

"They tried to bury us, but they didn't know we were seeds."



These words were written by Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal in 1954 in his 'Epitaph for the Tomb of Adolfo Báez Bone,' one of the citizens who rebelled against the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. The quote was used in 1978 by Greek poet Dinos Christianopoulos, who experienced discrimination by the literary community for his sexual orientation. The sentence was finally adopted in the 90s by the Zapatista movement in Mexico and popularised by feminists, Indigenous communities and other groups facing marginalisation in Latin America and worldwide.



 International Service
for Human Rights

Annual Report 2026

For year ending 31 December 2025

Seeds of hope. Roots of resistance.

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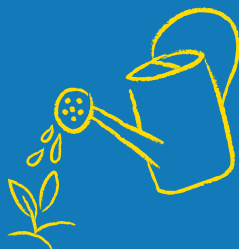
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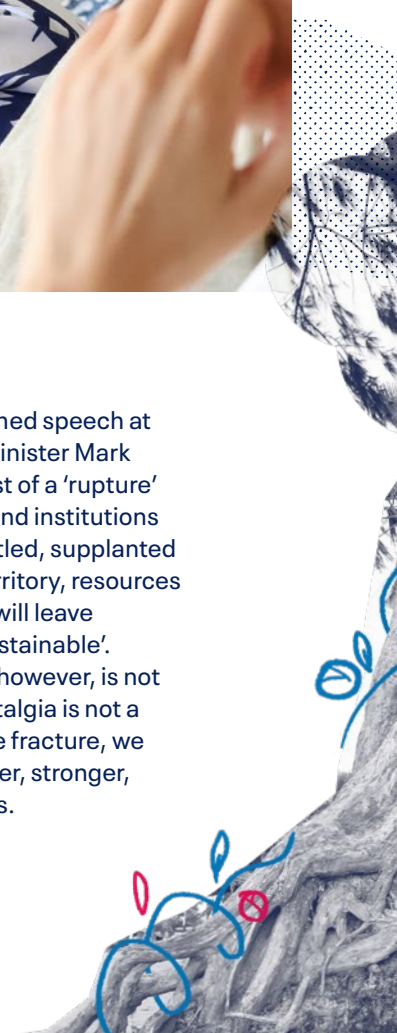


Message from chairperson and director

Seeds of hope. **Roots of resistance.**

In large parts of the Australian bushland and African savannah, fire is regenerative. It burns away much of the old growth. But while devastating, it does not destroy everything. The ash bed it leaves is full of nutrients, nourishing roots and germinating seeds, which flourish in the newly available sunlight. Thirty years ago, Black poet Sonia Sanchez invoked the metaphor of regenerative fire, urging readers to 'catch the fire' that fuels activism, protest and progress.

More recently, in his widely acclaimed speech at Davos this year, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said that we are in the midst of a 'rupture' - an epochal period in which laws and institutions are being disregarded and dismantled, supplanted by the self-interested pursuit of territory, resources and power. This pathway, he said, will leave us 'poorer, more fragile and less sustainable'. Carney's response to this rupture, however, is not a reassertion of the old order. 'Nostalgia is not a strategy,' he said. Instead, from the fracture, we must 'build something bigger, better, stronger, more just' that is founded on values.



There is a fire sweeping through the international human rights system, fueled by rising authoritarianism, militarism and disinformation, and accelerated by an acute funding crisis. The fire is causing devastation, reducing the capacity of the system to prevent, investigate or ensure accountability for gross human rights violations from Afghanistan, to Myanmar, to Sudan, to Venezuela. While extinguishing the fire may be beyond ISHR's control, or even that of the global human rights movement, we can play a vital role in safeguarding the roots - core human rights principles and values - and feeding the seeds - human rights defenders - that are essential for post-fire regeneration.

In 2026 and beyond, there are a number of core values and principles that will guide and drive ISHR's work for a more healthy, diverse and sustainable human rights ecosystem.

First, we are convinced that respect for human rights, the rule of law and multilateral cooperation are essential for peace, justice, security, good governance, sustainable development and a healthy planet.

We have evidence establishing that strong, accessible and responsive laws, policies and mechanisms

at the national, regional and international levels, developed and universally applied in conformity with international human rights principles, are essential to protect human rights defenders and enable their vital work. And we have documented how international mechanisms can be used by defenders to expose injustice, enhance protection, promote accountability, garner solidarity and increase pressure for national change. Despite this, human rights laws, policies and mechanisms face unprecedented threat and erosion. That is why we are working with partners and mobilising coalitions through processes such as UN80 to build and sustain an international human rights system that is credible, adequately resourced and responsive to defenders' demands for justice. This is informed by and complements our work with defenders at the national level to develop and ensure the effective implementation of laws, policies and mechanisms for their recognition and protection.





Second, we know that the work of human rights defenders is essential for the realisation of all human rights, particularly those of people and communities subject to various and intersecting forms of discrimination. We understand that the participation of human rights defenders in policy development, decision-making and governance contributes to more fair, just, inclusive, equitable, accountable, sustainable and rights-respecting processes and outcomes. That is why we are working to ensure that human rights defenders have a safe seat at the table and have the tools, capacities, resources, platforms, networks and narratives they need to engage and influence key policy and decision-makers.



Third, we recognise and deplore that many human rights defenders face violence, risks and repression, whether in their home country or in exile, including from State, business and other non-State actors.

We have witnessed the ways in which violations against defenders imperil the realisation of all human rights and are convinced that accountability for

grave violations is necessary to protect defenders, provide justice for victims, and prevent and deter further violations. That is why we provide solidarity and support to defenders when they are subject to threats, attacks or restrictions, and advocate to ensure that States, business enterprises and other non-State actors are held accountable for grave violations and abuses, and that root causes are identified and addressed. That is also why we continue to campaign and develop effective narratives that build public and political support for defenders, contributing to their freedom and protection and, in so doing, the realisation of human rights for all.



Finally, we are convinced that the health of the human rights ecosystem requires support for, and coordination between, human rights defenders and organisations working on diverse issues at the local, national, regional and international levels.

That is why we develop partnerships with frontline defenders based on principles of equity, trust, learning

and respect. It is why we identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination with other civil society partners that enhance efficiencies and leverage our distinctive but complementary capacities, networks and expertise. And that is why we build and mobilise strong, diverse, multisectoral and intersectional coalitions and networks that respect and promote the values of human rights and the rule of law.

Mark Carney's Davos speech invoked Czech dissident and later president Václav Havel, who wrote in an essay titled 'The Power of the Powerless' about the indomitable human yearning for freedom and dignity, and our agency and responsibility to organise and resist injustice. Havel was also the inspiration for Sonia Sanchez's 'Poem for July 4, 1994', dedicated to Havel, in which she tells us that 'this is the time for the creative human being'. This is the time for the human being who decides to 'save the earth from extinction', to 'live in peace', and to strive for 'racial and sexual justice', she says. Invoking the preambular language of the UN Charter, Sanchez promises that after the fire 'it'll get better'.

*if we the people work, organize, resist,
come together for peace, racial, social
and sexual justice*

*it'll get better
it'll get better.*

Now - as the fires of militarism, colonialism, populism and patriarchy burn - is the time for human rights and those who defend them. Human rights were elaborated for precisely this moment, this rupture. As a constraint on power. A bulwark against lawlessness. And a



guarantor of our individual and collective aspirations for dignity, representation and self-determination.

Now is the time to come together for human rights - to organise, resist and invest. Now is the time to come together for a more inclusive and effective multilateralism - firmly rooted in values. And now is the time to come together for defenders - protecting, supporting and nourishing our seeds of hope.



**Philip
Lynch**

Executive
Director



**Taaka
Awori**

Chair of the
ISHR Board



Strategy 2030





For over 40 years, ISHR has worked with human rights defenders to promote freedom, dignity, equality and justice. We have partnered with them to strengthen human rights laws, systems, networks and narratives. Over the next decade the work of defenders, supported by ISHR, will be critical to reverse rising authoritarianism, combat the accelerating climate crisis, prevent regress in areas such as women's rights and the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, address systemic racism and discrimination, adequately regulate new and emerging technologies, and promote accountability for widespread atrocity crimes, among other challenges.

ISHR's new Strategy 2030 - developed in consultation with over 800 defenders, partners and experts - is designed to ensure that human rights defenders and the international human rights movement are equipped to respond to these challenges. It will ensure that ISHR's work is relevant, responsive, effective, efficient, impactful and sustainable, and that our partnerships are equitable, powerful and influential.

STRATEGY IN A SENTENCE

Because the work of human rights defenders is integral to the realisation of all human rights, ISHR partners with defenders through capacity development, advocacy and litigation at the UN and at regional and national levels to ensure defenders are **protected and supported** (Goal 1) to **participate safely and effectively in credible and responsive systems** (Goal 2) to **seek justice and accountability** (Goal 3).





Our mission

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, defenders 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.

Our mission is to work in solidarity with human rights defenders to achieve freedom, dignity, equality and justice, and partner with them to strengthen human rights laws, systems, networks and narratives.



**INCREASE
IN NUMBER
OF VISITS
TO ISHR
ACADEMY
FROM:**

- + 800% Gambia**
- + 233% Malawi**
- + 221% Cameroon**
- + 148% Türkiye**
- + 110% Kenya**
- + 73% Mexico**
- + 44% Colombia**

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. It also reflects the results of the launch of our new course on the African Commission, targeted at African human rights defenders.



