

# Open Letter: Funding Shortfall for Human Rights Mechanisms

We convey our deep concern regarding the critical funding situation affecting the UN's human rights mechanisms and OHCHR. We understand that the combination of delays in payments of UN member states' assessed contributions to the regular budget and the 25% cut to travel of UN representatives, including treaty body experts and Special Procedure mandate holders, and other budget cuts (2018-2019) may adversely impact on the capacity of various human rights mechanisms to carry out their mandates effectively.

In April, the Chairpersons of the 10 human rights treaty bodies were informed that due to the financial situation, the autumn 2019 sessions of six treaty bodies may need to be cancelled.<sup>1</sup> Not only is the cancellation of treaty body sessions deeply worrying as it may involve cancellation of reviews already scheduled and delay decisions on individual communications pending before the Committees but it also sends a troubling message ahead of the 2020 treaty body strengthening discussions. This unprecedented development would come as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

We understand that other independent expert mechanisms such as the Special Procedures, and other mechanisms created by the Human Rights Council such as Fact-Finding Missions and Commissions of Inquiry, may also be hampered in carrying out their mandates to monitor and investigate human rights violations.

As of 10 May, only 44 UN member states had paid all their assessments due to the UN. We would like to commend Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Monaco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Rwanda, Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, Sweden, Switzerland and Tuvalu for having done so.<sup>2</sup> 98 member states had paid their regular budget assessments by 20 May 2019.

The failure to pay assessed contributions is only the latest in a worrying trend of shortfalls and cuts affecting the UN budget allocated to its human rights mechanisms. In the 2018-2019 budget the General Assembly made adjustments to reduce the resources for experts by 15 per cent, reduce the travel of representatives by 25 per cent, and reduce resources for travel of staff by 10 per cent<sup>3</sup>, all without taking into account the disproportionate effect these decisions would have on the UN's human rights mechanism. Only 3.7 per cent of the total UN regular budget is currently allocated to OHCHR<sup>4</sup>. We are extremely concerned by reports that the funding gap may affect the functioning of OHCHR and the human rights mechanisms in 2020 and beyond.

Against the worrying background of a global pushback against the promotion and protection of human rights, we urge all UN member states to:

- Pay their assessed contributions without further delay, unless they have already done so, in order to assure the functioning of the UN's human rights mechanisms.
- Prioritise securing adequate funding for the UN's human rights pillar, with the promotion and protection of human rights being also indispensable to development, peace and security.
- Initiate, in due time ahead of the 2020-2021 budget negotiations, discussions on how to reverse the trend of reduced regular budget for OHCHR and assuring that the UN's human rights mechanisms are not disproportionately affected by over-all cuts to the UN budget, including by restoring the budget allocation for travel of representatives for these mechanisms.

Signatories:

- A 11 - Initiative for Economic and Social Rights
- Abogados y abogadas del Noroeste argentino en derechos humanos y estudios sociales (Andhes)
- ACADHOSHA (Action des Chrétiens Activistes des Droits de l'Homme à Shabunda)
- ACAT
- ACAT Belgium
- ACAT Canada
- ACAT Congo
- ACAT Ghana
- ACAT Italia
- ACAT Luxembourg
- ACAT Tchad
- ACAT- Benin
- ACAT- NIGER
- ACAT-Brasil
- ACAT-Burundi
- ACAT-Cameroun
- ACAT-France
- ACAT-Switzerland
- ACAT-USA
- Action femme de valeur
- Action Jeunesse pour le Développement
- Action on Child, Early and Forced Marriage
- ActionAid International
- Activist
- Adalah - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel
- Addu women's Association (AWA)
- Adska ong
- Advocacy for women in peace and security- Africa
- Afghan Women Network
- Afghan Women News Agency Organization
- Afghan women Skills Development Center
- Agir Ensemble pour les Droits de l'Homme (AEDH)
- Aid Organization
- Al-Zahraa: Organization for the Advancement of Women

