

Our Rights. Our Future.

Annual Report 2025
for year ending
31 Dec 2024





 International Service
for Human Rights

Annual Report 2025

For year ending 31 December 2024

Our Rights. Our Future.

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Contents

- 04** Message from chairpersons and director

- 09** Vision, strategy and priorities

- 14** 40+ years of impact

- 19** Challenges and opportunities
in the years ahead

- 23** Goals and impact

- 24** Supporting human rights defenders

- 32** Protecting rights and promoting accountability

- 38** Strengthening human rights laws and systems

- 44** Our team

- 48** Our supporters

- 50** Good governance

- 54** Financial statements



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for Human Rights

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Message from chairpersons and director

The future is ours to right

Rising authoritarianism. An accelerating climate crisis. Continuing conflicts characterised by war crimes and crimes against humanity. It's difficult to face 2025 with anything other than a sense of fear, inevitability and despair.

Yet these are precisely the understandable impulses we must resist. Authoritarianism feeds on insecurity. Unscrupulous corporations rely on indifferent consumers and investors. And those responsible for atrocity crimes are emboldened by a sense of impunity.

Faced with turbulence, ISHR's core values – including a principled approach to human rights, solidarity with human rights defenders, respectful and empowering partnerships, and a commitment to diversity, transparency and accountability – become critical navigational tools. Guided by these values, we will relentlessly pursue our mission to support human rights defenders in their work for freedom, equality and justice, while remaining dynamic and adapting our tactics to an uncertain and rapidly changing world. And our collective action with you, our partners, will drive human rights progress.

Confronting challenges

In the years ahead, we foresee a range of challenges, while also remaining convinced that the fairer, more peaceful, more sustainable future that defenders strive for is possible.

The first challenge is to resist and reverse the erosion of international human rights law. The selective and discriminatory application of human rights standards by some State and non-State actors undermines the universality of rights, as well as the credibility and influence of those engaged in such double standards. Human rights are also eroded when the language of rights, and interests such as development and national security, are instrumentalised to justify violations and arbitrary and disproportionate restrictions, including with respect to the rights of women, Indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ+ persons and environmental rights. ISHR's commitment is to promote a consistent and principled approach to human rights for all persons, everywhere, without discrimination and without double standards.

A second challenge is to advance accountability for human rights violations, both as an integral aspect of the right to effective remedy and because impunity licenses further violations. ISHR is committed to supporting human rights defenders who document, expose and promote international accountability for grave violations, and who are frequently targeted because of this vital work. In partnership with defenders, we will promote, push and support action by the Human Rights Council and other bodies to pursue accountability

for atrocity crimes, including in Afghanistan, China, Israel/Palestine, Russia/Ukraine, Sudan and Venezuela. We will continue our work to ensure that international human rights bodies – as well as international justice and accountability mechanisms – are safe and accessible and that all persons can cooperate with such bodies free from any form of intimidation, reprisal or sanction.

A third challenge is that of inadequate resources and declining investment in human rights. The UN human rights system remains chronically underfunded, while many governments and philanthropic trusts and foundations are slashing investment in the international human rights movement precisely at a time when increased resources are needed most. If it continues, this reduced investment will not only accelerate the erosion of rights and diminish the prospects of accountability for grave violations, but create an opportunity for more nefarious actors – both States as well as GONGOs (government organised or controlled NGOs) – to swoop in, buy out and completely co-opt and control the system. Over the last few years, the term '*enshitification*' has been widely used to describe the decay of online platforms as the interests of consumers and other stakeholders are wholly subverted to the pursuit of profits. It could equally be used to describe the erosion and decay of the international human rights system and potentially the human rights movement if the interests of human rights defenders, as well as victims and survivors of violations, continue to be trumped in the pursuit of populist politics.

Mounting a counter-offensive

If 2024 was a year in which we resisted regress, 2025 must be the year in which we mount an ambitious human rights counter-offensive, the success of which will be underpinned by a number of elements:

- **A shared vision:** We need to powerfully reaffirm that respect for universal human rights and the rule of law are indispensable to a world that is fair, just and peaceful, and that the work of human rights defenders is essential to effectively realise human rights for everyone, everywhere.
- **A broad support base and commitment to cooperation:** We need to build strong, diverse intersectional coalitions. We need to invite all those who share a commitment to values of freedom, dignity, equality, solidarity and justice to join the team. Our commitment to cooperation must be multifaceted. We must collaborate within civil society, ensure protection from reprisals for those who cooperate with the UN, and demand good faith and substantive cooperation by States with human rights bodies and international justice mechanisms,

including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

- **A belief we can win:** No great advance is achieved without ambition and a bold belief that victory is possible. Our recent against-the-odds defeats of powerful but grossly unqualified candidates for the Human Rights Council, including Russia and [Saudi Arabia](#), are testament to that.
- **A well resourced and protected frontline:** Human rights defenders are at the frontline, pushing for human rights change and resisting human rights regress. They must be provided with the legal recognition and protection, as well as the financial and political support, that is necessary for this vital work.
- **The right people at the table:** Complementing their work on the ground, human rights defenders are increasingly turning to the international human rights system for justice, accountability and solidarity. We are committed to supporting defenders' access and participation in multilateral fora – ensuring that they can speak with their own voices, share their own expertise, articulate their own demands, and shape solutions that are community-informed, owned and led.
- **A smart use of tools and tactics:** We have international human rights law on our side. It provides a powerful tool to promote freedom and justice, to prevent and resolve crises and conflicts, and to ensure accountability for violations and abuses. We must maintain its integrity and effectiveness by deploying it in a principled manner, and guarding against its instrumentalisation or co-optation. We must also continue to develop human rights standards, including through normative



initiatives such as the [Declaration +25](#) and the campaign to codify the crime of [gender apartheid](#), as well as through strategic litigation and advocacy at the national, regional and international levels. With the Declaration +25 articulating the current legal baseline on the protection of defenders, there are opportunities to build on [groundbreaking jurisprudence](#) on the right to defend rights.

- **An effective communication plan:** We need to convincingly tell our own story, countering disinformation and amplifying [compelling narratives](#) that center human rights defenders, make the case that respect for human rights lifts us all up and is not a zero sum game. We need to provide a vision and hope for a more fair, just and sustainable future.
- **Sustainable resources and supply lines:** We will not win and cannot survive on starvation rations. We need investors – governments, foundations, corporations and individuals – to join us and create the resources that enable us to be sustainable, innovative and impactful. This investment needs to be made in civil society at the national, regional and international levels, as well as in the international human rights system to which frontline defenders increasingly turn when justice and accountability are denied at the national level. The realisation of human rights will provide an unmatched return on investment.
- **Resilience and regeneration:** Making human rights progress frequently involves confronting power, privilege and prejudice. This requires persistence and resolve. It can also involve risk. We need partners – financial, diplomatic as well as individual supporters – with a long-term commitment to human rights progress as well as a preparedness to take

some risks and learn some lessons along the way. Our activism must be sustainable and regenerative. We need to prioritise self-care, community care and solidarity, and celebrate the small victories that mark the path to any major human rights success.

- **Being the change:** Finally, we need to be the change, practising and projecting values of diversity, equity, inclusion and accountability, both within the human rights movement and externally. Eleanor Roosevelt’s wisdom from 1958 that human rights change begins in small places close to home rings just as true today.



Taking action for a fairer future now

As we reflect on 2024, we celebrate the many advances to which we contributed with your support – from developing the capacities of over 1,000 human rights defenders and partnering with them to drive change on the ground, to building coalitions and supporting international mechanisms on issues including [racial justice](#), the rights of women, [LGBTIQ+](#) persons and Indigenous peoples as well as the situations in [Afghanistan](#), China, Israel/Palestine, Russia/Ukraine, [Sudan](#), Yemen and [Venezuela](#) among others.

At the same time, we deplore ongoing gross violations and express our solidarity with human rights defenders in each of these contexts, calling on the international community to take all necessary measures to address the root

causes, provide justice to victims, and pursue accountability for perpetrators.

As we embark on 2025, with your support, we pledge to strengthen our work with defenders, enabling them to expose injustice, pursue accountability, seek international solidarity, and help shape community-based solutions to the multiple crises humanity faces. And we invite you to take action for a fairer future now, whether by sharing our [training and information material](#), amplifying our messages on [social media](#), making a [donation](#) or [in-kind contribution](#), or participating in our [campaigns](#). Your every action makes a difference.

The future is ours to right.



Philip Lynch

Executive Director



Vrinda Grover

Chair (outgoing) of the ISHR Board



Taaka Awori

Chair (incoming) of the ISHR Board



RECOMMENDATIONS OR QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY ISHR

71%

TAKEN UP BY STATES IN THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW, WITH EACH ISHR RECOMMENDATION MADE BY AN AVERAGE OF 3 STATES

72%

ADOPTED BY THE UN TREATY BODY TO WHICH THEY WERE DIRECTED

Vision, strategy and priorities





Our mission



1,163

NUMBER OF DEFENDERS
TO WHOM ISHR PROVIDED
INTENSIVE TRAINING OR
ADVOCACY SUPPORT IN 2024



FROM **61**
DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES

+6%

Human rights defenders are essential agents of progress and positive change. **Their work is vital** for gender justice, racial justice, environmental justice, political justice and economic justice. **Their work confronts** and challenges power, privilege and prejudice. For this, they are frequently exposed to threats and attacks from governments, corporations and other actors. **Their work contributes** to fostering good governance and accountability at the local, national and international levels.

For over four decades, ISHR has remained dedicated to its mission to serve, support and provide solidarity to human rights defenders. We strengthen laws, policies and mechanisms for their protection, promote accountability for violations against them, and work with partners to build powerful coalitions for human rights progress.

Our goals for change

Supported by our [Theory of Change](#), ISHR works to ensure that:

1

Human rights defenders are equipped, connected, supported and influential.

We provide defenders with tools, capacities and networks to use international and regional human rights laws and systems to contribute to human rights progress. We build and support powerful coalitions for human rights change.

2

States, businesses and other non-State actors respect and protect human rights defenders.

