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yourHRC.org

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A window onto cooperation, dialogue, leadership  
and policymaking at the UN Human Rights Council



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GUIDE TO THE 2015  
**UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**  
ELECTIONS

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On 5 October 2015, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Universal Rights Group (URG) launched yourHRC.org, an innovative new online tool designed to contribute to international efforts to strengthen the visibility, relevance and impact of the Human Rights Council.

The yourHRC.org portal, together with a number of related reports, are designed to provide country-specific information on: cooperation with the Council and its mechanisms, participation in Council debates and exchanges, member state voting patterns, political leadership, and Council elections.

## A window onto the work of the UN's human rights pillar...

In 2006, member states took a significant step to strengthen the human rights pillar of the United Nations (UN) and established the Human Rights Council as the UN's principal body responsible for 'promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.'

The Council seeks to influence the on-the-ground enjoyment of human rights in a number of ways including, inter alia, by:

- **Serving as a forum for dialogue on human rights** – GA resolution 60/251 recognises that in order to promote and protect human rights, the Council's work should be based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue, and aimed at strengthening the capacity of states to comply with their human rights obligations.
- **Adopting resolutions** – at the end of every session, Council members adopt a series of resolutions or decisions expressing the will of the international community on a given human rights situation or issue.
- **Elaborating universal human rights norms** – the Council is responsible for making recommendations to the GA for the further development of international law in the field of human rights.
- **Promoting state cooperation with the human rights mechanisms** – the Council has created a number of mechanisms (e.g. Special Procedures, UPR) to promote the full implementation of the human rights obligations undertaken by states, and/or to respond to the violation of those rights.

To pursue and realise the mandate of the Council and thereby to ‘promote universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all,’ the GA decided that the new body would consist of 47 member states, elected by a majority of the members of the GA. In making their choice, members of the GA would take into account the contribution of the candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as their voluntary pledges and commitments.

The GA furthermore decided that elected members should uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and fully cooperate with the Council and its mechanisms. Moreover, it was agreed that the Council’s methods of work would be transparent, fair and impartial, enable genuine dialogue, be results-oriented, allow for subsequent follow-up discussions to recommendations and their implementation, and allow for substantive interaction with Special Procedures and other mechanisms.

**yourHRC.org** has been created to promote transparency around the degree to which the Council and its members are delivering on this crucial mandate, passed to them by the GA and, ultimately, entrusted to them by ‘the Peoples of the United Nations’ described in the UN Charter.

## Membership of the Council

GA resolution 60/251, which officially created the Council, made five critical changes to its membership system compared to that of its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights:

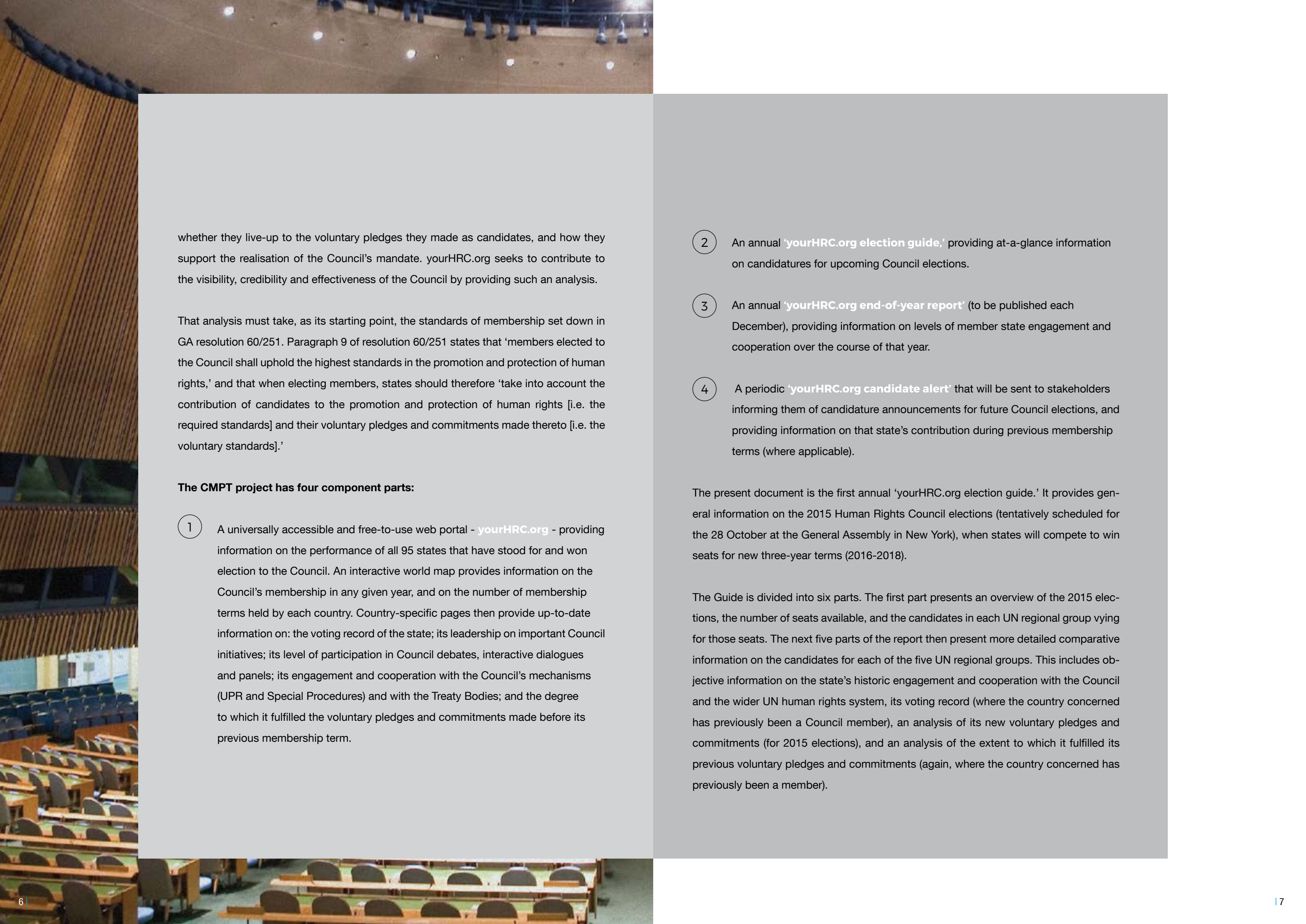
- 1 The total number of members was reduced from 51 to 47;
- 2 Council members would be elected by the entirety of the GA, rather than the 54 members of ECOSOC, with successful candidates needing at least 96 votes in support;
- 3 In voting for Council members, states would be required to ‘take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto;’
- 4 Council members would be ineligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms;
- 5 Council members could have their membership rights suspended by the GA in the event that they committed gross and systematic violations of human rights.

When the GA adopted resolution 60/251 on 15 March 2006, these new membership procedures and requirements were the most commonly discussed issue in states’ explanations of their votes. Many states complained that the membership criteria were not strong enough. Others emphasised the need to ensure that elected members were fully deserving of their position.

In the ten years since the Council’s creation, a total of 95 of the UN’s 193 member states have served, or are in the process of serving, at least one membership term. However, little attention has been afforded to analysing how these states, once elected, contribute to the Council’s work, how they engage and cooperate with the Council’s mechanisms,







whether they live-up to the voluntary pledges they made as candidates, and how they support the realisation of the Council's mandate. yourHRC.org seeks to contribute to the visibility, credibility and effectiveness of the Council by providing such an analysis.

That analysis must take, as its starting point, the standards of membership set down in GA resolution 60/251. Paragraph 9 of resolution 60/251 states that 'members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights,' and that when electing members, states should therefore 'take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights [i.e. the required standards] and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto [i.e. the voluntary standards].'

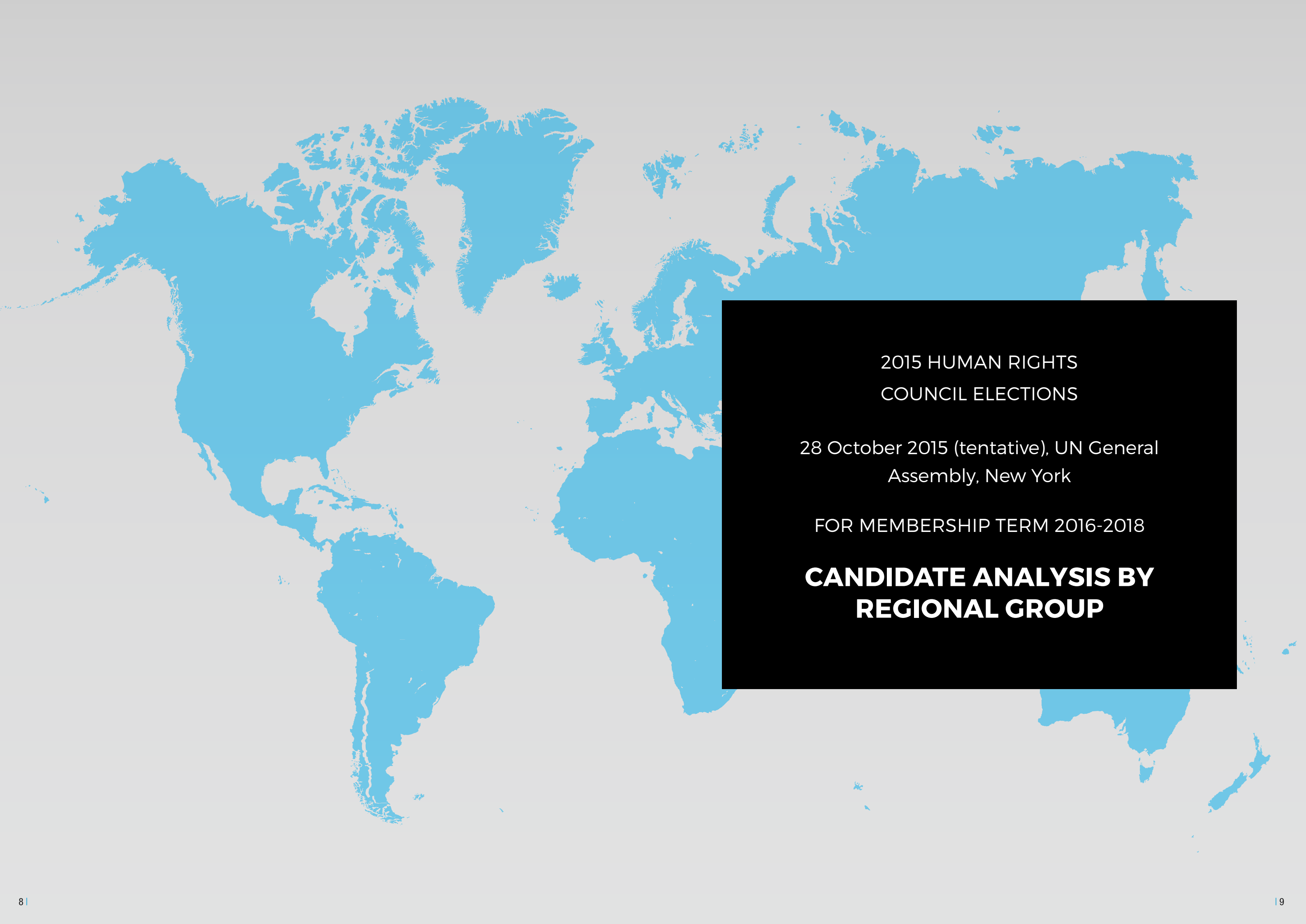
**The CMPT project has four component parts:**

- 1 A universally accessible and free-to-use web portal - **yourHRC.org** - providing information on the performance of all 95 states that have stood for and won election to the Council. An interactive world map provides information on the Council's membership in any given year, and on the number of membership terms held by each country. Country-specific pages then provide up-to-date information on: the voting record of the state; its leadership on important Council initiatives; its level of participation in Council debates, interactive dialogues and panels; its engagement and cooperation with the Council's mechanisms (UPR and Special Procedures) and with the Treaty Bodies; and the degree to which it fulfilled the voluntary pledges and commitments made before its previous membership term.

- 2 An annual '**yourHRC.org election guide**,' providing at-a-glance information on candidatures for upcoming Council elections.
- 3 An annual '**yourHRC.org end-of-year report**' (to be published each December), providing information on levels of member state engagement and cooperation over the course of that year.
- 4 A periodic '**yourHRC.org candidate alert**' that will be sent to stakeholders informing them of candidature announcements for future Council elections, and providing information on that state's contribution during previous membership terms (where applicable).