- Alhaq
- All Okinawa Council for Human Rights
- Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development
- Alliance Globale contre les Mutilations Génitales Féminines
- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- Amnesty International
- ALQST for Human Rights
- Arab Women Network for Parity and Solidarity
- Articulación Feminista Marcosur
- ASEAN SOGIE Caucus
- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
- Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC)
- Asian Migrants' Coordinating Body(AMCB-IMA)
- Asociace romskych predstavitelu Libereckeho kraje z.s.
- Asociación Ciudadana ACCEDER
- Asociación de Mujeres Afrodescendientes de Yolombo - ASOMUAFROYO.
- Asociación de Mujeres Afrodescendientes del Norte del Cauca- ASOM
- Asociacion Tesai Reka Paraguay
- assiwar--the feminist arab movement
- Asociace Romskych Rodicu z.s.
- Association "MARTA Centre"
- Association for Civil Rights in Israel
- Association for Cultural and Media Activism QUEER SQUARE Skopje
- Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality
- Association for the Prevention of Torture
- Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
- Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons
- Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
- Association of War Affected Women
- Association of Women for Action and Research
- ASTRA-Anti trafficking action
- ATFD
- ATTA LKER
- AUDF
- Avocats Sans Frontières France
- Awen Amenca z.s.
- Bahamas Crisis Centre
- Bahrain Center for Human Rights
- Baidarie
- Bairo Pite Clinic Lanud, Timor-Leste
- Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud AC
- Better World Campaign
- Beyond Beijing Committee
- Blind Women Association, Nepal (BWAN)
- Botswana Watch OrganizationBreakthrough Trust
- Bridgebuilders Trust
- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
- Cambodian Center for Human Rights ("CCHR")

- Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children
- Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action
- Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
- CBM
- Center for Justice and International Law
- Center for Legal Civic Initiatives
- Center for Media, Data and Society, Central European University
- Center for Reproductive Rights
- Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)
- Centre Catholique International de Genève
- Centre for Civil and Political Rights
- Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru
- Centre for Migration, Refugees and Belonging, The University of East London
- Centre for Social Concern and Development (CESOCODE)
- Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres (CEDEHM)
- Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas AC
- Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez
- Centro de derechos humanos pasó del Norte
- Centro de estudios de la mujer
- Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)
- Child Rights International Network
- CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality
- Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations
- CIDEM
- CISCOSA
- CIVICUS: World Alliance for citizen participation
- Civil Rights Defenders
- CKLP
- CNRS
- Coalition Burkinabe des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (CBDDH)
- COALITION CEDEF ET LES ANGES DU CIEL
- Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies
- Coast Education Centre (COEC)
- COC Nederland
- Colectiva Ciudad y Género ac
- Collectif des Associations Contre l'Impunité au Togo CACIT
- COLLECTIF DES AVOCATS POUR LA DEFENSE DES VICTIMES DES CRIMES DE DROIT INTERNATIONAL COMMIS AUX BURUNDI
- CoMensha
- Comisión de Derechos Humanos - COMISEDH
- Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
- Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de las Mujeres
- Comité Víctimas Lesa Humanidad y Graves Violaciones DDHH Ecuador
- Committees for the defense of democracy freedoms and Human Rights in Syria(C.D.F)
- Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)
- Community Work Ireland
- Conectas Direitos Humanos CONGCOOP
- Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

- Congrès Mondial Amazigh
- Consorcio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad Oaxaca A.C.
- Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas
- Contra Nocendi International
- Cook Islands National Council of Women
- Cooperation committee for Cambodia (CCC)
- Coordinadora de la Mujer
- Coordinadora Lesbica y de Hombres Trans- Republika Libre
- Corte suprema de justicia
- Cotidiano Mujer, Uruguay
- CROISADE-NIGER
- Czech Women's Lobby / Česká ženská lobby
- Dalit NGO Federation (DNF), Nepal
- Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies
- Darfur Network for monitoring and Documentation
- Defence for Children International
- DefendDefenders (the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project)
- Dejusticia
- Democracy Today
- Democratic Party, Hong Kong
- Director, Comparative Governance and Policy Research Cente, Department of Government & International Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University
- DIVA for Equality
- Dóchas
- Dominicans for Justice and Peace
- Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
- Dutch CEDAW Network
- Earthjustice
- Echoes of Women in Africa Initiatives
- ECPAT France
- Edmund Rice International
- Education Coalition
- Equality Now
- European Center for Notfor-Profit Law
- European Network of People of African Descent - ENPAD
- European Roma Rights Centre
- Fédération Euro- Méditerranéenne contre les Disparitions Forcées - FEMED
- Feminist Legal Clinic Inc.
- Femmes et Droits Humains
- FIACAT
- First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada
- FOKUS
- Fondazione Pangea onlus
- Foundation Ultimate Purpose
- FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL
- Freelance
- Fundación Arcoiris
- Fundación de Mujeres Luna Creciente