We monitor, mobilise, advocate and litigate to ensure that States and businesses consult, respect and protect defenders, and are held accountable for violations and abuses against them.

3

Human rights laws and mechanisms are accessible, responsive and effective.

We conduct research, provide advice, and undertake advocacy and litigation to ensure that international and regional human rights laws and mechanisms are accessible to defenders, responsive to their demands, and effective in promoting rights and accountability.



Who we serve and support

ISHR supports and acts in solidarity with human rights defenders in their work for freedom, dignity, equality, justice and other fundamental values at the international, regional and national levels. We undertake this work with and through other non-governmental organisations, networks and coalitions.

We are deeply informed by the situation, protection needs and priorities of defenders. We work with them in partnerships that are long-term, committed, respectful, empowering and which recognise and honour their knowledge and expertise.

ISHR's programmes provide support and solidarity to defenders working on the following intersectional issues:

* Equality, dignity and non-discrimination

We provide solidarity and support to women human rights defenders and defenders working on issues of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics. We also support anti-racism and migrant and refugee rights defenders.

* Environmental justice and sustainability

We provide solidarity and support to defenders working on issues of environmental justice, corporate accountability, and sustainable and inclusive development. We seek to ensure that businesses and other non-State actors are effectively regulated with respect to human rights and defenders, take action to respect and contribute to the protection of defenders, refrain from actions that restrict or violate their rights, and are held accountable when they fail to do so.

* International accountability

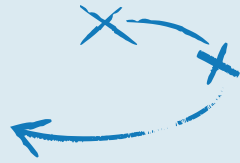
We provide solidarity and support to defenders working in highly restrictive or repressive environments, and undertake advocacy and litigation to ensure that defenders are safe and free. We promote both State and non-State accountability for widespread and systematic threats, attacks, restrictions and reprisals against defenders, including through the establishment of international investigative and accountability mechanisms. In recent years, this programme has supported defenders working in relation to countries such as Afghanistan, Bahrain, Burundi, China, Egypt, Israel/Palestine, Nicaragua, Russia/Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Venezuela and Yemen.

* Transparency and the rule of law

We provide solidarity and support to defenders working at the national level to safeguard democratic institutions and accountability mechanisms, and to strengthen legal frameworks for the protection of human rights defenders, including in Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Mongolia, the Philippines, São Tomé and Príncipe, and many others.



Our tactics



We use a range of integrated tactics, developed and implemented in partnership with defenders. Our activities include:

- Training, capacity development, strategic advice, advocacy support and fellowships for human rights defenders
- Legislative and policy research, advocacy and advice
- Strategic litigation and amicus curiae interventions
- Narrative development, campaigning and mobilisation
- Coalition building and coordination

We recognise that ISHR holds a privileged position within the international human rights system. With our main offices in Geneva and New York, we have significant systems expertise, as well as strong relationships, access and influence with key decision-makers, including high-level government officials and diplomats, senior UN officials and experts, and international media.

We are committed to using this privilege to enhance the access and influence of human rights defenders, while also pushing to reform the system, redistribute power and ensure that frontline defenders, victims and affected communities have direct access and influence.

A values-driven organisation

We are **principled** and **passionate** about **human rights**.

We are deeply **connected** and act in **collaboration** and **solidarity** with human rights defenders.

We develop and work in **partnerships** and **coalitions** that are long-term, committed, respectful and empowering.

We seek to learn and **expand our human rights knowledge** and **share our human rights expertise**.

And we promote **equality, inclusivity, diversity, transparency** and **accountability**, both internally and externally.

DISCOVER MORE

We are dedicated to our mission, inspired by the defenders we serve, and committed to working with our partners to achieve our shared vision. To learn more and to support this vision, see www.ishr.ch/about-us/strategy.



40+ years of impact

While the countries and contexts may have changed, the essence of ISHR – providing solidarity and support to defenders and working with them to achieve change – has remained constant over 40 years. Here are just some of our key milestones!



1984

ISHR supports anti-apartheid defenders from South Africa and independence activists from Timor-Leste to seek justice at the UN and commences work to develop an **international declaration on human rights defenders**.



1987

ISHR builds and coordinates **civil society coalitions** to support the work of newly established UN human rights mechanisms on Afghanistan, El Salvador, Guatemala, torture, and extrajudicial executions.



1994

ISHR provides training to its **1000th human rights defender!**

1998

After 14 years of ISHR's advocacy and negotiation, the **UN General Assembly adopts the landmark Declaration on Human Rights Defenders**, enshrining the right to defend rights and to communicate and cooperate with the UN.

2000

UN Secretary-General appoints **Hina Jilani as inaugural UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders**, who is provided support by ISHR.



1988

ISHR publishes first **Human Rights Monitor**, connecting human rights defenders on the ground with international human rights systems and developments.



1993

ISHR facilitates global civil society engagement with the **Second World Conference on Human Rights**, which leads to the strengthening of women's rights, the affirmation of universal rights, the adoption of the **Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action** and the establishment of the **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**.

1989

ISHR conducts its **first national-level human rights defender workshops** in Colombia, the Philippines, and Hong Kong, following the **Tiananmen Square democracy protests and massacre in China**.

2003

ISHR leads a successful campaign for the appointment of a **Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders** by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.



2006

ISHR contributes to the establishment of a new global peak body for human rights issues, the **UN Human Rights Council**, ensuring that it is relevant and accessible to civil society organisations and victims of violations worldwide.





2007

ISHR leads and coordinates the development of the **Yogyakarta Principles on sexual orientation and gender identity**, strengthening legal recognition and protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ people worldwide and leading to progressive legal and policy changes in Australia, India, Nepal, Switzerland, the UK and many others.

2011

ISHR's sustained advocacy on the issue of reprisals and intimidation faced by human rights defenders leads to the adoption of a landmark **UN Human Rights Council resolution condemning and strengthening protections against reprisals**.

2019

ISHR secures adoption of first ever **UN resolution on environmental human rights defenders** and launches an interactive **online academy** to build the capacities, networks and influence of defenders.



2018

Together with the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, ISHR launches an **authoritative guidance for business enterprises** on their legal obligations and economic interests with respect to the protection of civil society space.



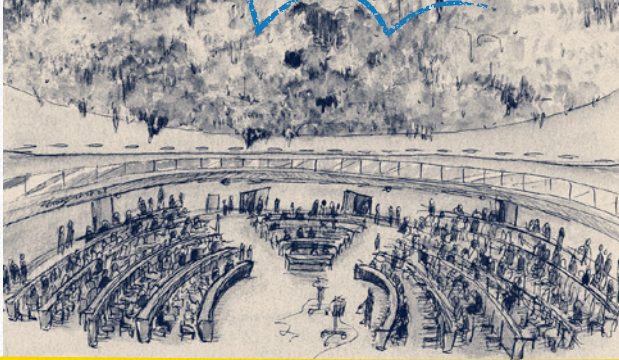
2021

Together with the families and representatives of Black people killed by police violence, ISHR secures the establishment of a **global investigative mechanism on racial justice in the context of law enforcement and co-creates a major international anti-racism coalition, UNARC**.

2022

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, ISHR leads a successful campaign in Geneva and New York to secure **Russia's expulsion from the UN Human Rights Council**, just the second expulsion in the Council's history.





2016

Following consultation with over 500 human rights defenders, ISHR spearheads the development of an influential **Model National Law on Human Rights Defenders**, endorsed by 28 leading human rights lawyers and experts, and subsequently contributing significantly to the adoption of defender laws in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mongolia and Niger, among others.

2014

ISHR leads a successful campaign for the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to mandate a **Special Rapporteur to combat reprisals against civil society actors in Africa**.

2013

Working in coalition, ISHR secures the adoption of the **first UN resolution on women human rights defenders**, providing a comprehensive roadmap for States on their recognition and protection of women defenders.



2023

ISHR conducts the first hybrid edition of its flagship **Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme**, and provides training and advocacy support to over 1000 defenders from more than 60 countries.

2024

Together with 17 coalition partners and in consultation with more than 700 defenders, ISHR launches the **Declaration +25**, articulating the international legal baseline on the recognition and protection of human rights defenders.





‘Without the inputs of civil society organisations from all regions of the world, major UN initiatives with far-reaching global impacts are deprived of the knowledge and experiences that these groups offer.’

Maithili Pai, ISHR’s UN Advocate (New York), in PassBlue, 5 March 2024



217

NUMBER OF NEWS ITEMS QUOTING OR CITING ISHR IN 2024



17 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

INCLUDING MENTIONS BY REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE (AFP), KEYSTONE-ATS, INFOBAE, FOLHA DE SÃO PAULO, POLITICO, DEUTSCHE WELLE, HONG KONG FREE PRESS AND MORE



INCREASE IN NUMBER OF VISITORS TO ISHR ACADEMY FROM:

- +740% Benin**
- +433% Papua New Guinea**
- +350% Algeria**
- +177% Honduras**
- +176% Thailand**
- +100% El Salvador**
- +87% Afghanistan**
- +39% Hong Kong**

These increases reflect the increased reliance of human rights defenders on the international human rights system, particularly those working in restrictive, repressive or deteriorating environments.

Challenges and opportunities in the years ahead



Over the course of this year, ISHR will develop a new Strategic Framework for 2026-2030. With the support of our partners and donors, we will continue to stand with and serve defenders, enabling them to expose injustice, pursue accountability, seek international solidarity, and help shape community-based solutions to the multiple crises humanity faces. Here are some of the key challenges and opportunities for human rights defenders that we foresee.



Key challenges

- The **climate crisis** in all of its dimensions, including extreme weather, food and water scarcity, economic shocks, conflict over land and resources, worsening inequalities, the impacts of energy transition, and mass displacement and movement of people (with many of these negative impacts having disproportionate impacts on Indigenous communities, racialised people and people living in poverty).
- The rapid rise of nationalism, **authoritarianism and populism**, and challenges to genuine democracy.
- The worsening **erosion and instrumentalisation of international human rights law**, with selectivity and double standards from States from all regions undermining universality, credibility and influence.
- A **declining commitment to multilateralism** and the international rule of law.
- The continued commission of and **impunity for atrocity crimes**, frequently with the involvement or complicity of third States.
- **Worsening inequalities**, both within and between States, and continued extreme poverty.
- The continued **rise of anti-rights narratives and movements**, with particular pressures and regress in areas including women's rights, sexual and reproductive health rights, and rights of LGBTIQ+ people.
- **Corporate capture and undue influence**, as well as economic models and systems that perpetuate inequalities and privilege profits over people, the environment and a sustainable future.
- The disproportionate influence of largely unregulated, oligarchic and **unaccountable tech giants**.

