

Open Letter to Members of the UN's General Assembly Regarding the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs

To: Member States of the UN General Assembly

Cc: President of ECOSOC, President of the General Assembly, President of the Human Rights Council, UN Secretary General.

Excellencies:

We are five months out from elections to the ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations for the 2023-2026 term. These are key elections for all those who value the expertise of civil society and seek to ensure the UN can benefit from it.

The Secretary General has called civil society the UN's 'indispensable partners'. Member States recently committed to boosting partnerships 'to ensure an effective response to our common challenges'. In recommending approval of the participation of non-governmental organisations in a range of UN bodies and processes, the Committee on NGOs plays a key role in facilitating such partnerships. It is essential that the members of the Committee are committed to fulfilling such a task fairly and judiciously.

With this in mind, we would like to request the following, that:

1. States with an interest in facilitating and safeguarding civil society access to and participation in UN processes stand for election to the Committee.
2. Candidates make public the reasons for their candidacy and their commitment to fulfil their responsibilities as members of the Committee, as per ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31.
3. All regions put up competitive slates, as the Asia-Pacific and GRULAC regions did in the last elections for the Committee in 2018. Competitive elections are important to create buy-in to the process and encourage states to be accountable for their commitments.
4. All regions make public candidacies at least two months before the elections to allow for proper consideration of candidates.
5. All ECOSOC members vote (and be encouraged to vote) only for candidates with positive track records in regard to civil society access and participation. Candidates could be assessed in regard to indicators such as support for relevant UN resolutions, such as those on civil society space and human rights defenders; on responses to cases of intimidation and reprisals; and on national level initiatives to safeguard civic space, press freedom – online as offline – and the right to defend human rights.

6. ECOSOC members should consider introducing term limits for membership of the Committee on NGOs, among other reforms encouraging openness and accountability. As with other UN bodies, states should be required to leave the Committee for a specific interval of time after serving for a maximum agreed period. Term limits would encourage greater diversity in membership over time and encourage states to step up as candidates.

The Committee on NGOs is entrusted with the task of facilitating civil society access so that the expertise and experience of civil society partners can enrich and inform UN debates. It needs members that are committed to fulfilling the Committee's mandate in a fair, transparent, non-discriminatory, expeditious and apolitical manner. It falls on all member states – as potential candidates and / or electors – to ensure that the Committee membership is fit for purpose.

Please elect to stand up for civil society!

Yours sincerely,

Aboriginal Drug & Alcohol Council (SA)
Aboriginal Corporation

Acceso a la Justicia

Access Now

Acción Solidaria

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (Addameer)

AfricaNPUD

AfroLatin@Project

Agência Piaget para o Desenvolvimento (APDES)

Agir Ensemble pour les Droits Humains

Ágora México

AIDS Action Europe

Alcohol and Drug Foundation Australia

Al-Erada Organization for Relief and Development

Al-Haq

Al Hub Wa Al Salam Iraqi Globally

Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights

Alliance for Diversity and Equality (AfED)

Alliance Nationale des Communautés pour la Santé Sénégal (ANCS)

Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

ALQST for Human Rights

Altaqwa Association for Women and Child Rights

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)

Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS)

Amnesty International

Andrey Rylkov Foundation for Health and Social Justice

Anhur Foundation

Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU)

Arab Network for Knowledge about Human Rights (ANKH)

ARTICLE 19

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus

Asian Conference on Education & International Development (ACEID)

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
Asociación Civil Red Ciudadana
Association de Parents et Amis de Disparus au Maroc
Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
Association Margina from Bosnia and Herzegovina
Association Mauritanienne pour la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme (AMPDH)
Association of Anti-bribery Management System Practitioners Malaysia
Association pour le Respect du Droit des Populations Autochtones, du Développement Durable et du Droit de l'Homme (ARPA2DH)
ASUD
Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council (AADC)
Autistic Minority International
AWTAD Anti-Corruption Organization
Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRDBH)
Bahrain Transparency Association
Beneby Enterprises, LLC
Bensther Development Foundation
Berkeley Patients Group
Botswana Watch Organization
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
Caleidoscopio Humano
Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Innovative and Pragmatic Development Initiative (CIPDI)

Center for Investigative Reporting (CIN)
Center for Reproductive Rights
Center Women and Modern World
Centre for Human Rights Movement
Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation (CDPE)
Centro de Convivência É de Lei
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)
Centro de Justicia y Paz (Cepaz)
Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN)
Centro InterculturaCidade (ACI)
Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental, A.C. (CEMDA)
Centro por la Justicia y Derechos Humanos de la Costa Atlántica de Nicaragua (CEJUDHCAN)
Centros de Integración Juvenil (CIJ)
Child Rights Connect
CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality
Chronic Illness Advocacy & Awareness Group (CIAAG)
CityWide Drugs Crisis Campaign Ireland
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)
Coalición Boliviana de Colectivos LGBTI
Coalition Ivoirienne des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (CIDDH)
Coexistence Organisation for Relief and Development
Collectif des Associations Contre l'Impunité au Togo (CACIT)
Collectif des Familles de Disparu(e)s en Algérie (CFDA)