Our goals for change

Guided by our Strategy 2030, ISHR works to ensure that:

1

All persons can exercise the right to defend human rights safely and freely.

We provide solidarity and support to defenders when they are subject to threats, attacks or restrictions, and work to ensure that States, international and regional bodies, and business enterprises develop and implement laws, policies and measures to recognise, respect and protect defenders.

2

Human rights defenders have access, capacity and resources to participate safely and effectively in key bodies and processes.

We work to ensure that human rights defenders have a safe seat at the table and have the tools, capacities, resources, platforms, networks and narratives they need to engage and influence key policy and decision-makers.

We partner, collaborate and innovate with other civil society organisations and movements to enhance our collective efficiency, sustainability and impact.

3

Human rights defenders can seek justice and accountability through a responsive human rights system.

Our work helps to build and sustain an international human rights system that is credible, adequately resourced and responsive to defenders' demands for justice. We work to ensure that States, business enterprises and other non-State actors are held accountable for grave violations and abuses, and that root causes are identified and addressed.



Our priorities, programmes and partners

ISHR pursues the following programme priorities. Across all programmes, we support defenders through a gender-responsive and intersectional approach, prioritising support for those who are underrepresented in regional and international fora.

Equality and non-discrimination

We provide solidarity and support to, and advocate for the protection of, defenders working on issues of gender inequality, patriarchy, racism and other forms of systemic oppression.

Corporate accountability, land and environmental justice

We provide solidarity and support to, and advocate for the protection of, defenders working on issues of environmental and climate justice, land and Indigenous Peoples' rights, corporate accountability, and grave and widespread violations of economic, social and cultural rights.

International accountability

We provide solidarity and support to, and advocate for the protection of, defenders working to promote international accountability for grave violations and atrocity crimes and address their root causes.

Rule of law

We provide solidarity and support to, and advocate for the protection of, defenders working to safeguard and strengthen civic space, democratic institutions and accountability mechanisms. We develop and strengthen legal frameworks and jurisprudence for the protection of human rights defenders.

Systems strengthening

We work with defenders and other key stakeholders to build and strengthen credible, responsive and adequately resourced human rights systems at the international and regional levels.



Our values and principles

ISHR is a values-driven organisation, committed to practising and projecting our values consistently, both internally and externally. These values are:

Solidarity We exist to serve and support defenders. We give primacy to the lived experience, expertise and demands of frontline defenders and affected communities, consulting and working with them in respectful, collaborative and participatory partnerships.

Integrity We are trusted and respected by diverse actors from all regions. We apply human rights law in a progressive, principled and consistent manner, without discrimination, addressing all situations on their merits. Our positions and advocacy are grounded in law and evidence.

Equity We practice and advance principles of equality, non-discrimination, diversity, inclusion and antiracism in our workplace, and through our partnerships, programmes and advocacy.

Sustainability We are committed to the wellbeing, security, resilience and sustainability of ourselves, our activism, our organisation, our partnerships and the planet.

Consistently with these values, ISHR applies the following cross-cutting **principles and prioritisation criteria** across all programmes:

- ISHR **centres human rights defenders** in all aspects of our work, co-constructing, consulting, supporting and partnering with them to share their experience, expertise, demands and recommendations for justice.
- ISHR gives particular **priority to human rights defenders at heightened risk** and those working on the most **grave and urgent situations**.

- ISHR is **driven by impact**, focusing our resources, capacities, expertise and passion where we can make the most significant, distinctive and SMART contributions to human rights progress or accountability.
- ISHR is deeply committed to **partnership principles** of solidarity, equity, accountability, trust, learning and respect, as well as principles of active participation and local ownership.
- ISHR identifies opportunities for **collaboration, coordination and partnership** with other stakeholders, enhancing efficiencies and leveraging our distinctive but complementary capacities, networks and expertise.
- ISHR only works on country situations in consultation and partnership with defenders from that country or region, whether they remain in the country or in exile, and only works on **thematic issues** in consultation and partnership with defenders with relevant lived experience.
- ISHR undertakes **comprehensive assessments of risk**, adopting a 'do no harm' approach with defenders, and identifying, preventing and mitigating risks that may affect them or ISHR.
- ISHR is committed to **sustainability**, applying our human and financial resources efficiently, accountably, and in responsible and sustainable ways.





X FOLLOWERS

ENGLISH

33,254
+1%

CHINESE

10,019
+4%

SPANISH

1,004
+0%

FRENCH

680
+2%

**ISHR
ONLINE
MEDIA
ACTIVITY
IN 2025**

FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS



24,986
+2%

LINKEDIN
FOLLOWERS



21,308
+25%

INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS



2,998
+33%

SESSIONS ON
WWW.ISHR.CH



256,000

BLUESKY
FOLLOWERS



ALL LANGUAGE
CHANNELS
1,392

ENGLISH

1,142

CHINESE

101

SPANISH

62

FRENCH

87

Our tactics and activities

We use a range of integrated tactics, developed and implemented in partnership with a vast network of defenders supported over the last 40 years. Our tactics are underpinned by research, analysis and meaningful consultation with human rights defenders and affected communities.

Our tactics and activities include:

- **Capacity strengthening and advocacy support:** ISHR co-creates the tools and strengthens the capacities of defenders to engage and influence international, regional and national human rights mechanisms, as well as State and non-State actors. This includes training both online and in person at the international, regional and national levels. We also provide strategic advocacy advice and accompaniment, networking support, and fellowships for defenders.





- **Coalition building and coordination:** ISHR builds, coordinates, resources and supports diverse, intersectional and multi-sectoral coalitions to strengthen the recognition and protection of defenders, support their work for justice and accountability, enhance solidarity, and promote a credible, responsive and adequately resourced human rights system.
- **International and regional advocacy:** ISHR engages and advocates with diplomats and decision-makers from all regions, as well as with human rights experts, to strengthen the recognition and protection of defenders, promote the principled and consistent application of international human rights law and standards, safeguard and expand civil society access and participation, and establish mandates and mechanisms to promote accountability for grave violations. We also conduct and publish research on these issues. Additionally, ISHR facilitates and supports the access of frontline defenders to high-level officials, experts and decision-makers.
- **Normative development:** ISHR works with defenders and diplomats, as well as international and regional mechanisms and experts, to develop and strengthen international and regional laws and standards on the protection of defenders and on issues affecting them, including systemic discrimination, transnational repression, and intimidation and reprisals.
- **National law and policy reform:** ISHR undertakes significant research and advocacy, and provides expertise and advice to civil society, national authorities and national human rights institutions, to develop, strengthen and ensure the effective implementation of laws, policies and mechanisms to protect defenders and address issues affecting them.
- **Strategic litigation and *amicus curiae* interventions:** ISHR engages in strategic litigation and advocacy at the international, regional and national levels to strengthen legal recognition and protection of the right to defend human rights, promote accountability for grave violations and abuses against defenders, and provide justice for affected communities.
- **Narrative development, campaigning and mobilisation:** Through our values- and hope-based communications and campaigns, ISHR positively influences attitudes, behaviours, laws and policies on defenders, counters stigmatisation and smears against them, and expresses solidarity with defenders and their communities. We engage and mobilise a diverse range of actors to prevent and redress restrictions and repression against defenders. Our communications and campaigns also promote respect and support for human rights, the rule of law and multilateral cooperation, recognising that they are foundational to peace, justice, security and sustainable development. We foreground and amplify the voices, experiences and expertise of defenders and affected communities.

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.



Our impact: 2025 at a glance



Nancy Awad

H.E. Ambassador
Tormod C. Endresen

POOJA PATEL



Protecting and defending the right to defend rights

- We led a coalition to secure a strong UN **resolution protecting human rights defenders from digital threats**, and pushing and providing guidance to governments and companies to adopt rights-respecting digital policies.



- Nominated by the UN Antiracism Coalition (UNARC) and supported in her advocacy and UN engagement by ISHR, **Ana Paula Gomes de Oliveira received the Martin Ennals Award** for her work against systemic racism following the police killing of her son Johnatha in a favela in Brazil in 2014. 'I feel like a part of me died with my son. Through my fight I have found a way to maintain my maternal role,' Ana Paula, who co-founded the collective 'Mothers of Manguinhos' told the UN Human Rights Council. The Martin Ennals Award provides both recognition and protective publicity.
- Following intensive advocacy from ISHR and 17 partner organisations, the UN Human Rights Council endorsed the **Declaration +25**, strengthening the legal recognition of defenders and the obligations of States and businesses to respect and protect them. Our new **Activist Guide** provides defenders with concrete and practical

advice about how to use the Declaration +25 in advocacy, policy development, litigation, education and movement building.

- As an increasing number of defenders are forced to work from exile, we strengthened **norms to protect defenders from transnational repression**, including through UN resolutions on civil society space and safety of journalists, as well as through guidance to States on how to combat transnational repression.



- Together with partners, we helped secure a landmark **Inter-American Court judgment affirming the right to defend the environment** and States' obligations to protect environmental defenders, as well as a landmark UN treaty body decision on the right to work as a human rights defender.
- Through strategic advocacy and litigation, for the first time ever, we activated the **Escazú Agreement Rapid Response Mechanism** to protect the family of a Chilean Indigenous environmental defender.