The present document is the first annual 'yourHRC.org election guide.' It provides general information on the 2015 Human Rights Council elections (tentatively scheduled for the 28 October at the General Assembly in New York), when states will compete to win seats for new three-year terms (2016-2018).

The Guide is divided into six parts. The first part presents an overview of the 2015 elections, the number of seats available, and the candidates in each UN regional group vying for those seats. The next five parts of the report then present more detailed comparative information on the candidates for each of the five UN regional groups. This includes objective information on the state's historic engagement and cooperation with the Council and the wider UN human rights system, its voting record (where the country concerned has previously been a Council member), an analysis of its new voluntary pledges and commitments (for 2015 elections), and an analysis of the extent to which it fulfilled its previous voluntary pledges and commitments (again, where the country concerned has previously been a member).



2015 HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUNCIL ELECTIONS

28 October 2015 (tentative), UN General  
Assembly, New York

FOR MEMBERSHIP TERM 2016-2018

**CANDIDATE ANALYSIS BY  
REGIONAL GROUP**

# 2015 ELECTIONS (FOR MEMBERSHIP PERIOD 2016-2018): THE CANDIDATES

## Latin America and Caribbean Group

Historic clean slate elections **5/8**

**8** seats at HRC    seats available: **3**    candidates: **4**

	Voluntary Pledges & Commitments	Number of Previous Terms
Ecuador	—	<b>2</b>
Panama	✓	<b>NEW</b>
Venezuela	✓	<b>1</b>
Bahamas	✓	<b>NEW</b>

## Western European and Others Group

**CLEAN SLATE ALERT**

Historic clean slate elections **4/8**

**7** seats at HRC    seats available: **3**    candidates: **3**

	Voluntary Pledges & Commitments	Number of Previous Terms
Belgium	✓	<b>1</b>
Germany	✓	<b>2</b>
Switzerland	✓	<b>2</b>

## Eastern European Group

**CLEAN SLATE ALERT**

Historic clean slate elections **4/8**

**6** seats at HRC    seats available: **2**    candidates: **2**

	Voluntary Pledges & Commitments	Number of Previous Terms
Georgia	✓	<b>NEW</b>
Slovenia	✓	<b>1</b>

## African Group

**CLEAN SLATE ALERT**

Historic clean slate elections **7/8**

**13** seats at HRC    seats available: **5**    candidates: **5**

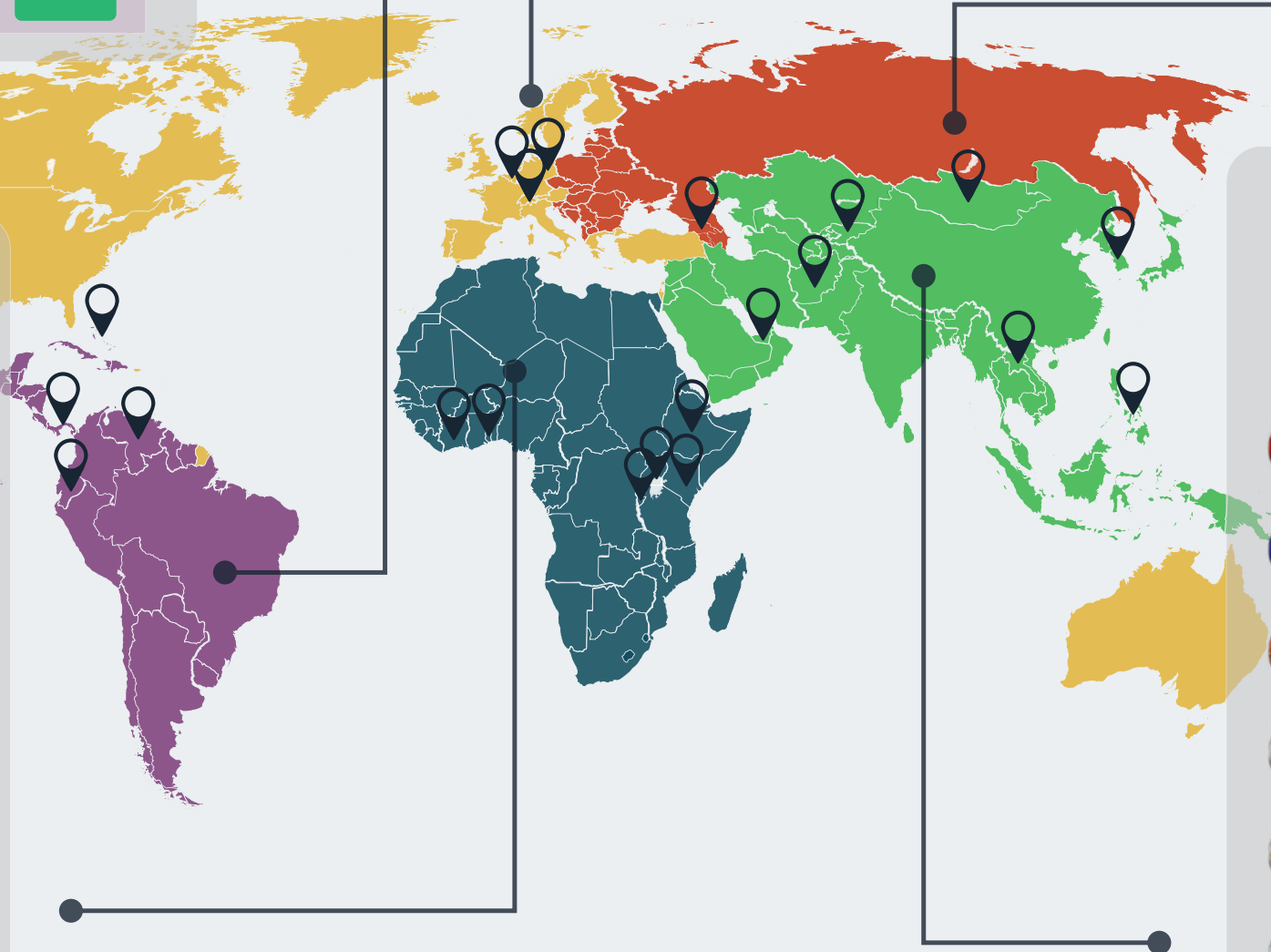
	Voluntary Pledges & Commitments	Number of Previous Terms
Burundi	—	<b>NEW</b>
Cote d'Ivoire	—	<b>1</b>
Ethiopia	—	<b>1</b>
Togo	—	<b>NEW</b>
Kenya	—	<b>1</b>

## Asia Pacific Group

Historic clean slate elections **6/8**

**13** seats at HRC    seats available: **5**    candidates: **7**

	Voluntary Pledges & Commitments	Number of Previous Terms
Kyrgyzstan	✓	<b>1</b>
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓	<b>NEW</b>
Mongolia	✓	<b>NEW</b>
Pakistan	✓	<b>3</b>
Philippines	✓	<b>3</b>
Republic of Korea	✓	<b>3</b>
UAE	—	<b>1</b>








A “clean slate” election is when, for a given Regional Group, the number of candidate countries (from that region) is equal to the number of seats available.



# African Group (AG)

## Overview of Candidates

		Membership of HRC Bureau	Voluntary Contribution to OHCHR (2014)	NHRI Accreditation Status	Previous Membership Terms	OHCHR Presence
Burundi		—	✗	A	0	Human rights component of peace mission
Cote d'Ivoire		—	✗	—	1	Human rights component of peace mission
Ethiopia		—	✗	B	1	Regional Office
Togo		—	✗	A	0	—
Kenya		—	✗	A	1	Human Rights Advisor

Note: for comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Burundi** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Cote d'Ivoire** presented 'voluntary obligations and commitments' in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 3 October 2012.

At national level, Cote d'Ivoire pledged to: promote the establishment of an agency to monitor and protect human rights; strengthen human rights teaching modules in the education system; organise human rights training seminars for the judiciary, security forces, local officials and parliamentarians; and bring its NHRI into line with the Paris Principles.

At international level, Cote d'Ivoire pledged to: improve reporting to the Treaty Bodies; begin consultations with parliament on the future ratification of CED, CRMW, CRPD, OP-ICESCR and OP-CAT; accept the communications procedures under the CERD and CAT; and harmonise national legislation with the provisions of the international instruments.

An analysis of steps taken by Cote d'Ivoire in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it did indeed move to ratify the CRPD (2014). But it has not yet honoured its commitment to ratify the other conventions listed in its 'voluntary obligations and commitments.' Nor has Cote d'Ivoire's record of treaty reporting shown significant improvement. Many of its periodic reports are overdue, one of them (ICESCR) by more than 20 years.

**Ethiopia** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 18 October 2012.

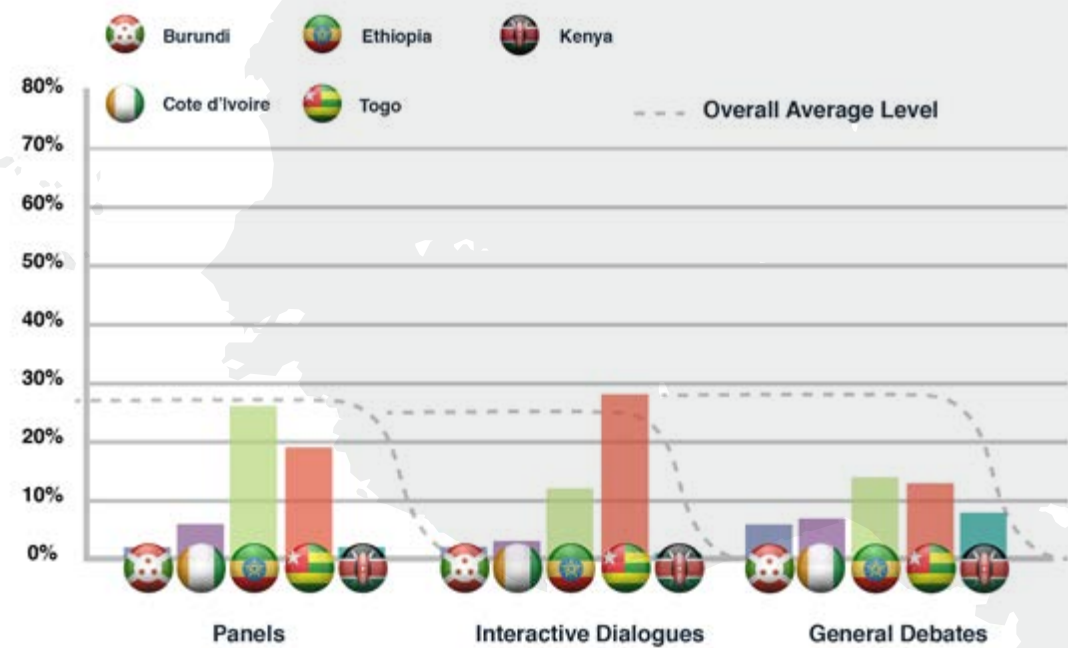
The 2012 pledges and commitments tend to describe existing Ethiopian contributions and practices in the area of human rights, rather than to pledge new steps. Notwithstanding, Ethiopia does offer some pledges, including commitments to: expedite ratification of two Optional Protocols to the CRC, and of the CRMW; report to the Council on the implementation of UPR recommendations; incorporate UN and regional human rights recommendations into its national human rights action plan; cooperate with OHCHR; submit proposals and organise side events at the Council; and engage with NGOs in the preparation of national reports.

An analysis of steps taken by Ethiopia in fulfilment of its 2012 international level pledges shows that it has ratified both Optional Protocols to the CRC. But it has not yet become Party to the CRMW. Nor has Ethiopia reported to the Council (i.e. a mid-term report) on the implementation of UPR recommendations.

**Togo** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Kenya** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 12 October 2012.

## Contribution to Council debates and dialogues



Note: data based on participation during the last 9 regular sessions of the Human Rights Council (21st-29th sessions). For full methodology, see end note. Source: HRC Extranet.

The main part of the document set out a number of pledges ‘to further advance human rights at the regional and international levels, and further enhance human rights at the national level.’ However, most paragraphs were a restatement of existing commitments. Kenya made few concrete pledges for further action to contribute to the fuller enjoyment of human rights domestically or internationally.

## Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

**Burundi’s** voluntary pledges and commitments, in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018, were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

**Cote d’Ivoire** circulated a note verbale informing UN member states of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in June 2015. The note verbale was not accompanied by voluntary pledges and commitments. Cote d’Ivoire’s voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

**Ethiopia** circulated a note verbale informing UN member states of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in March 2015. The note verbale was not accompanied by voluntary pledges and commitments. Ethiopia’s voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

**Togo** circulated a note verbale informing UN member states of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in June 2015. The note verbale was not accompanied by voluntary pledges and commitments. Togo’s voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

**Kenya** circulated a note verbale informing UN member states of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in July 2015. The note verbale was not accompanied by voluntary pledges and commitments. Kenya’s voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

## Voting history during previous membership terms

**Burundi** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2013, **Cote d’Ivoire** has either voted in favour of, or has joined consensus on, most resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council’s attention), as well as all country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). Under item 4, Cote d’Ivoire has tended to vote in favour of resolutions on the situation in North Korea and Syria, but abstain in votes on the situations in Belarus and Iran. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Cote d’Ivoire has consistently voted in favour (except for two abstentions in 2013).

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Cote d’Ivoire has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. Cote d’Ivoire voted against the 2014 resolution on sexual orientation. It abstained on the 2014 and 2015 resolutions on drones, and the 2014 resolution on the integrity of the judicial system.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Cote d’Ivoire has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** protection of the family.



Since it first became a member of the Council in 2013, **Ethiopia** has (in the absence of consensus) almost always abstained on resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council’s attention), as well as on country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). The only exception was a 2013 resolution on the situation in Syria, when Ethiopia voted in favour. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Ethiopia usually votes in favour, though on two occasions it abstained.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Ethiopia has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. Ethiopia voted against resolutions in 2013 and 2014 on the question of the death penalty, and against a 2014 resolution on sexual orientation. It has abstained on resolutions dealing with: peaceful protests; human rights, democracy and rule of law; and drones.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Ethiopia has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** child, early and forced marriage; corruption and human rights; elimination of discrimination of persons with leprosy.

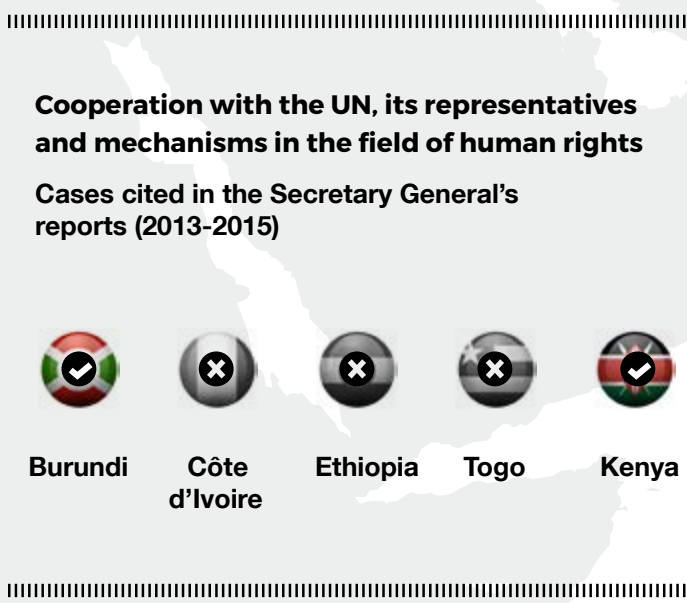
**Togo** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2013, **Kenya** has (in the absence of consensus) almost always abstained on resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council’s attention). It did, however, vote in favour of two resolutions on the situation in Syria in 2013. Kenya has voted against or abstained on country-specific resolutions tabled under item 2 (i.e. on the situation in Sri Lanka). For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Kenya has generally voted in favour, though on four occasions it abstained.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Kenya has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. It did though vote against a 2013 resolution on the question of the death penalty, a 2014 text on sexual orientation, and a 2014 text on peaceful protests. Kenya abstained during voting on a 2014 resolution on the death penalty, and during voting on a 2014 resolution on the integrity of the judicial system.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Kenya has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

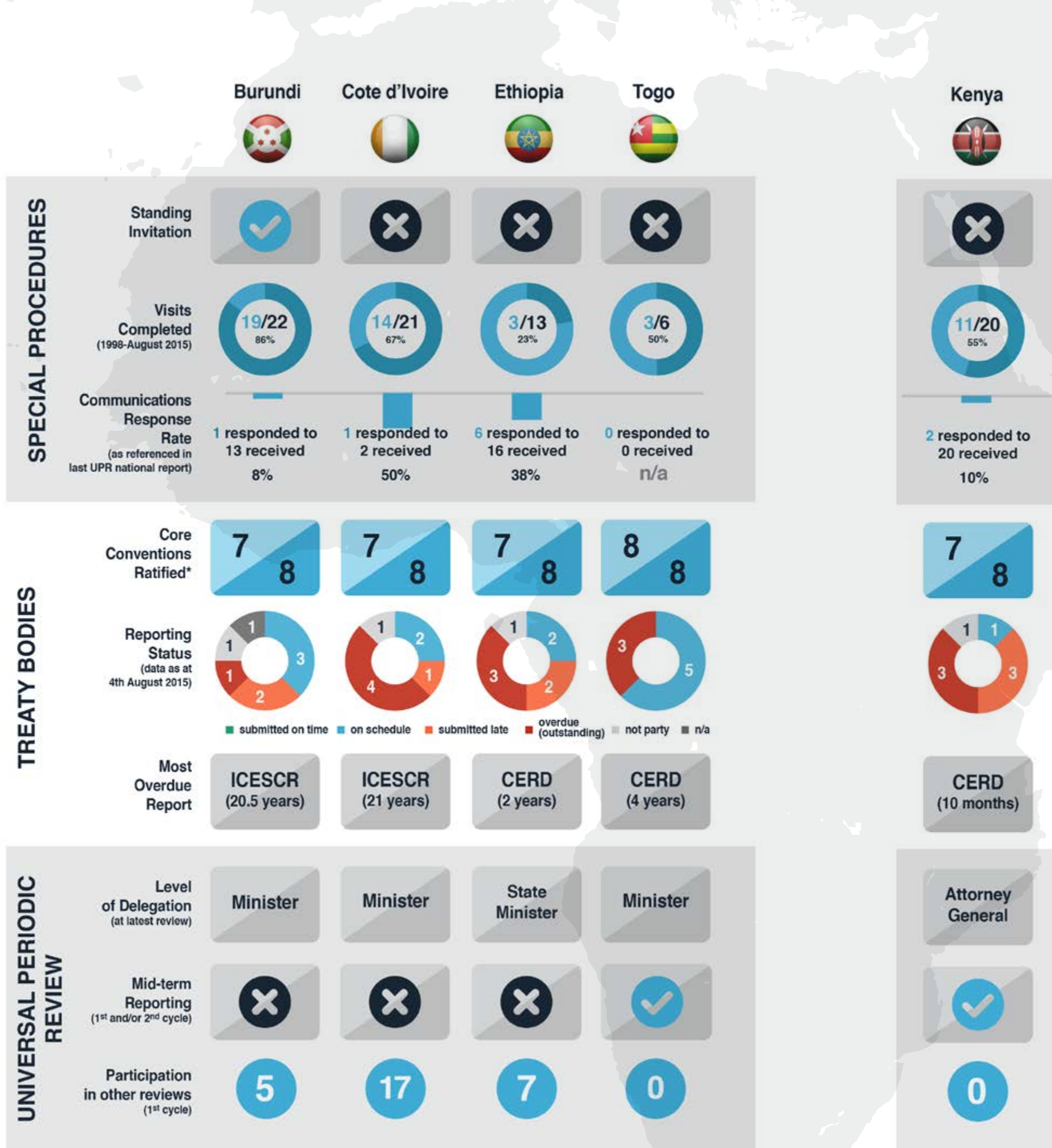


Inclusivity / Access

Percentage of Regional Group members that have held a seat on the Council

52%

## Cooperation with human rights mechanisms




\* Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight "core human rights conventions," which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Note: for more comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.



# Asia-Pacific Group (APG)

## Overview of Candidates

		Membership of HRC Bureau	Voluntary Contribution to OHCHR (2014)	NHRI Accreditation Status	Previous Membership Terms	OHCHR Presence
Kyrgyzstan		Vice-President (2011)		B	1	Regional Office
Lao People's Democratic Republic		—		—	0	—
Mongolia		—		A	0	—
Pakistan		—		—	3	—
Philippines		HRC Vice-President (2008)		A	3	Human Rights Advisor
Republic of Korea		—		A	3	Field-based structure
UAE		—		—	1	—

Note: for comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Kyrgyzstan** presented voluntary human rights commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2009-2012 on 20 April 2009.

At domestic level, Kyrgyzstan committed to ‘reinforce various national institutions...and continue its full support for their activities, including that of the Office of the Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan.’

Internationally, it pledged to: cooperate with Special Procedures; and engage with and support the work of the Council and all its mechanisms.

An analysis of steps taken by Kyrgyzstan in fulfilment of its international pledges shows that it actually participated in very few Council debates and interactive dialogues (around 5%). Kyrgyzstan facilitated half of Special Procedures visit requests (7 out of 14), and responded to nearly 70% of communications.

**Lao** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Mongolia** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Pakistan** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 28 September 2012.

In terms of future commitments, Pakistan pledged to: enhance human rights education and training; strengthen the implementation of international conventions to which it is Party; cooperate with civil society; play an active role in both the normative and operational work of the Council; participate fully in the UPR of Pakistan and of other countries; engage constructively and cooperate with Special Procedures; promote dialogue and cooperation in addressing ‘situations of concern’ in the Council; and help strengthen OHCHR and its independence.

An analysis of steps taken by Pakistan in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it has now ratified nearly all the core international human rights treaties. In terms of cooperation with the Treaty Bodies, Pakistan’s periodic reports tend to be overdue. Regarding Pakistan’s participation at the Council, it has spoken in around 25-30% of panel discussions and general debates, (though it speaks in many more as coordinator of the OIC). Turning to cooperation with Special Procedures, Pakistan has responded to 60% of all communications received, but has only facilitated 3 out of 15 visit requests. Regarding its own UPR, Pakistan participated at ministerial level. Pakistan also participated in the reviews of 75 other states.

**The Philippines** presented pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2011-2014 on 11 February 2011.

At international level, Philippines made commitments to: foster cooperation with states to make the Council more efficient; bridge national, regional and international human rights goals and standards; be sensitive to challenges that impact on human rights; support the right to development;



actively engage with the Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and the UPR; and work closely with OHCHR on initiatives in areas such as trafficking and human rights education.

Domestically, Philippines pledged to: implement all human rights treaty obligations; realise the Millennium Development Goals; support policies that address the concerns of migrants and children; and support the work of NHRIs.

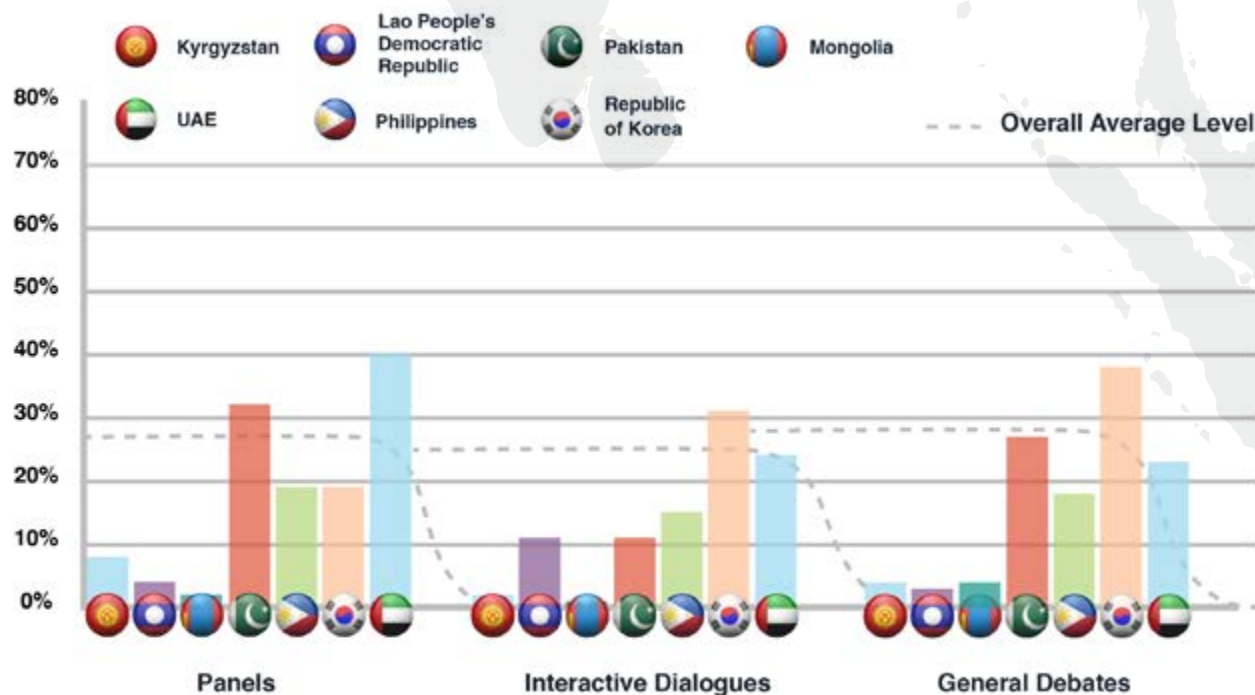
An analysis of steps taken by Philippines in fulfilment of its international pledges shows that it has facilitated only 8 of 24 Special Procedures visit requests (between 1998 and August 2015), and has responded to around half of all communications. Regarding engagement with Treaty Bodies,

Philippines is Party to all the core conventions but a number of its periodic reports under those treaties are overdue.

