

Human Rights Council elections 2024

Questions asked by Civil Society to candidate States during the Pledging Event

4 September 2024

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BENIN

(did not attend)

A question asked to all States from a different organisation was asked to Benin in the second round ([see below](#)).

- **DefendDefenders:** Regarding principled support to country-specific initiatives on the basis of objective criteria - can Benin commit to the incoming members' pledge and Irish Principles? - *asked during the event*

BOLIVIA

(did not attend)

- **Carmen Capriles Flores, human rights defender from Bolivia:**
 - Given Bolivia's obligations under international human rights law, what specific steps will the government take to address the unresolved issue of enforced disappearances, most of which occurred during the period 1972-1980? How will the government ensure accountability and deliver justice, not just reparations, to the victims and their families? For instance, in the case of my family, (Carlos Flores Bedregal and others vs. Bolivia), a year has passed since the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued its ruling, yet Bolivia has made little progress in investigating and finding the body of Carlos Flores Bedregal, showing minimal political will to do so.
- asked during the event
 - Additionally, how does Bolivia plan to enhance its cooperation with international human rights mechanisms to address these serious concerns if elected to the Human Rights Council in 2024?
- **CONTIOCAP (Coordinadora Nacional en Defensa de Territorios Indígenas Originarios Campesinos y Áreas Protegidas) y CEDIB (Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia):**
 - What explanation does the Bolivian State give in response to the following two critical aspects, which are the result of its public policies contrary to addressing climate change, which have an enormous global repercussion? (A) Being among the top 3 countries with the highest rate of deforestation in the world, and the highest amount of devastation of primary forests, either by deforestation, or by uncontrolled fires. (B) Occupying the unwelcome first places among the countries importing

mercury and with evidence of being the centre of distribution of illegal mercury in South America, in open contradiction with its commitments assumed before the Minamata Convention - *asked during the event*

- How does the Bolivian state propose to act for Human Rights in the face of authoritarian regimes that are ideologically akin to it? Will it be able to make its effective commitment to Human Rights prevail over ideological alignments and political pragmatism?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Several UN human rights bodies have raised concerns about lack of judicial independence in Bolivia. What steps will the government of Bolivia take to ensure that the judiciary is independent and impartial?
 - In 2023, as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, Bolivia consistently opposed scrutiny of various states' records, including Nicaragua, Russia, and Iran. Will Bolivia take steps to challenge serious rights abuses everywhere?

COLOMBIA

(attended)

- **Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) and Plataforma mesa nacional para las migraciones y refugiados en Republica Dominicana:** Human mobility is a multidirectional phenomenon with increasingly complex dynamics in risky contexts, and some States' responses are restrictive and even criminalising. What is Colombia's position in response to this phenomenon, guaranteeing the protection of the human rights of people on the move? What specific actions will the Colombian Government take from a human rights perspective in order to address the issue at the Council? As well as in relation to Venezuelan migration at the national level? - *asked during the event*
- **Ilex Acción Jurídica:**
 - What will be Colombia's position on issues that refer to situations of racial discrimination such as racist police violence in the global and national context before the Council? Will they prioritise this issue, and what actions will they take to promote the participation of the Afro-descendant population at the Council? - *asked during the event*

- What are Colombia's strategic actions in the event of becoming a member of the Council? What issues will these actions be oriented towards?
- **Organisation is Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (GFOD):** The Palenque community, originating from San Basilio de Palenque in Colombia, is a distinct group of Afro-descendants who trace their roots to individuals who, after enduring generations of enslavement and forced abduction from Africa, form part of a larger group known as Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWD). Despite the recognition of San Basilio de Palenque's cultural heritage by UNESCO, what practical support is Colombia providing to ensure the preservation and promotion of the Palenque community's cultural identity and heritage? Given the reliance of the Palenque community on informal work, how will Colombia develop and implement programs that provide social protections and economic opportunities for informal workers?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Colombia's "total peace" policy and its repeated ceasefires with armed groups have so far failed to protect citizens from abuses by armed groups in remote communities. What steps will Colombia take to decrease violence, and end child recruitment and massacres?
 - The Colombian government has committed to implementing the 2016 peace accord. But it has done little to ensure that confessed war criminals are sanctioned with "effective restrictions of liberty," as established in the accord. How will Colombia ensure justice for victims?
- **Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS):** Human mobility in the Americas is an increasingly widespread phenomenon and movements are carried out in multiple directions with increased risks, in many cases, due to the lack of regular mechanisms for entry into the territory. What is the position of the State in relation to this situation and how do you think the Council could address the issue?
- **Programa Somos Defensores:** What is the Colombian State going to do to protect human rights defenders, since in less than 8 years more than 1,200 have been murdered and the country has a broad regulatory framework?

