other international organizations in Geneva*

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The Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions in Geneva and, with reference to Note n° 688/2016, dated December 21st, 2016, and to Note n° 230/2018, dated June 29th, 2018, has the honour to recall that the Government of Brazil has decided to present its candidature for re-election to the Human Rights Council, period 2020-2022, at the elections to be held during the 74th session of the General Assembly, in 2019.

Brazil reinforces its steady commitment to the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights at the domestic, regional and international levels and attaches herewith a copy of its voluntary pledges and commitments, in accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 60/251.

The Government of Brazil would highly appreciate the invaluable support of your government to the Brazilian candidature for re-election to the Human Rights Council, period 2020-2022.

The Permanent Mission of Brazil avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions in Geneva the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, June 26th, 2019.

To the
Permanent Missions in Geneva
Geneva

Candidacy of Brazil for the Human Rights Council, 2020-2022

Voluntary commitments

I) Brazil and Human Rights

1. Brazil's unwavering commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms is enshrined in the Federal Constitution. The Brazilian Constitution, known as the "Citizen Constitution", establishes human dignity as a fundamental cornerstone of the Republic (article 1). It also incorporates the main provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil, the Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as those of the other human rights treaties ratified by Brazil (articles 5 and 6). The constitutional text establishes that Brazil's international relations are governed, inter alia, by the principles of "prevalence of human rights", "self-determination of the peoples", "defense of peace", "repudiation of terrorism and racism", and "granting of political asylum" (article 4).

2. Brazil is determined to promote, protect and respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all, regardless of origin, race, sex, color, age, religion or any other forms of discrimination. This commitment is embedded in the decision to strengthen the ministry of human rights, which has been renamed as the Ministry of Women, the Family and Human Rights (MMFDH, in Portuguese), within the new structure of public administration. The new Ministry has a broader mandate and a unified structure, which has allowed it to develop comprehensive human rights-oriented public policies, with real impact on the lives of Brazilians. The Government is conscious that the protection of human rights is an inherent value of the Brazilian democratic state and the basis for the elaboration and implementation of all public policies.

3. In spite of the progress on human rights in the country, Brazil still faces considerable challenges on several fronts. The Government reaffirms its determination to defend the right to life and security of person; to promote the rights of women, including by combating violence against women; to guarantee the well-being and the best interest of the child; to protect the family and strengthen family ties; to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities; and to prioritize the attention to older persons, with a human rights perspective. The Government will take effective action to ensure appropriate education and healthcare to all Brazilians without distinction. It will strengthen efforts to ensure freedom of expression and religion; and to combat racism and racial discrimination, in all its forms, as well as violence and discrimination against vulnerable groups. The rights of indigenous peoples will enjoy the full protection of the Brazilian State, which will act firmly to protect human rights defenders, whose work contributes to the full enjoyment of human rights by all.

4. The Government will continue to hold discussions and consultations with local and state authorities, as well as with non-governmental organizations and civil society, from all regions, in the processes of developing, implementing and assessing human rights policies. It will also encourage the participation and engagement of the Legislative and Judiciary branches, in accordance with their constitutional competences, with respect to the system of checks and balances and the principle of separation of powers, as provided by the Constitution. The Government welcomes public debate to guide human rights policies, both domestically and internationally.

II) Brazil and the Human Rights Council

5. Brazil's commitment to the international human rights system dates back to the very beginning of the United Nations (UN). It should be recalled that the Brazilian delegation played a decisive role in the incorporation of the clause that provides for the equality between men and women into the Preamble of the UN Charter. Brazil also engaged meaningfully in the negotiations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A Brazilian delegate was entrusted with the presentation of its final draft to the 3rd General Assembly, in 1948. Brazil was the first country to sign the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, in 1966, having, since then, ratified nearly all multilateral human rights treaties. In the Inter-American System, Brazil played a leading role in the negotiation of several treaties, such as the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons. Brazil recognizes the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Furthermore, we have extended a standing invitation to all Human Rights Council (HRC) thematic special procedures.

6. Brazil is a founding member of the Human Rights Council (HRC), a central body of the UN human rights system. Brazil has sought to actively participate in the HRC, in light of the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, through the strengthening of dialogue, consensus-building and international cooperation. Brazil reaffirms its determination to take part in the HRC's activities, which are based on a non-selective, objective and universal approach to human rights, avoiding politicization and double standards. We are determined to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council in a constructive and positive way.

