

# **Germany's candidacy for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council**

**2023 to 2025**

## **Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 60/251**

The Federal Republic of Germany has the pleasure to hereby present its candidacy to the Human Rights Council for the period from 2023 to 2025, with elections to be held in New York in October 2022.

Serving on the Council since 2020, Germany has demonstrated its strong commitment to the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms and the purposes they serve. We are proud to be serving as Vice-President of the Council in its Bureau. Germany strongly believes in values-based foreign policy and the universality of human rights as a guiding principle for cooperation between States in a rules-based, equitable multilateral order, supported by strong voices from civil society and national human rights institutions. We seek immediate re-election to the Human Rights Council to continue to promote universal human rights for all.

Germany pursues a human rights-based approach in its foreign policy. It has committed itself to a feminist foreign policy, strengthening the rights, resources and representation of women and promoting diversity. Gender equality and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls are fundamental requirements for sustainable peace and security.

The promotion and protection of human rights is currently facing major challenges. Armed conflicts and repressive regimes are threatening fundamental human rights. Climate change is affecting people's living conditions and the realisation of their human rights worldwide. We are committed to the universality of human rights as laid down by the United Nations in 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as by the applicable international human rights treaties and the acquis of human rights guarantees under customary international law. Against this backdrop, Germany will continue to protect human rights, inter alia, by working together with our partners in the Human Rights Council and by furthering these rights in the fields of climate policy, the digital transformation, gender equality and accountability.

## **Human rights at home**

The protection and promotion of as well as respect for human rights begins in our own country. Germany considers the realisation of human rights to be an ongoing task. Germany is a party to the fundamental human rights covenants and conventions and has incorporated them into national law. We have entered into extensive commitments concerning the protection of human rights, and we appreciate our partners' views on how to better respect, protect and fulfil human rights in Germany. In this regard, we highly value the input from the Universal Periodic Review and the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, and we have issued standing invitations to the UN's Special Procedure Mandate holders.

Germany regards human rights policy as a cross-cutting task affecting all areas of society. Implementing our National Action Plan to commit to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, our efforts to achieve integration and equal opportunities and participation for refugees and migrants, as well as to adjust and to develop our National Action Plan to Fight Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Related Intolerance are just a few examples of our ongoing commitment to improving the domestic human rights situation.

The German Institute for Human Rights, established in March 2001, is Germany's independent National Human Rights Institution and adheres to the Paris Principles (A Status). It monitors the Government's human rights activities closely and critically, e.g. by publishing an annual report about the domestic human rights situation submitted to the German Bundestag.

## **Germany's international commitment to human rights**

Germany strives to protect and foster respect for human rights throughout the world by addressing human rights issues in its bilateral political dialogues and consultations, by providing support and technical cooperation for projects aimed at improving human rights situations, and by systematically taking human rights into account in its development cooperation policy programmes, humanitarian aid projects and conflict prevention activities. We focus, inter alia, on human rights and climate change, on the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls in all their diversity and on human rights online.

As part of our commitment, we have strengthened the Office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Assistance. The Commissioner is our point of contact for all human rights issues, travels the world to engage in human rights dialogues, and liaises closely with civil society representatives and the German Bundestag.

Furthermore, Germany is seizing the opportunity presented by its G7 presidency in 2022 to strengthen the multilateral order and to bring human rights into focus in all global policy dossiers.

At CSW66, UN member states adopted concrete measures for the first time to strengthen women's rights in tackling climate change and reached agreement on approaches for the participation of women and girls in all areas of tackling the climate crisis. Germany played a leading role in facilitating these negotiations and will actively promote the implementation of these conclusions.

Germany is a staunch supporter of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and will continue to do its utmost to ensure that it can work as effectively as possible and that it receives broad support from the international community.

In addition, Germany strongly supports mechanisms of the Human Rights Council that contribute to ending impunity, such as the Commission of Inquiry to investigate all alleged violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the context of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and OHCHR's Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

Germany has been a committed supporter of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms since its establishment. In 2021, for example, Germany strongly supported the recognition by the Human Rights Council of the right to a healthy, clean and sustainable environment as a human right, derived from and inherent in pre-existing international human rights obligations, and will continue to promote its implementation.