CYPRUS

(attended)

A question asked to all States from a different organisation was asked to Cyprus in the second round ([see below](#)).

- **The Shelter Students Refuge (TSSR):**
 - Given the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Cyprus, how does your government view the situation, and what role do you think the international community, including your country, should play in ensuring that the rights of these vulnerable populations are upheld and that they are provided with adequate protection and support? - *asked during the event*
 - What is your country's stance on enhancing international cooperation to improve the conditions for refugees and migrants in regions like Cyprus, where tensions and resource constraints are significant?

CZECHIA

(attended)

A question asked to all States from a different organisation was asked to Cyprus in the second round ([see below](#)).

- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - There are serious concerns about the negative impact of the EU's externalization policies on migrant rights. Is Czechia ready to support strong HRC attention on the issue and committed to implement Special Procedures' recommendations pertaining to migration externalization and rights of migrants at borders?
 - The Czech government has welcomed ICC action on Russia's crimes in Ukraine while criticizing it for Israeli crimes in Gaza, and preventing EU action to address them. Will CZ end its double standards and demand accountability for all atrocity crimes, whichever the perpetrator? - *asked during the event*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

(did not attend)

- **Human Rights and Development in Africa:**
 - What concrete commitments is the DRC prepared to make to improve access to justice and guarantee the independence of the judicial system in order to combat impunity? And to make progress in protecting human rights defenders, journalists and political opponents, who are often victims of intimidation, arbitrary arrest and violence? - *asked during the event*
 - How does the DRC intend to ensure the effective participation of civil society and victims in the development and implementation of its human rights policies?
- **Alerte Congolaise pour l'environnement et les droits de l'Homme, ACEDH:**

In terms of respect for the rights and freedoms of local communities who are the victims of evictions due to mining investments, what major legal and institutional reforms are planned to respect and ensure respect for human rights? After the introduction of 3 pieces of legislation (the law on the protection and responsibility of human rights defenders, the digital code and the press law), these laws are more repressive, liberticidal and unsuited to democratic and social protection objectives. What measures and reforms is the DRC planning to facilitate access to justice? The issue of access to energy as a human right poses a serious problem in the DRC, and how does the state intend to ensure that these rights are respected in order to guarantee economic growth and reduce poverty?
- *asked during the event*
- **Anonymous:** If you are elected to represent the DRC on the Human Rights Council, what will be your model for promoting human rights values within the other Member States of the Council and the UN in general, given that the DRC is not cited as a model in terms of human rights and in particular respect for fundamental freedoms (right to life, freedom of opinion, peaceful assembly and gathering, freedom of association, prison conditions, freedom of movement and personal security, etc.)?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - The Congolese authorities have increasingly cracked down on opposition members, civil society activists, critics, and journalists throughout the 2023 presidential election period and ever since: What actions will the authorities take to show genuine support for fundamental liberties and

ensure that journalists and opposition activists can gather and speak freely?

- August 30 marks one year since Congolese security forces killed at least 57 people in Goma, the capital of the North Kivu province. While a military court in October 2023 found four soldiers, including a commanding officer, guilty of murder, no further investigations were launched and no victims received compensation: Will the government of the DRC commit to establishing command responsibility and appropriately punishing all those responsible for this brutal massacre and will the government commit to adequately compensating families of the victims?
- Armed conflict in eastern Congo has intensified as Rwandan-backed M23 continue to seize territory around the eastern city of Goma. In May 2021, President Félix Tshisekedi, who was re-elected in December 2023, declared martial law – a “state of siege” – in the North Kivu and Ituri provinces. Armed groups continue to attack civilians with little protection from the Congolese army despite the “state of siege.”: What measures can the government take to ensure that martial rule is not used as a pretext to curtail people’s fundamental rights and find effective measures to address security issues in North Kivu?
- **Foyer de Développement pour l'Autopromotion des Personnes Indigentes et en Détresse (FDAPID):** What is the Congolese government's vision for guaranteeing the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, especially the fight against torture, the abolition of the death penalty and the improvement of civic space, the working climate for human rights defenders, prison conditions and the fight against impunity for perpetrators of gender-based violence and other serious crimes?

ETHIOPIA

(did not attend)

- **Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Center (EHRDC):**
 - What are the measures to be taken by the government to conduct impartial, thorough and effective investigations into all cases of attacks, harassment and intimidation against civil society activists, HRDs and journalists, and bring the perpetrators to justice in fair trials? - *asked during the event*

- How can the government ensure that HRDs are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear or undue hindrance, obstruction, or legal and administrative harassment?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Ethiopia took unprecedented steps to resist and undermine international scrutiny of rights violations in Ethiopia, including by UN-HRC mandated and regional mechanisms. As a Council member, how will Ethiopia support international scrutiny of abuses, including domestically? - *asked during the event*
 - Victims of serious human rights abuses across Ethiopia express a lack of trust in state institutions to deliver credible accountability. How is the government strengthening institutions and ensuring transparency in justice processes so as to not fuel further impunity?