Collectif Urgence Toxida	Engineering Association for Development and Environment
Comisión Colombiana de Juristas	Epikieia DDHH
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative	Episteme. Investigación e Intervención Social
Concile Mondiale de Congrès Diplomatiques des Aumoniers pour la Paix Universelle des Droits Humains et Juridiques	ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey
Conectados Pela Vida	Ethiopian Initiative for Human Rights (EIHR)
Conectas Direitos Humanos	Eurasian Harm Reduction Association (EHRA)
Consejo Regional Indígena y Popular de Xpujil	European AIDS Treatment Group
Conselho Indigenista Missionário (CIMI)	European Coalition for Just and Effective Drug Policies (ENCOD)
Corporación Viso Mutop Colombia	Eurothink - Center for European Strategies
Correlation European Harm Reduction Network	Expert Forum (EFOR)
Czech AIDS Help Society	FAAAT Think & Do Tank
DaMigra	Fédération Addiction
Dar Africa	Fédération Euro-Méditerranéenne Contre les Disparitions Forcées (FEMED)
Darya Organization for Developing Women and Community	Fédération Internationale pour les Droits Humains (FIDH)
Dawei Probono Lawyer Network	FIACAT
DefendDefenders - East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project	Fields of Green for ALL
Derechos Humanos y Litigio Estratégico Mexicano (DLM - Mexico)	F'INE Pasifika Aotearoa Trust
Deutsche Aidshilfe	Forum Droghe
Dianova International	Forum Réfugiés-Cosi
DRCNet Foundation Inc	Fòs Feminista
Drug Policy Network South East Europe	Franciscans International
Društvo AREAL	Fundação Portuguesa "A Comunidade Contra a SIDA" (FPCCSIDA)
Elternkreis Wien Verein zur Förderung der Selbsthilfe für Angehörige von Suchtkranken	Fundación de Ayuda contra la Drogadicción (FAD)
Empowerment for Sustainable Livelihood (EFSL)	Fundación Gente Positiva CR
	Fundación Multitudes
	Fundación Red por la Infancia

Fundamental Human Rights & Rural Development Association FHRDA	Indonesian Harm Reduction Network (JANGKAR)
Global Action for Trans Equality	Institute for Development of Freedom of Information
Global Black Gay Men Connect (GBGMC)	Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)
Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect	Institute of Legislative Ideas
Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime	Integrity Initiatives International
Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)	Intercambios Asociación Civil
Global Justice Center	International Accountability Project
Green Crescent Ethiopia	International Association of Applied Psychology
Green Development Advocates (GDA)	International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)
Gulf Centre for Human Rights	International Center for Ethnobotanical Education, Research, and Service (ICEERS)
Guyanese Association of Harm Reduction (AGRRR)	International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Harm Reduction Australia (HRA)	International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
Harm Reduction International	International Council of Women; National Council of Women Austria
Health Poverty Action	International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN)
Healthy Options Project Skopje (HOPS)	International Drug Law Advocacy and Resource Center (IDLARC)
Hearts On Venezuela	International Drug Policy Consortium
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights	International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
Hepatitis Australia	International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights (Race and Equality)
HIV Justice Network	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA World)
HIV Legal Network	International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)
Hope and Trust	International Movement for Advancement of Education Culture Social & Economic Development (IMAECSSED)
HPLGBT	
Human Rights Campaign	
Human Rights Defenders Network – Sierra Leone (HRDN-SL)	
Human Rights House Foundation	
Human Rights Watch	
Humanists International	
IFEX	

International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific

Iranti South Africa

Iraqi Al-Amal Association

Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights

Japan Advocacy Network for Drug Policy

Jeunesse pour une Nouvelle Société (JNS)

Jordan Transparency Center

Just Fair

Justice for All

Justitia Center for Legal Protection of Human Rights in Algeria

Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (Campaign Against Homophobia)

Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)

Khairat Al-Nahraeen of Human Organization

Kilómetro 0

KIOS Foundation

Kuchlak Welfare Society (KWS) Balochistan Pakistan

Laboratorio de Paz

LakanBini Advocates Pilipinas

Larsa Organization

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC)

LEAP Europe

Legal Resources Centre (LRC)

Louisiana Veterans for Medical Cannabis

Maecenata Foundation

Mainline Foundation

Mangfoldhuset

MANODIVERSA

Mediterranean Dialogue Center

MENA Rights Group

Mesa de Trabajo Nacional (MTN)

México Unido Contra la Delincuencia (MUCD)

Mother and Child Development Organization (MCDO)

Mother Teresa Foundation

Movement for Democracy and Prosperity in Azerbaijan

Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies Canada

Mwatana for Human Rights

Namibia Diverse Women's Association (NDWA)

Narasha Community Development Group

Narconon Nigeria Initiative

National Birth Equity Collaborative (NBEC)