**The Republic of Korea** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 4 September 2012.

Korea committed to ratify or consider ratifying a range of international instruments, to withdraw reservations, and fully implement the provisions of instruments to which it is Party. Korea also made concrete commitments to: strengthen its cooperation with Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and the UPR, including by implementing recommendations made; work closely with civil

## Contribution to Council debates and dialogues



Note: data based on participation during the last 9 regular sessions of the Human Rights Council (21st-29th sessions). For full methodology, see end note. Source: HRC Extranet.

society; and protect the rights of the most vulnerable. Korea furthermore pledged to help other countries implement recommendations by providing technical assistance and capacity building, and by integrating a human rights perspective into its development policy.

An analysis of steps taken by Korea in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it has indeed moved to ratify many of the conventions mentioned in its voluntary pledges. Korea has not, however, ratified CPED or OP-CAT. It has also generally submitted timely reports under those human rights instruments to which it is Party. Regarding Korea's pledge to withdraw its reservations to CRPD, in September 2014 it informed the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of its intention to withdraw its reservation to article 25e. The country has a strong record of cooperation with Special Procedures. It maintains a Standing Invitation to visit, has facilitated 12 of 16 visit requests, and has responded to all communications.

**The United Arab Emirates (UAE)** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 13 March 2012.

Internationally, UAE pledged to: strengthen technical and substantive cooperation with OHCHR; continue its financial support to OHCHR; strengthen cooperation with the Council and its mechanisms; provide support to other countries to help them develop legislation and systems to end human trafficking; and amend its own national laws to bring them into line with international standards on human trafficking.

Domestically, UAE committed to: pursue legislative and other reforms to bring national laws into line with international standards (though only where such standards are 'in line with the cultural values of the UAE'); improve its child protection system; better protect women's rights; improve labour standards, including for expatriate workers; study the possibility of establishing a NHRI; conduct human rights training courses for law enforcement agencies; and promote dialogue with civil society as a way of following up on the implementation of UN recommendations.

An analysis of steps taken by UAE in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it has continued to make contributions to OHCHR (e.g. US\$1.5 million in 2013). Notwithstanding, the level of contributions has decreased since 2013. In terms of UAE's cooperation with Special Procedures, its responsiveness to communications is quite low (6 out of 23). UAE has facilitated 4 out of 11 country visit requests.

## Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

**Kyrgyzstan** presented an aide memoire in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in June 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☒ *Ratify CRPD.*
- ☒ *Encourage dialogue and constructive cooperation in the Council, taking into account country-specific and region-specific cultural and historical traditions.*

**Lao** presented an aide memoire in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in March 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☑️ *Adopt policies and measures to promote the full enjoyment of human rights in line with the conventions to which Lao is Party.*
- ☑️ *Engage constructively and participate actively in the work of the Council.*
- ☑️ *Ensure that the Council's methods of work are strong, fair, efficient and credible.*
- ☑️ *Support and cooperate with the Council's mechanisms.*
- ☑️ *Support international actions to advance women and children's rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities.*
- ☑️ *Continue its efforts to implement the accepted recommendations from the second cycle of the UPR.*

**Mongolia** presented voluntary obligations and commitments in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in March 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☑️ *Continue to support the work of the OHCHR, including in the area of capacity building.*
- ☑️ *Support Council initiatives on gender equality and women's empowerment, the rights of persons with disabilities, violence against women and children, and human trafficking.*
- ☑️ *Continue to fully cooperate with Council mechanisms, including Special Procedures and the UPR; and with the Treaty Bodies, including by submitting periodic reports in a*

*timely manner and by following-up on recommendations.*

- ☑️ *Consider ratifying OP3-CRC, and making a declaration under article 22 of CAT.*
- ☑️ *Continue legal reforms (e.g. new draft criminal code) to harmonise national laws with international norms and standards.*

**Pakistan** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in August 2015. In addition to providing useful information on 'progress on past pledges,' Pakistan makes a number of new and detailed commitments, including to:

- ☑️ *Formulate a national plan of action on human rights.*
- ☑️ *Strengthen the operation and independence of national human rights institutions.*
- ☑️ *Launch public awareness campaigns on, and pass legislation to strengthen, the rights of women, children, minorities and other groups.*
- ☑️ *Continue to contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the methods of work of the Council and its mechanisms.*
- ☑️ *Continue to promote engagement and dialogue with concerned states to address 'situations of concern.'*
- ☑️ *Participate fully in the UPR and make action-orientated and useful recommendations to other states. Cooperate with Special Procedures.*
- ☑️ *Continue to take forward initiatives to promote inter-religions and inter-cultural dialogue.*
- ☑️ *Provide further support to OHCHR.*

**Philippines** presented an aide memoire in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in August 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☑️ *Help make the Council more efficient and effective.*
- ☑️ *Enhance domestic implementation of human rights treaty obligations.*
- ☑️ *Continue to be a voice for vulnerable groups, including migrants, women and children. Continue to be sensitive to emerging challenges that impact on human rights, such as climate change.*
- ☑️ *Continue its active engagement with the Council's mechanisms, including Special Procedures and UPR.*
- ☑️ *Support the work of NHRIs, and cooperate with civil society at national and international levels.*
- ☑️ *Remain actively engaged with regional human rights mechanisms.*

**Republic of Korea** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support for its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in May 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☑️ *Cooperate with the international community to address human rights violations around the world.*
- ☑️ *Cooperate with other states in the implementation of their obligations through technical assistance. Incorporate human rights perspectives into*

*development cooperation.*

- ☑️ *Help make the Council more effective and efficient, so that it can respond to urgent situations in a prompt manner.*
- ☑️ *Cooperate fully with Special Procedures and the UPR mechanisms, and with the Treaty Bodies. Support the work of OHCHR.*
- ☑️ *Implement the provisions of the international human rights instruments at national level.*
- ☑️ *Consider withdrawal of reservations made to article 25e of the CRPD, and to article 21a of the CRC. Consider ratification of CPED and OP-CAT.*
- ☑️ *Strengthen the implementation of the 'Second National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights' for 2012-2016.*
- ☑️ *Enhance cooperation and partnership with civil society.*

**United Arab Emirates'** voluntary pledges and commitments, in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018, were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

## Voting history during previous membership terms

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2009, **Kyrgyzstan** has either (in the absence of consensus) voted in favour of (e.g. resolutions on



the situation in Syria) or has abstained on (e.g. resolutions on the situation in Belarus and Iran), resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention), and has abstained on country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Kyrgyzstan has consistently voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Kyrgyzstan has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. Notwithstanding, Kyrgyzstan did not vote on a 2010 resolution on the right to peace, and on a 2011 resolution on sexual orientation.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Kyrgyzstan has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, almost all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** technical assistance and cooperation for Kyrgyzstan.

**Lao** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Mongolia** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, **Pakistan** has voted in favour of two item 4 resolutions (situations that require the Council's attention) on Syria (both in 2013); has voted against a number of resolutions on the situations in Iran, North Korea, Sudan; and has abstained on a significant number of resolutions on Belarus, North Korea, as well as (more recent texts on) Syria. Pakistan has voted against country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). Notwithstanding, in June 2015 Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC) presented and joined consensus on an item 2 resolution on the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Pakistan has consistently voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Pakistan has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. Notwithstanding, Pakistan has voted against resolutions on the question of the death penalty, sexual orientation and peaceful protests.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Pakistan has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** drones; the effects of foreign debt on human rights.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, the **Philippines** has voted in favour of two item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention) resolutions on Belarus (2012) and North Korea (2014); has voted against a 2009 resolution on the situation in Sudan; and has abstained on a significant number of resolutions on Belarus, Iran, North Korea, and Syria. It has voted against (twice) or abstained (once) on country-specific resolutions under item 2 (i.e. the situation in Sri Lanka). For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), the Philippines has consistently voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, the Philippines has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has nearly always voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, the Philippines has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** human rights and climate change; extreme poverty; human rights education; trafficking in persons.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, the **Republic of Korea** has consistently voted in favour of item 4 resolutions (situations that require the Council's attention), and country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). For item 7 resolutions (human rights in

the Occupied Palestinian Territories), the Republic of Korea has tended to either vote in favour or to abstain during the vote.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, the Republic of Korea has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has voted in favour of resolutions on, inter alia: arms transfers; human rights, democracy and rule of law; education as a tool to prevent racism; peaceful protests; regulation of firearms; religious discrimination; sexual orientation; and torture. It has voted against various item 9 resolutions on racism and on preparations for the Durban Review Conference, and against resolutions on: complementary standards to the CERD; defamation of religions; drones; effects of terrorism on human rights; and right to peace. It has abstained on resolutions on the question of the death penalty.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, the Republic of Korea has joined consensus on a majority of texts. Where a vote has been called, the Republic of Korea has voted in favour of resolutions on the right to development. It has voted against resolutions on issues such as: economic reform policies; the impacts of globalisation on human rights; the effects of foreign debt; international solidarity; and unilateral coercive measures.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** human rights, democracy and rule of law; local government; human rights and sport; and the role of good governance.



Since it first became a member of the Council in 2013, the **United Arab Emirates** (UAE) has tended to vote in favour of item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention) resolutions on the situations in North Korea and Syria; and has abstained on resolutions on the situations in Belarus and Iran. UAE has voted against country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. the situation in Sri Lanka). Notwithstanding, in June 2015, UAE joined consensus on an item 2 resolution on the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), UAE has consistently voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, UAE has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has tended to vote in favour. Notwithstanding, UAE has voted against resolutions on the question of the death penalty, and sexual orientation.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, UAE has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** right to education of every girl.

**Cooperation with the UN, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights**

Cases cited in the Secretary General's reports (2013-2015)



**Inclusivity / Access**

Percentage of Regional Group members that have held a seat on the Council

38%

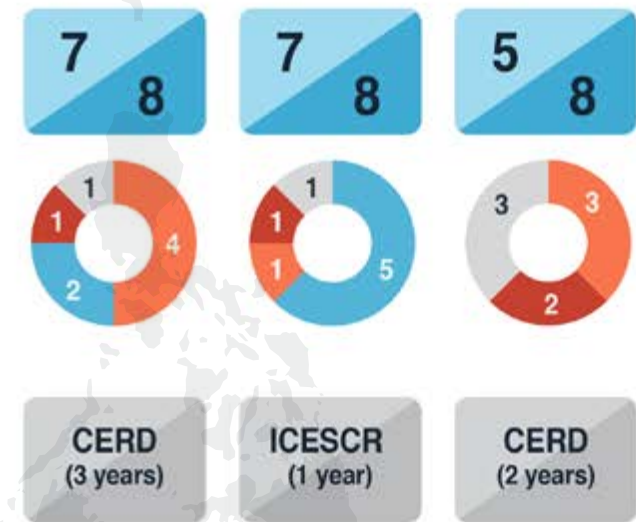
## SPECIAL PROCEDURES



## TREATY BODIES



## UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW



## Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

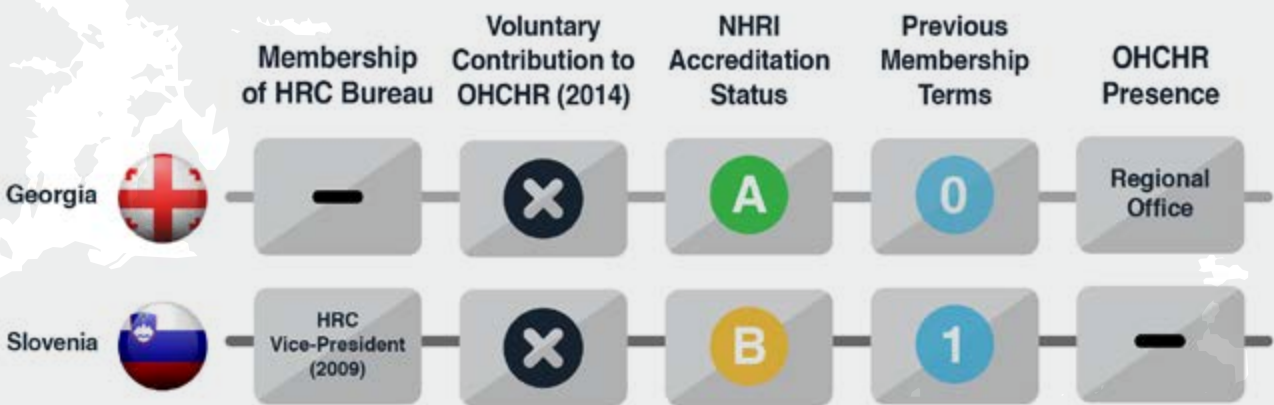
\* Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight "core human rights conventions," which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Note: for more comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.