GAMBIA

(did not attend)

- **Human Rights Watch:** The Gambian government's consideration of a bill reversing the ban on a 2015 FGM is deeply troubling for women's rights. Can the government commit to protecting the rights of Gambian girls and women by rejecting any proposal to reverse or weaken the 2015 FGM ban? - *asked during the event*
- **Defend Defenders:** Will Gambia commit to applying principled support to country-specific initiatives on the basis of objective criteria? As well as committing to the incoming members' pledge and Irish Principles? - *asked during the event*

ICELAND

(attended)

A question to all States was asked to Iceland in the second round as we only received one question addressed specifically to Iceland ([see below](#)).

- **Set My People Free:** As member of the HRC, how will Iceland protect the rights of LGBTQI+ but also ExMuslims who face legal and existential threats in over 24 countries? - *asked during the event*

KENYA

(did not attend)

- **REDRESS and Peace Brigades International:** Kenya has experienced mass demonstrations in June with recent reports of human rights violations, including alleged abuses by the Kenya Defense Forces and police and numerous protesters allegedly killed and disappeared by security forces. The establishment of a Coroner Service would be key to investigating those crimes. Specifically, what steps will be taken to operationalize the Prevention of Torture Act and the National Coroners Service Act, ensure accountability for perpetrators, and uphold the rights to peaceful protest and assembly in line with international human rights obligations? - *asked during the event*
- **Minority Rights Group:** Does Kenya considers the human rights obligations stemming from the jurisprudence of the African Commission and African Court as integral part of its vision towards advancement of human rights and, if so, which steps the Government is planning to take to ensure the full implementation of the mentioned decisions and ensure a human rights approach in nature conservation policies - *asked during the event*
- **Anonymous:** What specific actions will your State take to ensure that Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) particularly Women Human Rights Defenders and those advocating marginalised communities are protected and are able to operate freely without fear of reprisals?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - During the 2022 presidential election campaigns, President William Ruto promised that extrajudicial killings will never happen under his administration. What steps is the Kenyan government taking to investigate and prosecute members of the Police and other security forces implicated in previous and recent cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances in Kenya?
 - In fulfilment of its Charter and treaty obligations, will the Kenya government commit to acceding to the requests of the UN Special Rapporteurs on the right to freedom of assembly and association, the rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions, and other relevant special mechanisms to investigate reports of violations in Kenya?
 - Will Kenyan authorities commit to ensuring an open civic space, including upholding and protecting the right to protest and picket, and refrain from

harassing or threatening the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, journalists, human rights defenders and civil society groups?

- **Anonymous:** On 18 August 2024 at Kitengela township of Kajiado county in Kenya 3 human rights defenders- Bob Micheni Njagi, Longton Jamil Hashim and Nadim Aslam Longton were abducted by suspected state police. Their whereabouts remain unknown despite missing persons reports by family at the local police. Their enforced disappearances adds into more than 60 similar cases documented by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights since the onset of youth led protests between June and August 2024. In an environment of fear and threats of abductions of human rights defenders and critics of current government; killings of 60 unarmed youthful protesters by police why should Kenya such a poor record of human rights with to sit at the HRC

MARSHALL ISLANDS

(attended)

We did not receive specific questions for the Marshall Islands so we asked questions received for all States (see below [1](#) and [2](#)).

MEXICO

(attended)

- **Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI):** If Mexico is elected to the Human Rights Council, what specific actions will it promote in the HRC on the rights of migrants and those in need of international protection? How will it collaborate with organisations defending the rights of migrants and those in need of international protection? What initiatives will it promote with Special Procedures and Treaty bodies on the rights of migrants? - *asked during the event*
- **Anonymous:**
 - How will your participation in the Human Rights Council contribute to the promotion of protection measures for people and communities defending the environment, land and territory in Latin America and the world?
 - How will your participation in the Human Rights Council contribute to combating climate change?

- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Mexico has led HRC resolutions on many thematic issues. But it has not supported scrutiny of serious human rights abuses in specific countries, often citing "non-interventionism." Will Mexico take steps to challenge serious rights abuses everywhere?
 - In 2023, Mexico promoted a resolution calling on States to prevent and investigate abuses against migrants in transit. That year, IOM reported nearly 700 migrants died at the US-MX border. What steps will Mexico take to address abuses against migrants within its own borders?

- **The Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center:** This year Mexico did not accept some recommendations issued by the Universal Periodic Review in matters such as the guarantees of de-militarization of public security or the elimination of the figures of preventive detention without charges (arraigo) and informal preventive detention, what would be the position of the Mexican State to promote the respect of human rights involved in this issues worldwide?

