



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

ICSFT AGENDA OF JUNE 2019 SESSION | HRC41



The 41st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) is opened this week in Geneva. The session will last three weeks, from 24 June and ending on 12 July 2019.

The Human Rights Council session is an opportunity for ICSFT to leverage human rights perspectives on the Middle East to bring visibility to on-the-ground realities and bridge the gap between what happens in the international bodies and on the ground.

The HRC session provide a space for civil society and human right organizations like ICSFT to bring their advocacy and address the root causes for human rights

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violations with the aim of elevating the protection and promotion of human rights according to international standards. The HRC session is one of the avenues that we use to facilitate access of human rights defenders and organizations from the Middle East to the international fora. Additionally we present our human rights concerns in our priority countries including, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Palestine, and Yemen to the council in the form of reports, submissions and statements. We bring analysis on the topics discussed, participate in debates, influence negotiations, and shape responses to the outcomes of the sessions. ICSFT along with its partner organizations will actively engage with relevant stakeholders, delegations and UN organs to make sure that the current human rights situation in the Middle East is not forgotten and on the agenda.

During this session, we will deliver oral statements under agenda item 3 and 4 with a specific focus on the human rights situation in Syria, Palestine, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Yemen. As well we will take the council's floor to deliver oral statements on reprisals, Human Rights Defenders, and country focused human rights situations that needs the council's attention. Prior to the start of the session we have submitted five written statements under our advocacy priority topics which can be found on the HRC extranet and our website. As per the usual ICSFT will actively engage with the council through different advocacy outlets including bilateral and multi-lateral meetings with relevant stakeholders.

Through our advocacy we will highlight the current human rights situations in the countries mentioned above and provide concrete recommendations to various national and international actors on how to end repression and impunity, and achieve sustainable peace, conflict prevention and ensure effective political processes. Further we will highlight the significant contribution of Human Rights Defenders, civil society and journalists in promoting human rights ideals and holding governments' accountable to their human rights commitments, and call

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the international community, particularly the Human Rights Council, donors and influential States, to end impunity and promote the meaningful participation of HRDs and civil society in the peace process. Most importantly, in doing so, we will remind countries of their human rights obligations, whether they are directly implicated in an armed conflict, or indirectly contributing to it.

We will reiterate our call on States to advance a HRC resolutions establishing a monitoring mechanism over the human rights violations in the above mentioned GCC countries, and call explicitly for the immediate and unconditional release of all human rights defenders including the detained women human rights defenders and to drop all charges against them, including those provisionally released.

#HRC41 | Thematic areas of interest

Reprisals

Reports of cases of intimidation and reprisal against those cooperating or seeking to cooperate with the UN not only continue, but grow. ICFST remains deeply concerned about reprisals against HRDs and civil society actors who try to engage with UN mechanisms, and consistent in its calls for all States and the Council to do more to address the situation. I line with previous efforts to remedy the situation, we urge the council to publicly identify and denounce specific instances of reprisals by issuing formal statements, conducting press-briefings, corresponding directly with the State concerned, and pressuring the State concerned to investigate, hold the perpetrators accountable and report back to the Council on action taken.

Other thematic interests include the reports of:

- The Special Rapporteur on independence of **judges and lawyers**

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- The Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of **peaceful assembly and association** (mandate renewal, reports include country visits to Tunisia and Armenia)
- The Special Rapporteur on **extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions** and right to **education**
- The Special Rapporteur on **freedom of opinion and expression** (including thematic report on surveillance companies and country visit report to Ecuador)

Resolutions tabled at the #HRC41 that are of ICSFT's interest

1. Rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (Czech Republic, Indonesia, Lithuania, Maldives, Mexico)
2. New and emerging and digital technologies and human rights (Republic of Korea, Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Morocco, Singapore)
3. Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (Canada)
4. The human rights situation in Syria

How to follow ICSFT during the 41st Session of the HRC?

We will publish our statements as they are published in our advocacy document archive.

Stay tuned on our work at the 41st HRC by following us on twitter @icsft #hrc41, and visit our website www.icsft.net

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