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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 27 June 2019 from the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly and, with reference to its announcement in December 2016 of its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the period 2020–2022, has the honour to enclose the voluntary pledges and commitments of the Government of Brazil for the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [60/251](#) (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Brazil would be grateful if the present note and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

* [A/74/50](#).



Annex to the note verbale dated 27 June 2019 from the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Brazil to the Human Rights Council, 2020–2022

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/251](#)

Brazil and human rights

1. The unwavering commitment of Brazil to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms is enshrined in the Federal Constitution. The Constitution of Brazil, known as the “Citizen Constitution”, establishes human dignity as a fundamental cornerstone of the Republic (art. 1). It also incorporates the main provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as those of the other human rights treaties ratified by Brazil (arts. 5 and 6). The Constitution establishes that the international relations of Brazil are governed by, inter alia, the principles of the prevalence of human rights, the self-determination of peoples, the defence of peace, the repudiation of terrorism and racism and the granting of political asylum (art. 4).

2. Brazil is determined to promote and respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all and protect against all forms of discrimination, regardless of origin, race, sex, colour, age or religion. This commitment is embedded in the decision to strengthen the Ministry of Human Rights, which has been renamed the Ministry of Women, the Family and Human Rights under the new public administration structure. The new Ministry has a broader mandate and a unified structure, which has allowed it to develop comprehensive human rights-oriented public policies that have a real impact on the lives of Brazilians. The Government is conscious that the protection of human rights is an inherent value of the democratic State of Brazil and the basis for the elaboration and implementation of all public policies.

3. Despite the progress made on human rights in the country, Brazil still faces considerable challenges on several fronts. The Government reaffirms its determination to defend the right to life and the security of persons; to promote the rights of women, including by combating violence against women; to guarantee the well-being and the best interests of children; to protect the family and strengthen family ties; to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities; and to prioritize attention to older persons, with a human rights perspective. The Government will take effective action to ensure the provision of appropriate education and health care to all Brazilians without distinction. It will strengthen efforts to ensure freedom of expression and religion and to combat racism and racial discrimination in all its forms, as well as violence and discrimination against vulnerable groups. The rights of indigenous peoples will enjoy the full protection of the Brazilian State, which will act firmly to protect human rights defenders, whose work contributes to the full enjoyment of human rights by all.

4. The Government will continue to hold discussions and consultations with local and State authorities, as well as with non-governmental and civil society organizations from all regions, in the process of developing, implementing and assessing human rights policies. It will also encourage the participation and engagement of the legislative and judiciary branches, in accordance with their constitutional competences and with respect to the system of checks and balances and the principle of separation of powers, as provided in the Constitution. The

Government welcomes public debate to guide human rights policies at both the domestic and international levels.

Brazil and the Human Rights Council

5. The commitment of Brazil to the international human rights system dates back to the very beginning of the United Nations. It should be recalled that the Brazilian delegation played a decisive role in incorporating the clause that provides for equality between men and women into the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations. Brazil also engaged meaningfully in the negotiations on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A Brazilian delegate was entrusted with presenting the final draft to the third session of the General Assembly in 1948. Brazil was the first country to sign the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in 1966, and since then has ratified nearly all multilateral human rights treaties. In the inter-American system, Brazil played a leading role in the negotiation of several treaties, such as the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons. Brazil recognizes the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Furthermore, Brazil has extended a standing invitation to all of the thematic special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

6. Brazil is a founding member of the Human Rights Council, a central body in the United Nations human rights system. Brazil has sought to actively participate in the Council, in accordance with the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, by strengthening dialogue, consensus-building and international cooperation. Brazil reaffirms its determination to participate in the Council's activities, which are based on a non-selective, objective and universal approach to human rights, avoiding politicization and double standards. We are determined to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council in a constructive and positive way.

7. If elected, Brazil will remain active in discussing the main substantive issues on the agenda of the Human Rights Council. It will maintain its engagement in the debates on the right to privacy in the digital age and the full enjoyment of human rights on the Internet. It will follow up on the proposals in defence of the right to health, including the fight against HIV/AIDS and the promotion of the right to mental health. Brazil will also foster initiatives on the fight against racism and racial discrimination. It will pay special attention to issues related to combating violence and discrimination against people in situations of vulnerability, regardless of the motivation. Brazil will remain a member of the core groups of resolutions on different subjects, such as ensuring the safety of journalists; promoting sports and the Olympic ideal; combating corruption; and facilitating technical cooperation, among others.