Developing defenders' capacities, access and influence

18



- In 2025, we provided intensive training and advocacy support to **more than 1,300 defenders from over 70 countries**, the highest number in ISHR's 40+ year history! We partner with these defenders to drive progressive change on the ground.
- Our new training programme developed the capacities of 16 African defenders to engage effectively with the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** and we launched a related new module on our online ISHR Academy.
- Our campaign to **#EndReprisals** led to 11 States speaking out publicly in relation to 15 individual cases of reprisals at the Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly. Our advocacy also ensured that, for the first time, the Council adopted a resolution which explicitly recognised and condemned reprisals against mandate

holders, such as the Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory, while our strategic litigation secured precedent-setting jurisprudence recognising that reprisals against defenders may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or even torture.

- Together with partners, we supported **10 Indigenous leaders and women human rights defenders** from diverse regions to advocate and share their experiences, expertise and demands at the UN. The participants in our Women Human Rights Defender Advocacy Week engaged on issues related to Indigenous rights, land and environmental justice, gender equality, corporate accountability and cultural rights. See our map on page 20 for an overview of our work on these thematic.
- More than 16,945 human rights defenders accessed information, resources, advice and support through our **multilingual online ISHR Academy**.



Supporting justice and accountability through a credible human rights system

- Working with partners, we helped to establish and maintain international **investigative and accountability mechanisms on Sudan, Afghanistan and Nicaragua**, enhancing monitoring of grave human rights violations, especially against women and girls.
- Our **advocacy and strategic litigation with UN treaty bodies and Special Procedures** secured key findings and recommendations to advance the protection of defenders in countries including Cameroon, France and Guatemala, working on issues from land rights and forced evictions, to combating systemic racism and police violence.
- Our **groundbreaking reports**, which were extensively covered in global media, exposed how some States - particularly China and Russia - work to influence and defund the UN human rights system, and equipped audiences to better safeguard multilateralism.
- Our proposals and campaign to strengthen the UN human rights system, developed with human rights defenders and civil society partners, heavily influenced the positions of States and UN agencies in the **UN80 reform process**.
- Our **score cards and public accountability events on Human Rights Council candidates** triggered a range of positive actions by States, including the submission of government treaty body reports, the acceptance of country visits by Special Rapporteurs, and other positive acts of cooperation with the UN.



INCREASE IN USE OF ISHR INFORMATION PRODUCTS BY HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, REPRESENTING THE ACCESSIBILITY AND RELEVANCE OF SUCH PRODUCTS ACROSS DIVERSE CONTINENTS AND CONTEXTS:

+ 317%	South Sudan
+ 275%	Nicaragua
+ 173%	Ethiopia
+ 132%	Zimbabwe
+ 130%	DRC
+ 129%	Kenya
+ 119%	Peru
+ 110%	Morocco
+ 85%	Venezuela
+ 80%	Afghanistan
+ 76%	Russia
+ 64%	China
+ 31%	United States
+ 30%	UAE

Our work on environment and climate justice

- Defender stories
- Strengthening international frameworks
- Specific cases



Goals and impact



Goal and impact:

22 **The right to defend rights is recognised and protected**

Our 2025 Goal

Everyone can exercise the right to defend rights safely and freely.



What we achieved

Through a strategic combination of research, advocacy, litigation, coalition building, mobilisation and campaigns, we:

- ★ provided advice, support and solidarity to defenders subject to threats, attacks, discrimination, racism, restrictions or reprisals
- ★ advised, supported and pressured States, international and regional bodies, and business enterprises to develop laws, policies and mechanisms to recognise and respect the right to defend rights and to promote and protect human rights defenders.

The mentions in brackets [SF21-25 - ...] allow a quick reference to [ISHR's Strategic Framework 2021-2025](#).



Select highlights



Antiracism defenders

Together with the [UN Antiracism Coalition](#), for which ISHR acts as the coordinator and secretariat, ISHR provided advice and support to more than 100 people affected by police violence and killings in Brazil. Among these was Ana Paula Gomes de Oliveira, whose son Johnatha was killed by police in a favela in 2014. For more than a decade, Ana Paula has struggled for justice and accountability for her son, as well as more than 6,000 people, overwhelmingly young Black men, killed by law enforcement in the country each year. With ISHR's support, Ana Paula was nominated for and received the prestigious Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders in 2025, providing her with much needed [recognition and protective publicity](#). We also supported Ana Paula to engage with a range of UN human rights experts and States to continue her push for justice. [SF21-25 - 1.2]



Protecting the right to defend rights in the context of business activities

In 2025, we launched the report '[Business Frameworks and Actions to Support Human Rights Defenders: a Retrospective and Recommendations](#)', which examines how standards have been operationalised in company policies, investor guidance, legal reforms and sector-specific commitments. The report acknowledges progress, identifies barriers to effective protection and proposes recommendations. We continue to promote corporate action to protect defenders and accountability for abuses through the [Business Network on Civic Freedoms and Human Rights Defenders](#), and by supporting efforts to develop a [binding instrument on business and human rights](#) that protects defenders, Indigenous Peoples and women, and advances the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. [SF21-25 - 2.4]



Digital rights and technological risks

Together with partners, ISHR shaped and secured a robust Human Rights Council [resolution addressing the risks and opportunities posed by new and emerging technologies](#) for human rights defenders. To achieve this, ISHR built a coalition of defenders and NGOs with expertise in defender protection, human rights and technology to provide substantive and strategic support to the resolution process led by Norway. The resolution tackled surveillance, AI-driven repression, digital threats, and the need for tech governance grounded in rights. The result is one of the strongest UN texts to date on technology and human rights. It equips defenders with new international standards, and pushes and provides guidance to governments and companies to adopt rights-respecting digital policies. [SF21-25 - 3.3]



Transnational repression

With an increasing number of defenders forced to work from exile, ISHR played a leading role in shaping emerging international norms to [protect human rights defenders from transnational repression](#). Working closely with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, ISHR contributed research, case studies and legal analysis, and facilitated inputs from victims to the UN's civic space brief on transnational repression. This has helped establish a clear global framework to identify, prevent and respond to cross-border attacks.

ISHR also played a key role in strengthening the Human Rights Council resolutions on civil society space and safety of journalists, ensuring they express grave concern about States and their agents targeting defenders and journalists abroad through digital, physical, and other means, including spyware, surveillance, and the targeting of families and associates. [SF21-25 - 3.3]

Legal recognition and protection of the right to defend rights

Through sustained advocacy, legal analysis, and support for national and regional defenders, ISHR secured the [Human Rights Council's endorsement](#) of the [Declaration on Human Rights Defenders +25](#) and strengthened norms on the protection of defenders within the Council's [civil society space resolution](#). These achievements reaffirm States' obligations to protect defenders and create enabling environments for activism. ISHR's contribution ensured key language on participation, safety, and accountability was retained, reinforcing the legitimacy of civil society at a time of shrinking civic space worldwide. This recognition helps defenders push back against repression using clear, authoritative international standards. In October 2025, we launched a new [Activist Guide](#), providing defenders with concrete and practical advice about how to use the Declaration +25 in advocacy, policy development, litigation, education and movement building. [SF21-25 - 3.3, 3.4]



Protecting environmental defenders

The right to defend rights imposes an obligation on States and other actors to protect families and communities who may be targeted in retaliation for a defender's work. In 2025, ISHR's advocacy contributed to the first-ever activation of the Escazú Agreement Rapid Response Mechanism to protect the relatives of Mapuche environmental human rights defender Julia Chuñil. This [order](#) establishes a powerful precedent: threats against families of defenders demand an urgent international response. ISHR's work ensured the mechanism functioned effectively and in close coordination with local organisations. The decision strengthens environmental protection across Latin America, affirms States' obligations to safeguard those who defend land and nature, and demonstrates how international mechanisms can provide real protection when local systems fail. [SF21-25 - 1.3]



Protecting environmental and Indigenous defenders at the...

...international level



Through legal research and policy advocacy, ISHR played a key role in ensuring the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) recognised that States must [protect environmental and Indigenous human rights defenders](#) in the context of sustainable development. This groundbreaking guidance clarifies that silencing defenders undermines climate action, biodiversity protection and development goals. ISHR's submissions, briefings and partnerships with grassroots defenders shaped the development of international law. The outcome strengthens legal protections worldwide and provides new tools for communities resisting harmful development projects, reinforcing the principle that defending the environment is integral to realising economic and social rights.

[SF21-25 - 3.4]

...regional level



Working in coalition, ISHR successfully advocated to secure a landmark Inter-American Court judgment [affirming the right to defend the environment](#) and States' obligation to protect environmental human rights defenders. This ruling strengthens regional protections and provides powerful jurisprudence for defenders across the Americas. ISHR's work ensured that the voices of affected communities were heard and that the Court recognised the essential role of defenders in safeguarding ecosystems and Indigenous territories. The decision reinforces that protecting defenders is integral to addressing climate and biodiversity crises.

[SF21-25 - 3.4]

Pressure for the release of arbitrarily detained defenders

Working alongside the #FreeAlKhawaja Campaign, the Gulf Centre for Human Rights, and Front Line Defenders, ISHR secured a recommendation from the UN Committee against Torture urging Bahrain to [release all arbitrarily detained human rights defenders](#), including prominent defender Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja. Al Khawaja has been detained and subject to persistent torture and ill-treatment since 2011 in retaliation for his work to promote democracy and the rule of law in Bahrain. The Committee has given Bahrain a deadline of November 2026 to respond to its authoritative recommendations.