- Fuuse
- Gender Alliance for Development Centre
- Gender and Sociology
- Gender Equality Network
- Geneva for Human Rights (GHR)
- Geten, Center for LGBTIQ People's Rights
- GIN-SSOGIE
- Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Global Network of Sex Work Projects
- GQUAL Campaign
- Greek Helsinki Monitor
- Groupe d'action pour les droits de la femme
- Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
- Gypsy Cooperative Uk
- Gypsy Council
- Hazte Visible A.C.
- HCLU
- Health and Human Rights Info
- HELP Resources
- HK Human Rights. Monitor
- Honduras Forum Switzerland
- Hong Kong Unison
- Human Rights Alert
- Human Rights Center of Azerbaijan
- Human Rights Committee, Norwegian Psychological Association
- Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
- Human Rights Defenders Network-SL
- Human Rights House Foundation
- Human Rights in China
- Human Rights Law Centre
- Human Rights Watch
- Humanists International
- IBAHRI
- IDHEAS, Litigio Estratégico en Derechos Humanos-México
- ILGA World
- ILGA-Europe
- IIsb
- IM Swedish Development Partner
- Independent
- Independent Medico- Legal Unit
- Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation(IMPACT)
- Iniciativa Mesoamericana de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos (IMDefensoras)
- İnsan Hakları Derneği / Human Rights Association - Turkey
- Instituto de liderazgo Simone de Beauvoir AC
- International Action Network for Gender Equity & Law
- International Association for Human Rights Advocacy in Geneva
- International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
- International Commission of Jurists

- International Council of Women
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
- International Indigenous Women's Forum
- International Justice Resource Center
- International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)
- International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
- International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific
- Intersex Human Rights Australia
- Investigacion para el desarrollo
- Irish Council for Civil Liberties
- Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights
- Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society
- JANANEETHI
- Justice for Iran (JFI)
- Karapatan Philippines
- Kenya Human Rights Commission
- Klagsverband/Litigation Association of NGOs against discrimination
- LA VOIX DES SANS VOIX POUR LES DROITS DE L'HOMME (VSV)
- Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret Y Derechos Humanos AC
- Latvian Human Rights Committee (FIDH)
- League for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran (LDDHI)
- Legal Resources Centre
- Ligue Algerienne de Defense des Droits de l'Homme
- LIGUE DES DEFENSEURS REGIONAUX
- Lutheran World Federation
- MADRE
- Maharat Foundation
- MARUAH
- Masimanyane Women's Right's International
- MASUM
- MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN MEDIATORS NETWORK
- Member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- MENA Rights Group
- MenEngage Global Alliance
- Minority Rights Group - Greece
- Minotenk - minoritetspolitisk tenketank
- Mongolia
- Moroccan association for human rights
- Movilización de Mujeres Negras por el Cuidado de Vida y los Territorios Ancestrales. Premio Goldman 2018
- Mujeres Transformando el Mundo
- Musawah
- Muslim Women's Network UK
- National Council of Women New Zealand
- NATIONAL UNION OF DOMESTIC EMPLOYEES
- National Women's Council of Ireland
- Nauru Island Association of NGOs