7. If elected, Brazil will remain active in discussing the main substantive issues in the Human Rights Council agenda. It will maintain its engagement in the debates on the right to privacy in the digital age and the full enjoyment of human rights on the internet. It will follow up on the proposals in defense of the right to health, including the fight against HIV/AIDS and the promotion of the right to mental health. Brazil will also foster initiatives on the fight against racism and racial discrimination. It will pay special attention to issues related to combating violence and discrimination against people in situations of vulnerability, regardless of the motivation. Brazil will remain a member of the core groups of resolutions on different subjects, such as the safety of journalists; sports and the Olympic ideal; the fight against corruption; technical cooperation, among others.

8. In the next three years, Brazil will maintain a high level of dialogue with the mechanisms and subsidiary bodies of the Human Rights Council. Accordingly, it reaffirms its decision to maintain a standing invitation to the thematic special procedures of the HRC, in effect since 2001. Brazil also renews its commitment to develop a constructive dialogue with the special rapporteurs, independent experts and other stakeholders on the main issues of the international agenda. It will remain engaged in the debates held in the Human Rights Council, as well as in the negotiation of initiatives brought to the body's attention. Whenever possible, Brazil will seek to promote understanding among actors of different regions, legal traditions and cultures, in order to achieve consensus, tolerance and mutual understanding.

III - Voluntary Pledges and Commitments

1. International Human Rights System

Brazil defends the strengthening of both the international human rights system and the Human Rights Council. In the next three years, Brazil will engage in the debates to promote better efficacy and effectiveness in the work of the Human Rights Council, based on its current institutional framework. Furthermore, it will take part in the discussions about the status of the HRC within the UN system. Whenever possible, Brazil will favor a preventive and cooperative approach in the deliberations of the HRC.

2. Women's Rights

The Brazilian Government acknowledges the central role of women in ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights. In its next term, Brazil will continue to foster concrete national and international initiatives to guarantee and promote the human rights of women and girls. Brazil will take its Constitution as a premise for its actions, as it defines that men and women are equal in rights and obligations.

3. Violence against women

In Brazil policies for protecting and defending women's rights are a priority. Brazil will not spare any efforts in fighting discrimination and violence against women. In this regard, it will support, both nationally and internationally, programmes and initiatives aimed at preventing, punishing and eradicating discrimination and violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, notably femicide and sexual harassment.

4. Children and adolescents

Brazil seeks to ensure the full protection of children and adolescents in practice and in law. It has implemented comprehensive policies aimed at guaranteeing the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social development of children and adolescents, in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the next three years, Brazil is committed to advance measures and policies for the promotion and protection of the rights of children, adolescents and their families, in order to ensure their best interest and well-being. It will focus on the fight against violence, sexual exploitation and child labour, as well as on the protection of the rights of the child in the digital environment. Additionally, Brazil will support initiatives aimed at reducing death rates among children and adolescents, improving the situation of youth in conflict with the law and protecting children in early childhood.

5. Youth

The Brazilian Government has worked to place youth at the center of the public agenda, recognizing young people as rights holders. To this end, the Government will foster the autonomy of young people; their participation in the social and political spheres, as well as in the development of the country; their well-being; the respect to their identity and diversity; safety and non-discrimination. Brazil reaffirms its commitment to implement and promote, nationally and internationally, strategies that provide an adequate approach to youth issues, as well as real opportunities for a full, effective, constructive and sustainable participation in society. Moreover, we highlight Brazil's engagement in the promotion of public policies for digital inclusion of the youth, preparing them for the future of work.

6. Family

The Brazilian Government defends the strengthening of family ties with a human rights approach. Therefore, it has developed cross-cutting public policies with families acting as focal points of the state's activities. Within the HRC, Brazil is committed to supporting initiatives to strengthen family structures and relations, with special consideration given to the different sociocultural and economic circumstances of families, mainly those in situations of vulnerability.

7. Persons with Disabilities

Measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities have been intensified in the current Administration. Inclusion is the watchword for the Government. We are committed to move forward with the inclusion of persons with disabilities in schools, the labor market and with the accessibility in cities. Brazil will continue to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities at the national and international levels, in order to ensure their full participation in society, as well as to realize the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Government will ensure that persons with disabilities are at the center of all the decisions that affect them.

8. Persons in Situations of Vulnerability

The national human rights policy prioritizes the protection of the rights of persons in situations of vulnerability. In the next mandate, Brazil reiterates its determination to combat all forms of violence and discrimination, especially against groups and people in situations of vulnerability. We are committed to strengthening and adopting concrete measures, both internally and internationally, to promote and respect the principles of equality and non-discrimination and to combat all forms of violence.