Key opportunities

- An increase in **technology facilitated violence against defenders**, including online harassment, stigmatisation and surveillance.
- The potential **negative human rights dimensions of artificial intelligence**, including with respect to privacy, discrimination and disinformation.
- Increasing **militarisation**, a diminution and reorientation of overseas development assistance, and a precipitous **decline in governmental and philanthropic human rights funding**.
- Increases in **forced migration**, often met by rights-violating responses fueled by populism, nationalism, xenophobia and systemic racism.
- An increase in **human rights defenders and movements being forced into exile**.
- The continued development and use of **national security and counter-terrorism laws and measures** to stigmatise, restrict and criminalise the work of defenders, including environmental defenders and those supporting the rights of Palestinians.
- Threats, harassment, reprisals and **sanctions against international justice and accountability mechanisms** and those who cooperate with them.
- The increased **influence of States in which civil society space is closed or repressed**, including China, India and Saudi Arabia.
- A **chronically inadequately resourced UN human rights system**.
- Both **States and human rights defenders continue to care about international and regional human rights law and mechanisms**, as evidenced by the efforts of some States to either instrumentalise or avoid the scrutiny of such mechanisms, and the continued engagement of defenders with such mechanisms despite the risks.
- The demonstrated potential of **engagement and mobilisation** around hope-based narratives and messages, values such as solidarity and equality, and people's desire for justice and accountability.
- The potential **positive dimensions of technology and artificial intelligence**, including in areas such as mobilisation and advocacy, data collection and analysis, education, content moderation and economic efficiencies.
- The building and mobilisation of **cross-sectorial coalitions and social movements** around issues such as systemic racism, the climate crisis, self-determination, and gender inequalities and discrimination, with an increasing understanding of intersectionality and the importance of international solidarity.



- The engagement and response of **international justice and accountability mechanisms**, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, to some atrocity crimes, as well as the **leadership of a diversity of States** - such as South Africa, the Gambia and the Hague Group - in initiating proceedings and defending such institutions.
- The **development of international law to promote accountability** for serious violations, including through moves to recognise new atrocity crimes such as ecocide and gender apartheid.
- The **establishment of victim-centred international mechanisms**, such as the expert mechanism on systemic racism in law enforcement and the Syria disappearances mechanism, as well as the mandating of mechanisms to examine and

report on root causes of conflict and violations (such as in the case of Russia/Ukraine and Israel/Palestine).

- The continued evolution of law, jurisprudence and mechanisms on human rights defenders, including the **Declaration +25**, regional and national court decisions from Latin America, a draft African Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and steps towards national laws and protection mechanisms for human rights defenders in Africa and Asia.
- Increasing demands for **representation, diversity and participation of affected communities** and those with lived experience and expertise, including within NGOs, with a recognition that when you change the people sitting at the decision-making table, you change the outcomes.
- The development of international, regional and national **laws regulating the human rights impacts of companies**, such as a binding treaty, the EU mandatory human rights due diligence directive, and moves to develop an African Escazacu-style environmental agreement.

- Increasing **awareness and mobilisation among consumers and investors** regarding environmental, social and governance issues.

- Increased understanding of the causal and consequential relationship between poverty and inequalities, on the one hand, and human rights violations on the other, as well as a **commitment by many in the human rights movement to better address economic, social and cultural rights violations** and support ESC rights defenders.



Goals and impact



Goal and impact:

Supporting human rights defenders

Our 2024 Goal

Human rights defenders are equipped, connected, supported and influential

What we achieved

Through our human rights defender support programme – which includes training online and offline, advice and advocacy support, facilitating access to high-level policy and decision-makers, and civil society strategisation, coordination and coalition-building – we:

- ★ provided defenders with the tools, capacities, networks and narratives they need to engage and influence international, regional and national mechanisms and actors
- ★ provided defenders with solidarity and stronger networks of protection and support
- ★ advocated on behalf of defenders who were deprived of liberty, subject to reprisals or other grave violations

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ACCESSING INFORMATION AND SUPPORT THROUGH THE ISHR ACADEMY IN 2024



18,185

VISITORS
(+6%)



2,245

RESOURCES
DOWNLOADED



Select highlights



Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme

All 16 human rights defenders chosen from a record 434 applicants for our Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme (HRDAP) indicated that they were 'very satisfied' (90%) or 'satisfied' (10%) with the programme and that it contributed significantly to building their capacity and networks, as well as achieving advocacy objectives at the UN. One defender wrote:

*'HRDAP is a programme with **everything you need to consolidate your knowledge in human rights**, offering a huge opportunity to expand your network and a wonderful experience to meet other human rights defenders with similar or diverse experiences like yours.'*

Another defender wrote: *'Thank you ISHR for this very practical, meaningful, and impactful opportunity for all of us. **It will enhance our future human rights work** and build connections with each other. I am deeply grateful for this wonderful opportunity.'*



'Egyptian authorities must open the civic space for civil society to play its role. They must stop persecuting human rights defenders, political opponents, and journalists simply for doing their jobs. The UN and the international community must maintain pressure on them to comply with human rights standards.'

Basma Mostafa, Egyptian investigative journalist, co-founder of the Law and Democracy Support Foundation and 2024 HRDAP participant



ISHR Academy

Amid continued high demand for online training and strategic advocacy support, we further scaled up the ISHR Academy. The Academy is an interactive, online platform to build the capacity and skills of defenders to leverage the UN human rights system to contribute to national level change. During 2024, the Academy received **over 18,000 visits from defenders from all regions, who downloaded over 2,245 resources.**



In total, ISHR provided training and advocacy support to 1,163 human rights defenders from 61 countries from all regions, the highest number in ISHR's 40 year history!

We partner with these defenders to drive progressive change on the ground.



Women Human Rights Defender Advocacy Week

26

We supported **11 accomplished women environmental defenders and Indigenous leaders** from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Palestine, Russia, and Sri Lanka. Throughout the week, the defenders engaged with a wide array of key stakeholders - including senior UN officials, human rights experts and diplomats - to advocate on issues including environmental and climate justice, gender justice, corporate accountability, Indigenous peoples' rights and debt justice. According to one participant, the Women Human Rights Defender Advocacy Week is *'an amazing experience where you'll learn how to effectively advocate for human rights with specific tools and connect with the international community of human rights defenders.'*



'We try to address issues of climate change and inequality only through answering symptoms of the disease. It's time that we address the root cause which is the global financial architecture.'

Melani Gunathilaka, woman human rights defender and environmental activist from Sri Lanka; 2024 WHRD Advocacy Week participant.



Building solidarity

In March, ISHR marked the 10th anniversary of Chinese woman human rights defender **Cao Shunli's** death in police custody; a victim of reprisals for her engagement with the UN. Together with partners, we commissioned and unveiled a statue of Cao Shunli, a former ISHR trainee, to **honour her tireless work for justice, equality and public participation**, as well as to **demonstrate solidarity** with all human rights defenders who believe in and engage with the UN human rights mechanisms, despite the grave risks they may face. As a result of our campaign, the City of Geneva announced that they will host a public monument to pay tribute to human rights defenders. UN experts and EU ambassadors also renewed public calls for accountability into Cao's death in custody.



'On 15 August 2021, when the Taliban took over, it was a moment of life or death for me, which led to my decision to stand against the Taliban, no matter what. I mobilised women to protest, and our protest continued until January 2022. I was arrested in my house, along with my three sisters, in the middle of the night. The decision to stand for human rights and for the rights of women in Afghanistan, for equality, liberty and democracy was a defining moment in my life.'



Tamana Zaryab Paryani,
woman human rights defender
from Afghanistan



Defenders' stories

Our series of human rights defender stories provide activists with a platform to reach new audiences, share their visions and expertise, and articulate their calls and demands. Over the last year, **we've amplified the stories of 17 defenders** from all regions, including Indigenous human rights defender and anti-war activist **Victoria Maladaeva** from Russia, digital rights defender **Jalal Abukhater** from Palestine, and environmental human rights defender **Bernardo Caal Xol** from Guatemala's Mayan Q'eqchi community, among many more. While working across a diverse spectrum of human rights issues, these defenders are united by a commitment to universal human rights, and to ensuring that all peoples enjoy the right to self-determination and can live in dignity and peace. We also curated a **special series of interviews with women human rights defenders from Afghanistan**, a country in which women's voices have been banned from being heard in public. In their powerful messages, **Farukhleqa Unchizada, Tamana Zaryab Paryani, Elham Kohistani** and **Sara Nabil** all called for international solidarity with Afghan women and girls, and action to ensure accountability for gender apartheid and other past and ongoing crimes against humanity.



China / Uyghur Region (Xinjiang) / Tibet

Our advocacy in Brussels together with a Uyghur human rights defender led to a landmark EU parliament resolution calling for the release of detained doctor **Gulshan Abbas** and detained economist **Ilham Tohti**, while our work in New York culminated in an important joint statement delivered by Australia at the UN General Assembly on the human rights situation in China, including the Uyghur Region (Xinjiang) and Tibet.

Ending arbitrary detention

For more than seven years, ISHR and partners have advocated for the release of Saudi human rights lawyer **Mohammad Fahad Al-Qahtani**, arbitrarily detained as a reprisal for his human rights advocacy and UN engagement. Al-Qahtani, the co-founder and President of the Saudi Association for Civil and Political Rights, which itself campaigns against arbitrary detention, was finally released as the year concluded, demonstrating the importance of sustained engagement by a diversity of actors.