- **Amnesty International Mexico:**
 - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS What initiatives will you, as a State Party, promote before the HR Council to address human rights violations committed by State and non-State actors?
 - MILITARIZATION How can Mexico support victims of human rights violations committed in contexts of militarization, guaranteeing access to justice, reparation and non-repetition? - *asked during the event*
 - JOURNALISTS How do you plan for the Human Rights Council to address impunity in cases of human rights violations against journalists?
 - RIGHT TO PROTEST What strategies would you recommend as part of the Human Rights Council to promote international cooperation in the protection of defenders of land, territory and the environment and to stop their criminalization?
 - FEMINICIDES What mechanisms will you promote before the Human Rights Council to ensure that the families of femicide victims have prompt and effective access to reparations from the international level? What is your commitment as a State member of the Human Rights Council to promote the implementation of international standards for the protection of

women victims of femicide in all countries party to the Human Rights Council?

- **Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership To End Child Marriage:** Recognising child, early and forced marriage and unions as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, how will Mexico ensure their commitment to ending these harmful practices through their membership to the Human Rights Council?
- **Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS):** Human mobility in the Americas is an increasingly widespread phenomenon and movements are carried out in multiple directions with increased risks, in many cases, due to the lack of regular mechanisms for entry into the territory. What is the position of the State in relation to this situation and how do you think the Council could address the issue?
- **PODER:** As a candidate to the Human Rights Council, what concrete actions does the Mexican State propose to guarantee human rights such as the right to access to information, to justice, to self-determination, to territory, to drinking water, to health and to a healthy environment, among others, in the context of business, State and private activities, including those of credit, trade and investment, national and transnational, under considerations of intersectionality, diversity and gender equality and inclusion and participation of affected communities, eliminating the undue influence of business actors in the decisions for such guarantee of human rights in Mexico and the world.

NORTH MACEDONIA

(attended)

A question to all States was asked to North Macedonia in the second round as we only received one question addressed specifically to North Macedonia ([see below](#)).

- **Global UN Engagement Coordinator for the Stakeholder Group of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent, part of the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders** - Ambassador Frchkoski of North Macedonia's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York has shown exemplary commitment to protecting minorities and the vulnerable, including Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent and the LGBTI community. With a new ambassador soon to follow, how will North Macedonia ensure this commitment is institutionalised and

continues, rather than being an isolated effort? While recognizing progress, what challenges does North Macedonia identify regarding the Roma community, part of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent? We are particularly interested in issues of economic and cultural marginalisation, physical segregation, and access to education - *asked during the event*

QATAR

(attended)

- **Jubilee Campaign/Set our people free:**
 - During the Human Rights Committee review of Qatar's compliance with the ICCPR in 2022 the experts asked Qatar about the sanction of the death penalty for apostasy. In fact at the end of the review, the Treaty Body Member noted that, "He had not heard an answer to the earlier question as to whether the death penalty could be imposed for apostasy." How is Qatar working to ensure the death penalty is only a sanction for "most serious crimes" and not for leaving the state religion and for exercising other human rights? - *asked during the event*
 - The HRCttee recommended Qatar: "37. The State party should take further steps to ensure respect for freedom of thought, conscience and religion for all, and ensure that its legislation and practices are in full conformity with the provisions of the Covenant. It should take measures to ensure that Muslims who have converted to another faith and Muslim women marrying a non-Muslim are not subjected to discrimination and social pressure." What steps have been taken in this regard?
- **The Gulf Center For Human Rights:** When do authorities in Qatar plan to grant women their full rights including the right to political participation, considering that none of them were able to be elected to the Shura Council in the election that took place in October 2021? And when will the authorities release all the detained prisoners of conscience including human rights lawyers, Dr. Hazzaa bin Ali Abu Shraydeh Al-Marri and his brother Rashid bin Ali Abu Shraydeh Al-Marri, who are serving life for their peaceful and legitimate human rights work? - *asked during the event*

- **Khyber Rights Forum:** Why is Qatar not working against the violations of Human Rights being a strong economic state in Asia?

- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Qatar hosted the 2022 FIFA World Cup between November and December 2022. Qatari authorities and FIFA failed to provide compensation to migrant workers for widespread abuses, including wage theft and the unexplained deaths of workers who prepared and delivered the tournament. Migrant workers faced new forms of exploitation, highlighting the inadequacies of Qatar's labor reforms and the shameful human rights legacy of the 2022 World Cup: Why have Qatar authorities failed to provide compensation for migrant workers who delivered the 2022 FIFA World Cup and faced widespread abuses, including wage theft and unexplained deaths?