9. Indigenous peoples

Brazil supports comprehensive public policies aimed at the sustainable development of indigenous populations and has worked to guarantee the differentiated access of indigenous peoples to social and to citizenship rights. We will remain committed to guaranteeing, promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, in line with Brazil's international commitments, as well as to ensuring essential public services for indigenous communities. At the Council, Brazil will continue to participate in the main initiatives concerning indigenous peoples and will maintain high level dialogue with the relevant mechanisms.

10. Freedom of Religion

Brazil values its rich diversity, which is the result of centuries of interaction between different cultures, religions and traditions. During the next term, we will continue to support, adopt, strengthen and promote measures that foster a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual understanding. Brazil is committed to protect and respect all religious expressions, including the freedom not to have any religion, as well as to promote and protect the human rights of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities.

11. Racism

Brazil prioritizes the implementation of effective programs and policies against ethnic and racial discrimination, in order to ensure respect for the country's important legislative legacy. We will continue to work to prevent and combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We reaffirm our support for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and the negotiation of a United Nations Declaration on the Promotion and Full Respect for Human Rights of People of African Descent. Furthermore, the Government is committed to strengthening the agenda for the promotion and protection the rights of traditional peoples and communities.

12. Internet

Brazil understands that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. We are determined to continue to support and promote initiatives that contribute to building trust, protecting and respecting all human rights online, and realizing the full potential of the Internet. We believe that the Internet contributes to development and innovation. To achieve such goals, it is necessary to foster cooperation between governments, civil society, the private sector and the technical and academic communities.

3. Freedom of Expression

Brazil reiterates the understanding that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression is a fundamental pillar of a free and democratic society. We will remain committed to fostering an environment conducive to the enjoyment of freedom of expression, including in the Internet, and condemning all forms of violence related to the expression of opinions. We will continue to support initiatives in this regard within the Human Rights Council.

14. Right to privacy

Brazil considers that the protection, promotion and respect for the right to privacy benefit from the sustained engagement of all stakeholders, including states, business, international organizations and civil society. At the Council, we will continue to support and implement initiatives that seek to respect and protect the right to privacy, especially in the context of digital communications. We will continue to engage in discussions on policies and measures related to the protection of personal data and online privacy in order to prevent and combat the arbitrary or illegal collection, processing, use or dissemination of data on the Internet that may violate human rights.

15. Human Rights Defenders

Brazil reiterates its commitment to the protection of human rights defenders, who contribute in a relevant and courageous way to the promotion and protection of human rights. In the next three years, we will continue to support and promote concrete measures to ensure that human rights defenders have a safe and supportive environment, so that they can work in safety without obstacles.

16. Older Persons

Brazil pays particular attention, from a human rights standpoint, to the growing segment of older persons in the Brazilian population. In this context, the country remains determined to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against older persons, to promote their full and effective participation in the economic, political and social life, and remains committed to the negotiation of an international legal instrument on rights of older persons, maintaining the promotion of active and healthy aging as a priority.

17. Social Inclusion

The Brazilian Government has developed active public policies to support people in situations of social vulnerability, in order to fully realize their economic, social and cultural rights. If elected to the Council, we will continue to support the implementation of initiatives that promote social inclusion, equity and inclusive education, in order to promote better standards of living and increase the well-being of all citizens. The Brazilian Government supports the basic premise of inclusion for all in order to leave no one behind.

18. Right to Health

In Brazil, everyone has the right to universal and free access to the public health service system without discrimination. In the Council, we will remain committed to initiatives to promote and protect the full and effective enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including on issues such as access to medicines.

19. Fight against Corruption

In light of the undeniable link between corruption and human rights violations, Brazil considers that the fight against corruption is consistent with measures aimed at the realization of fundamental rights. We will seek to foster, nationally and internationally, measures and practices to prevent corruption and its impacts on the enjoyment of human rights, ensuring transparency, access to public information, accountability, non-discrimination and meaningful participation in the conduct of public affairs.

20. UPR

Brazil considers that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) constitutes an important institutional instrument to ensure the objective, transparent, constructive, non-politicized, non-confrontational and non-selective treatment of human rights within the framework of the multilateral system. Brazil participated directly in its creation and remains fully committed to its success and to strengthening the national reviews under the mechanism. We reiterate our determination to implement effectively the recommendations accepted by Brazil in the review process. We reaffirm our commitment to present, in 2019, a mid-term report concerning to the recommendations accepted by Brazil in the third cycle of the UPR.

21. Reports to Human Rights Treaty Bodies

Brazil supports the human rights treaty bodies, which are a valuable part of the UN human rights system. We reaffirm our commitment, in the current Administration, to present and keep up to date all periodic reports due to the human rights treaty bodies, as well as to monitor the implementation of their recommendations.