[SF21-25 - 1.3]



#FREEALKHAWAJA

Right to work as a human rights defender

ISHR supported legal advocacy that contributed to a landmark decision by the CESCR confirming that restrictions imposed on human rights defenders can violate the right to work and safe working conditions. This expands the protective framework for defenders and recognises the economic harm caused by retaliation, blacklisting or exclusion. ISHR's work ensured the Committee heard the real-world impacts of such restrictions and understood their systemic nature. The decision strengthens legal tools available to defenders and deepens international recognition that defending rights is legitimate work deserving full protection. [SF21-25 - 3.4]



National laws, policies and mechanisms to protect defenders

Specific national laws, policies and mechanisms on defenders can contribute significantly to the recognition and protection of their work. Together with national partners, our legislative protection work focused on strengthening legal frameworks for the protection of defenders, including consultations and workshops on the development of laws in new jurisdictions such as [Nigeria](#) and [Zambia](#), and the effective implementation of such laws and policies in jurisdictions in which they have already been enacted, including [Mali](#) and [Niger](#). In addition to ISHR's [Model National Law](#), the Declaration +25 provides authoritative guidance to States on their international legal obligations to respect, protect and support defenders. [SF21-25 - 2.3]

Together with national and regional partners in Africa, we also initiated the establishment of a network of [legal professionals for the protection of the rights of defenders](#) in Africa. The network aims to strengthen the collective response to violations of the right to defend rights in Africa through strategic litigation, training and legal support.



NUMBER OF
NEWS ITEMS
QUOTING OR
CITING ISHR
IN 2025

286



DIFFERENT
LANGUAGES

22



COUNTRIES ON
ALL CONTINENTS

30

INCLUDES ARTICLES BY MAJOR AGENCIES LIKE REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, INFOBAE AND OTHERS, AND INDIVIDUAL OUTLETS SUCH AS EL PAÍS, POLITIKEN, LE MONDE, LE TEMPS, THE STRAIT TIMES, THE CITIZEN, SKY NEWS, INTERNAZIONALE, THE INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISTS AND MORE.



Contributions of women human rights defenders

With public recognition of the positive impact of human rights defenders being an essential element contributing to their protection and an enabling environment for their work, we continue to push sectoral uptake of effective narratives. We are working with influential actors who are increasingly adopting this approach, leading to the delivery of a precedent-setting cross-regional statement by 60 States led by Belgium which pays 'tribute to the numerous achievements and meaningful progress made by women and girls human rights defenders, and emphasises the continued need for their voices to be heard and supported'. [SF21-25 - 2.3]

“

‘Throughout history, women and girls have played pivotal roles in driving change and leading advancements in human rights. Globally, women and girls human rights defenders and movements have been instrumental in achieving significant legal milestones at the international, regional and national levels, fostering more equitable and just societies and promoting gender equality.’

Statement by Belgium on behalf of 60 States from all regions to UN Human Rights Council on 25 June 2025



Goal and impact:

Defenders have access, capacities, resources and influence

Our 2025 Goal

Human rights defenders have access, capacity and resources to participate safely and effectively in key bodies and processes



What we achieved

Through a combination of intensive training, capacity development and advocacy support, both online and in person, as well as through research, international and regional advocacy, policy development, and coalition building and coordination, we:

- ★ equipped defenders with the tools, capacities, resources, platforms, networks and narratives they need to engage with and influence international, regional and national mechanisms and actors, including business enterprises and other non-State actors
- ★ advocated and advised international and regional bodies and mechanisms to develop and implement policies and processes for the safe and effective participation of defenders and to prevent and address acts of intimidation and reprisal, and secured the support of diverse States for this
- ★ strengthened strategisation, coordination and the impact of civil society organisations working to support defenders and safeguard the international human rights system.





Select highlights



Training and supporting a record number of defenders

In 2025, we provided intensive training, capacity development and advocacy support to more than 1,300 defenders from over 70 countries, the highest number in ISHR's 40+ year history! We partner with these defenders to drive progressive change on the ground.

[SF21-25 - 1.1, 1.2]



'There is a consensus that **HRDAP (ISHR's Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme)** is a transformative experience, linking knowledge with action and fostering a global community of human rights defenders...HRDAP enhances defenders' ability to **engage with the UN system and leverage it for their advocacy**... These interactions often translate into tangible advocacy outcomes—such as State commitments during UPR sessions, follow-up actions from Special Rapporteurs, and local policy shifts informed by international engagement.'

Independent expert evaluation of ISHR Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme, 15 September 2025





42

**NUMBER OF ISHR
RECOMMENDATIONS
TAKEN UP BY STATES
IN THE UNIVERSAL
PERIODIC REVIEW**

Safe access and ending reprisals

Extensive research and evidence demonstrate that public statements from high-level officials are critical to deter acts of intimidation and reprisal against human rights defenders, send a message of solidarity to defenders and their families, and increase political costs for perpetrators. ISHR's 2025 [End Reprisals campaign](#) led to 11 States speaking out publicly in relation to 15 individual cases of reprisals at

the Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly. Our advocacy also ensured that, for the first time, the Council adopted a resolution which explicitly recognised and condemned reprisals against mandate holders, such as the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory. Our completely [updated handbook on reprisals](#), available in five languages, provides concrete and practical guidance to defenders about how best to mitigate the risk of reprisals and how to pursue accountability when they occur.

[SF21-25 - 1.3, 2.2]



African human rights defenders

Developed together with Front Line Defenders, ISHR's intensive [new training programme](#) in Banjul, The Gambia, enabled 16 African human rights defenders to engage effectively with the NGO Forum and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). Through capacity strengthening, mentoring and tailored advocacy support, ISHR helped participants influence ACHPR debates on civic space, extractive industries, gender equality and environmental protection. The hybrid training also involved pre-learning sessions from ISHR's [new online learning module](#) on the ACHPR, as well as a [comprehensive roadmap](#) on how to use the ACHPR to advance State implementation of human rights obligations. In addition to supporting defenders' engagement, ISHR also submitted a range of reports and recommendations that influenced the ACHPR, including in relation to the situation and need for enhanced [protection of defenders](#).

[SF21-25 - 1.1]

Earlier in the year, a new ISHR report, based on consultations with over 350 defenders, identified the key protection and capacity development needs of defenders from the six [African island States](#) of Cape Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, and Seychelles. The insights from the report, as well as the partnerships developed during the country visits and consultations, will enable the development of targeted and tailored programmes to support defenders from these often overlooked States. [SF21-25 - 1.1]





'I feel so grateful for the hospitality of ISHR. The advocacy objectives — developed along with the support of the ISHR coach — led me to a concrete and pragmatic advocacy route. They helped me clearly define SMART objectives and articulate a theory of change that strategically incorporates international and regional human rights mechanisms.'



Shafira Noor Adlina, KontraS Surabaya, Indonesia, 2025 HRDAP participant.

Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme

All 16 defenders chosen from a record 626 applicants for our [Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme](#) indicated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the programme. They reported that it significantly built their capacity and networks, and the attainment of advocacy objectives at the UN. The programme, which includes a two-month online component followed by two weeks of intensive training and advocacy support in Geneva, supported defenders from a diversity of regions and contexts, including Colombia, Guatemala, Nigeria, Indonesia, Tunisia, Lebanon, Nepal, India, Uganda, Cameroon, Syria, North Macedonia, Tibet and Sierra Leone. Their work focused on the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, environmental justice, transitional justice, gender equality, migrant rights, corporate accountability, and the protection of communities at risk. Participants in the programme contributed significantly to the [renewal of a vital UN mechanism](#) to combat violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. Over 90% of HRDAP participants report using the new skills, capacities and networks to concretely advance human rights within six months of the programme. [SF21-25-1.1,1.2]





ISHR Academy

Amid continued high demand for online training and strategic advocacy support, we further scaled up the ISHR Academy, including through new language options and a dedicated module to support defenders' strategic engagement with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Academy is an interactive, online platform to build the capacity and skills of defenders to leverage the UN and regional human rights systems to contribute to national level change. During 2025, the Academy received almost 17,000 visits from defenders from all regions. [SF21-25 - 1.1]



16,945

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE
ACCESSING
INFORMATION AND
SUPPORT THROUGH THE
ISHR ACADEMY IN 2025**

Women Human Rights Defender Advocacy week

Together with partners, we supported 10 Indigenous women defenders from diverse regions to advocate and share their experience, expertise and demands with States and at the UN in relation to Indigenous Peoples' rights, land and environmental justice, gender equality, corporate accountability and cultural rights. Coming from contexts including Brazil, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Russia, the Philippines and Karakalpakstan, the women defenders also developed strong networks of solidarity, learning and support, contributing to their protection and impact. [SF21-25 - 1.1, 1.2]



'My heart overflows with gratitude for an extraordinary journey that has left me utterly inspired. The sheer brilliance of crafting this exceptional programme, blending hands-on training and the opportunity to address the Human Rights Council, is a privilege I will forever cherish. This incredible experience has not only empowered me but also ignited a fire to continue this vital work.'