 - Qatar's advisory Shura Council proposed the government adopt measures that risk severely backtracking on their labor reforms introduced in 2020. Will Qatari authorities reject these recommendations and instead look to expand and improve on their 2020 reforms?

- **Baha'i International Community:** What measures the state have taken to ensure and respect the right of the Baha'i community as a religious minority in the country? specially after two UN treat bodies (CESCR and CERD) have raised concerns about discrimination against Baha'is, including discriminatory dismissals, lack of recognition of their marriage and personal status documents, deportations and blacklisting, all of which have resulted in adverse consequences such as loss of income and separation of families. And have asked the state of Qatar to address these acts of discrimination against members of the Baha'i community in Qatar.

- **Ilef Kassab, MENA Human Rights Adviser at the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)**
 - At the national level, does Qatar intend to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)? and what specific measures does Qatar intend to take to ensure that the freedom of expression and assembly are fully respected and protected, especially in the context of civil society and human rights defenders?

 - Regionally, and in light of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, how does Qatar intend to contribute to or support independent investigations into these

allegations? What role does Qatar see itself playing in ensuring accountability for those responsible?

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

(attended)

- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - Will the Republic of Korea show leadership at the UN by joining its last remaining convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers?
 - The Republic of Korea says it “upholds human rights as one of its core foreign policy principles,” will it use its HRC seat to show leadership in ensuring joint collective action so there is accountability for serious abuses?
 - Will the Republic of Korea show leadership system-wide at the UN, beyond their HRC seat by establishing a new standing body at the UNGA to ensure there is a regular UN reporting to examine the linkages between peace and security and the human rights situation in DPRK? – *asked during the event*
- **Jubilee Campaign:**
 - What efforts will ROK take to protect the rights of North Korean defectors. What steps will a Member states to protect North Korean refugees from refoulement?
 - What efforts will ROK take to protect the rights of North Korean defectors?
|| What steps will Member states take to prioritise the protection of North Korean refugees from refoulement?

SAUDI ARABIA

(did not attend)

- **ALQST for Human Rights:**
 - The Human Rights Council is a critical body, whose success depends on members' commitment to cooperate closely with the UN in a bid to promote human rights. Yet UN fact-finding experts have been repeatedly denied access to Saudi Arabia for many years, Saudi Arabia refuses to

engage constructively with Council mechanisms and Saudi human rights defenders face reprisals for engaging with the UN. What steps will Saudi Arabia take to ensure that their actions align with membership criteria of the Human Rights Council set out in resolution 60/251? - *asked during the event*

- Will Saudi Arabia release all political prisoners charged for contacting human rights organisations, and allow human rights defenders to continue their work safely?
- **Gulf Center for Human Rights:**
 - Where are exactly human rights defenders Dr. Mohammed Al-Qahtani, Issa Al-Nukhaifi, both were forcibly disappeared on 24 October 2022, and Red Cross worker Abdulrahman Al-Sadhan, who was forcibly disappeared since 12 March 2018?
 - When authority will be able to release all the detained WHRDs who were heavily sentenced in some unfair trial for tweets? - *asked during the event*
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - There has been no accountability for the widespread & systematic killings of migrants & asylum seekers by Saudi border guards, nor for unlawful Saudi airstrikes in Yemen. How will Saudi Arabia support the core mission of the HRC, including scrutiny of its domestic rights record? Q2: HRW found that violations of defendants' rights are so fundamental & systemic that it is hard to reconcile Saudi Arabia's criminal justice system with one based on the basic principles of the rule of law. What steps will KSA take to address rampant abuses in its justice system?
 - HRW found that violations of defendants' rights are so fundamental & systemic that it is hard to reconcile Saudi Arabia's criminal justice system with one based on the basic principles of the rule of law. What steps will KSA take to address rampant abuses in its justice system?
- **Anonymous:** Saudi Arabia's most prominent defenders were arrested in 2018. One, Loujain al-Hathloul was kidnapped after an event at the human rights council. Will SA commit to stop its retaliation against human rights defenders? And will it close the file of these detainees by unconditionally releasing them, lifting their travel bans and the ones illegally imposed on their families?

SPAIN

(attended)

- **Asociación Española para el Derecho Internacional de los Derechos Humanos (AEDIDH):** Will Spain ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families? Will it accept art. 11.1 of the ICESCR OP? Will it ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity? Will it ratify the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries? Will it ratify the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid? Will it accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons? Will it repeal the 1977 Amnesty Law? Will it repeal the 2015 Gag Law? Will it repeal the Law on Foreigners? Will it recognise in domestic law ESCR, in particular the right to housing? Will it adopt by law the obligation to abide by the decisions of international human rights bodies in domestic law?
 - What steps will Spain take to address gaps in ratifying core human rights treaties and protocols and fully align with international human rights standards? - *asked during the event*

- **Asociación Cuidadores de Personas:**
 - From your position in the Council, what will you do to ensure that the Spanish State formulates laws to prevent and punish socio-occupational discrimination against skilled migrant workers? - *asked during the event*

 - What proposal for a law will you make so that highly qualified women can occupy positions that are in line with their professional training?