8. In the next three years, Brazil will maintain a high level of dialogue with the mechanisms and subsidiary bodies of the Human Rights Council. Accordingly, the country reaffirms its decision to maintain a standing invitation to the thematic special procedures of the Council that has been in effect since 2001. Brazil also renews its commitment to developing a constructive dialogue with the special rapporteurs, independent experts and other stakeholders on the main issues on the international agenda. It will remain engaged in the debates held in the Human Rights Council, as well as in the negotiation of initiatives brought to the body's attention. Whenever possible, Brazil will seek to promote understanding among actors from different regions, legal traditions and cultures in order to achieve consensus, tolerance and mutual understanding.

Voluntary pledges and commitments

International human rights system

9. Brazil defends the strengthening of both the international human rights system and the Human Rights Council. In the next three years, Brazil will engage in debates to promote better efficacy and effectiveness in the work of the Human Rights Council, based on its current institutional framework. Furthermore, it will take part in discussions about the status of the Human Rights Council within the United Nations system. Whenever possible, Brazil will favour a preventive and cooperative approach in the deliberations of the Human Rights Council.

Women's rights

10. The Government of Brazil acknowledges the central role of women in ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights. In its next term, Brazil will continue to foster concrete national and international initiatives to guarantee and promote the human rights of women and girls. Brazil will base its actions on its Constitution, which establishes that men and women are equal in rights and obligations.

Violence against women

11. In Brazil, policies that protect and defend women's rights are a priority. Brazil will spare no effort in fighting discrimination and violence against women. In this regard, it will support, both nationally and internationally, programmes and initiatives aimed at preventing, punishing and eradicating discrimination and violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, notably femicide and sexual harassment.

Children and adolescents

12. Brazil seeks to ensure the full protection of children and adolescents in practice and in law. It has implemented comprehensive policies aimed at guaranteeing the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social development of children and adolescents in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the next three years, Brazil will be committed to advancing measures and policies for the promotion and protection of the rights of children, adolescents and their families, in order to ensure their best interests and well-being. It will focus on the fight against violence, sexual exploitation and child labour, as well as on the protection of the rights of the child in the digital environment. Additionally, Brazil will support initiatives aimed at reducing death rates among children and adolescents, improving the situation of youth in conflict with the law and protecting children in early childhood.

Youth

13. The Government of Brazil has worked to place young people at the centre of the public agenda by recognizing them as rights holders. To this end, the Government will foster the autonomy of young people; their participation in social and political spheres and the development of the country; their well-being; respect for their identity and diversity; safety; and non-discrimination. Brazil reaffirms its commitment to implementing and promoting, at the national and international levels, strategies that provide an adequate approach to issues affecting youth, as well as real opportunities for their full, effective, constructive and sustainable participation in society. Moreover, we highlight the engagement of Brazil in promoting public policies for the digital inclusion of young people, preparing them for the future of work.

Family

14. The Government of Brazil defends the strengthening of family ties using a human rights-based approach. It has therefore developed cross-cutting public policies with families acting as focal points for the State's activities. Within the Human Rights Council, Brazil is committed to supporting initiatives to strengthen family structures and relationships, with special consideration given to the different sociocultural and economic circumstances of families, mainly those in situations of vulnerability.

Persons with disabilities

15. Measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities have been intensified in the current Administration. Inclusion is the watchword for the Government. We are committed to moving forward with the inclusion of persons with disabilities in schools and the labour market and with accessibility in cities. Brazil will continue to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities at the national and international levels in order to ensure their full participation in society and to realize the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Government will ensure that persons with disabilities are at the centre of all decisions that affect them.

Persons in situations of vulnerability

16. The national human rights policy prioritizes the protection of the rights of persons in situations of vulnerability. In the next mandate, Brazil reiterates its determination to combat all forms of violence and discrimination, especially against groups and people in situations of vulnerability. We are committed to strengthening and adopting concrete measures, both internally and internationally, to promote and respect the principles of equality and non-discrimination and to combat all forms of violence.

Indigenous peoples

17. Brazil supports comprehensive public policies aimed at the sustainable development of indigenous populations and has worked to guarantee the differentiated access of indigenous peoples to social and citizenship rights. We will remain committed to guaranteeing, promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, in line with Brazil's international commitments, as well as to ensuring essential public services for indigenous communities. At the Council, Brazil will continue to participate in the main initiatives concerning indigenous peoples and will maintain high-level dialogues with the relevant mechanisms.

