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

Note verbale dated 27 February 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the United Nations, with reference to the candidature of the Republic of Albania to the Human Rights Council for the term 2024–2026, at the elections to be held in New York in October 2023, has the honour to transmit herewith the voluntary pledges of the Government of the Republic of Albania, reaffirming its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [60/251](#) (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania would be grateful if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Assembly, under agenda item 117 (c).

* [A/78/50](#).



Annex to the note verbale dated 27 February 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Albania to the Human Rights Council, 2024–2026

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

1. Albania is deeply committed to the promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad. Convinced that respect for fundamental rights and freedoms for all individuals and groups is a key precondition for lasting peace, security and sustainable development, Albania remains fully committed to advancing the promotion and protection of human rights across the world.
2. Albania presents its candidature for the Human Rights Council for the term 2024–2026 based on its firm conviction that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and inherent to all people regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status.
3. Thirty years after the fall of the dictatorship, Albania continues to hold human rights at the core of its foreign policy, which shapes Albania’s principled position and engagements in international and regional multilateral forums.
4. Having served on the Human Rights Council in a previous term, 2015–2017, Albania has demonstrated its strong ambition to contribute to the strengthening of the United Nations human rights system. During its term as a member of the Council, Albania was active by becoming part of the Council’s decision-making and had an impact on improving the Council’s functioning, relations between United Nations bodies in Geneva and New York and enhancing the Council’s work effectiveness; supported the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; worked closely with the special procedures of the Council; supported the universality of the universal periodic review; co-sponsored a number of resolutions; promoted the countries of the new democracies; and sponsored and co-organized several activities like the activity of Amnesty International and the International Service for Human Rights and the Council’s pledging event on youth for human rights and common benefits.
5. Albania placed the promotion and protection of human rights at the centre of its priorities during the chairpersonship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2020, and currently, as an elected member of the Security Council for the term 2022–2023, human rights serve as the bedrock of Albania’s priorities during its mandate.
6. Albania seeks to contribute further to a more dynamic and efficient Human Rights Council and above all preserve its credibility, independence and effectiveness and to continue to work in enhancing respect for human rights by serving for a second term on the Council.
7. Albania seeks to strengthen the ability of the Human Rights Council to address traditional and new threats to the effective enjoyment of human rights, by fostering closer cooperation among members and civil society, and the United Nations system.
8. If elected, Albania will prioritize the areas set out below.

Strengthening accountability and the rule of law

9. Holding perpetrators of serious crimes to account to fight impunity and deter further breaches of basic rights will be central to Albania's work on the Human Rights Council.

10. Albania will work to defend universal norms and principles and strengthen the rule of law to enable the enjoyment of universal rights by all.

11. Albania will work to strengthen the role of special procedures, treaty bodies and the universal periodic review, which together form the basic pillars of the United Nations system to ensure accountability for all violations of human rights. It will defend the independence of special rapporteurs to do their vital work and serve as "the eyes and the ears" of the entire system. Albania will encourage all States to engage constructively and in a timely way with the treaty bodies and see to it that their decisions are complied with.

12. Albania will work to further consolidate the universal periodic review, by engaging constructively, allowing for open and frank exchanges about all violations of human rights in all countries, sharing best practices and taking a firm stance against persistent violators.

Promoting women's rights and gender equality

13. The promotion of gender equality across the world will continue to be a priority for Albania. Gender equality is a national priority, which puts Albania among the top five gender-balanced Governments in the world, with women accounting for 70 per cent of ministers. Some of the key highest public positions in Albania – including independent institutions, agencies and departments in key areas of the State – are successfully run by women.

14. Albania has launched the preparation of the second national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). Through the second national action plan, Albania will seek to further expand the participation of women in foreign policy, global peace and security issues while continuing to implement measures to empower women economically in alignment with the European Union gender equality plan (GAP III).

15. Albania is championing the women and peace and security agenda across the full breadth of the Security Council's work. Women and peace and security constitutes the main priority for Albania. Albania strongly believes that putting women and girls at the centre of peace and security is a good investment in longer-lasting and more sustainable peace. As the facilitator of the shared commitments for 2023, Albania will continue to work and coordinate with all Security Council members who are part of this initiative to ensure the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in concrete and tangible ways.

Promoting civic space and protecting human rights defenders

16. Albania strongly believes that civil society and human rights defenders must continue to play their vital role in the Human Rights Council. Peacebuilders, human rights defenders, advocates for gender equality, journalists and other civil society representatives play a critical role in advancing the common goal of sustainable peace, human rights and gender equality. Their perspectives, their voices and the insights they bring are crucial for the Council to fulfil its mandate and for Member States to make informed decisions.

17. Albania will not only promote the active and meaningful participation of civil society in the work of the Human Rights Council but will spare no efforts in

combating all forms of intimidation and reprisals against civil society actors who engage with the United Nations. Without the space to defend those rights, there can be no realization of human rights. In standing up for civic space, Albania will promote the right to freedom of expression and opinion, which is essential for the fulfilment and enjoyment of a wide range of human rights.

Protecting and promoting children's rights

18. Albania is working to strengthen and promote the children and armed conflict agenda as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Albania is working closely with all like-minded countries to ensure that child protection provisions and capacity are included in all relevant mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

19. Albania believes that children should be treated primarily as victims and in line with international juvenile justice standards.

20. Albania will spearhead concrete and decisive action to improve the situation of children worldwide driven by a human rights-based approach that puts the child at the centre and filters analysis through the lens of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

21. Albania pledges to:

- Remain strongly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide, a basic condition for peace and development based on the principles of equality and universality of human rights.
- Remain committed to enhancing the universality, inalienability, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights for all.
- Cooperate with all States to promote and protect human rights for all.
- Support the participation of civil society actors and human rights defenders, especially women, in the work of the Human Rights Council and on the ground.
- Advocate for greater use of human rights information in common efforts to develop effective early warning mechanisms and early response capabilities. Human rights are and should be used as a valuable set of tools for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace.
- Support the increase of the synergies between the Security Council and the Human Rights Council as well as the strengthening of the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the United Nations system, including in the work of the Security Council.
- Support all efforts aimed at mainstreaming child protection in the Human Rights Council agenda as well as relevant activities of the States Members of the United Nations, including in the field of conflict mediation and prevention.
- Protect and promote minority rights as a prerequisite for all people's full enjoyment of human rights.
- Advocate and promote the protection of freedom of religion and of belief everywhere, based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination and universality in respect of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in a timely way and to advance a human rights-based approach to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Advocate for the right attention and engagement of multilateral forums at the nexus between climate change and human rights.
 - Continue to provide contributions to activities aimed at the promotion and protection of human rights, including contributions to relevant funds of the United Nations.
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