# Eastern European Group (EEG)

## Overview of Candidates



Note: for comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Georgia** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Slovenia** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period of 2007-2010 on 23 January 2007.

Internationally, Slovenia pledged to: support the mainstreaming of human rights; cooperate fully with the procedures and mechanism of the Council; contribute to and cooperate with the UPR; sign and ratify the third additional protocol to the Geneva Conventions; sign and ratify the CRPD and its Optional Protocol; and sign and ratify the CPED.

An analysis of steps taken by **Slovenia** in fulfillment of its international pledges show that it did indeed sign and ratify the third additional protocol to the Geneva Conventions, and the CRPD and its Optional Protocol (2008). Although Slovenia did sign the CPED in 2007, it has yet to ratify it. Regarding cooperation with Special Procedures, Slovenia has maintained a Standing Invitation, and has completed all visit requests. Regarding cooperation with UPR, Slovenia has submitted a mid-term report on implementation and has (impressively) participated in the reviews of 171 other states.

## Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

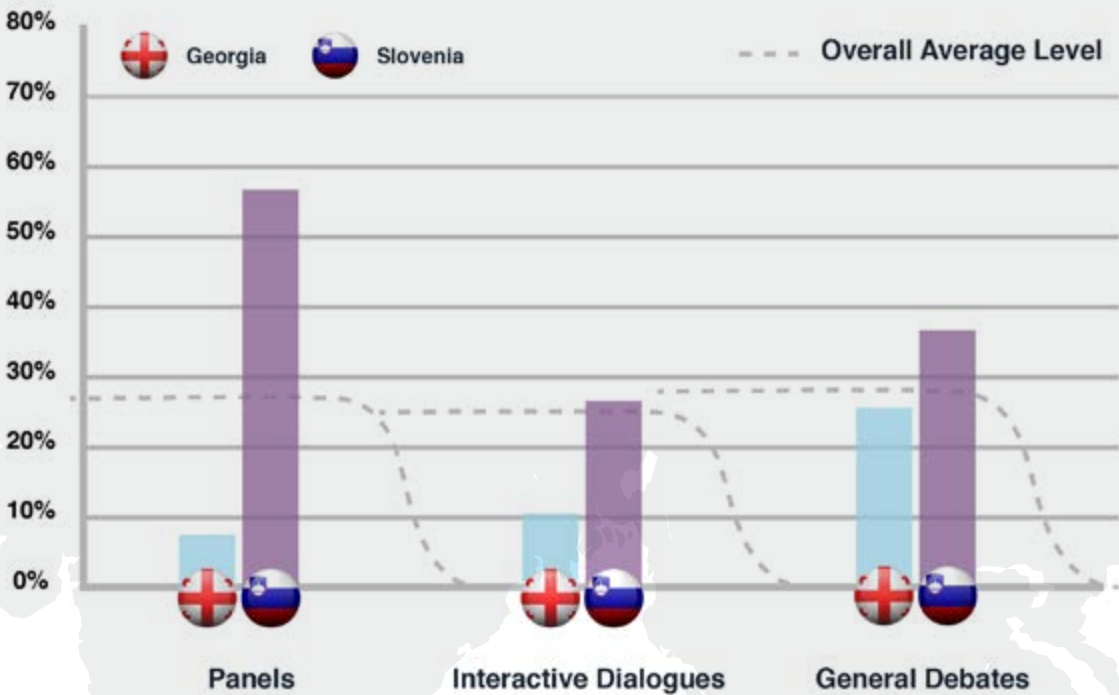
**Georgia** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in April 2015. Key pledges include:

- ✓ Fully cooperate with the Council and its mechanisms as per GA resolution 60/251.
- ✓ Help improve the working methods of the Council.
- ✓ Support and cooperate with OHCHR.
- ✓ Engage constructively in the UPR process (both Georgia's own review and the reviews of other states).
- ✓ Consider ratifying those instruments to which Georgia is not yet Party.
- ✓ Promote the right to a healthy environment.
- ✓ Continue to offer voluntary financial contributions to various human rights bodies.
- ✓ Promote NGO participation in the international human rights system.

**Slovenia** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in February 2015. As well as reflecting on the fulfilment of Slovenia's previous pledges and commitments, the document outlines a number of new commitments. Key pledges include:

- ✓ Continue efforts to build an effective Council, including by cooperating with all member states.
- ✓ Continue to fulfil its obligations under the international human rights conventions, including by submitting periodic reports in a timely manner.
- ✓ Continue to pursue priority issues including women's rights, children's rights, minority rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the rights of older persons. Slovenia identifies human rights education and learning for children, and the fight against all forms of violence and abuse of children, as areas of particular concern.
- ✓ Work towards including a human rights perspective in the post-2015 development

## Contribution to Council debates and dialogues



Note: data based on participation during the last 9 regular sessions of the Human Rights Council (21st-29th sessions). For full methodology, see end note. Source: HRC Extranet.



agenda, and continue Slovenia's leadership on human rights and the environment. Continue to implement, at a domestic level, the UN Guiding Principles on human rights and business.

Implement its national action plan on Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Slovenia has joined consensus on a majority of texts. It has voted against resolutions on: the effects of foreign debt; international solidarity; and unilateral coercive measures. Slovenia abstained in the vote on the 2009 resolution on the right to development.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** human rights education; human rights and the environment; Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

## Voting history during previous membership terms

Georgia has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2007, Slovenia has either voted in favour of, or has joined consensus on, all resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention). For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Slovenia generally either votes in favour or abstains. It did though vote against a 2008 resolution on 'human rights violations emanating from Israeli military incursions in the OPT and the shelling of Beit Hanoun.'

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Slovenia has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it voted in favour of two resolutions (2007 and 2009) dealing with issues of religious discrimination, and a 2009 resolution on torture. Slovenia has voted against resolutions on 'defamation of religion,' the right to peace, and various resolutions on racism, the Durban Review Conference, and complementary standards to CERD.

### Cooperation with the UN, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights

Cases cited in the Secretary General's reports (2013-2015)



## Inclusivity / Access

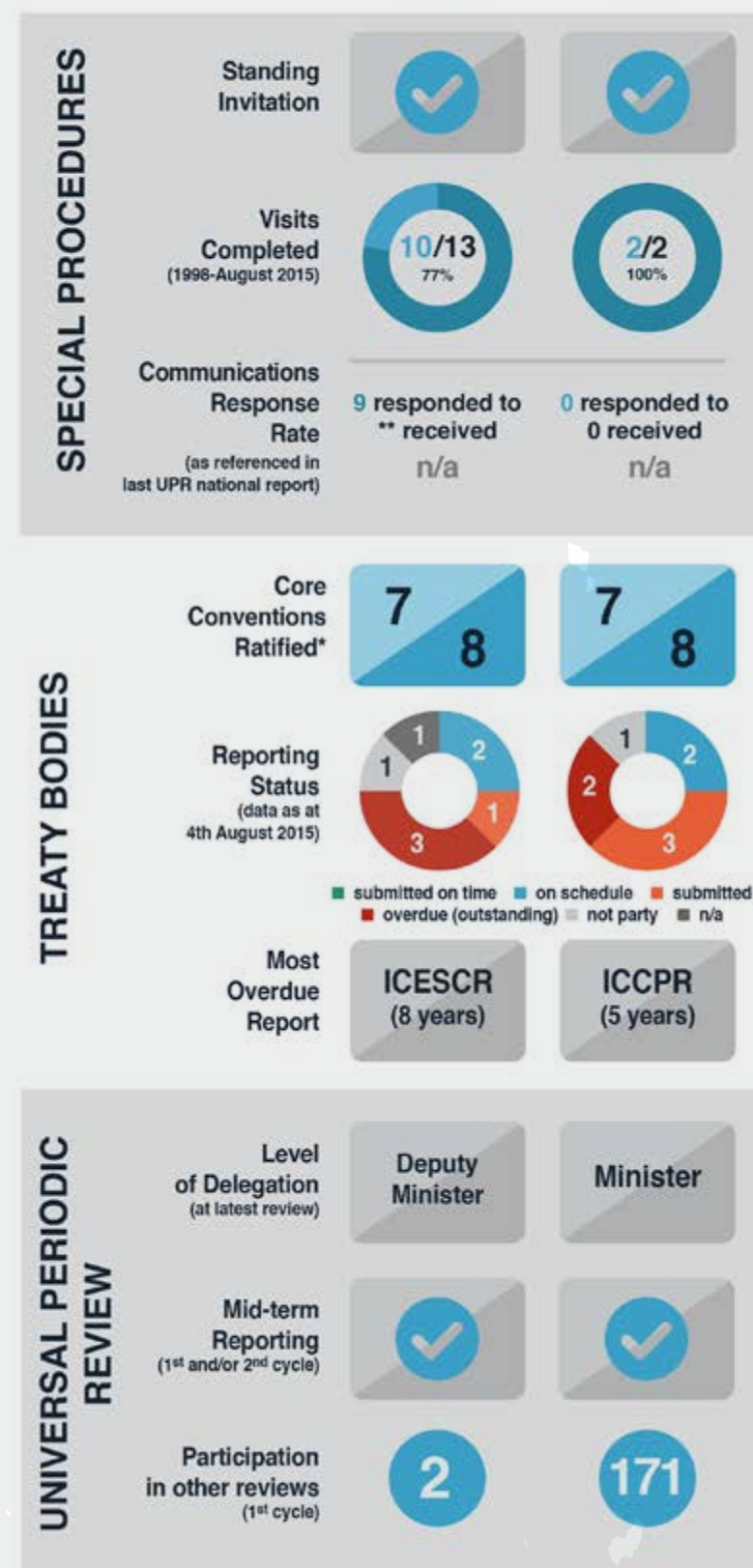
Percentage of Regional Group members that have held a seat on the Council

70%

Georgia



Slovenia



## Cooperation with human rights mechanisms






















\* Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight "core human rights conventions," which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

\*\* Data not available.

Note: for more comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

# Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)

## Overview of Candidates

		Membership of HRC Bureau	Voluntary Contribution to OHCHR (2014)	NHRI Accreditation Status	Previous Membership Terms	OHCHR Presence
Ecuador		HRC Vice-President (2013)				Human Rights Advisor
Panama						Human Rights Advisor
Venezuela						
Bahamas						

Note: for comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Bahamas** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Ecuador** presented a detailed list of voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2010-2013 on 5 April 2010.

At international level, Ecuador pledged, inter alia, to: work closely with OHCHR to investigate alleged human rights violations; present, sponsor and support draft resolutions condemning violations of human rights in any part of the world; maintain a Standing Invitation to Special Procedures; support the adoption of new international instruments; strengthen follow-up to international commitments (i.e. reporting); and ratify the OP-CAT and the CPED.

Domestically, Ecuador made commitments to: strengthen inter-institutional coordination to implement and follow-up on UN human rights recommendations and obligations; evaluate the National Human Rights Action Plan to incorporate international-level commitments; revise the Penal Code; adopt an anti-discrimination act; effectively implement the national plan to combat human trafficking; fully implement the CRPD; establish a Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Unit within the police force; and conduct human rights training and capacity building programmes.

An analysis of steps taken by Ecuador in fulfilment of its international pledges shows that it does maintain a Standing Invitation, and has facilitated 15 of 19 Special Procedures visits. Ecuador has also responded to 73% of communications. Ecuador demonstrates similarly high levels of cooperation with the UPR (it was represented at ministerial level, and has presented a mid-term report) and with Treaty Bodies (Ecuador is Party to all the core conventions and tends to report on time). Ecuador has participated in around half of all debates at the Council. It ratified the CPED in 2009, and OP-CAT in 2010.