Participant in the Women Human Rights Defender Advocacy Week 2025

Landmark jurisprudence on reprisals

Adjudicating a case filed by ISHR on behalf of four Burundian lawyers, the UN Committee against Torture issued a [precedent-setting decision](#) in November 2025, finding that Burundi violated the Convention against Torture by retaliating against the lawyers for cooperating with the Committee, including through their suspension from legal practice. Alongside their disbarment, the victims and their families were also threatened, had their property arbitrarily seized, and were forced from Burundi and into exile. In its [Views](#), the Committee held that Burundi breached article 13 of the Convention, obliging States to protect complainants and witnesses from intimidation or retaliation for engaging with UN mechanisms. The Committee also went further, stating that under article 16 of the Convention, 'reprisals constitute a form of cruel treatment or punishment... and may amount to torture in certain circumstances.' In addition, the Committee found that Burundi's refusal to engage with the individual complaints procedure constituted a further violation of the Convention. This decision is the clearest and strongest ever ruling by a UN treaty body that there is a State duty to cooperate with the UN and that reprisals against human rights defenders for engaging with the UN are unlawful and may amount to cruel, inhuman or even torturous treatment. [SF21-25 - 1.3, 2.2]



'This decision confirms an essential truth: defending human rights and cooperating with the UN is not a crime, it is a duty. When a State persecutes lawyers for carrying out their mission, it violates international law. This recognition strengthens our determination to continue the fight for justice, alongside victims, until impunity ends.'

Armel Niyongere, one of the four Burundian lawyers supported and represented by ISHR in the landmark November 2025 decision of the UN Committee against Torture



Centering frontline defenders

As a key principle, we are committed to centering human rights defenders in our work, with many 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 2025, we supported 17 defenders to address the UN Human Rights Council directly. Among many others, ISHR was privileged to work with Palestinian Indigenous woman human rights defender [Khulood Abu Obaid](#) to call on States to address the systematic denial of Palestinian rights, with Colombian woman human rights defender [Laura Restrepo](#) to outline the human rights conditions necessary for lasting peace, with Sri Lankan climate activist [Melani Gunathilaka](#) to testify on the human rights and environmental consequences of foreign debt, and with [Cressida Kuala](#) from the Porgera Red Wara Women's Association in Papua New Guinea on ensuring a just energy transition for Indigenous communities. Guided by our national partners, ISHR staff continued to deliver statements at the UN in circumstances where it may remain too risky for national-level defenders, such as defenders from China and Venezuela. [SF21-25 - 1.1, 1.2]



Amplifying 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 10 defenders from all regions, including journalist, researcher and human rights defender [Judi Aldalati](#) on her aspirations in post-conflict Syria, Cameroonian human rights lawyer and traditional leader [Gladys Mbuya](#) about defending the rule of law and the rights of

protest and dissent, and Ecuadorian environmentalist [Nathalia Bonilla](#) about defending the rights of Nature. 'A revolution where you can't dance is not my revolution,' Nathalia told ISHR, arguing for an 'environmentalism for the people'. 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. [SF21-25-1.1, 1.2]



1,300

**NUMBER OF DEFENDERS
TO WHOM ISHR PROVIDED
INTENSIVE TRAINING OR
ADVOCACY SUPPORT IN 2025**



**FROM 70
DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES**

+12%

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, as well as the European Union, to [reform the Committee](#) to ensure that NGO accreditation processes are fair, transparent, expeditious and non-discriminatory. We also provide expert advice and support to a diverse range of independent NGOs, enabling them to gain UN accreditation, bringing their experience, expertise and knowledge of human rights problems and solutions to the international community. [SF21-25 - 3.2]

Goal and impact:

Defenders can seek justice and accountability

Our 2025 Goal

Human rights defenders can seek justice and accountability through a human rights system that is accessible, responsive and effective



What we achieved

At a time of unprecedented attacks and erosion of the international human rights system, as well as unprecedented demands from defenders and affected communities for the system to deliver protection, accountability and justice, our combination of research, advocacy, strategic litigation, and coalition building and coordination contributed significantly to:

- ★ developing and maintaining a credible, responsive international human rights system
- ★ the adoption and renewal of mandates and mechanisms to prevent and address grave violations and abuses and their root causes
- ★ strengthening accountability of States, business enterprises and other non-State actors for grave violations and abuses.



STATES SPEAKING OUT ON INDIVIDUAL CASES OF REPRISALS



STATES JOINING FORCES AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONDEMN REPRISALS

**Justice and
accountability**

**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 and to identify and address root causes for widespread and systematic violations and abuses. In line with this approach, we built coalitions and worked with defenders to establish, renew, strengthen and engage with investigative and accountability mechanisms in relation to [Afghanistan](#), [Israel/Palestine](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Russia/Ukraine](#), [Sudan](#) and [Venezuela](#), among others. [SF21-25 - 3.3]



Addressing the acute humanitarian crisis in Sudan



Working in close partnership with Sudanese women human rights defenders, ISHR helped secure renewal of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan and supported successful calls for a [UN Human Rights Council special session](#) as atrocities intensified. By facilitating the [direct engagement of Sudanese women defenders](#) with States and supporting their expert submissions, ISHR strengthened the international response to mass killings, gender-based violence and displacement. The renewed mandate ensures continued documentation and will support future accountability efforts. By driving international action when Sudanese civilians most needed protection, ISHR reinforced the UN's responsibility to act and ensured that Sudan's crisis remained on the global agenda. [SF21-25 - 3.3]



Combating violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons

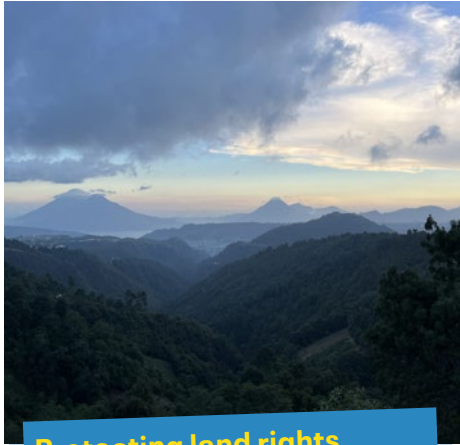
Following a campaign by 1,259 non-governmental organisations from 157 States and territories coordinated jointly by ISHR and ILGA World, the Human Rights Council renewed the mandate of the only human rights expert within the UN system specifically dedicated to addressing violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (LGBT) and gender diverse persons. Welcoming the renewal, ISHR Programme Manager Fabiana Leibl said that it was 'a powerful response to a rising tide of anti-rights rhetoric that has sought to target LGBT and gender diverse people across the globe.' According to Elena Petrovska, Project Coordinator for ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Türkiye, 'the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI is indispensable: it is a moral and political shield and, without it, our struggles would be at risk of being abandoned and made invisible.' [SF21-25 - 3.3]



Ending grave violations in Afghanistan

As part of a [broad-based coalition](#) led by women human rights defenders from the country, [ISHR campaigned](#) and contributed to securing the establishment of a new independent investigative mechanism on Afghanistan. The mechanism enhances international monitoring of grave human rights violations, especially against women and girls, human rights defenders, and ethnic and religious minorities. The mechanism's mandate and political narrative were shaped by Afghan civil society voices, reinforcing the international community's responsibility not to abandon Afghan people. This mechanism is now a critical tool for accountability, documentation, and global pressure amid one of the world's gravest human rights crises. It will also contribute to criminal accountability for the Taliban and others responsible for atrocity crimes, both at the International Criminal Court and in national courts and tribunals exercising universal jurisdiction. [SF21-25 - 3.3]





Protecting land rights defenders in Guatemala

Forced evictions, often of entire communities using disproportionate force, are widespread in Guatemala, most frequently in association with major mining, hydroelectric and agribusiness projects. ISHR supported Guatemalan human rights defenders through technical help and capacity development to engage with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This engagement and advocacy [secured key recommendations](#) from the UN experts, who called for an end to forced evictions against Indigenous communities and for the protection of land rights defenders. [SF21-25 - 3.3, 2.4]



Providing a pathway to justice for Nicaraguan defenders

Faced with a highly restrictive national environment and the absence of accessible or effective domestic mechanisms for accountability, international mechanisms provide one of the few options for Nicaraguan human rights defenders to seek protection or accountability for past and ongoing crimes against humanity in the country. Working as part of Colectivo 46/2, ISHR contributed significantly to [renewing the mandate of an international investigative and accountability mechanism on Nicaragua](#), as well as strengthening its scope so that the human rights situation is not just on the agenda of the Human Rights Council, but also the General Assembly in New York, increasing pressure for change. [SF21-25 - 3.3]



'With this [strong resolution](#), the Human Rights Council has made it clear to Nicaragua and all States that would seek to escape scrutiny that isolation will grant them no immunity. Despite a purely performative withdrawal from the Council and other institutions, Nicaraguan authorities will still have to explain themselves in New York for their innumerable violations of human rights.'