- NGO Committe for CSW
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- NGO Women for Development
- NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland
- Noon Center for Women and Family Issues
- North Wales Regional Equality Network
- Norwegian Centre against Racism
- Norwegian Helsinki Committee
- Norwegian Humanist Association
- Odhikar, Bangladesh
- ODRI intersectional rights
- Okogun Odigie Safewomb International Foundation (OOSAIF)
- Omega Research Foundation
- OMOD
- Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains
- Oslo Metropolitan University (Oslomet)
- Østsamene
- OutRight Action International
- Oxfam
- Pacific Partnerships on Gender, Climate Change and Sustainable Development (PPGCCSD) -Regional
- PACIFICWIN
- PAIMAN
- Palestinian Center for development And Media Freedoms-MADA
- Partido Revolucionario Febrerista
- PARTNERSHIP FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- PathFinders Limited
- Peace Brigades International
- Peace Foundation Pakistan
- People's Watch - INDIA
- Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates ( PAHRA)
- Piattaforma CEDAW Italia Lavori in corsa
- Plan International
- Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad
- Positive Women (Ukraine)
- Pro Sentret
- Proceso de Comunidades Negras
- Project on Organizing, Development, Education and Research (PODER)
- Promo LEX Association, Moldova
- PUBLIC COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE IN ISRAEL
- Radha Paudel Foundation
- RCMD
- Reacción Climática
- Reactor - Research in Action
- REAMA Network network for the empowerment of women and self help support
- REd de Educación Popular entre Mujeres REPEM -LAC
- Red Nacional de Mujeres - Colombia



- Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos (conformada por 87 organizaciones de 23 entidades federativas de México)
- REDRESS Trust
- Rescue Me-crime prevention
- Réseau International des Droits Humains (RIDH)
- RESPECT Network
- RFSL - The Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights
- Rights for All Women
- Rivers without Boundaries
- International Coalition
- Roma Future z.s.
- ROMEA
- Saami Council Save the Children International
- Sayoni, Singapore
- Secretary
- Shah-Aiym Network
- Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre
- Sistren Theatre Collective
- SOLIDARITE FEMININE POUR LA PAIX ET LE DEVELOPPEMENT INTEGRAL, Ong
- Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan
- SOS Children's Villages International
- Spatium Libertas AC
- Spiralis z.s.
- STIR: Stop Institutional Racism
- Success Capital Organisation
- Swedish Muslims in Cooperation Network
- Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)
- Syrian Network for Human Rights
- Tafawuq Consulting Center for Development
- Tais Plus
- Taternes Landsforening
- TEDS Trust
- Teresian Association
- Terra Mater
- The Advocates for Human Rights
- The Canada OPCAT Project
- The Egyptian initiative for personal rights (EIPR)
- The MiRA Resource Center for black, migrant and refugee women
- The MiRA Resource Center for black, migrant and refugee women inNorway
- The Negev Coexistence Forum
- The Norwegian Bar Association Human Rights Comittee
- The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
- THE NORWEGIAN HUMAN RIGHTS FUND
- The Norwegian Support Committee for Western Sahara
- The Regional Diversity Roundtable
- The YP Foundation
- Think Young Women
- Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

- TRIAL International
- Trócaire
- Tunisian Human Rights League
- UN Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA)
- UNFPA
- Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos - Guatemala
- United Nations Association of Norway
- University
- University of Kent
- University Of The West Indies
- UPR Info
- US Human Rights Network
- Uthema Maldives
- Validity Foundation - Mental Disability Advocacy Centre
- Vision Spring Initiatives
- Vzájemně soužití (Life Together)
- Wenshe Centre for Human Rights Education
- Wi'am
- Woman Inc (Woman Incorporated)
- Women Against Rape Inc.
- WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE
- Women and Media Collective
- Women Peace Network (32701)
- Women's Active Museum on War and Peace(WAM)
- Women's Human Rights Education Institute
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
- Women's Rights Center
- Women's International Solutions for Equality (A WISE Network)
- Women's Link Worldwide
- World Organisation Against Torture
- XUMEK
- Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- YWCA Canada
- جمعية الحقوقيات المصريات

1 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24621&LangID=E>

2 <http://undocs.org/en/A/73/443/Add.1>, para. 26 and <https://www.un.org/en/ga/contributions/honourroll.shtml> accessed on 27 May 2019.

3 <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/gaab4270.doc.htm>

4 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/FundingBudget.aspx>