**Panama** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

**Venezuela** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 22 February 2012.

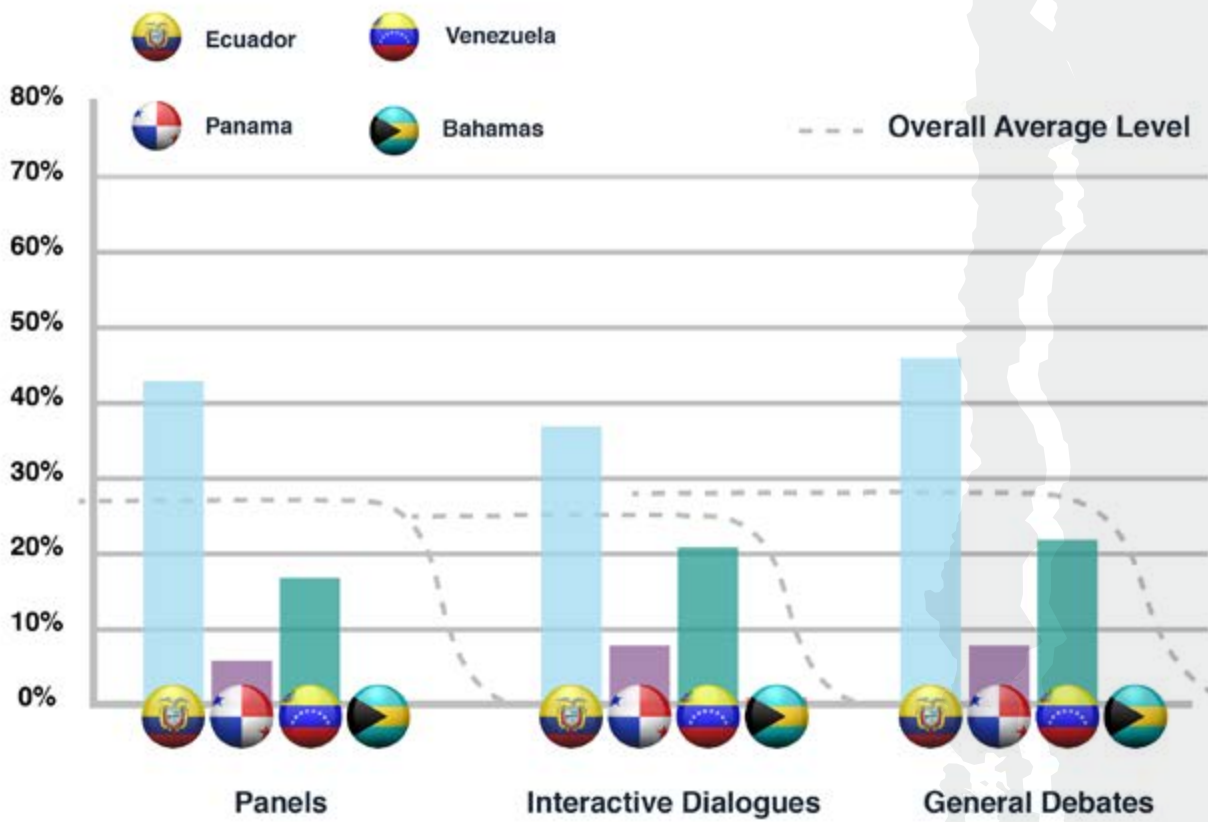
Internationally, Venezuela pledged to: strengthen cooperation with the Council and its mechanisms, including Special Procedures; resist efforts to merge or restrict Special Procedures mandates; continue to provide voluntary financial contributions to OHCHR; ratify the CRPD and its Optional Protocol; report in a timely manner to the Treaty Bodies and follow-up on recommendations; and promote reform of the Inter-American human rights system.



Domestically, Venezuela committed to: continue to cooperate with relevant UN and OHCHR field presences to build national capacity; implement the right to development through national ‘social missions;’ promote the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; strengthen the right of people ‘to individual and collective property;’ design a system of national human rights indicators in collaboration with OHCHR; and continue to develop national human rights education programmes.

An analysis of steps taken by Venezuela in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it ratified the CRPD on 24 September 2013. With respect to the international instruments Venezuela has ratified, it has submitted nearly all periodic reports on time. Regarding Special Procedures cooperation, Venezuela is yet to complete any mission, despite receiving 9 visit requests. It has though responded to 73% of communications.

Contribution to Council debates and dialogues



Note: data based on participation during the last 9 regular sessions of the Human Rights Council (21st-29th sessions). For full methodology, see end note. Source: HRC Extranet.

Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

**Bahamas** circulated an aide memoire requesting support for its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in September 2015. Key pledges include:

- Contribute, at international level, to the advancement of women’s rights, children’s rights, the rights of persons with disabilities; and the advancement of issues related to migration, health and sustainable development.
- Promote the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the work of the UN.
- Review and implement accepted recommendations from the Bahamas’ UPR.
- Implement the provisions of CEDAW, thereby promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Support the efforts of the Council and the wider international community to respond to human rights violations.

**Ecuador’s** voluntary pledges and commitments, in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018, were unavailable at the time the yourHRC.org 2015 Election Guide went to press.

**Panama** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership of the Council for the period 2016-2018 in March 2015. Key pledges include:

- Foster the development of international human rights indicators.
- Strengthen the status of the Council as the principal UN human rights body.
- Support the creation of a mechanism to review and assess, on an annual basis, the degree to which Council members and candidates are cooperating with the Council and its mechanisms, in order to determine the composition of the Council.
- Participate constructively in the UPR reviews of other states.
- Support the Council’s work on torture, human rights defenders, gender mainstreaming, and the status of girls and their empowerment; also support the Council President in his/her efforts to combat reprisals.
- Demand, as appropriate in urgent situations, an immediate and effective response from the Council.
- Effectively implement the recommendations received from the UN human rights mechanisms, and develop a system to monitor implementation in collaboration with OHCHR and civil society.
- Ensure that international human rights obligations are incorporated into national law, including a constitutional level.



- ☒ Promulgate comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.
- ☒ Establish the same legal minimum age for marriage for both sexes.
- ☒ Combat impunity for domestic violence against women.
- ☒ Create a National Preventative Mechanism (NPM) under the OP-CAT.
- ☒ Adopt comprehensive child protection legislation.
- ☒ Establish a shelter for the victims of human trafficking.
- ☒ Integrate human rights education into the national curriculum.

**Venezuela** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in September 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☒ Help strengthen the effectiveness of the Council.
- ☒ Implement accepted UPR recommendations and commitments.
- ☒ Submit its first periodic report under the CRPD, thereby promoting the rights of the most vulnerable in society. Present all periodic reports under the human rights treaties in a systematic and timely manner.
- ☒ Support the transformation and strengthening of the regional human rights system.
- ☒ Continue to strengthen the National Council for Human Rights, to coordinate public policy in the area of human rights.
- ☒ Adopt a National Plan for Human Rights, after a public referendum, to help realise human rights at a national level.
- ☒ Continue its project to develop a national system of human rights indicators in cooperation with UNDP.

- ☒ Incorporate human rights education into school curricula.

## Voting history during previous membership terms

**Bahamas** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, **Ecuador** has voted (in the absence of consensus) in favour of resolutions on the situations in Syria (2012) and Sudan (2010), and against resolutions on the situations in Iran (2011) and Belarus (2011 and 2012). Ecuador has also abstained on various item 4 texts covering the situations in Belarus, Iran, North Korea and Syria. It has voted against item 2 resolutions (2012 and 2013) on the situation in Sri Lanka. Notwithstanding, in June 2015 Ecuador joined consensus on an item 2 resolution on the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Ecuador has consistently voted in favour of all texts.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Ecuador has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, Ecuador has nearly always voted in favour. The only exception is with regard to a 2007 resolution on defamation of religion - Ecuador abstained.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Ecuador has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** the contribution of parliaments; elaboration of a legally binding instrument on business and human rights; national policies and human rights; regulation of firearms; rights of peasants.

**Panama** has not previously held a seat on the Human Rights Council.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2013, **Venezuela** has (in the absence of consensus) voted against all resolutions tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention), and country-specific resolutions under item 2 (e.g. on the situation in Sri Lanka). Notwithstanding, in June 2015, Venezuela joined consensus on an item 2 resolution on the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Venezuela has consistently voted in favour.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Venezuela has generally joined consensus. Where there has been a vote, it has nearly always voted in favour. Notwithstanding, it abstained in a 2015 vote on 'human rights, democracy and rule of law,' and voted against a 2014 resolution on 'peaceful protests.'

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Venezuela has either joined consensus on, or has voted in favour of, all adopted texts.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** effects of foreign debt on human rights; regulation of private military and security companies.

## Cooperation with the UN, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights

Cases cited in the Secretary General's reports (2013-2015)

**Ecuador**

**Panama**

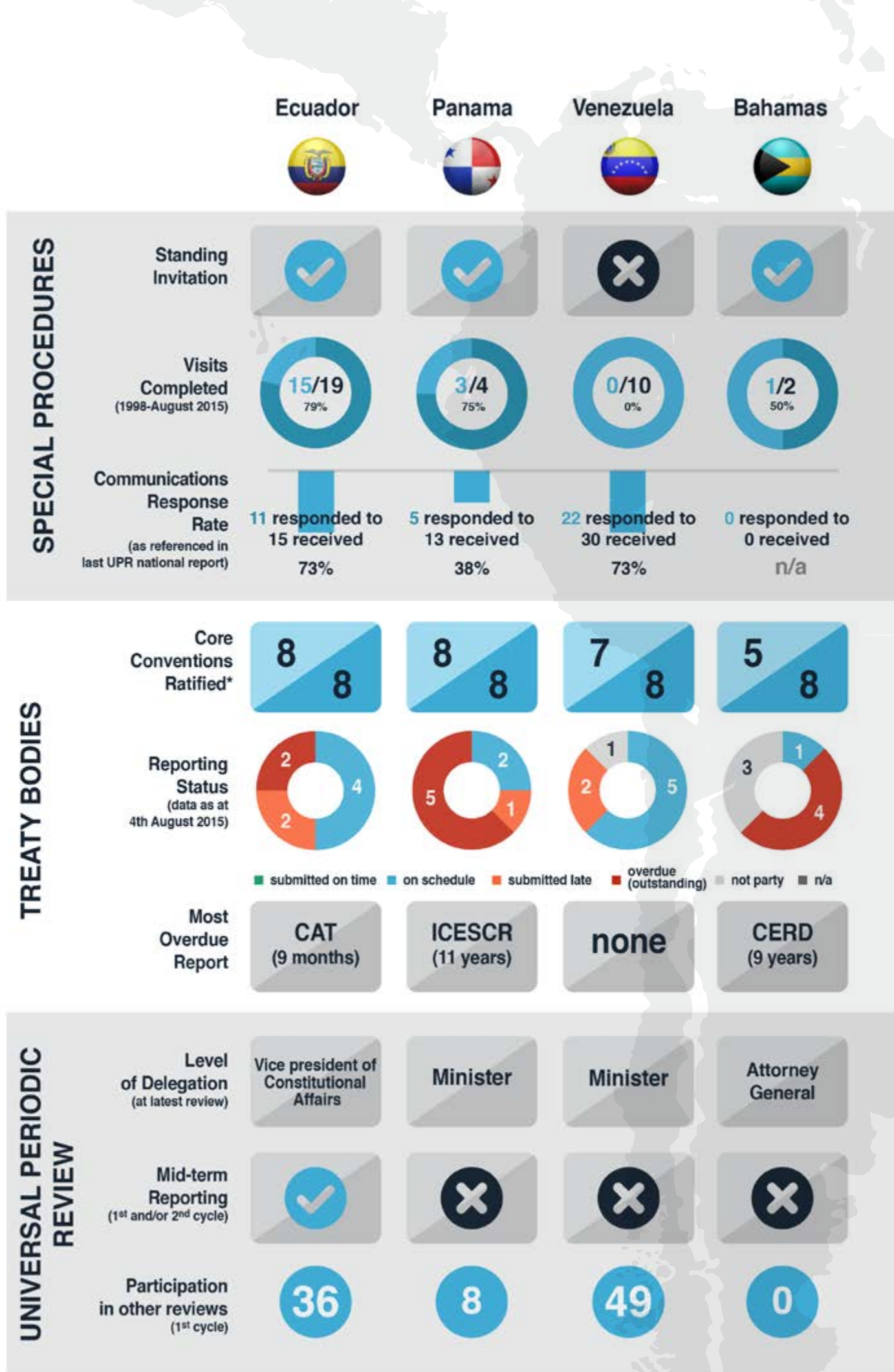
**Venezuela**

**Bahamas**

## Inclusivity / Access

Percentage of Regional Group members that have held a seat on the Council

45%



## Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

\* Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight "core human rights conventions," which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Note: for more comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.