Colectivo 46/2 coalition, following renewal of the mandate of the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua





Accountability for police violence and systemic racism

In April, ISHR supported the participation of racial justice activist Assa Traoré and NGO Comité Vérité pour Adama in the [periodic review of France by the UN Committee Against Torture](#). 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. 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 victims and their families. Specifically citing the case of Adama Traoré, the Committee Against Torture said that it is ‘troubled by reports of the dismissal of a large number of cases, administrative penalties that are neither severe nor commensurate with the seriousness of the conduct and the failure of the courts to punish police officers and gendarmes, as illustrated by the cases involving the deaths of Adama Traoré, Luis Bico and Nahel Merzouk, for which no one has been held to account.’ [SF21-25 - 1.1, 3.3]

Addressing abuses associated with gold mining in Cameroon

Following advocacy from ISHR, together with our local partner Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER), a diverse group of UN human rights experts publicly called on Cameroon to [urgently address severe human rights and environmental harms](#) resulting from mercury use in gold mining operations in the country’s Eastern Region. In parallel, the UN experts also sent a communication calling on China to address the role and responsibility of Chinese companies implicated in Cameroon’s gold mining operations and to ensure that Chinese businesses respect human rights throughout their operations abroad. The communications underscore the responsibilities of businesses operating in Cameroon’s gold mining sector under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The communications also amplify longstanding demands for accountability from Cameroonian civil society organisations, emphasising the urgent need to dismantle barriers faced by human rights defenders and to prioritise human and environmental rights over corporate interests. [SF21-25 - 3.3, 2.4]



81%

OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY ISHR TAKEN UP BY STATES IN THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW, WITH EACH ISHR RECOMMENDATION MADE BY AN AVERAGE OF 5 STATES

**A credible,
responsive and
effective human
rights system**

**Select
highlights**



Safeguarding the international human rights system

In the face of mounting global conflicts and crises, as well as closing civic space at the national level in many contexts, the demands on the international human rights system to deliver justice and accountability are unprecedented. Despite this, we are also experiencing a profound erosion of international human rights law, institutions and funding, driven by a constellation of anti-rights actors and powerful States. It is in this context that the UN is confronting a financial crisis and has launched a reform process - the UN80 initiative - to modernise, streamline and ensure the sustainability of the system.

ISHR is playing a central role in shaping the [UN80 reform process](#), convening diverse human rights groups to develop joint proposals and a coordinated and strategic civil society position. Recognising the urgent need for substantive, long-term reform, ISHR emphasised that UN80 must strengthen - not weaken - the effectiveness, reach and responsiveness of UN human rights mechanisms, rather than focus narrowly on efficiency or cost-cutting. Together with 16 partners, ISHR submitted influential principles, criteria, and concrete proposals to the UN Secretary-General and High Commissioner. ISHR has also provided submissions to [workstream 2](#) and [workstream 3](#) and convened civil society and diverse States to build coordinated approaches to ensure reforms meet the needs of defenders, victims and survivors. [SF21-25 - 3.1]



Exposing States which seek to defund the UN

ISHR's groundbreaking analyses of [China's tactics to block civil society from accessing UN bodies](#), and on the behaviour of States including the US, China, Russia and Israel at the [Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly](#), generated major international media coverage. The reports exposed trends in voting behaviour, political pressure, and attempts to reshape global human rights norms to pursue narrow national interests. ISHR's data-driven approach equipped diplomats and civil society with tools to understand geopolitical dynamics and defend the integrity of the UN system. In addition, our work with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists ([ICIJ](#)) and our outreach to newsrooms around the world resulted in widespread coverage that magnified accountability and fed global conversations on safeguarding multilateralism from authoritarian influence. [SF21-25 - 3.1]



'Russian and Chinese diplomats have weaponised UN budget negotiations to serve their own interests and shield allies from scrutiny, at the expense of human rights. Budget negotiations should be solely guided by the goal of adequately funding the UN's work, not serving as a political tool to weaken accountability and rights protection.'

ISHR New York Director **Madeleine Sinclair**, quoted in Agence France Presse on 21 October 2025

Cross-regional alliance to defend human rights and multilateralism

Respect for human rights and the rule of law, together with effective multilateral cooperation, are essential for peace, justice, security and sustainable development. The interests of a vast majority of peoples and States are not served by rising lawlessness, militarisation and economic coercion by a small number of global powers. In this context, together with Human Rights Watch, ISHR worked closely with Chile, the Netherlands, and a diverse range of States to establish a new cross-regional Group of Friends committed to [strengthening multilateralism, human rights and the rule of law](#). ISHR's role included conceptual support, advocacy, outreach and mobilisation of civil society voices. The initiative provides an important counterweight to growing nationalist and anti-rights blocs and strengthens cooperation among States prioritising democratic values and accountability. This development reinforces that principled multilateralism remains essential for tackling global crises and protecting universal rights. [SF21-25 - 3.1]

Improving Human Rights Council membership

The membership of the Human Rights Council is critical to its integrity, responsiveness and effectiveness. 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 candidates, and improve the Council's composition. In 2025 and recent years, our scorecards and public accountability events on Council candidates triggered a range of positive actions by States, including the submission of government reports to treaty bodies, the acceptance of country visits by Special Rapporteurs, and other positive acts of cooperation with the UN. [SF21-25 - 3.3]

'Countries from all regions – from the Gambia and South Africa, to Colombia and Mexico, to Malaysia and Thailand, to Albania and Slovenia, to Norway and the Netherlands – have much more in common with each other in terms of political, economic and military power, as well as an interest in the international rule of law, than they do with the global hegemony of the US, China and Russia. Such States should come together to save human rights and multilateralism by significantly stepping up their political and financial contributions, both because it's the right thing to do and it's in their individual and shared interests.'

ISHR Executive Director **Phil Lynch** writing in Geneva Solutions, 23 February 2025



Our team



Taaka Awori

Chair*
Uganda

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

* Elected Chair from June 2025



Vrinda Grover

Former 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.

* Retired June 2025 following expiration of term



Bruno Stagno Ugarte

Vice-Chair
Costa Rica

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



Florian Pollner

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.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AT ISHR

63%
OF BOARD MEMBERS

75%
OF EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM



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.



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.





Shaharzad Akbar

Member*
Afghanistan

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

* Retired June 2025 following expiration of term



Kamala Chandrakirana

Member*
Indonesia

Founding Board Chair of Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights Asia and Pacific, and former member of UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls and of Indonesia's National Commission on Violence against Women.

Elected December 2025



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.

* Retired June 2025 following expiration of term



Lamar Bailey Karamañites

Programme Manager (Racial Justice)
✂️ LamarBK



Marianne Bertrand

Campaign and Mobilisation Manager
✂️ MariBertl



Salomé Boucif

Training and Advocacy Support Manager
✂️ Salome_ISHR
✂️ SalomeISHR



Marina Dailly

Deputy Executive Director (Operations)



Christine Do Phan

Communications Director
✂️ Christine_ISHR
✂️ Christine-ISHR



Lidawh-wè Dontema

Legal and Advocacy Officer (Africa)
✂️ Lidawh_weD
✂️ Lidawh-wed



Elise Golay

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



Eva Homolkova

Senior Fundraising and 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**

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**Fabiana
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Programme
Manager (Human
Rights Council)
✕ [FabiLeibl](#)



**Lee
Chung Lun**

Programme Officer
(Asia)



**Tina
Luft**

Digital
Communications
Manager



**Phil
Lynch**

Executive Director
✕ 🦋 [PhilALynch](#)



**Tess
McEvoy**

Programme Director
& Legal Counsel
✕ 🦋 [Tess_L_McEvoy](#)



**Maithili
Pai**

Senior Programme
Officer (New York)
✕ [MaithiliPai](#)



**Pooja
Patel**

Deputy Executive
Director (Programmes
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**Francisco
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Communications
& Media Manager
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**Ulises
Quero**

Programme Manager
(Business, Land
& Environment)



**Antsa
Rakotonanahary**

Senior Finance
Coordinator



**Nicolas
Rapin**

Fundraising
& Grants Officer
✕ [Rapin_Nicolas](#)
🦋 [Rapinico](#)



**Marco Barbosa
Santos**

Office & Programme
Support Assistant



**Madeleine
Sinclair**

New York Office
Director & Legal
Counsel
X Madeleine_ISHR
MadSinclair



**Antoine
Tremblay**

Africa Programme
Coordinator
X AI Tremblay



**Raphaël Viana
David**

Programme Manager
(Asia and Latin
America)
X VDRaphael



**Diego
Villanueva**

Senior Admin &
Programme Support
Manager
X DiegoISHR



**Jelena
Zaric**

Finance Manager

ISHR acknowledges the following dedicated staff who departed during 2025. Thank you for your outstanding work for ISHR and the human rights defenders we serve and support.

Clément Nyaletsossi Voule

Eleanor Openshaw

Nada Awad

Assé Chetima Madou Gagi

Nayara Khaly Silva Sanfo

Javier Urizar Montes de Oca

ASSISTANTS, FELLOWS, INTERNS & VOLUNTEERS

Assistants

Lutfi Aris

Communications
Assistant, PPE+

Djalil Djaguir

Human Resources
Assistant, PPE+

**Marlène Gomes
de Sousa**

Communications
Assistant, PPE+

Abir Ben Salah

Advocacy Training
Assistant, PPE+

Fellows

Catherine Haddad

Kennedy Fellowship,
University of Virginia
School of Law, New York

Natika Kantaria

Barbara Frey Fellowship,
University of Minnesota,
New York

Zélie Ménard

University Paris 2
Panthéon-Assas,
New York

Antoine Tremblay

ISHR Africa Programme
Fellowship, Morocco

Vrinda Vinayak

Public Service Venture
Fund Fellowship, Harvard
Law School, New York

Interns

Afrin Sohana Ahona

DLA Piper Global
Scholarship, Bangladesh

Muhammed Bah

DLA Piper Global
Scholarship, Gambia

Balkis Chaabane

Geneva Academy
of International Law
and Human Rights,
Switzerland

Mery Chirinos

DLA Piper Global
Scholarship, Honduras

Hana Gharbi

Aix-Marseille University,
France

Isabella Matias Heredia

Geneva Graduate
Institute, Switzerland

José Luis Treviño Illsley

Geneva Graduate
Institute, Switzerland

Ashfia Mahbub

DLA Piper Global
Scholarship, Bangladesh

Volunteer

Calum Oliver

Salt Leaf Agency,
Canada

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



Our supporters



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.