Testimonial by **Rute Fiuza**

Centering frontline defenders

Throughout the year, we continued to centre defenders in our work, with the vast majority of ISHR statements at the UN delivered by national-level defenders and victims of violations. ISHR works to **ensure that international bodies and processes are accessible and responsive to human rights defenders**. In 2024, we supported **more than 35 defenders**, including 22 women human rights defenders, **to address the UN Human Rights Council directly in ISHR's name!** Among many others, ISHR was privileged to work with woman human rights defender **Nazifa Jalali** to call on governments to support the establishment of a comprehensive international accountability mechanism on Afghanistan, and with lawyer **Noon Kashkosh** to demand accountability for atrocity crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence, in Sudan. ISHR was proud to provide a UN platform for **Rute Fiuza** to testify about the enforced disappearance and murder of her son, Black teenager Davi Fiuza, and to outline the reforms necessary to ensure that human rights defenders working on issues of racial justice in Brazil can do so safely. Guided by our national partners, ISHR staff also continued to deliver statements at the UN in circumstances where it remains too risky for national-level defenders, such as defenders from China.



INCREASE IN USE OF ISHR INFORMATION PRODUCTS BY HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FROM:

- + 137% Burkina Faso**
- + 93% Yemen**
- + 62% Hong Kong**
- + 59% Venezuela**
- + 57% Thailand**
- + 47% Saudi Arabia**
- + 32% Guatemala**

These increases reflect the relevance and accessibility of ISHR's resources across diverse continents and contexts.



'Environmental conservation requires the involvement of local communities living close to natural resources. These communities are key to effective protection and should be included in all decision-making processes to ensure their livelihood.'



Obakèmi Jean-Pierre Olofindji, human rights defender from Benin



UN Antiracism Coalition

We played a key role in building, coordinating and resourcing a diversity of coalitions with human rights defenders at their centre, including the **UN Antiracism Coalition** (UNARC) which works to combat systemic racism and achieve racial justice across the world. Led by African and Afrodescendant women from the Global South, **the coalition has grown from 60 to 119 members** in just three years of existence, and supported substantial civil society engagement when UN experts on racial justice visited Brazil and the US. We also continue to work in and support coalitions campaigning on issues including LGBTIQ+ rights, human rights in Venezuela, and gender apartheid in Afghanistan.

ISHR ONLINE MEDIA ACTIVITY IN 2024

BLUESKY FOLLOWERS



ALL LANGUAGE CHANNELS

375

ACCOUNTS CREATED IN NOVEMBER 2024



X FOLLOWERS

ENGLISH

33,043

+3%

CHINESE

9,650

+14%

SPANISH

1009

+4%

FRENCH

667

+3%

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



24,569

+3%

LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS



17,091

+29%

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



2,259

+43%

YOUTUBE VIEWS



95,232

+125%

SESSIONS ON WWW.ISHR.CH



220,301

-1%

In depth

Supporting environmental human rights defenders

The world is facing a triple planetary crisis, with the interplay of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. While there is scientific evidence about the consequences of environmental degradation and climate change, narratives based on skepticism and denial are still widespread. In this context, environmental human right defenders (EHRDs), Indigenous peoples, peasants' movements and civil society from around the world have been **essential to pressure their governments to take concrete action**, and to offer alternative solutions to tackle these crises.

Despite their fundamental role, EHRDs continue to face harassment, intimidation and even murder at the hands of State and non-State actors. Peaceful protests are continuously repressed with excessive use of force, including in cases of civil disobedience, and the use of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation to silence EHRDs is becoming more frequent.

'From the time we grow up, our grandparents teach us to love nature and the environment, to respect rivers, lakes and mountains, because, as children, they explain to us that all of it is sacred.'

Bernardo Caal Xol, environmental human rights defender from Guatemala's Mayan Q'eqchi community



Since the adoption of resolution 40/11 at the Human Rights Council in 2019, ISHR has played an important role **ensuring that EHRDs are at the core of discussions on climate and environmental justice, as well as corporate accountability**. While we were successful in reaffirming the importance of including environmental human right defenders in international decision-making processes, we also saw resistance by some countries in recognising their contribution.

In 2024, ISHR increased its support to EHRDs, particularly **Indigenous peoples, women, and underrepresented communities** from almost every continent in the world. From Sri Lanka to Chile, and from Palestine to Panama and Mexico, ISHR was privileged to work with incredible and inspiring defenders who shared their expertise and their fights at the grassroots level.

Defenders from Guatemala shared the impacts that hydroelectric and mining companies had in their territories, including the pollution of rivers and lakes, through projects that were imposed without their free, prior and informed consent. In Honduras, defenders continue fighting against impunity for the murder of Berta Cáceres in 2016. In Cameroon, our partners raised awareness of the impact of the use of

mercury in the mining industry, despite the complete ban imposed by the Minamata Convention. In Benin, defenders have witnessed the extent to which local communities are often suppressed when it comes to the protection of their land, particularly in the context of conservation projects. In Russia, Indigenous peoples continue to be a target in the context of the invasion of Ukraine. In Fiji, EHRDs have been attacked for opposing phosphate mining projects which have adverse health and environmental impacts. And in French Guiana, the Kali'ña people denounced the imposition of a power plant project in their territory without their consent. After a submission made with ISHR's support and a subsequent letter by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the company and the Kali'ña people reached an agreement concerning the project.

These stories are not only a reflection of the multiple and intersecting issues that occur in the context of the protection of the environment, but evidence that **the triple planetary crisis is, in fact, affecting everyone, everywhere.**

ISHR also played an important role in **advancing the protection and promotion of EHRDs at the regional level.** We participated in the public hearings of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the context of the Advisory Opinion on Climate Change. Here, ISHR reiterated the obligation of States to effectively protect environmental human rights defenders. Similarly, at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, ISHR advocated for the adoption of an instrument that further develops environmental rights, including the protection of EHRDs. We are also monitoring other regional developments relevant to EHRDs, including the Escazú Agreement implementation, the ASEAN declaration on environmental rights, and moves to recognise the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable

environment at the Council of Europe through an Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights.

With your support, ISHR will continue partnering with those who are at the frontline protecting our planet, their territories and their land. Now, more than ever, we need to make sure that EHRDs, particularly women and Indigenous peoples, are meaningfully participating in multilateral fora. ISHR will continue working with EHRDs to ensure that the issues defenders work on at the grassroots level are visible and amplified in various UN mechanisms.



'Since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Indigenous peoples, particularly Buryat, have been hit the hardest. I work to help my people, fight Russian propaganda, and raise awareness about systemic colonial oppression and discrimination faced by Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in the Russian Federation.'

Victoria Maladaeva, Indigenous human rights defender and anti-war activist from Russia



Goal and impact:

Protecting rights and promoting accountability

Our 2024 Goal

States, businesses and other non-State actors respect and protect human rights defenders



What we achieved

- ★ We worked to ensure that States and businesses respect and protect defenders and fulfil their human rights obligations at the international, regional and national levels, including through legislative and policy action.
- ★ Our unparalleled experience at the UN and with regional bodies allowed us to rapidly and strategically use those mechanisms to prevent violations and attacks against defenders and pursue justice and accountability where they occurred.
- ★ We worked with local partners to advocate for national implementation of international and regional human rights standards on the protection of defenders and an enabling environment for their work. Our deep partnerships with grassroots defenders, and our track record of principled cooperation with governments and human rights institutions, uniquely positioned us to advise and support national-level implementation.
- ★ Through our values- and hope-based communications and narratives, we positively influenced public and political attitudes, behaviours, laws and policies in relation to defenders and countered stigmatisation and smears against them.

Select highlights

Accountability for international crimes

ISHR is deeply committed to taking a principled and consistent approach to all human rights situations, supporting defenders to seek accountability for international crimes. In line with this approach, we built coalitions and worked with defenders to establish, renew, strengthen and engage with **investigative and accountability mechanisms in Afghanistan, Israel/Palestine, Nicaragua, Russia/Ukraine, Sudan and Venezuela**, among others.



Sudan

Working closely with women human rights defenders in Sudan, we succeeded in renewing the mandate of the international **Fact Finding Mission** on Sudan, ensuring continued and vital human rights scrutiny of all sides to the brutal conflict engulfing that country. With the support of ISHR, the critical **advocacy of Sudanese women human rights defenders** in Geneva with African members of the Human Rights Council helped secure success, with South Africa and Ghana both actively supporting the resolution.



Afghanistan

It is now overwhelmingly clear that the situation confronting women and girls in Afghanistan amounts to one of **gender apartheid**. Working alongside women human rights defenders from the country, we were able to secure the adoption of a resolution which sets out a blueprint for further international action to promote justice and accountability and seeks to address the root causes of violations and abuses in the country. We continue to call for meaningful action by States at the UN to advance accountability for past and ongoing crimes under international law.



'I urge the United Nations and the international community to hold the Taliban accountable for the crimes they have committed against the Afghan people. Over the past twenty years, the Taliban has shed the blood of thousands of innocent people in their pursuit of power. They must be held responsible for their human rights violations and their imposition of gender apartheid.'

Farukhleqa Unchizada,
woman human rights defender from Afghanistan



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Venezuela

Building on our longstanding partnerships with Venezuelan human rights defenders, we were successful in extending the mandate of the international **Fact Finding Mission** (FFM) on the country, as well as the country mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The FFM has been essential to document and expose the human rights and humanitarian crisis in the country and its work will contribute to ongoing efforts towards **accountability for grave violations, including crimes against humanity.**



LGBTQ rights

Working in coalition with LGBTQ NGOs at the UN General Assembly, we ensured that **130 Member States condemned extrajudicial executions based on sexual orientation and gender identity.** At a time when hateful rhetoric is on the rise, targeted especially at transgender people, it is particularly important that States agree that extreme violence against all LGBTQ people must be investigated and perpetrators brought to justice. The outcome of this vote shows States' overwhelming acceptance of the basic and inalienable principle that all human beings have dignity and rights.



'There is a responsibility for big tech companies to uphold human rights to make sure that they are not complicit in the violation of human rights, especially in the context of genocide.'