# Western European and Others Group (WEOG)

## Overview of Candidates

	Membership of HRC Bureau	Voluntary Contribution to OHCHR (2014)	NHRI Accreditation Status	Previous Membership Terms	OHCHR Presence
Belgium	HRC President (2009)	✓	B	1	Regional Office
Germany	HRC President (2015)	✓	A	2	—
Switzerland	HRC Vice-President (2013)	✓	C	2	OHCHR Headquarters

Note: for comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Belgium** presented voluntary human rights pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2009-2012 on 25 March 2009.

At domestic level, Belgium committed to respect the obligations arising from the human rights instruments to which it is Party.

Internationally, Belgium pledged to, inter alia: be actively involved in the work of the Council; ensure that the Council addresses important human rights situations; protect the independence of and cooperate with Special Procedures; maintain a Standing Invitation to Special Procedures and facilitate visits; respond quickly to Special Procedures communications; prepare its national UPR report in a transparent and inclusive manner; promote the involvement of civil society; support and contribute to the work of the Third Committee; continue to support OHCHR, including financially; ratify CPED, CRPD, OP-CRPD, OP-ICESCR and OP-CAT; cooperate fully with the Treaty Bodies, including by submitting reports in a timely manner; and contribute to UN efforts to combat racism.

An analysis of steps taken by Belgium in fulfilment of its international pledges shows that it has indeed ratified CPED, CRPD, OP-CRPD, and the OP-ICESCR. It is yet to ratify OP-CAT. Belgium has participated in around half of all Council panel discussions and interactive debates. Regarding Special Procedures cooperation, Belgium has facilitated 6 out of 8 visit requests, but has replied to only

5 of 26 communications. Belgium has a strong record of reporting to Treaty Bodies in a timely manner. All of its periodic reports have been submitted on time. Likewise, it participated in its UPR review at ministerial-level and submitted a mid-term report on implementation.

**Germany** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2013-2015 on 28 February 2012.

Internationally, Germany pledged to: implement its obligations under the human rights instruments; fulfil its reporting obligations; widely disseminate concluding observations and examine how to implement recommendations; continue its close cooperation with OHCHR; promote the participation of NHRIs in the work of the Council; work to enable the Council to fulfil its mandate under GA resolution 60/251; continue to sponsor relevant resolutions and mandates; and cooperate with the Council's mechanisms.

Domestically, Germany committed to: develop a national action plan to implement the CRPD; implement the 2011 Federal Action Plan to protect children and youth from sexual violence and exploitation; and implement the National Action Plan on Human Rights (2010-2012).

An analysis of steps taken by Germany in fulfilment of its international level pledges shows that it continues to make voluntary contributions to OHCHR (of around US\$5 million per year). Germany has fulfilled its reporting obligations in terms of submitting timely reports under the ICCPR, ICESCR, CAT and the CRC, though reports under some other instruments are overdue. In terms of cooperation with Special Procedures, Germany maintains



a Standing Invitation, has facilitated 7 out of 8 visit requests, and has responded to all communications. In terms of support for the work of the Council, Germany participates in a significant number of panel discussions (36%), interactive dialogues (42%) and general debates (44%).

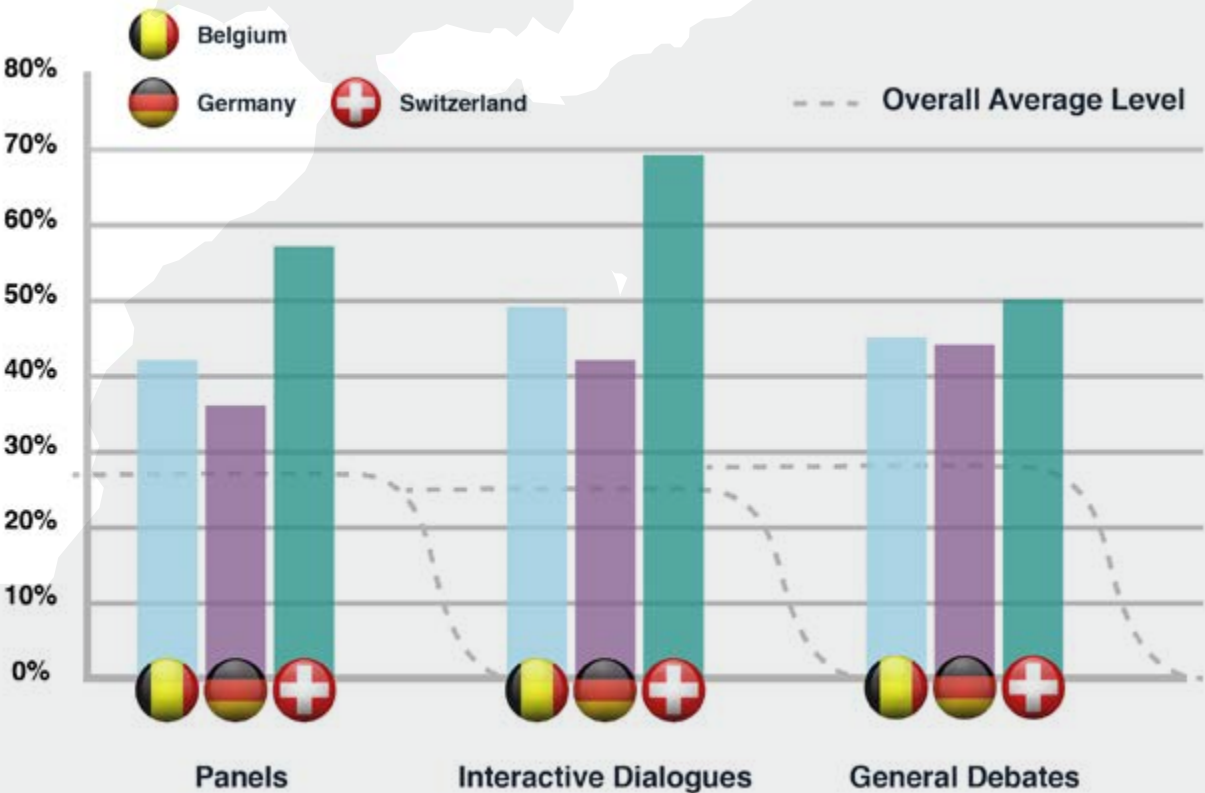
**Switzerland** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2010-2013 on 18 March 2010.

At the international level, Switzerland pledged to, inter alia: participate actively in the work of the Council; ensure that the Council deals with human rights situations everywhere; promote human rights

education; promote the participation of NGOs; work in close cooperation with and maintain financial support for OHCHR; mainstream human rights across the UN's development work; support states to implement their human rights commitments (e.g. through development assistance); examine the possibility of ratifying CPED and CRPD; cooperate fully with Treaty Bodies, including by reporting regularly; cooperate with Special Procedures and facilitate visit requests; and maintain financial support for Swiss and international NGOs.

At a national level, Switzerland undertook to: comply with its international human rights obligations at federal and cantonal level; undertaken awareness-raising and training programmes; implement the

Contribution to Council debates and dialogues



Note: data based on participation during the last 9 regular sessions of the Human Rights Council (21st-29th sessions). For full methodology, see end note. Source: HRC Extranet.

provisions of recently-ratified treaties including the OP-CRC on the sale of children and OP-CEDAW; and include civil society in the implementation of UPR recommendations.

An analysis of steps taken by Switzerland in fulfilment of its international pledges shows that it has participated actively in Council debates (e.g. 69% of interactive dialogues, 57% of panels), and has maintained its financial support for OHCHR. In terms of Special Procedures cooperation, Switzerland maintains a Standing Invitation, has facilitated two-thirds of visit requests, and responded to all communications. In terms of cooperation with Treaty Bodies, Switzerland is Party to most core conventions, and generally reports on time. Switzerland ratified the CRPD in 2014.

Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

**Belgium** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in April 2015. Key pledges include:

- Ensure that the Council fulfils its mandate to deal with both country situations and thematic issues.
- Cooperate actively with, and protect the independence of, Special Procedures.
- Engage constructively with the UPR mechanism, follow-up on accepted recommendations, and ensure that interactive dialogues remain inclusive.
- Ensure civil society participation in the work of the Council.

- Continue to support OHCHR, including financially.
- Maintain cooperation with Treaty Bodies, including by submitting periodic reports in a timely manner and by implementing recommendations. Ratify OP-CAT.
- Continue to raise the question of the death penalty, and the role of regional organisations or arrangements, in the Council.
- Continue work towards the establishment of a NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles.

**Germany** presented voluntary pledges and commitments in support of its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in July 2015. Key pledges include:

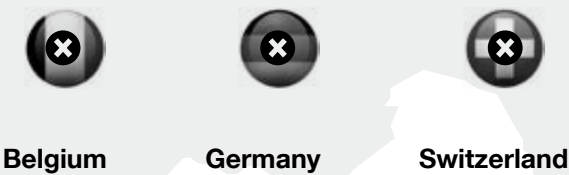
- Continue to implement Germany's obligations under the core human rights conventions.
- Cooperate with Treaty Bodies, including by fulfilling its reporting obligations and by following-up on implementation.
- Continue its close cooperation with, and continue to provide support to, OHCHR.
- Promote the participation of NHRIs and civil society in the work of the Council.
- Maintain a Standing Invitation to Special Procedures and engage fully with the UPR.
- Implement the National Action Plan to realise the provisions of CRPD, develop a national action plan on business and human rights, and fully implement the Federal Government's Plan of Action for Human Rights 2014-2016.

**Switzerland** presented voluntary obligations and commitments in support for its candidature for membership for the period 2016-2018 in February 2015. Key pledges include:

- ☒ Develop a national ad hoc mechanism to coordinate the preparation of periodic reports and to follow-up on the implementation of recommendations.
- ☒ Implement, in good faith, accepted UPR recommendations.
- ☒ Consider the establishment of a NHRI.
- ☒ Elaborate a national strategy to implement the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights.
- ☒ Keep under review the possibility of withdrawing Switzerland's reservations under certain conventions. Step up efforts to ratify CPED and OP3-CRC.
- ☒ Continue efforts towards: the universal abolition of the death penalty; universal recognition of the right to water and sanitation; ending discrimination, including of people based on their sexual orientation. Maintain strong commitment to the prevention torture and to human rights in the context of peaceful protests.
- ☒ Convene a high-level meeting in 2016 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Council.
- ☒ Enhance the participation of NGOs and NHRIs in the work of the Council.
- ☒ Support the work of OHCHR, including financially.

**Cooperation with the UN, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights**

Cases cited in the Secretary General's reports (2013-2015)



**Voting history during previous membership terms**

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2009, **Belgium** has either voted in favour of or has joined consensus on every resolution tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention), and country-specific resolutions under item 2. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Belgium generally either votes in favour or abstains (almost equally). The only item 7 resolution it has voted against was a 2010 text on human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, where a vote is called Belgium has abstained on four occasions (e.g. on resolutions on 'a global call for concrete action against racism'), voted in favour on two occasions (on democracy and rule of law, and on sexual orientation), and has voted against three times (two texts on the right to peace, and one on defamation of religion).

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Belgium has joined consensus on a majority of texts. Where there has been a vote, Belgium has tended to vote in favour of resolutions on the right to development. It has tended to vote against texts on: the effects of foreign debt; international solidarity; and unilateral coercive measures. Texts Belgium has abstained on include: non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin, and access to medicine.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** question of the death penalty; extreme poverty and human rights; and regional arrangements.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, **Germany** has either voted in favour of or has joined consensus on every resolution tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention), and country-specific resolutions under item 2. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Germany generally votes in favour, though it sometimes abstains. The only item 7 resolutions it has voted against were two texts in 2008 and 2009 on human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Germany has mainly either voted in favour or joined consensus. Resolutions that it usually (or always) votes against include: resolutions on defamation of religion; resolutions on the right to peace; some resolutions on

racism and the Durban Review Conference; a resolution on complementary standards to CERD; and a resolution on the effects of terrorism on human rights. Germany abstained in votes on the 2014 resolution on the integrity of the judicial system, and the 2014 and 2015 resolutions on drones.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Germany has joined consensus on a majority of texts. Where there have been votes on such texts, Germany has voted in favour of resolutions on the right to development, and against texts on: the effects of foreign debt; international solidarity; unilateral coercive measures; globalisation and its impact on human rights; and the effects of economic reform policies and foreign debt. Germany has abstained on a number of resolutions, including on the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin, and on access to medicine.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** situation in Syria; adequate housing; right to privacy in the digital age; right to water and sanitation; and trafficking in persons.