Governmental and intergovernmental donors

- Canton de Genève - Service de la Solidarité Internationale
- Denmark - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Finland - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Iceland - 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
- Private Swiss foundation
- Open Society Foundations

Special contributions, consultancies and collaborations

- Belgium - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Permanent Mission in Geneva)
- DT Institute
- Microsoft
- Z Zurich Foundation (with thanks to Sabine Saggelke)

Private donors*

* A number of private donations were matched thanks to the generous support of the Z Zurich Foundation.

\$5000+

- Krystyna Campbell-Pretty
- Andrew Cummins

\$1000 - 4999

- Anonymous
- Philip Alston
- Marina Dailly
- Philippe Destraz
- Elise, Florence and Marie Golay
- Benjamin Juratowitch
- Rosemary McCreery
- Phil Lynch and Lucy McKernan
- Pooja Patel
- Patricia Schulz
- Madeleine Sinclair
- Jonathan Webster

\$500 - 999

- Anonymous
- Kevin Bell
- Jamil Dakwar
- Luc Dockendorf
- Olivier de Frouville
- Gregor Henneka
- Beatrix and Peter Luft and family
- Stephen Marks
- Jean-Jaques Martin
- Rosemary McCreery
- Maithili Pai
- Chris and Margaret Sidoti
- Alistair Sinclair

\$101 - 499

Anonymous, Antonio Calle Sanchez, Arnaud Chevallier, Christopher Duckett, Elizabeth Evatt, Roland Hacker, Eva and David Homolka, Hugh de Kretser, M Laksh, David and Judith Lynch, Robert Mister, Hannah Reinl, Ben Saul, John Shawley, Nick Sinclair, Georgios Topulos, Traute Wolk

Up to \$100

Anonymous, Ruth Barson, Sarah Booth, Christine Do Phan, Diana Johanson, José González, Sarah Joseph, Tina Luft, Ted Piccone, Vincent Ploton, Lorraine Potts, Pierre Rapin, Anja and Lutz Schmidt, Valentine Sébile, Maria Stewart, Thomas Valenti, Jelena Zaric

Pro bono contributions

During 2025, ISHR worked with some of the world's leading law firms, counsel and legal clinics, on a pro bono basis, enabling us to leverage substantial legal expertise and resources. We also benefited from support from a number of universities and public programmes.

- Barbara Frey Human Rights Fellowship (University of Minnesota)
- DLA Piper
- Essex Court Chambers (UK) – Ben Juratowitch KC, Ruben Robertson
- Geneva Academy of International Law and Human Rights
- Kennedy Fellowship (University of Virginia School of Law)
- King & Spalding
- Oxford Pro Bono Publico (OPBP)
- PPE+ (Professional Experience Programme in the Social and Solidarity Economy), Canton of Geneva, Switzerland
- 7 Wentworth Selborne Chambers (UK) - Callista Harris
- Public Service Venture Fund (Harvard Law School)
- University of Michigan Law School



Good governance

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

The ISHR Board met four times during 2025, with an average attendance of 68%, 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 also engaged extensively in the development and adoption of the 2026-30 Strategic Framework, including through in-depth Board discussions, and consultation with partners and experts.

During 2025, the Board elected Taaka Awori as its new Chair, for an initial period of two years. Taaka has extensive experience and expertise in organisational and executive leadership and development. She is the CEO of Busara Africa and the author of 'Leadership in Africa Redefined'.

In 2025, ISHR adopted revised Articles of Association to ensure compliance with amendments to the Swiss Civil Code and new requirements for registration with the Registre du Commerce for non-profit associations which primarily collect or distribute assets abroad. These provisions apply to ISHR as most of our funds originate outside of Switzerland. The revised Articles of Association are based on model Articles of Association prepared by the Centre d'Accueil de la Genève Internationale, adapted to incorporate key elements of ISHR's previous Articles of Association (such as to the number and qualifications of Board members, and the position of Staff Representative to the Board). There are no material changes to the purposes, membership, governance or structure of ISHR in the revised Articles of Association.

There were no reported breaches of ISHR's Code of Conduct in 2025.

ISHR is committed to the highest standards of sound financial management and responsibility.

In 2025, ISHR's finances, financial management and reporting systems were independently audited by Beau HLB. External evaluations have consistently affirmed the integrity, rigour and appropriateness of ISHR's financial management policies, systems and practices.

ISHR acquires and manages funds in compliance with Swiss GAAP RPC, US GAAP and international accounting standards. We have adopted a range of financial health targets designed to ensure the independence, stability and sustainability of the organisation, including maintaining reserves at 15-25% of annual operating expenses and maintaining dependency on any one donor below 20% of total income.

The ISHR Board Treasurer, Florian Pollner, has over three decades of experience in sustainable business development and leadership, including as a Partner with McKinsey & Co and a Senior Consultant with IBM.

ISHR's programme planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning (PMEL) structures and processes are designed to make our programmes more relevant, efficient and effective.

In 2025, ISHR further developed PMEL structures and processes to enable real-time monitoring and adaptation; identify and address opportunities, risks and challenges; facilitate prioritisation and workload management; monitor and measure progress and impact; and ensure we continually learn and improve.

A number of our programmes were also independently audited, including our major Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme. At the organisational level, we participated in an independent evaluation commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. Findings and recommendations are used to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of our projects and programmes.

ISHR remains 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 the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, and antiracism defenders, among others.

There were no reported breaches of ISHR's Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy in 2025.

Five of eight 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, the UN, and the private sector – brings diverse experience and expertise to ISHR.

Three of four members of ISHR's Executive Leadership Team are women, while seven of eight 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 2025, this included implementation of a disability inclusion policy, supporting institutionalisation of a racial justice programme, and advising on the DEI implications of new developments, such as in the area of artificial intelligence.

ISHR received the maximal possible score in the Global 50/50 Justice and Gender Score Index, the world's first and only independent assessment of how organisations active in global law and justice deliver gender equality and promote fair and inclusive workplaces.

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 2025, ISHR continued to implement our Holistic Security Policy as well as advice and recommendations from our Digital Security Working Group. We worked with

an external IT service provider, InterHyve, to strengthen our digital security practices and update our IT infrastructure. We also continued to implement the organisational policy on artificial intelligence that we adopted in 2024. Our AI Working Group ensures that the organisation remains abreast of key developments in the area, as well as providing guidance and advice on the safe, ethical and effective use of various AI tools.

ISHR's 2025 staff strategy retreat included dedicated sessions on wellbeing and team building, as well as ensuring that ISHR is a safe, inclusive workplace that promotes belonging.

Throughout the year we continued to implement our organisational Wellbeing Policy, with the leadership and support of our Wellbeing Working Group. A new peer-to-peer mentoring system was introduced for newcomers.

In her December 2025 report to the ISHR Board, ISHR's Staff Representative noted: an overall positive and inclusive work environment, despite a very challenging external environment; staff appreciation for the Board's solidarity and organisational commitment to staff wellbeing; staff appreciation for ISHR's adaptability and responsiveness to changing internal and external contexts, and the commitment and difficult decisions made by the Executive Leadership Team in this regard; and an increased level of anxiety for some staff associated with the global state of human rights, the situation for many defenders, the challenging funding environment, and ISHR's financial situation and related job security issues.

ISHR will conduct an organisation-wide staff wellbeing survey in 2026, with the last such survey undertaken in 2024 and informing policy development and practice since that time.





We are committed to **climate justice and to a healthy and sustainable environment.** We stand with and support environmental human rights defenders. ISHR recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements.

In 2025, we continued to implement our Environmental Policy, setting out our commitment to promote biodiversity, environmental sustainability, and the reduction of our environmental footprint. The Policy is regularly aligned with evolving best practices to ensure environmentally responsible approaches across our events, operations, and logistical procedures and continually improve our environmental performance.

ISHR continues to advance its hybrid working modalities by strengthening digital capacities and institutional practices that enhance effectiveness and sustainability. We systematically monitor and report our carbon emissions on an annual basis to inform evidence-based reductions and continuous improvement. In line with the International Geneva Goals and in partnership with 2050 Today, ISHR is integrating climate-responsible procedures across its operations, with a clear commitment to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.

During 2025, ISHR continued to participate in the 2050 Today 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. ISHR is a part of different Working groups including mobility, food, sustainable IT, and a Focal Point for the initiative.



Financial statements

This is an extract of ISHR's audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025. For a complete version, please contact Marina Dailly at m.dailly@ishr.ch.