Jalal Abukhater,
digital rights
defender from
Palestine



Israel / Palestine

Throughout 2024, together with partners, ISHR advocated at the UN Human Rights Council, the African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights, and beyond for States to address the situation in Israel/Palestine in the context of its root causes, including colonial-apartheid, occupation, and Israel's ongoing forced displacement and transfer of the Palestinian people. In light of clear independent international expert findings of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Israel in Gaza and war crimes committed by Palestinian armed groups, ISHR continues to push the international community to take all necessary measures to ensure **accountability**, with States having particular obligations to **end the genocide** against the Palestinian people **and the occupation** of their territories, in line with authoritative International Court of Justice rulings. States must also cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, including in the execution of arrest warrants. Together with Jewish Voice for Peace, we also called on States to address and end the repression and criminalisation of those who advocate for the rights of the Palestinian people, including through the weaponisation of antisemitism.



'We urge French authorities to cooperate with the Committee and to take all necessary steps towards resolving the long-standing tensions around the village of Prospérité and address the reasonable grievances of its residents.'

Madeleine Sinclair, ISHR's New York Director, quoted by the AFP in reaction to the CERD's urgent appeal regarding France's project to build a power plant on Indigenous land in French Guiana, 2 May 2024



Legislative protection

Specific national laws, policies and mechanisms on human rights defenders can contribute significantly to the recognition and protection of their work. Together with national partners, our legislative protection work in 2024 focused on strengthening legal frameworks for the protection of defenders, as well as the effective implementation of such laws and policies, including in **Côte d'Ivoire**, where we developed a four-pillar action plan to effectively operationalise the State's protection mechanism. In a [key meeting](#), we convened human rights defenders and representatives from protection mechanisms in **Colombia, Mexico, Honduras, Mongolia, the Philippines, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire** to share learnings and develop strategies to improve legal protection of defenders and the functioning and effectiveness of protection mechanisms. Participants agreed on the need for a comprehensive protection model that not only addresses physical security and individual risks, but also contributes to prevention by addressing the structural factors that allow attacks against defenders.

Indigenous peoples' rights

Working together with leaders of the Indigenous Kali'ña people of French Guiana, ISHR submitted an **urgent appeal to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** regarding the construction of a power plant on their territories. In a rapid response addressed to the French authorities, the Committee expressed concern at the lack of 'consultation or free, prior and informed consent of the Kali'ña people before the approval of the project'. The Committee also flagged allegations of 'excessive use of force by law enforcement, detention, prosecution and criminal convictions against leaders and members of the Kali'ña people'. It noted that these allegations could constitute a breach of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as 'an attack on the rights of Indigenous peoples which are protected by the Convention'. Reacting to the UN intervention, traditional chief Roland Sjabere said that **'the Committee's appeal to France is a victory for the Kali'ña people** and for all the people who have given us their support in our struggle to preserve our lands and our traditions.' Clarisse Da Silva, an Indigenous activist opposed to the project, said that 'authorities cannot disprove what we are seeing every day on the ground: they must put an end to the construction of the plant, find a new location, and stop turning a deaf ear to the demands of Indigenous peoples.'



36

‘Thirteen States, including several Latin American democracies, urged China to allow unfettered visits by UN experts. This shows that some countries in the Global South do want China to stop flouting UN rules.’

Raphaël Viana David, ISHR’s China Advocacy Manager quoted in *The Economist* on 25 January 2024



Effective narratives

Public recognition of the positive impact of human rights defenders contributes to their protection and an enabling environment for their work. We continue to **drive sectoral uptake of effective narratives**, including by diplomats and UN experts. We were pleased to collaborate with the Netherlands to deliver a precedent-setting **cross-regional statement by 71 States** recognising that **‘human rights defenders are leaders of positive change’** and that ‘emphasising their positive impact and honouring their successes is essential in supporting them’.



China

Following an ISHR campaign urging the government of China to end the practice of **‘Residential Surveillance at a Designated Location’ (RSDL)**, six countries - France, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, the United States, Sweden and Australia - echoed our calls at the Universal Periodic Review. UN independent experts have found that RSDL is **a form of enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention and may amount to torture**. Together with partners, ISHR also continued to advocate with States and senior UN officials and experts to comprehensively address the wide range of human rights violations in China, including the continuing and systematic harassment, detention, disappearance and ill-treatment of human rights defenders across the country, the complete rollback of democratic rights and freedoms in **Hong Kong**, and widespread discrimination and persecution of communities in the **Tibetan and Uyghur regions**.

Corporate accountability

Together with the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre and the B-Team, **we promoted corporate action to protect defenders and pursued corporate accountability for abuses against them**, including through the Business Network on Civic Freedoms and Human Rights Defenders. In 2024, following extensive research and consultations, we launched **authoritative indicators** to provide companies and investors with clear **guidance on what is required to fulfil the business responsibility to respect defenders and support civic freedoms**. The indicators provide a powerful accountability tool for defenders, Indigenous peoples, local communities, workers and trade unions to track company compliance. However, while guidelines and indicators are important, voluntary commitments are not enough to guarantee corporate accountability; States need to regulate business with binding rules to comprehensively address corporate human rights abuses. Recognising this, ISHR continued to support efforts to develop **a binding international treaty on business and human rights** with specific provisions to recognise and protect defenders. We also worked with regional partners to push for an **African regional framework on environmental rights**.



Transnational repression

ISHR's advocacy to push States to desist from and ensure accountability for transnational repression resulted in a **joint commitment of 45 States**, led by the United States, which included expressing support to human rights defenders, journalists, diaspora communities, and others who may be targets of transnational repression; strengthening information sharing and coordinating action against acts of transnational repression; and increasing the cost to and holding accountable those who engage in these acts. Consistent with ISHR advocacy and the increasing calls and realities of many human rights defenders in exile, both the UN **High Commissioner for Human Rights** and a number of **Special Rapporteurs** also enhanced their focus on combating transnational repression.



Systemic racism and police violence

In October, ISHR supported the participation of racial justice activist **Assa Traoré** and Comité Vérité pour Adama in the periodic review of France by the UN Human Rights Committee. Assa has campaigned for years for truth and justice for her brother Adama Traoré – a Black French man killed in police custody in 2016. Among our key recommendations was that French authorities should ensure that investigations into deaths or injuries caused by police are genuinely independent and impartial. We urged the Committee to demand that victims of police violence and their families have access to justice and adequate reparations. Other civil society organisations also pushed for these demands in their submissions. The Committee echoed these recommendations in its final observations. In particular, **the Committee called on France to ensure that all allegations of excessive force are promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated, and that accountability measures, including criminal prosecution where appropriate, are pursued**. Furthermore, the Committee reiterated the importance of ensuring access to justice for the victims of police violence and their families.



'It is vital that all States cease supporting or acquiescing in acts of transnational repression (such as through mutual legal assistance, extradition or refoulement to States engaged in the persecution of defenders), refuse to provide the tools of transnational repression (such as spyware and arms), and build community awareness and law enforcement capabilities to recognise, report and respond to acts of transnational repression.'

Phil Lynch, ISHR Executive Director, addressing the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Human Rights in Helsinki, Finland



Goal and impact:

Strengthening human rights laws and systems

Our 2024 Goal

Human rights laws and mechanisms are accessible, responsive and effective



What we achieved

Our deep understanding of the needs and priorities of defenders, our expert policy research and advocacy, and our access to high-level decision-makers and diplomats within the UN and regional systems, combined to make those systems more accessible, effective, protective and responsive for defenders and victims. Our work contributed significantly to ensure that:

- ★ human rights mechanisms are accessible and safe, with policies and processes to enable meaningful participation for defenders online and offline
- ★ human rights mechanisms are effective and fit for purpose, respond to the calls and demands of defenders, develop norms and jurisprudence to protect defenders, and establish appropriate mechanisms and mandates to promote accountability and justice
- ★ cases of intimidation and reprisals are properly investigated and perpetrators held accountable.



STATES SPEAKING OUT ON INDIVIDUAL CASES OF REPRISALS



STATES JOINING FORCES AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONDEMN REPRISALS

Select highlights



Declaration +25

As part of activities to mark the 25th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, **we consulted more than 700 defenders** and worked with lawyers and human rights experts to draft the Declaration +25. The Declaration +25 elaborates the **current international legal baseline on the recognition and protection of human rights defenders**. It is grounded in binding international law and reflects developments in jurisprudence over the last 25 years, the evolutions of movements and activism, and defenders' lived experiences. **It supplements the UN Declaration** - addressing additional issues such as the stigmatisation and criminalisation of defenders, transnational repression, attacks against defenders' families and communities, obligations of non-State actors including business enterprises, defenders in conflict and post-conflict situations, and the relationship between human rights defenders and technology - and is meant to be read alongside it. The Declaration +25 has been launched at the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Human rights defenders, legal scholars, civil society organisations, international and regional human rights mechanisms and State authorities are encouraged to use the Declaration +25 as an authoritative document that sets out standards on protecting the right to defend rights and those who exercise it.



Racial justice

In collaboration with the UN Antiracism Coalition (UNARC), we secured the **extension of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement (EMLER)** for 3 years, as well as strengthened its resources to provide enhanced psychosocial support to victims and their families. The extension recognises the value of the mechanism's work, as well as the need for experts to continue investigating systemic racism in States' law enforcement practices and their impact on African and Afrodescendant people and communities throughout the world.

Accountability for reprisals

Our 2024 campaign to raise the political costs for perpetrators of reprisals against human rights defenders was a significant success, with States at the UN Human Rights Council and, for the first time ever at the UN General Assembly, using those significant platforms to publicly speak out in solidarity with a number of arbitrarily detained defenders on behalf of whom ISHR campaigned, including **Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja in Bahrain** and **Pham Doan Trang in Vietnam**. ISHR's research analysing over 500 cases of reprisals over a ten year period establishes that public statements and calls by senior officials, particularly when repeated by a number of actors over a sustained period, are among the **interventions most likely to improve the situation of victims and contribute to accountability for perpetrators**.





40

'Given a real choice, States voted down the less deserving candidate, refusing to hand powerful actors who violate basic rights an enhanced ability to bend key human rights processes in their favour.'