**Germany pledges to:**

- continue to work to promote the universality and indivisibility of human rights;
- continue its support for the independence and autonomous capacity to act of all national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles;
- bring its G7 presidency in 2022 to bear to strengthen multilateralism and to dovetail economic, climate, environmental and socio-political issues with the protection of human rights;
- support and strengthen the framework of the Human Rights Council as the primary UN forum for human rights and to actively participate in discussions on the efficiency and the institutional status of the Human Rights Council;
- continue its support for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the independence of her mandate;

- continue its close cooperation with the OHCHR by, inter alia, providing substantial political and financial support for its work;
- closely cooperate with the mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, in particular by upholding its standing invitation to the Special Procedures to visit Germany;
- continue to work towards a greater number of ratifications of international human rights treaties;
- continue to work actively on the UPR by offering recommendations to States and by cooperating with the UPR, with Germany itself being under review in 2023;
- actively support the UN Treaty Body reform process with a view to furthering its effectiveness and efficiency while securing the independence of the Treaty Bodies and their experts;
- continue to promote the crucial role of civil society in the Human Rights Council and to actively support human rights defenders worldwide; including via its relocation and protection programme for human rights defenders, the Elisabeth Selbert Initiative;
- continue its commitment to end impunity for human rights violations and crimes under international law worldwide by supporting for example, the OHCHR's Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar and other mechanisms as well as the ICC;
- continue to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and to pursue a rights-based approach to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- continue to strengthen the link between climate change and human rights and to support a rights-based approach to guide global climate change policies and actions;
- continue its efforts to implement a common and consistent climate diplomacy and to achieve climate justice in line with the European Green Deal, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement with a view to the impact of climate change on human rights;

- continue leading the engagement on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation as well as on adequate housing and on the human rights of victims and survivors of trafficking in persons;
- use its membership of the HRC as well as the UN Commission on the Status of Women and in other international forums to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women and girls, as well as to support norm setting and the implementation of the rights of women and girls with, inter alia, its candidacy in 2022 for a seat on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and also promote women's economic empowerment;
- actively engage in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes" adopted by the UN Commission on the Status of Women this March;
- fulfil our third Action Plan on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2021-2024 and develop a fourth national action plan on Women, Peace and Security;
- continue its engagement in fighting Conflict Related Sexual Violence, including by implementing the international architecture and supporting the monitoring efforts of the OHCHR and of the International Criminal Court inter alia in Ukraine;
- strengthen the rights, resources and representation of women and girls worldwide and promote social diversity with a feminist foreign policy in mind;
- as a member of the Equal Rights Coalition, tackle violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons and support the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, inter alia through the Federal Commissioner for the Acceptance of Sexual and Gender Diversity, and counter all forms of discrimination;
- remain committed to the right to freedom of expression and fight for press freedom and the protection of journalists, including by programs offering scholarships and temporary stays in Germany, as well as to tackle hate speech;

- continue to advocate for the freedom of religion and belief and for inter-faith dialogue, inter alia as promoted by the Federal Commissioner for Freedom of Religion or Belief;
- continue to protect and promote children's rights, in particular those affected by armed conflict;
- continue to advocate for an EU action plan on business and human rights based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and to enhance the National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights in line with the new national Act on Corporate Due Diligence Obligations for the Prevention of Human Rights Violations in Supply Chains;
- advocate for and strengthen human rights both offline and online, including by promoting the resolution on Privacy in the Digital Age and by broadening its scope to also consider the impact of artificial intelligence;
- actively promote the recognition of the right to a healthy, clean and sustainable environment as a human right, derived from and inherent in pre-existing international human rights obligations, by the UN General Assembly and to advocate for its concretisation and enforcement;
- continue efforts to put human rights at the heart of the COVID recovery and promote international solidarity and cooperation;
- continue to, every two years, present the Federal Government's comprehensive human rights report, including a Plan of Action for Human Rights, to the German Bundestag.