Neengar Society

Network of the Independent Commission for Human Rights in North Africa (CIDH AFRICA)

New York NGO Committee on Drugs

No Borders Humanity Organization (NBH)

NORML France

Northern Citizen Community Board (NCCB)

Observatorio de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad de Los Andes

Observatório de Economia e Gestão de Fraude (OBEGEF)

Observatorio Penal Mérida (OPEM DDHH)

OpenMedia

Option2world Initiative Against Drug Abuse

Organization for Addiction Prevention Treatment and Rehabilitation (OAPTAR)

OutRight Action International

Oyu Tolgoi Watch

Pan Africa ILGA (PAI)

Paropakar Primary Health Care Centre PPUK

Partnership for Justice, Nigeria

Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development (PaWED)

Peace Track Initiative (PTI)

Pink Human Rights Defender NGO

Pioneer Filipino Transgender Men Movement

Plan International

Planet Ally

Plateforme Droits de l'Homme (PDH)

Pont de la Solidarité

Positiiviset ry HivFinland

Positive Voice

Positive Women

Project on Organizing, Development, Education, and Research (PODER)

Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Lesbian and Bisexual Women (PETAL)

Protección Internacional Mesoamérica

Proyecto Centros de Atención Laboral, Escuela Nacional Sindical, Colombia

Purity Care Investment

Queer Singapore

Rainbow Community Kampuchea Organisation (RoCK)

Rainbow Pride Foundation (RPF)

Recovering Justice

Recovering Nepal (RN)

Red Internacional de Derechos Humanos (RIDH, Suiza/Ginebra)

Rede Nacional de Mulheres Negras no Combate á Violência

ReLeaf Malta

Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF)

Research Institute Without Walls

Réseau Nigérien des Défenseurs des Droits Humains (RNDDH)

Réseau Ouest Africain des Défenseurs des Droits Humains

REVS PLUS

Rights Realization Centre (RRC)

Rivers Without Boundaries Coalition - Mongolia

Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS)

Sadaa Center for Human Development

Safoi Konibodom

SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights (SALAM DHR)

San Patrignano Foundation

SEDRA-Federación de Planificación Familiar (SEDRA-FPFE)

Shine Africa Foundation - Teso (SAF-TESO)

Sisters of Charity Federation

Skilled Iraqi Woman Foundation

Social Research & Evaluation Pty Limited

Solace Initiative

Solidarité Internationale LGBTQI

SOS Africaines en Danger

South Asian Drugs and Addictions Research Council
Spero
Students for Sensible Drug Policy
Sudanese Women Rights Action
Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)
Ta'afi Initiative Syria
The Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation
The Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya (GALCK)
The Global Alliance for LGBT Education (GALE)
The Global Interfaith Network (GIN-SSOGIE)
The Good Lobby
The Institute for Studies of Society, Economy & Environment (iSEE)
The International Youth Parliament (IYP)
The Jus Semper Global Alliance
The Lesbian and Gay Association of Liberia (LEGAL)
The National Organization of Yemeni Reporters SADA
The Stockholm Drug Users Union
The WPS Group
Together for Responsible Use and Cannabis Education (TRUCE)
Tournons La Page
Trans* Support Organization - Kenya
Transform Drug Policy Foundation
Transformation Self Motivation (TSM) Consultants
Transgender Europe (TGEU)
Transparency International
Transparency International Taiwan

Transvanilla Transgender Association
Uganda Key Populations Consortium (UKPC)
Ukrainian Network of People who Use Drugs (PUD.UA/ VOLNA)
Ukrainian Network of Women who Use Drugs (UNWUD)
UNANIMA International
UNCAC Coalition
Unchained At Last
Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEQUA)
UNIDOS - Rede Nacional de Redução de Danos
Union contre la Co-infection VIH/Hépatites/Tuberculose (UNICO HIV/HV/TB)
Union for Equity and Health, Moldova
Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA)
Unitarian Universalist Association
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Nations Association, UK
United Nations Program, Occidental College
Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
Urnas Abiertas
Uzbek Forum for Human Rights
Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC)
VIVAT International
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)
West Africa Drug Policy Network (WADPN)

West African Human Rights Defenders'
Network

Western Pacific Palliative Care Advocacy
Network; Australasian Palliative Link
International

Women Supporting Women Association
(WSW)

Women Nest

Women's Centre for Legal Aid and
Counselling (WCLAC)

Women's Human Rights International
Association

World Organisation Against Torture
(OMCT)

World Organization Safety Montenegro

Yemeni Youth Forum for Peace

Young Feminist Europe

Young Queer Alliance

Youth for Human Rights Pakistan

Youth RISE

مؤسسة الحق لحقوق الانسان - العراق

مؤسسة المرأة العراقية الماهرة

مؤسسة نخبة المستقبل لحقوق الانسان

منظمة سما للدعم النفسي والاجتماعي -حقوق الانسان

منظمة نور الرحمه لحقوق الانسان