- **Instituto de Asuntos Culturales:**
 - The EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum - While the pact aims to balance solidarity and responsibility among member states, there are several gaps and challenges that critics and stakeholders have identified, I would like to know what your action plan is to get Spain counteracting the gaps and negative impact of EU's pact on Migration and Asylum on the following areas:
 - a. Insufficient solidarity mechanism
 - b. Lack of adequate protection for migrants' social mobility and labour rights
 - c. The ambiguity in return procedures

d. The overreliance on border control And what would the main challenges be for you / your post to deal with the above firmly and effectively from your new potential post within the Human Rights Council?

- How do you see and would like to see the role of civil society to support your role in facing the gaps and challenges on the 4 previous categories.
- **Las Asociación "Cuidadores":** From our longitudinal research on the quality of life of migration in Spain, endorsed by the College of Political Science and Sociology and the Spanish Federation of Sociology, we concluded that structural discrimination has a direct impact on the health of people of foreign origin. For the representatives of Spain, from your position in the Council, what are you going to do for the Spanish State to formulate laws to prevent and sanction socio-labor discrimination of skilled migrant workers?
- **Aquarius Survivors - Supervivientes**
 - What is your position on the use by Spanish political parties of the situation of unaccompanied minors who arrive on the Spanish coast? What measures would you apply to guarantee their effective protection regardless of who governs each administration?
 - What measures do you propose to improve the dignity of migrants who live and work in Spain without papers? And for applicants for international protection who face system saturation. It is even impossible to get appointments at the Immigration Office to process the application or renewal of permits.

SWITZERLAND

(attended)

- **BAGSO - Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Seniorenorganisationen:** What does Switzerland do to strengthening of the protection of the rights of older persons at national, regional and international levels and what is its position towards the drafting of a new convention on the rights of older persons under the auspices of the Human Rights Council? – *asked during the event*
- **Public Eye:**
 - Switzerland likes to see itself as a leader in the protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law. How do you respond to the fact that

Switzerland is currently lagging significantly behind certain (legislative and judicial) international developments, particularly in the areas of corporate responsibility (where, unlike the EU, Switzerland still lacks comprehensive, binding regulations on corporate responsibility) and climate change and human rights (especially in light of the recent statement by the Federal Council on the KlimaSeniorinnen-ruling of the European Court of Human Rights, which lacked a clear and strong commitment to the international system of human rights protection as an integral part of the Swiss rule of law)? - *asked during the event*

- What are your specific commitments to prevent the abusive use of court systems by corporations and potentates to intimidate, silence, and harass Swiss NGOs and journalists working in the public interest?
- **Anonymous:** In recent years there have been quite a few advancements at the Human Rights Council in terms of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), which align with international human rights norms coming out of the UN treaty bodies, as well as advancements in state practice. What is your position in supporting SRHR at the Council, and are there specific issues you would like to see addressed.
- **People for Equality and Relief in Sri Lanka:** If elected, what specifically will Switzerland do to strongly push for justice and accountability, via individual or state responsibility, in Sri Lanka, noting that its past record on Sri Lanka has been weak and disappointing to victim-survivor communities?
- **NGO-Plattform Human Rights Switzerland:**
 - Could the representatives of Switzerland please clarify the pledge continuing its effort to combat all forms of discrimination? So far the official position of the Swiss Government is against a holistic approach and is constantly rejecting a non-discrimination law.
 - Could you please say something about their understanding of the recent declaration of the Swiss parliament and the statement of the Federal Council concerning the judgment of the ECHR on KlimaSeniorinnen and they criticized the extension of the ECHR to protection against climate change. In addition, the Federal Council is of the opinion that Switzerland meets the requirements of the judgment based on its previous and ongoing climate policy efforts. Should this be understood to mean that the

Swiss authorities are questioning the right to dynamic legal development of the international conventions by international courts and human rights monitoring bodies?

- **Anonymous:** How does Switzerland intend to defend the traditional interpretation of human rights within the Human Rights Council in the face of the increasing tendency of certain States to relativize the importance of civil and political rights (e.g. freedom of expression or assembly) in favor of the realization of economic and social rights (e.g. increased purchasing power or health coverage)?
- **ACAT-Switzerland:** Has Switzerland drawn up a strategy to work against this trend, in particular to prevent countries that relativize the importance of civil and political rights from monetizing their position on the Human Rights Council through economic agreements?