Since it first became a member of the Council in 2006, **Switzerland** has either voted in favour of or has joined consensus on every resolution tabled under item 4 (situations that require the Council's attention), and country-specific resolutions under item 2. For item 7 resolutions (human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories), Switzerland usually votes in favour or



(somewhat less frequently) abstains. It has never voted against an item 7 resolution.

For thematic resolutions dealing with civil and political rights, Switzerland has mainly joined consensus. Resolutions that it usually (or always) votes against include: resolutions on defamation of religion; resolutions on the right to peace; and some resolutions on racism, the Durban Review Conference and complementary standards to CERD. It has voted in favour of resolutions on: arms transfers; the question of the death penalty; human rights, democracy and rule of law; sexual orientation; torture; and religious discrimination.

For thematic resolutions dealing with economic, social and cultural rights, Switzerland has joined consensus on a majority of texts. Resolutions that it tends to vote against include: resolutions on the effects of foreign debt; resolutions on international solidarity; and resolutions on unilateral coercive measures. Switzerland votes in favour of resolutions on the right to development.

**Leadership/principal sponsor:** child, early and forced marriage; human rights and environment; human rights education; peaceful protests; safety of journalists; transitional justice; UN Trust Fund to support the participation of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council.

## Inclusivity / Access

Percentage of Regional Group members that have held a seat on the Council

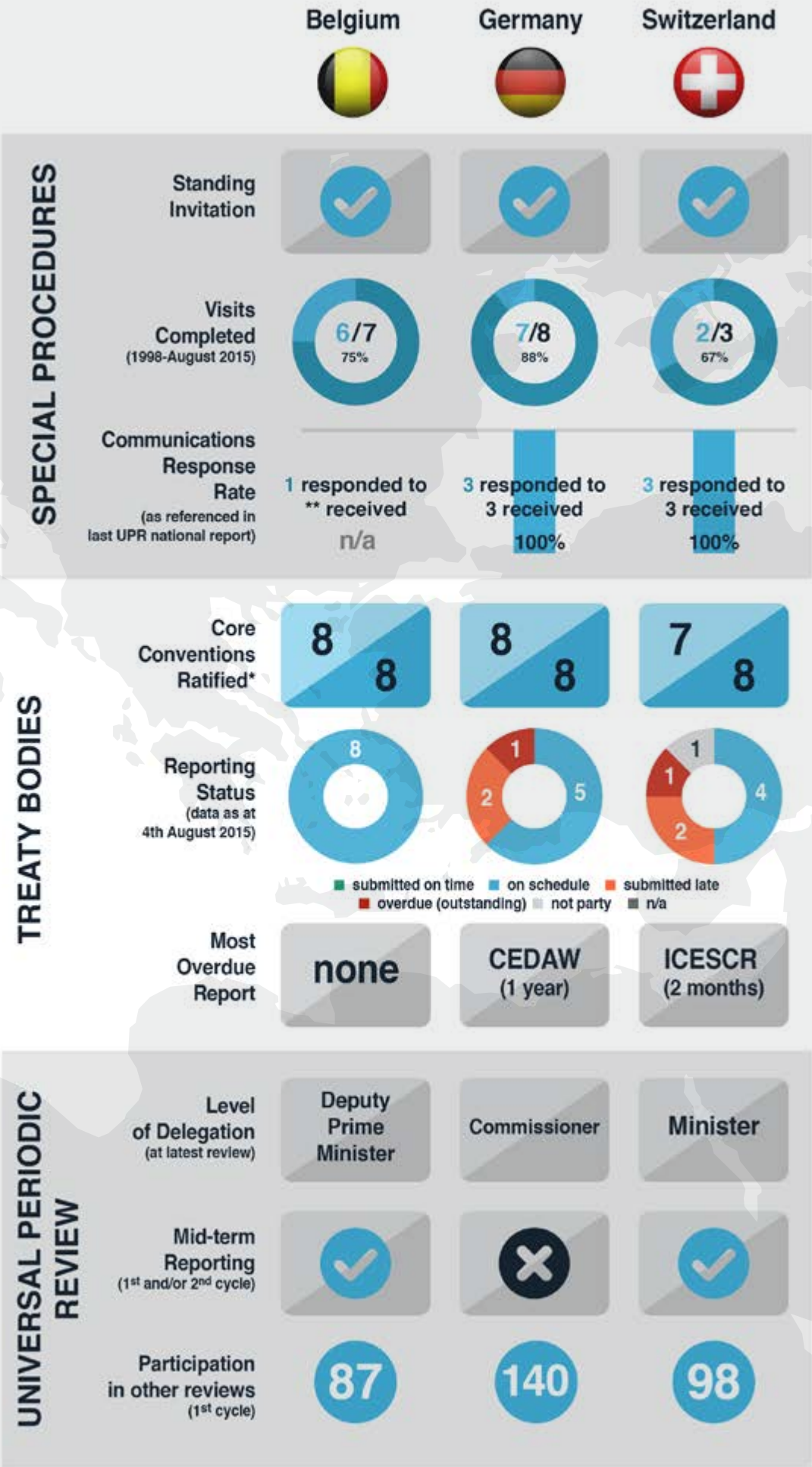
52%

\* Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight “core human rights conventions,” which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

\*\* Data not available.

Note: for more comprehensive information on data sources, timeframes and methodology, please see end note.

## Cooperation with human rights mechanisms





# Methodology Notes

YourHRC.org uses independent and objective data as the basis of its summaries and analyses. The origin of that data is primarily official UN documents and information produced by other international organisations. To ensure transparency, information on the sources of all data used, together with the methodology applied and the timeframe, is presented below.

### Overview of Membership

#### Membership of HRC Bureau

**Source:** OHCHR website.

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

#### Voluntary contribution to OHCHR (2014)

**Source:** Human Rights Appeal 2015, p.44.

**Data as at:** April 2015.

#### NHRI Accreditation Status

**Source:** <http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/Contact/NHRIs/Pages/Global.aspx>.

**Data as at:** 30th August 2015.

#### OHCHR Presence

**Source:** Human Rights Appeal 2015, p. 48-49 (with the addition of the OHCHR Headquarters in Switzerland, and updated information on Burundi, Togo and the Republic of Korea).

**Data as at:** April 2015.

#### Previous Membership terms

**Source:** OHCHR website.

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

### Fulfillment of previous voluntary pledges and commitments

**Source:** UN General Assembly website; OHCHR website [<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/Pledges.pdf>].

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

**Note:** yourHRC.org summarises the specific, forward-looking pledges made by States when presenting their candidatures for membership of the Human Rights Council. GA resolution 60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council stipulates that, when electing members of the Council, states shall take into account: the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights; and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto. Beyond this provision, the GA provided no further guidance and established no particular framework for the form and content of electoral pledges, commitment and statements. Notwithstanding, OHCHR has published a helpful document on ‘suggested elements for voluntary pledges and commitments by candidates for election to the Human Rights Council’ which states that voluntary pledges and commitments should be ‘specific, measurable and verifiable.’ The paper then provides a

general framework for assessing pledges and commitments against this benchmark. yourHRC.org uses this framework to identify the number of specific pledges presented by candidates. yourHRC.org also presents a short analysis of the degree to which members of the Council have fulfilled the international-level pledges they made when running for their current or last term of membership. This analysis aims to be independent and objective, without value judgements. The analysis is mainly based on data in the yourHRC.org analysis of member State engagement with the UN human rights system.

### Contribution to Council debates and dialogues

**Source:** HRC Extranet.

**Data as at:** 4th July 2015.

**Note:** The level of participation in Panel Discussions, Interactive Dialogues and General Debates was calculated based on individual and joint statements listed on the HRC Extranet during the past three years (i.e. during HRC sessions 19-29). Joint statements by set regional or political groups (e.g. the African Group or the EU) were not counted on the basis that this was not a conscious effort by the state concerned to participate in the debate, as is the case, for example, with ad-hoc cross-regional statements. Nor were we able to count joint statements on behalf of a group of states that were not individually listed (this includes some statements on behalf of the Like-Minded Group). Nevertheless, of course, states do also participate in this broader manner. Full-day discussions were counted as one panel – so states participating in either the morning or the afternoon were counted as having participated.

### Key pledges and commitments for 2015 election

**Source:** UN General Assembly website.

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

**Note:** yourHRC.org summarises the key specific, forward-looking pledges made by States when presenting their candidatures for membership of the Human Rights Council. GA resolution 60/251 establishing the Council stipulates that, when electing members of the Council, states shall take into account: the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights; and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto. yourHRC.org presents these key pledges in a factual manner, without value judgement. Notwithstanding, the lists of key pledges are non-exhaustive – with selection based on an analysis and the judgement by URG analysts.

### Voting history during previous membership terms

**Source:** URG HRC Voting Portal (<http://www.universal-rights.org/country-voting-history-portal/>).

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

**Note:** The yourHRC.org analysis aims to be purely factual, without value judgement as to the merit of individual resolutions, or moral or

legal judgements about the nature of State voting patterns. For each member State of the Council, past and present, URG analysts looks for patterns in State voting on both country-specific resolutions (items 2, 4, 7 and 10) and thematic resolutions (both civil and political, and economic, social and cultural – including the right to development).

### Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

#### Special Procedures

##### Standing Invitation

**Source:** OHCHR website.

**Data as at:** 5th August 2015.

#### Country visits / visit requests

**Source:** OHCHR website [<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/CountryvisitsA-E.aspx>].

**Data as at:** data covers the period 1998-11th August 2015.

**Note:** The number of total country visits since 1998 includes all visits undertaken, visits agreed by the state concerned but which has not yet taken place, and requests that have received no reply, as listed on the OHCHR website. The number of visits undertaken includes only visits that have actually taken place, as listed on the OHCHR website.

#### Responsiveness to communications

**Source:** “Compilation of UN Information” report during the State’s latest UPR.

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

**Note:** The response rate to Special Procedures communications (i.e. to letters of allegations and urgent appeals) is based on the information provided in the “Compilation of UN Information” report submitted to the most recent UPR review of the state concerned.

### Treaty Bodies

**Source:** OHCHR website.

**Data as at:** 4th August 2015/18th August 2015.

**Note:** Ratification and Reporting is recorded for the eight “core human rights conventions,” which include: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Treaty body reporting dates relate to the state’s current reporting cycle, as listed on the OHCHR website. In cases where there is no

deadline for the current reporting cycle, the status of reporting of the previous cycle was used, where available.

Explanation of Options:

- SUBMITTED ON TIME: The State Party Report submitted the report before the due date;
- ON SCHEDULE: the current cycle due date is in the future;
- SUBMITTED LATE: The State Party Report has been submitted for the current cycle, but was submitted late;
- OUTSTANDING (OVERDUE): the current cycle report has not yet been submitted, and is overdue;
- NOT PARTY: The State has not ratified the respective Treaty;
- N/A: where data was not available.

The “most overdue” report time is for the outstanding report that is the most overdue.

Reporting and ratification scores were calculated on the 4 August 2015 (with exception of Burundi, Togo, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Panama and Georgia, where the date was recorded as at 18 August 2015).

Universal Periodic Review

Level of delegation

**Source:** the Head of a State’s delegation (for its last UPR) was determined using the “Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review.” Where the rank of the representative was not clear, the URG followed up with the relevant missions as far as possible.

**Data as at:** 28th September 2015.

Mid-term reporting

**Source:** OHCHR website.

**Data as at:** 15th September 2015.

**Note:** The “mid-term reporting” score relates to whether the state has submitted a mid-term report for the first and/or the second cycles of UPR.

Participation in other reviews

**Source:** UPR Info “Statistics of UPR Recommendations.”

**Data as at:** 10th April 2015.

**Note:** Participation in other reviews relates to the number of other 1st cycle reviews (out of 192) during which the state concerned made its own recommendations.

Cooperation with the UN, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights

Cases cited in the Secretary General's reports (2013-2015)

Source: “Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights” report by the Secretary General (UN Docs. A/HRC/24/29, A/HRC/27/38, A/HRC/30/29).  
Data as at: 28th September 2015.

*For updated information on all current and former Council members, visit [yourHRC.org](http://yourHRC.org).*

Universal Rights Group  
Ch. du Grand-Montfleury 48

CH-1290 Versoix  
Switzerland

[info@universal-rights.org](mailto:info@universal-rights.org)



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A window onto cooperation, dialogue, leadership  
and policymaking at the UN Human Rights Council



UNIVERSAL RIGHTS GROUP



PERMANENT MISSION OF NORWAY