Tess McEvoy,
ISHR Programme
Director quoted by
AFP following the
defeat of Saudi
Arabia's bid to
be elected to the
UN Human Rights
Council



Defeating Saudi Arabia

For many defenders and victims, the UN Human Rights Council provides a powerful platform to expose violations, seek justice, shape policy, and contribute to national level change. For the Council to fulfil these functions, its membership matters. For this reason, ISHR coordinates with civil society partners to campaign against candidate

States which are responsible for atrocity crimes, widespread civil society repression and reprisals. In 2024, one candidate State fulfilled all three of these criteria: Saudi Arabia. Following a concerted ISHR-led campaign in New York, Geneva and at capital level, we defeated Saudi Arabia in its bid to be elected to the Council. **This outcome was a victory for human rights, multilateralism and the rule of law. It was also a victory for Saudi human rights defenders,** both those imprisoned in the country, as well as those outside the country increasingly targeted by Saudi Arabia in acts of transnational repression. Together with partners, we won the campaign despite Saudi Arabia's massive financial and diplomatic mobilisation to win a seat at the Council. Just like ISHR's previous successful campaign to kick Russia out of the Council, it's a victory that shows what is possible when civil society is bold, ambitious and coordinated.



Strategic litigation

ISHR engages in strategic litigation to strengthen legal recognition and protection of defenders, and pursue accountability and justice for violations. In 2024, in a series of groundbreaking rulings in cases in which ISHR intervened, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Court of Colombia set new precedents that significantly enhance protections for defenders in Latin America. In the case of *Tavares Pereira et al. v Brazil*, regarding the disproportionate use of force against nearly 200 protesting union members, the Inter-American Court found Brazil responsible for the killing of Antônio Tavares and injuring other protestors, as well as for the subsequent impunity of those responsible. At the national level, the Constitutional Court of Colombia ruled that the situation of defenders amounted to an 'Unconstitutional State of Affairs'. The extraordinary judgment recognises the **indispensable role that defenders play in upholding human rights, the rule of law and democracy**, how attacks against them have a collective impact on society at large, and how the State has a constitutional duty to protect them. ISHR also analysed and reported on international, regional and national jurisprudence strengthening the protection of defenders, ensuring the accessibility of comparative case law as an advocacy tool.

Climate justice

While still pending resolution, in partnership and collaboration with civil society partners, ISHR submitted four interventions to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights for its advisory opinion on Climate Change and Human Rights, noting that **protecting environmental defenders is an international obligation necessary to combat climate change**, and that the American Convention on Human Rights should be interpreted in light of the standards set out in the Escazú Agreement on access to information, public participation and justice in environmental matters.



African Commission

Throughout 2024, ISHR actively engaged with the African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights, both on substantive human rights issues such as the development of an African Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and an African instrument on environmental rights, as well as on country situations such as in **Burkina Faso, Angola and Côte d'Ivoire**. We also continued advocacy to **ensure that this vital regional body strengthens protections against reprisals**. Together with the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, ISHR supports civil society engagement with the Commission, including through the Forum on the Participation of NGOs.



Civil society participation

Meaningful civil society participation is a cornerstone of an effective United Nations, helping to identify key human rights issues and priorities on the ground, and develop responses and solutions that are community informed and owned. Throughout 2024, ISHR continued to engage with the President and Bureau of the Human Rights Council to **ensure that initiatives to make the Council more 'efficient' do not restrict civil society access** and result in a Council which is less effective. We also worked with the UN Special Procedures to enhance transparency, coordination, cooperation and measures to promote civil society engagement, as well as with the Treaty Bodies to seek to secure sufficient resources for their vital work.

Opening the door to NGOs

The UN Committee on NGOs - comprised of elected States - is a critical gatekeeper to civil society participation at the UN. Despite frustratingly slow progress due to the opposition of States such as China and Cuba, ISHR continues to work with States such as Costa Rica and the United Kingdom to reform the Committee to **ensure that NGO accreditation processes are fair, transparent, expeditious and non-discriminatory**.



Improving HRC membership

In addition to the specific campaign against Saudi Arabia, our ongoing work on Human Rights Council elections, including through candidate scorecards and a candidate pledging event convened jointly with Amnesty International, helps to increase transparency, promote accountability, strengthen the commitments, pledges and actions of various candidates, and improve the Council's composition.

In depth

The multilateralism we need

In the face of the triple planetary environmental crisis, of conflict, genocide and apartheid, of the consolidation of authoritarian ideologies and narratives around the globe, and the erosion of the rule of law and the closing of civic space, **the challenges we all have to confront in the years ahead are overwhelming. Human rights defenders work on all these issues, fighting for dignity and justice in these increasingly restrictive and violent contexts.**

Meanwhile, a number of States from all regions across the political spectrum are actively undermining the international human rights system for their own political gains. This is evidenced by the selectivity and double standards that dictate action, especially on accountability for atrocity crimes. For example, there is a lack of implementation of calls made by UN bodies, experts and international courts by certain powerful Western States regarding Gaza, by member States of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) regarding Xinjiang, and by some African States regarding Sudan.

While this political expediency has always been the *de facto* state of play, never has it come at such a cost to the integrity of the UN human rights system. The ongoing genocide in Gaza and the impunity provided by a number of States has put the entire UN system into question. Furthermore, the threats and intimidation of United States lawmakers and the President against the Prosecutor General of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and his family is an example of reprisals at the highest level. This has served to undermine not only the human rights mechanisms that are supposed to deliver justice, but also



the confidence of human rights defenders and victims in their engagement with this system.

Nevertheless, at ISHR, we firmly believe that never have we had such a need for a robust and relevant multilateral system. One that can respond with efficiency and effectiveness to the great challenges of our times.

For this to work, **the system must be grounded in universal human rights law and values, centre rights holders, and respond to situations based on their merits.**

The recently adopted 'Pact for the Future' falls short of these principles. While organisers hailed the Pact as the 'most wide-ranging international agreement in many years' covering both 'entirely new areas' and 'issues on which agreement has not been possible in decades', the absence of a dedicated human rights chapter among the broad themes guiding the 56 actions to which States have committed is striking. The pact does not even mention 'human rights defenders'. In fact, human rights are only explicitly cited in four of the 56 actions (7, 30, 35 and 46).

Despite the overall commitment to keeping vital multilateral structures relevant to our current challenges, the Pact for the Future and its annexes appear to miss various key targets. We call on States to take the broad principles spelled out in the Pact and to apply them in ways that **achieve a multilateral system which is inclusive, accessible, and responsive for rights holders, and, crucially, that is adequately resourced and fit for purpose.**

Specifically, we call on States to:

1. **Recognise and protect human rights defenders.**

States should recognise that exercising the right to defend rights is integral to the realisation of all human rights, particularly the human rights of people and communities subject to various and intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression. States should commit to ensuring a safe and enabling environment for the work of human rights defenders and accountability for attacks and restrictions against them.

2. **Ensure the meaningful participation of civil society and human rights defenders, free from the fear of reprisals.**

States should support the meaningful participation of civil society in all UN bodies and processes, and reform the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs to ensure accreditation processes are fair, transparent, expeditious and non-discriminatory. States should also institutionalise hybrid modalities across the UN to enable inclusive participation, reduce environmental impacts, and overcome barriers such as visa denials, resource challenges, and accessibility for people with disabilities.

3. **Adequately fund the human rights pillar.**

States should prioritise securing adequate funding for the UN's human rights pillar with the understanding that the promotion and protection of human rights is indispensable to development, peace and security. States must also commit to paying their assessed contributions without delay to ensure the effective functioning of the UN's human rights system, including civil society engagement with this system.

4. **Address the triple planetary crisis: make it a priority!**

States must implement meaningful and targeted measures to advance the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The measures should be taken in consultation and considering the compound and systematic discrimination and

impact that Indigenous peoples, Afrodescendant communities and other marginalised groups are suffering. States should address legislative or policy barriers to guarantee corporate accountability for wrongdoings related to environmental harm and other human rights violations related to their activities. States should also guarantee access to remedies and intergenerational justice for victims.

5. **Reform the Security Council so it acts in the face of atrocity crimes.**

States must abolish the veto in the Security Council and, pending that, prohibit its use in circumstances where there is *prima facie* evidence of atrocity crimes. States should commit to pursuing accountability and ending impunity for atrocity crimes.

We have seen the limitations of a system centred on and led by States. In this moment of opportunity, the only way forward is one that is inclusive of all stakeholders, particularly human rights defenders and victims and survivors of violations.

This is the 'multistakeholderism' we need!



Pooja Patel is ISHR's Deputy Executive Director (Programmes & Advocacy)



Marianne Bertrand is a Campaign & Mobilisation Manager at ISHR

Our team

Board



Vrinda Grover

Chair
India

Indian lawyer and human rights defender, successfully litigating landmark cases on women's rights, police accountability, freedom of the press and sexual minorities. Member of UN Commission of Inquiry on Russia/Ukraine.



Bruno Stagno Ugarte

Vice-Chair
Costa Rica

Chief Advocacy Officer with Human Rights Watch. Previously Executive Director of Security Council Report, and Foreign Minister of Costa Rica.



Shaharzad Akbar

Member
Afghanistan

Woman human rights defender, Executive Director of Rawadari and former Chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.



Taaka Awori

Member
Uganda

Founder and CEO of Busara Africa, a Pan-African leadership development firm, and Chair of the African Women's Development Fund.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AT ISHR

60%
OF BOARD MEMBERS

75%
OF EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM



Oleksandra Matviichuk

Member
Ukraine

Human rights lawyer and head of the Ukraine Centre for Civil Liberties, conferred with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022; Vice-President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).



Heba Morayef

Member
Egypt

MENA Regional Director with Amnesty International; former Egypt Director at Human Rights Watch and Associate Director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights.



Florian Pollner

Member / Treasurer*
Switzerland

Organisational development and strategy expert, with expertise in business and human rights and three decades experience as a former Partner with McKinsey & Co and Senior Consultant with IBM.

* Elected June 2024, Treasurer from December 2024



Jamil Dakwar

Member
United States

Director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Human Rights Program, leading ACLU advocacy at the UN and before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.