Profit and loss statement for year ended 31 December 2025

INCOME	2025 CHF	2024 CHF
REVENUE – CORE		
Governmental agencies	783,130	1,439,376
Trusts and foundations	353,847	410,490
Individual and corporate donors*	48,451	48,249
Other revenue	74,653	98,043
Total Core Grants	1,260,081	1,996,159
REVENUE – EARMARKED		
Governmental agencies	1,961,388	1,502,720
Trusts and foundations	496,337	496,615
Intergovernmental agencies	0	0
Special contributions & consultancy	24,403	50,394
Total Earmarked Grants	2,482,128	2,049,729
TOTAL INCOME	3,742,209	4,045,888
COSTS		
Personnel cost GVA	2,666,118	2,956,623
GENERAL EXPENDITURE		
Missions, travel, accommodation	308,431	420,154
Publications, translations, outreach	90,378	81,407
Office and operating costs	246,546	275,032
Financial charges, audit fees	110,513	97,364
Governance and strategy	11,696	50,294
New York costs	328,753	216,664
TOTAL COSTS	3,762,436	4,097,538
END OF YEAR RESULT	-20,227	-51,651

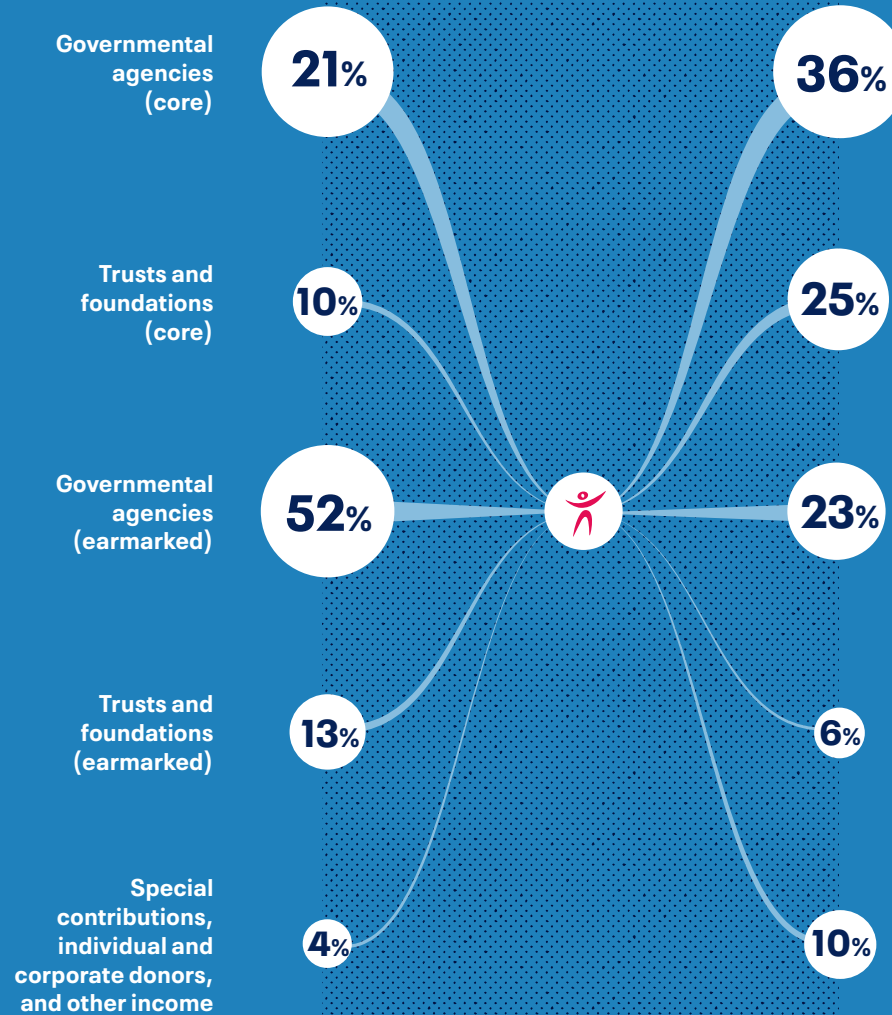
*This represents individual donations received by the Geneva entity. All other donations to ISHR Inc. will be included in the audit of the New York office.

Balance sheet at 31 December 2025

ASSETS	2025 CHF	2024 CHF
CURRENT ASSETS		
Petty cash	463	389
Bank accounts and special bank accounts	1,916,045	1,005,624
Sub-Total	1,916,509	1,006,013
Debtors	71,764	287,614
Withholding tax	-	-
DEFERRED AND ACCRUED ASSETS		
Deferred expenses	-	-
Grants receivable – Governmental and intergovernmental	193,200	625,028
Grants receivable – Non-governmental	221,419	146,272
Total deferred and accrued assets	414,619	771,299
TOTAL ASSETS	2,402,892	2,064,926
LIABILITIES AND RESERVES		
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities	146,817	106,378
Provisions	-	-
Sub-total	146,817	106,378
Deferred grants	1,622,940	1,305,187
Total liabilities	1,769,758	1,411,565
RESERVES		
Reserve funds	653,361	705,012
Income (deficit) for the year	-20,227	-51,651
Total reserves	633,134	653,361
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND RESERVES	2,402,892	2,064,926

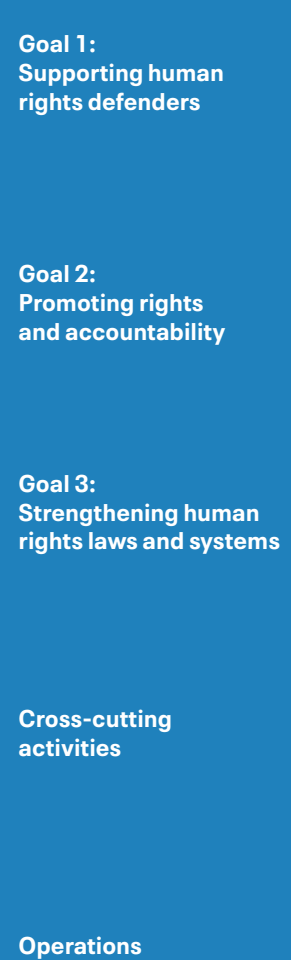
Income by source

Total CHF



Expenditure by category

Total CHF



Take action to support ISHR and the defenders we serve!

Over the last two years, ISHR has been privileged to work closely with Egyptian journalist and woman human rights defender Basma Mostafa to strengthen protections from acts of transnational repression against defenders and their families. Such acts are increasingly perpetrated by authoritarian and repressive regimes against human rights defenders in exile as a means of silencing and punishing their work. This is Basma's message.



I'm truly proud of ISHR's campaign - not only because they highlighted my story and my work, but because they made human rights defenders the voice of their message. This shows who they really are: genuine defenders standing with those at risk. Human rights defenders share qualities that inspire me every day: courage, persistence, solidarity, and an unwavering commitment to justice. These qualities define ISHR's team - a team that truly feels like my second home.

ISHR didn't just stand by me during the hardest times; they equipped me through their training on international mechanisms to advocate effectively. That knowledge turned into real impact: together, we helped push governments like Germany to publicly condemn transnational repression and raise the issue at the Human Rights Council.

Our collaboration also put Egypt firmly on the map of transnational repression - a topic previously associated mainly with countries like Russia, China and Iran.

Today, thanks to joint advocacy, Egypt is recognised as part of this global pattern, and States are being urged to act.

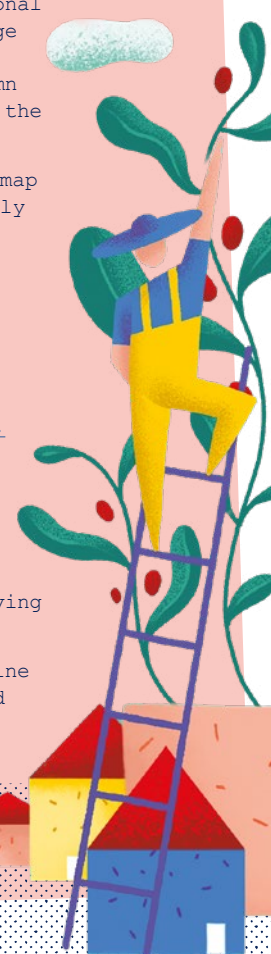
I'm proud to continue this work through Law and Democracy Support Foundation e.V., (<https://ldsfi.info/>) which I co-founded in Berlin with other inspiring defenders to promote rule of law and democracy, combating TNR in Europe and supporting exiled human rights defenders.

We are always proud - as an organisation and as defenders - to collaborate with ISHR to keep moving forward on this path.

International Service for Human Rights are genuine defenders who make sure voices at risk are heard where it matters most.

If you believe in protecting freedom and empowering defenders, please support their incredible work by donating.

Basma Mostafa





If you share Basma's passion for human rights, justice and accountability, here are a few concrete ways in which you can make a contribution and a difference!

- 1. **Subscribe** to our email list and regular publications, and keep informed about the latest international human rights news!
- 2. **Follow us** on social media, including on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Bluesky](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#)!
- 3. **Make a donation** - every contribution supports our vital work with human rights defenders!
- 4. **Join an ISHR campaign** and be part of concrete, collective action to promote rights, justice and accountability!
- 5. **Attend an ISHR event**, whether in person or online, to hear from frontline human rights defenders and experts and be a part of a vibrant global human rights community!
- 6. **Leave a bequest** - leaving a gift for ISHR in your will is an effective and enduring way to advance human rights for years to come!
- 7. **Volunteer your skills!** Are you an expert in your profession and looking for an opportunity to use your skills to support a good cause? We need and welcome lawyers, IT experts, translators, graphic designers and many more. You can make a difference through this skillful way of donating to defenders!
- 8. **Educate yourself** more about human rights by exploring and completing the modules and quizzes in the ISHR Academy.
- 9. **Contribute your art work or photography!** Help us amplify defenders' voices and tell more powerful stories by illustrating our work with your collections.
- 10. **Explore our resources** and **share the stories** of human rights defenders to amplify their experiences, calls and expertise!





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Annual Report 2026 for
year ending 31 Dec 2025

 International Service
for Human Rights