THAILAND

(attended)

- **Anna Annanon, Young Thai human rights defender and Thai Lawyers for Human Rights:** Many UN experts have expressed concerns and recommended the amendment of the Lèse Majesté Law (Article 112 of Thai Criminal Code), which provides that 'Whoever defames, insults or threatens members of the Royal Family, shall be punished with imprisonment of three to fifteen years'. As a country who is a candidate to the Human Rights Council, how do you plan to readjust this law to comply with international law and UN experts' recommendations? - *asked during the event*
- **Peace Rights Foundation, Jacob Goldberg The New Humanitarian and the People's Empowerment Foundation:** Thailand has held 48 Uyghur asylum seekers in immigration detention for more than 10 years, in addition to this, 5 persons detained have died in the past decades. As Thailand seeks membership of the Human Rights Council, will the Royal Thai Government guarantee to uphold the principle of non-refoulement in relation to these Uyghurs detained for the last 10 years? And What steps will the Government take to ensure access to international protection and durable solutions for this group? - *asked during the event (compiling three questions below)*

- **Peace Rights Foundation:** As Thailand seeks membership of the Human Rights Council, will the Royal Thai Government (RTG) guarantee to uphold the principle of non-refoulement in relation to Uyghurs detained for the last 10 years in Thailand? Will the RTG ensure the access to international protection and durable solutions for this group despite the fact that 5 persons had died in the past decades?
- **Jacob Goldberg The New Humanitarian:** Thailand has held 48 Uyghur asylum seekers in immigration detention for more than 10 years. Why doesn't Thailand release them? Why can't they access Thailand's National Screening Mechanism? Is Chinese tourism more important than their right to escape persecution?
- **People's Empowerment Foundation (PEF):**
 - What does Thailand stand for refugees, the humanitarian crisis and peace in Myanmar?
 - How will the Thai government handle the Uyghur refugees in Thailand after over ten years of living in the Detection Center?
 - How will the Thai government combat corruption during the increasing number of transnational scammer agencies in Thailand, either in Thailand or on border neighboring countries? it has led Thailand to become as center of transnational crimes. There are a lot of cases as affecting human rights violation as human trafficking, consumer fraud, many have become victims.
 - Will the government de-criminalize sex workers by repealing The Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act (1996)? 5. Will the government have any plan to reform the constitution?
- **Young Pride Club:** Thailand has made significant progress by passing marriage equality laws, which is commendable. However, other critical areas of legislation, such as the decriminalization of sex work and the legal recognition of gender identity of trans and gender diverse/ nonbinary individuals, are yet to be addressed. Given that Thailand also became the first country in Asia to join the Equal Rights Coalition, while many member states of ERC have already implemented the decriminalization of sex work and the legal recognition of gender identity. What specific plans or timelines does Thailand have to advance

these important legislative areas to align more closely with the values and commitments of the ERC?"

- **Anonymous:** For the case of the death of the hunger strike "Boong" Netiporn Sanesangkhom? (she was jailed after bail was revoked, and she was charged with lese majeste article 112), how will the Thai government reform the jurisdiction system?
- **Human Rights Watch:**
 - What steps will the Thai government take to strengthen democratic freedoms? Given the Constitutional Court disbanded the party that won the most votes at the last election, violating freedom of expression, association, assembly & democratic participation enshrined in the ICCPR?
 - Will the Thai government show its support for free expression by dismissing all pending cases still being prosecuted under Covid-19 restriction-related charges? While emergency measures were lifted in Oct 2022, 1,400+ people are still being prosecuted under the emergency decree.
- **Nyrola Elimä; New York Times Magazine:**
 - What is the Thai government's response to the UN letter dated February 28, 2024, regarding the case of the 48 Uyghur men detained in Bangkok? That letter argued that the conditions of these detainees "may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or even torture and which has reportedly caused the deaths of five Uyghur migrant detainees, including two minors." Have Thai authorities responded to the claims in that letter? Do Thai authorities believe the decade-long detention of Uyghur asylum seekers is conducted in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Thailand in 1996, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, acceded to by Thailand on 5 September 1999, of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), acceded to by Thailand on 2 October 2007, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), ratified by Thailand on 28 January 2003, and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Thailand on 27 March 1992? 2. Regarding this same population of Uyghur detainees, will the Thai government uphold the rules of customary international law, particularly concerning the principle of non-refoulement?

- What is the Thai government's response to the UN letter dated February 28, 2024, regarding the case of the 48 Uyghur men detained in Bangkok? That letter argued that the conditions of these detainees "may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or even torture and which has reportedly caused the deaths of five Uyghur migrant detainees, including two minors." Have Thai authorities responded to the claims in that letter?