Jean-Claude Erné

Treasurer*
Switzerland

Equity Partner at Banque Pictet and Head of Pictet Wealth Management in Switzerland; lawyer admitted to the Geneva Bar.

*Retired December 2024 following end of second term



Mona Sabella

Member
Palestine

Human rights defender coordinating global efforts on corporate accountability at ESCR-Net; former International Advocacy Officer with Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies.



Miroslaw Wyrzykowski

Member
Poland

Chair of the Human Rights Department, Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Warsaw; former judge of the Constitutional Tribunal of Poland.



Nada Awad

HRC Advocacy
Coordinator



Lamar Bailey

UN Antiracism
Coalition Manager
✦ LamarBK



Marianne Bertrand

Campaign & Mobilisation Manager
✦ ✦ MariBertl



Salomé Boucif

Training and Advocacy Support Manager
✦ Salome_ISHR
✦ SalomeISHR



Assé Chetima Madou Gagi

Digital Communications Senior Officer
✦ Asse-ISHR



Marina Dailly

Deputy Executive Director (Operations)



Christine Do Phan

Communications Director
✦ Christine_ISHR
✦ Christine-ISHR



Elise Golay

Campaign and Mobilisation Manager & elected Staff Representative to the ISHR Board
✦ ✦ EliseGolay



Eva Homolkova

Senior Fundraising & Grants Manager



**Salma
El Hosseiny**

Senior Programme
Manager (Human
Rights Council)
✂ Salma_ISHR



**Samira
Huseynova**

Human Resources
Manager



**Diya Lavinia
Jugessur**

Fundraising
& Grants Officer



**Adélaïde
Etong Kame**

Senior Programme
Manager (Africa)
✂ Adelaide_ISHR
✂ Adelaide-ISHR



**Fabiana
Leibl**

Programme
Manager (Human
Rights Council)
✂ FabiLeibl



**Lee
Chung Lun**

Programme Officer
(China)



**Tina
Luft**

Digital
Communications
Consultant



**Phil
Lynch**

Executive Director
✂ PhilALynch



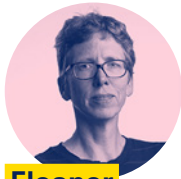
**Tess
McEvoy**

Programme Director
& Legal Counsel
✂ Tess_L_McEvoy



**Muhindo
Makunya Trésor**

Legal & Advocacy
Officer (Africa)
✂ TMakunya



**Eleanor
Openshaw**

Programme Director
✂ EleanorOpenshaw



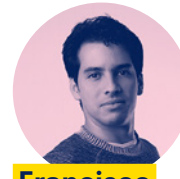
**Maithili
Pai**

UN Advocate
(New York)
✂ MaithiliPai



**Pooja
Patel**

Deputy
Executive Director
(Programmes
& Advocacy)
✂ Pooja_ISHR
✂ Pooja-ISHR



**Francisco
Pérez**

Communications
& Media Manager
✂ FranciscoJPGz



**Ulises
Quero**

Programme Manager
(Business, Land
& Environment)



**Antsa
Rakotonanahary**

Senior Finance
Coordinator



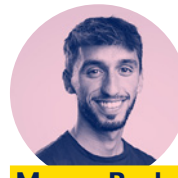
**Nicolas
Rapin**

Fundraising
& Grants Officer
✕ Rapin_Nicolas
🦋 Rapinico



**Nayara Khaly
Silva Sanfo**

UN Antiracism
Coalition Coordinator



**Marco Barbosa
Santos**

Office & Programme
Support Assistant



**Madeleine
Sinclair**

New York Office
Director & Legal
Counsel
✕ Madeleine_ISHR
🦋 MadSinclair



**Javier Urizar
Montes de Oca**

Legal & Programme
Officer
✕ Javi_Urizar
🦋 Javi-Urizar



**Raphaël Viana
David**

Programme Manager
(China & Latin
America)
✕ 🦋 VDRaphael



**Diego
Villanueva**

Senior Admin &
Programme Support
Manager
✕ 🦋 DiegolISHR



**Clément
Nyaletsossi
Voule**

Senior Advisor
✕ CVoule



**Jelena
Zanic**

Finance Manager

Fellows

Angela Chukunzira,
University of Minnesota,
Africa Programme Fellow

Natika Kantaria,
University of Minnesota,
New York Office Fellow

Tanya Lallmon,
Africa Programme Fellow

Hortense Minishi,
University of Michigan

Antoine Tremblay,
Africa Programme Fellow

Interns and volunteers

Afrin Sohana Ahona,
DLA Piper

Lutfi Aris, Après-
Genève

Wipada Baccam, SYNI

Pauline Bertschy,
Après-Genève

Mery Chirinos,
DLA Piper

José David Enríquez,
DLA Piper

Nicolas Feuilloz,
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Hana Gharbi,
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**Isabella Matías
Heredia,** Geneva
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Zélie Ménard,
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Ramos,** Geneva
Graduate Institute
(IHEID)

Tamam Mohsen,
University of Geneva

Socorro Topete,
University of Michigan

*The names of some
ISHR staff and Human
Rights Defender Fellows
have been omitted for
security reasons.*



Our supporters



Thank you!

The generous contributions of our donors sustain our work to support human rights defenders, strengthen human rights systems and achieve human rights change. They provide hope and make change happen!

As a registered non-profit association in Switzerland, and recognised as tax exempt in the US under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, your gift to ISHR may be tax deductible in these and other jurisdictions. Please support human rights defenders and invest in ISHR.

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- Canton de Genève – Service de la solidarité internationale
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- Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ireland – Department of Foreign Affairs (Irish Aid and Permanent Representation of Ireland to the UN in Geneva)
- Liechtenstein – Office for Foreign Affairs
- Luxembourg – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Norway – Norad
- Switzerland – Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- United Kingdom – Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- United States – Department of State (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor and Mission to the United Nations in Geneva)
- Ville de Genève – Délégation Genève ville solidaire



Trusts and foundations

- Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
- Ford Foundation
- Loterie Romande
- Open Society Foundations
- Sigrid Rausing Trust

Special contributions and collaborations

- Belgium – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- DLA Piper
- DT Institute
- Fastenaktion (Action de Carême)
- Microsoft
- University of Minnesota
- Ville de Genève - Service de l'Espace Public, Département de la Sécurité et des Sports

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- Krystyna Campbell-Pretty

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- Philippe Destraz
- Jean-Claude Erné
- Phil Lynch and Lucy McKernan
- Jonathan Webster

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- Anonymous donor
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- Florence Golay
- Hurst Hannum
- Gregor Henneka
- Rosemary McCreery
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- Alistair Sinclair
- Madeleine Sinclair
- Georgios Topulos

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Up to \$100

Lamar Bailey, Wolfgang Benedek, Benjamin Bertrand, Assé Chetima, Christine Do Phan, Emma Do Phan, David Gomez, Vrinda Grover, Samira Huseynova, Michel Johanson, Sarah Joseph, Tina Luft, Munir Tanvir E Mahbub, Nicole McKenna, Helen Nolan, Eleanor Openshaw, Francisco Pérez, Ted Piccone, Lorraine Potts, Antsa Rakotonanahary, Mona Sabella, John Shawley, Bruno Stagno, Miroslaw Wyrzykowski

Pro bono contributions

During 2024, ISHR worked with some of the world's leading law firms and counsel on a pro bono basis, enabling us to leverage substantial legal expertise and resources. We also benefited from support from a number of universities.

- Barbara Frey Human Rights Fellowship (University of Minnesota, USA)
- Brick Court Chambers (UK) – Jennifer MacLeod, Robert Steele
- Clinique de Droit International d'Assas
- DLA Piper
- Essex Court Chambers (UK) – Ben Juratowitch KC
- Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
- King & Spalding
- Streicker International Fellows Program (Princeton University)
- University of Michigan Law School
- White & Case

www.ishr.ch/donate



Good governance

ISHR is deeply committed to principles of **good governance, transparency and accountability.**

In 2024, ISHR's finances and financial management and reporting systems were independently audited by Beau HLB. The management letter recommends ISHR adopt an ongoing strategy to manage currency fluctuation risks. A number of our programmes were also independently audited.

The ISHR Board met on four occasions during 2024, with an average attendance of 70% (up from 62% in 2023), addressing issues including the external environment, governance, strategy, policy, risk, holistic security, human resources and staff wellbeing, programmatic outcomes and impacts, evaluations and learnings, and fundraising and financial resource management.

The Board convened an in-depth expert panel discussion on 'Re-energising human rights in a context of crises, conflicts, discrimination and double standards' with a view to informing ISHR strategy, priorities, programmes and partnerships.

In 2024, ISHR comprehensively reviewed and updated its Code of Conduct, strengthening policies and processes to identify, investigate, address and resolve complaints and grievances, as well as any allegations of misconduct. The revised Code of Conduct also strengthens provisions regarding potential conflicts of interest.

ISHR is committed to addressing all forms of discrimination and **promoting diversity, equity and inclusion**, both internally and through our programmatic support to women human rights defenders, defenders of LGBTIQ+ rights, and anti-racism defenders, among others.

There were no reported breaches of ISHR's Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy in 2024.

Six of ten of ISHR's Board members are women, including the Chair. The composition of ISHR's Board reflects organisational values of diversity and representation, with members from the Asia-Pacific, Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, North America, and Western and Eastern Europe. Their work as human rights defenders across various sectors – NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions, academia, government, courts and the private sector – brings diverse experience and expertise to ISHR.

Three of four members of ISHR's Executive Leadership Team are women, while eight of nine members of the Directors' Group are women. ISHR's Executive Director is a member of the Global Board of International Gender Champions.

ISHR's Working Group on Non-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion, which reports directly to the ISHR Board as well as the Executive Director, continued to monitor, make and implement recommendations to better address discrimination and promote diversity and inclusion. In 2024, this included the development and adoption of a new disability inclusion policy.

In 2024, consistent with recommendations from an independent evaluation, ISHR developed and adopted a competencies framework for various positions and levels within the organisation, designed to enhance transparency, fairness and equity in recruitment and promotion, as well as to assist in identifying gaps and development needs.

We consider that **holistic security and a focus on wellbeing** are paramount to the safety and sustainability of defenders and their work, as well as that of ISHR staff.