Freedom of religion

18. Brazil values its rich diversity, which is the result of centuries of interaction between different cultures, religions and traditions. During the next term, we will continue to support, adopt, strengthen and promote measures that foster a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual understanding. Brazil is committed to protecting and respecting all forms of religious expression, including the freedom to not have any religion, as well as to promoting and protecting the human rights of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

Racism

19. Brazil prioritizes the implementation of effective programmes and policies against ethnic and racial discrimination in order to ensure respect for the country's important legislative legacy. We will continue to work to prevent and combat racism,

racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We reaffirm our support for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent and the negotiation of a United Nations declaration on the promotion and full respect for human rights of people of African descent. Furthermore, the Government is committed to strengthening the agenda for the promotion and protection of the rights of traditional peoples and communities.

Internet

20. Brazil understands that the rights that people have offline must also be protected online. We are determined to continue to support and promote initiatives that contribute to building trust, protecting and respecting all human rights online and realizing the full potential of the Internet. We believe that the Internet contributes to development and innovation. In order to achieve such goals, it is necessary to foster cooperation between governments, civil society, the private sector and the technical and academic communities.

Freedom of expression

21. Brazil reiterates its understanding that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression is a fundamental pillar of a free and democratic society. We will remain committed to fostering an environment that is conducive to the enjoyment of freedom of expression, including on the Internet, and condemning all forms of violence related to the expression of opinions. We will continue to support initiatives in this regard in the Human Rights Council.

Right to privacy

22. Brazil considers that efforts to protect, promote and ensure respect for the right to privacy benefit from the sustained engagement of all stakeholders, including states, businesses, international organizations and civil society. In the Council, we will continue to support and implement initiatives that seek to respect and protect the right to privacy, especially in the context of digital communications. We will continue to engage in discussions on policies and measures related to the protection of personal data and online privacy in order to prevent and combat the arbitrary or illegal collection, processing, use or dissemination of data on the Internet that may violate human rights.

Human rights defenders

23. Brazil reiterates its commitment to the protection of human rights defenders, who contribute in a relevant and courageous way to the promotion and protection of human rights. Over the next three years, we will continue to support and promote concrete measures to ensure that human rights defenders have a safe and supportive environment to ensure that they can work in safety and without obstacles.

Older persons

24. Brazil pays particular attention, from a human rights standpoint, to the growing number of older persons in its population. In this context, the country remains determined to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against older persons and to promote their full and effective participation in economic, political and social life. It also remains committed to the negotiation of an international legal instrument on the rights of older persons, while maintaining the promotion of active and healthy ageing as a priority.

Social inclusion

25. The Brazilian Government has developed active public policies to support people in situations of social vulnerability in order to fully realize their economic, social and cultural rights. If elected to the Council, we will continue to support the implementation of initiatives that promote social inclusion, equity and inclusive education, in order to promote better standards of living and increase the well-being of all citizens. The Government supports the basic premise of inclusion for all in order to ensure that no one is left behind.

Right to health

26. In Brazil, everyone has the right to universal and free access to the public health service without discrimination. In the Council, we will remain committed to initiatives to promote and protect the full and effective enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, including on issues such as access to medicines.

Combating corruption

27. In the light of the undeniable link between corruption and human rights violations, Brazil considers that the fight against corruption is consistent with measures aimed at the realization of fundamental rights. We will seek to foster, nationally and internationally, measures and practices to prevent corruption and its impact on the enjoyment of human rights, ensuring transparency, access to public information, accountability, non-discrimination and meaningful participation in public affairs.

Universal periodic review

28. Brazil considers the universal periodic review to constitute an important institutional instrument that ensures the objective, transparent, constructive, non-politicized, non-confrontational and non-selective treatment of human rights within the framework of the multilateral system. Brazil participated directly in its creation and remains fully committed to its success and to strengthening national reviews under the mechanism. We reiterate our determination to implement effectively the recommendations accepted by Brazil during the review process. We reaffirm our commitment to present a midterm report in 2019 concerning the recommendations accepted by Brazil in the third cycle of the universal periodic review.

Reports to human rights treaty bodies

29. Brazil supports the human rights treaty bodies, which are a valuable part of the United Nations human rights system. We reaffirm our commitment, in the current Administration, to present and keep up to date all periodic reports owed to the human rights treaty bodies, as well as to monitor the implementation of their recommendations.