

Candidature of Ireland to the United Nations Human Rights Council, 2027 – 2029

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

Ireland's candidature for membership of the Human Rights Council from 2027 – 2029 reflects an unwavering commitment to human rights, multilateralism and the international legal order, and to the Human Rights Council as the primary inter-governmental body responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights. Ireland remains determined to uphold and strengthen the institutions that protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ireland is a consistent voice and committed partner for human rights. From experience of conflict and peacebuilding on the island of Ireland, Ireland knows that the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights is essential for a secure, prosperous and more peaceful world. Ireland will continue to engage across the agenda of the Human Rights Council in an open and constructive way with Members and non-Member States, including listening to the voices of institutions and civil society from across all regions, to bolster international human rights and the multilateral system.

Ireland will continue to advocate for a strengthened, well-funded human rights pillar in the ongoing UN reform process, and for the critical role of the Human Rights Council in promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Ireland will continue to insist upon adequate and sustainable funding for the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review, for the treaty bodies, for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and for Special Procedures. Ireland commits to providing continued core funding to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ireland is committed to a strong and effective Human Rights Council capable of delivering on its mandate. Ireland supports UN reform, including rationalisation efforts at the Human Rights Council and is committed to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the Human Rights Council. In this spirit, Ireland will continue to present the biennial civil society space resolution developed during the previous membership and endeavours to bring no additional thematic resolutions during membership.

Ireland remains committed to the Universal Periodic Review as the primary peer review mechanism for human rights. Ireland pledges to continue principled and balanced engagement on all reviews.

Ireland strongly supports and will continue to defend the independence of UN Special Procedures mandate holders. Ireland will continue to provide voluntary funding support to the Coordination Committee for Special Procedures.

In parallel with membership of the Human Rights Council, Ireland will continue its active engagement in the Third Committee of the General Assembly. Ireland commits to continued support for other multilateral fora addressing and promoting human rights, including UN bodies such as the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as through membership of the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ireland will continue to advocate for and promote the inclusion of youth voices and engagement at the UN, including through supporting the participation of UN Youth Delegates.

Ireland is committed to supporting National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and to strengthening human rights governance by supporting initiatives to build democratic systems of government and effective, accountable institutions for service delivery, in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Ireland remains committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to the target of providing 0.7% of GNI to Official Development Assistance. Ireland will work with other UN Member States, in particular with developing countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and other stakeholders to explore how the Human Rights Council can address the interlocking crises facing today's world, including the adverse impacts of climate change on fundamental human rights. Ireland will continue to support the full engagement of LDCs and SIDS at the Human Rights Council, including through the OHCHR LDC/ SIDS trust fund.

Ireland will focus on five thematic priorities, drawn from across civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, with the following pledges and commitments for membership of the Human Rights Council.

The promotion and protection of civil society space and human rights defenders

Ireland commits to consistent support for civil society and for human rights defenders as a member of the Human Rights Council. A strong, independent and inclusive civil society empowers local actors, enhances good governance and amplifies the voices of all parts of society. Human rights defenders, through their essential work, play a key role in the protection and promotion of human rights, both in their own countries and internationally. Ireland commits to maintaining support for civil society's vital role in conflict-affected contexts as it works to resolve conflict and promote inclusive peace, including by drawing on Ireland's experience of the peace process in Northern Ireland. As a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- **To lead on the Civil Society Space Resolution at the Human Rights Council, in 2027 and 2029;**

- To advocate for the prevention of and address harassment and reprisals against individuals and groups cooperating with the UN, including through awareness raising in both Geneva and New York fora;
- To maintain support for civil society and human rights defenders globally, through Ireland's Embassy network and with targeted funding and partnerships;
- To continue the operation of Ireland's dedicated humanitarian visa scheme for human rights defenders;
- To review and update Guidelines for Ireland's Embassies on human rights defenders;
- To continue to be a strong advocate for the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly, opinion and expression, including through support for the mandates of the Special Rapporteurs.

The Right to Adequate Food

The fight for food security is being lost. This is being driven by broader humanitarian crises fuelled by conflict, climate change and geopolitical and economic dynamics. Conscious of Ireland's own history of famine, and of the life-threatening consequences of food insecurity and malnutrition, as a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- To promote the right to adequate food, and the fundamental right to be free from hunger across the work of the Human Rights Council;
- To prioritise the right to adequate food through international development cooperation, including interventions in support of inclusive, resilient and sustainable food systems with a view to promoting inclusive economic growth and alleviating poverty;
- To address hunger and malnutrition globally with a particular focus on women and children, reaching the furthest behind first, including through a commitment to €250 million annually for nutrition interventions for four years (2026-2029) announced at the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris in 2025;
- To work with diverse partners to foster political will, secure financing, support research and promote cross-sector collaboration in advancing food security and addressing malnutrition.

Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Cairo Declaration and Programme of Action on Population and Development, Ireland has been a consistent and committed advocate for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Ireland strives to ensure the rights of all women and girls are protected and recognised as fundamental for sustainable social and economic growth and development. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, gender equality and the empowerment of

women and girls is a priority for Ireland, and a core tenet of its human rights, peacebuilding and development cooperation work. As a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- To promote gender equality across the Human Rights Council and in other multilateral fora;
- To promote and advance the Women, Peace and Security Agenda through discussions at the Human Rights Council;
- To support and engage with feminist movements and women's rights organisations in driving progress on gender equality and preventing sexual and gender-based violence including conflict-related sexual violence;
- To continue to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and to focus on women's and girls' health, in particular on reducing unintended pregnancies and preventable maternal deaths, including in conflict and humanitarian settings;
- To support quality education for girls including through development cooperation programmes;
- To commit to an ambitious target for bilateral official development assistance advancing gender equality.

The Rights of LGBTIQ+ persons

Ireland has undergone significant social change and transformation in recent decades. Informed by this positive experience, Ireland advocates strongly for the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons in all bilateral and multilateral engagement, in international fora and through membership of international groups. As a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- To promote the fundamental principle of equality and non-discrimination, and be a strong voice for the protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons;
- To use engagement at the Human Rights Council, including the Universal Periodic Review, to advocate for the decriminalisation of same-sex relations and the repeal of discriminatory legal provisions;
- To work to alleviate the impact that increased restrictions on civil society space are having on LGBTIQ+ civil society;
- To promote and protect the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons through development cooperation funding;
- To contribute to the Global Resources Report and continue to map Ireland's Official Development Assistance funding targeted towards LGBTIQ+ focused organisations and activities.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Conflict

Conflict has a disproportionate impact on persons with disabilities, including those living with existing disabilities and for those who acquire a disability due to the impact of conflict. Ireland takes a human rights-based approach to disability across foreign policy engagement, with a focus on rights, protection, access to humanitarian assistance, disarmament, victim assistance, and the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in conflict resolution and peace building. As a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- **To highlight the rights of persons with disabilities in conflict and advocate for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;**
- **To promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities at the Human Rights Council and across the UN;**
- **To strengthen the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Ireland's humanitarian engagement, including through endorsement of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action;**
- **To encourage the integration of the rights of persons with disabilities into victim assistance and post-conflict recovery efforts in line with the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA);**
- **To promote the protection of the rights of women with disabilities in conflict situations through the work of the Human Rights Council;**
- **To work with partners to implement fully the positive obligations relating to victim assistance and support in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.**

Advancing Human Rights in Ireland

Ireland, as a consistent and committed partner on human rights, strives for coherence and consistency in its approach to the protection and promotion of human rights at home and abroad. Ireland has ratified seven of the core international human rights treaties and is firmly committed to complying with its international obligations, including through timely reporting and engagement with the relevant UN Treaty Monitoring Bodies. Ireland has issued a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council to visit Ireland, and remains committed to open and constructive engagement.

Ireland has taken a pro-active approach to implementation of national human rights, equality and non-discrimination obligations. In parallel with membership of the Human Rights Council, it commits to work to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in Ireland on an ongoing basis. As a member of the Human Rights Council,

Ireland pledges:

- To uphold the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights across national and international policies, and legislation;
- To continue work in support of NHRIs in partner countries, as Ireland greatly values the accountability and oversight function of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission for Ireland's human rights work;
- To fully engage with and consult civil society in the development of international and national policy and strategy on human rights issues, through the standing Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee on Human Rights and the Annual Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Human Rights Forum;
- To actively participate in the UPR, including through full consideration of recommendations received during Ireland's review under the 53rd Session in November 2026;
- To ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture;
- To ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- To continue to actively consider withdrawing Ireland's remaining reservations to international human rights treaties;
- To finalise and publish the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, 2026 - 2030.

Ireland has developed, and is committed to the full implementation of, the following National Strategies and their related Action plans:

- *National Housing Strategy for Disabled People, 2022-2027*
- *National Action Plan Against Racism, 2023 – 2027*
- *Young Ireland: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2023-2028*
- *National LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy II, 2024 - 2028*
- *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy II, 2024 - 2028*
- *National Strategy for Women and Girls, 2025 - 2030*
- *National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People, 2025 - 2030*
- *National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security, 2025 – 2030*
- *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development to 2030*

Ireland has a longstanding, principled history of consistent and committed partnership on human rights, which will continue throughout our membership. As a member of the Human Rights Council, Ireland will listen to all voices, champion the universal, indivisible and interdependent nature of human rights and support the integrity of the multilateral human rights system, in unprecedented times.