Throughout 2024, ISHR continued to implement our Holistic Security Policy as well as advice and recommendations from our Working Group on Digital Security. We worked with an external IT service provider, InterHyve, to further strengthen our digital security practices and update our IT infrastructure. Our Artificial Intelligence Working Group developed an organisational policy on our use of, and safeguards regarding, artificial intelligence.

ISHR's 2024 staff strategy retreat included dedicated sessions on wellbeing and team building, as well as the foundations of effective and empowering staff management.

In her December 2024 report to the ISHR Board, ISHR's Staff Representative noted: appreciation for the overall positive and inclusive work environment; appreciation for the organisation's commitment and concern for staff wellbeing; an increased level of anxiety for some staff associated with the state of human rights globally, as well as the challenging human rights funding environment; and the need for continued efforts to manage workloads and ensure sustainability.



52

In 2024, a staff survey conducted by the Wellbeing Working Group and completed by 85% of staff found that 96% consider that ISHR makes a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of its staff and 92% consider that ISHR provides a highly supportive and flexible working environment. The most significant stressors and concerns for staff relate to workload management, as well as the need to ensure support and integration for staff working outside of the main offices in Geneva or New York.

We updated and continued to implement our organisational Wellbeing Policy to reflect the results of our last Staff survey. We incorporated some recommendations such as the establishment of the peer-support system for onboarding. We organised a diverse range of online and in-person activities to reinforce team building and wellbeing, such as end-of-year festivities and regular check-ins, as well as maintaining and updating resources on wellbeing tips and practices for all staff.



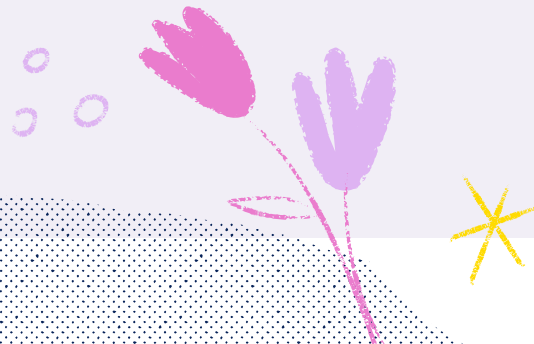
We are committed to climate justice and to a healthy and sustainable environment. ISHR recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements.

In 2024, we continued to implement our Environmental Policy, setting out our commitment to reduce our environmental impact, and continually improve our environmental performance.

With the pandemic precipitating a period of digital innovation at ISHR, and with the continued evolution of hybrid work practices, we have reduced both staff and partner emissions associated with our activities, particularly through a reduction in air travel, over a three year period.

Reflecting the intersectionality of climate justice and gender justice, ISHR's Executive Director was a founding signatory of the Geneva Pledge for Gender Responsive Climate Action, launched on 7 November 2024.

During 2024, ISHR continued to participate in the 2050Today initiative, a Geneva climate action forum bringing together governments, international organisations, academia, private and civil society entities, to tackle climate change by reducing emissions through collective and customised projects.



Dear ISHR,

Congratulations on this remarkable victory for human rights! The **successful campaign against Saudi Arabia's bid for the UN Human Rights Council** is a significant achievement, and I applaud the efforts of ISHR and all the civil society partners involved.

This outcome not only underscores the importance of accountability and the rule of law but also sends a powerful message about the resilience and determination of those fighting for human rights. **It is inspiring to see what can be accomplished when we unite our voices and work together towards a common goal.**



Olga Karach is a Belarusian human rights defender, living in exile and sentenced in absentia to 12 years of imprisonment for her human rights and anti-war activism

I wholeheartedly support your call for continued efforts to achieve even more victories in the future. Let us build on this momentum and continue advocating for those whose voices are silenced.

In solidarity,

Olga Karach,
Director of Our House

Financial statements

54

Profit and loss statement for year ended 31 December 2024

| INCOME | 2024 CHF | 2023 CHF |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| REVENUE – CORE | | |
| Governmental agencies | 1,439,376 | 1,321,021 |
| Trusts and foundations | 410,490 | 411,080 |
| Individual and corporate donors* | 48,249 | 19,273 |
| Other revenue | 98,043 | 44,865 |
| Total core grants | 1,996,159 | 1,796,239 |
| REVENUE – EARMARKED | | |
| Governmental agencies | 1,502,720 | 1,403,327 |
| Trusts and foundations | 496,615 | 641,807 |
| Intergovernmental agencies | 0 | 14,082 |
| Special contributions and consultancy | 50,394 | 40,382 |
| Total earmarked grants | 2,049,729 | 2,099,598 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 4,045,888 | 3,895,836 |
| COSTS | | |
| Personnel cost GVA | 2,956,623 | 2,753,486 |
| GENERAL EXPENDITURE | | |
| Missions, travel, accommodation | 420,154 | 442,333 |
| Publications, translations, outreach | 81,407 | 88,383 |
| Office and operating costs | 275,032 | 317,113 |
| Financial charges, audit fees | 97,364 | 67,146 |
| Governance and strategy | 50,294 | 47,720 |
| New York costs | 216,664 | 169,691 |
| TOTAL COSTS | 4,097,538 | 3,885,872 |
| END OF YEAR RESULT | -51,651 | 9,965 |

*This represents individual donations received by the Geneva entity.
All other donations to ISHR Inc. will be included in the audit of the New York office.

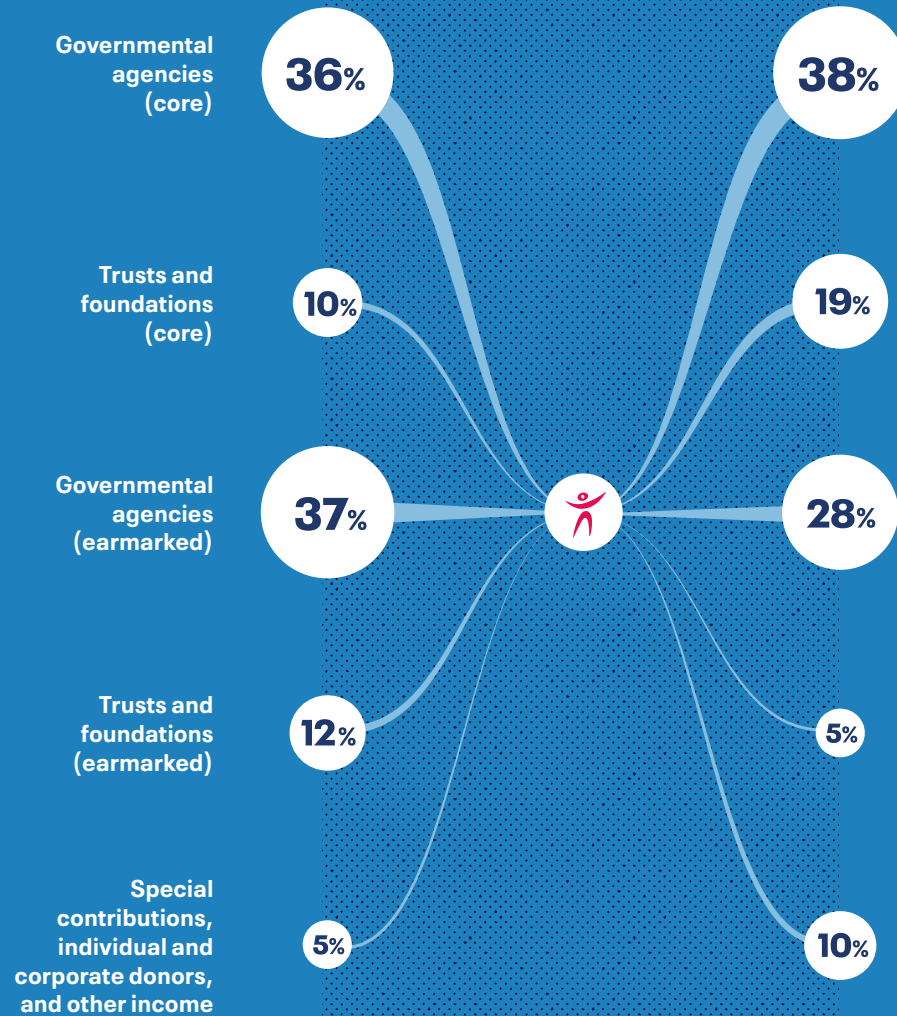
This is an extract of ISHR's audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. For a complete version, please contact Marina Dailly at m.dailly@ishr.ch

Balance sheet at 31 December 2024

| ASSETS | 2024 CHF | 2023 CHF |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Petty cash | 389 | 610 |
| Bank accounts and special bank accounts | 1,005,624 | 971,883 |
| Sub-Total | 1,006,013 | 972,443 |
| Debtors | 287,614 | 44,540 |
| Withholding tax | - | - |
| DEFERRED AND ACCRUED ASSETS | | |
| Deferred expenses | - | - |
| Grants receivable – Governmental and intergovernmental | 625,028 | 984,299 |
| Grants receivable – Non-governmental | 146,272 | 405,976 |
| Total deferred and accrued assets | 771,299 | 1,390,275 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 2,064,926 | 2,407,257 |
| LIABILITIES AND RESERVES | | |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Current liabilities | 106,378 | 122,545 |
| Provisions | - | 26,600 |
| Sub-total | 106,378 | 149,145 |
| Deferred grants | 1,305,187 | 1,553,100 |
| Total liabilities | 1,411,565 | 1,702,245 |
| RESERVES | | |
| Reserve funds | 705,012 | 695,048 |
| Income (deficit) for the year | (51,651) | 9,965 |
| Total reserves | 653,361 | 705,012 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND RESERVES | 2,064,926 | 2,407,257 |

Income by source

Total CHF
4,045,888



Expenditure by category

Total CHF
4,097,538

Goal 1:
Supporting human
rights defenders

Goal 2:
Promoting rights
and accountability

Goal 3:
Strengthening human
rights laws and systems

Cross-cutting
activities

Operations



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Annual Report 2025
For year ending
31 December 2024

 International Service
for Human Rights