ALL STATES

- **CIVICUS:** How much importance do you accord to civic space as an essential element of human rights and how will you advance it as an HRC member? - *asked to MARSHALL ISLANDS during the event*
- **Anonymous:** What is your position on access to abortion as a part of the fundamental right to bodily autonomy? - *asked to MARSHALL ISLANDS during the event*
- **Age Platform Europe and Bethany Brown, AARP International:** How does your country promote the equal enjoyment of human rights by older persons, what action does it foresee at national, regional and international levels, and will it support the drafting of a new human rights convention for older persons under the auspices of the Human Rights Council? - *asked to CYPRUS during the event*
- **Plataforma Colombiana de Organizaciones Sociales y Populares por el Protagonismo de Niñas, Niños y Jóvenes (Plataforma 3 Voces):** What is your proposal to ensure the active participation of children in the Human Rights Council and would you commit to creating protocols to ensure such participation? - *asked to CZECHIA during the event*
- **International Lawyers.org:**
 - How will you promote the right to development and the adoption of the Convention on the Right to Development during your time in the Council? - *asked to NORTH MACEDONIA during the event*
 - How will you ensure that the historical responsibility and intergenerational responsibilities of States are taken into account in ensuring the common

but differentiated responsibilities of States for mitigation and adaptation activities and ensuring adequate and new finance, technology transfer, and capacity building to all developing countries so that they can combat the adverse effects of climate change that impact human rights? - *asked to ICELAND during the event*

- **Association Camerounaise pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme des Libertés et du Bien-Être:**

- What specific measures does your government plan to take to guarantee the protection of human rights at national and international level?
- How do you intend to ensure freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly for all citizens, including marginalised groups? - *asked to BENIN during the event*
- What efforts is your government making to end discrimination and promote gender equality, particularly in the areas of education, employment and political representation?
- How do you plan to ensure the protection of human rights defenders and journalists, as well as a safe environment for their work?
- What concrete initiatives will your government put in place to combat torture, enforced disappearances and any form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment?
- How do you intend to cooperate with civil society and international organisations to promote and protect human rights in your country?
- How do you intend to involve young girls who are victims of tribal conflicts and war in rural areas in decision-making?
- How do you plan to involve young people in climate change issues linked to human rights and reforestation?
- How do you link human rights to cultural diversity and have an impact on government decisions?

- What added value will you bring to human rights in your role, and how do you plan to involve vulnerable groups?
- **The Shelter Students Refuge (TSSR):**
 - What specific measures will your government take to ensure the protection and integration of Afro-descendant youth within your country, and how do you intend to promote their participation in social and political processes?
 - Considering the mental health challenges faced by refugees and migrants who have experienced trauma, what initiatives does your government plan to implement to provide accessible psychological support and counseling services tailored to their unique needs.
 - How does your country intend to improve the legal frameworks and protections against human trafficking and exploitation, particularly for vulnerable migrant populations who are often at higher risk?
 - Given the global climate crisis, how will your country address the increasing number of climate refugees and ensure that displaced persons receive the necessary support and protection in their new environments?
- **Dean Bordode, Human Rights' Defender based in Canada:** Given the global challenges in human rights, how do you plan to address issues such as the protection of indigenous rights, freedom of expression, and prevention of unjust detentions in your country? What specific measures will you implement to ensure your country upholds its international human rights obligations, and how will you advocate for these issues on the Human Rights Council?
- **Global Action for Trans Equality (GATE):** What do you think about the threat posed by increasing anti-gender and anti-rights narratives and actors, and how will you ensure that the HRC addresses it?
- **Lucie Vidovicová, Masaryk University** How does your country support the strengthening of the protection of the rights of older persons at national, regional and international levels and will it endorse the drafting of a new human rights convention for older persons under the auspices of the Human Rights Council?
- **European Network Against Racism:** Everywhere we look, the racialisation of non-white lives is commonplace in governmental policies. This is especially

relevant in a context where right-wing extremism is being platformed across the globe, and mainstream political groups and politicians are culpable in the degradation of non-white lives. What practical steps are candidates proposing to take to address this worrying trend of racism and the violence it engenders?

- **Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS):** Are you aware of and are part of the Alliance for a Torture Free Trade Agreement. If so, how do you intend to promote this process and what role do you think the Council could play in this regard? If you are not yet part of it, do you intend to join?
- **Human Rights Matter:** How can the UN Human Rights Council continue to push for human rights when they allow a country like Saudi Arabia to be considered knowing full well their human rights violations record?
- **Afghan Women's Network:** I want to know about the UN plan for addressing the human right situation in Afghanistan specifically women's rights who are in the most difficult situation in the history as they are denied of their very basic human rights i.e. right to have access to education and employment. In such a situation where the Taliban regime is not recognized.