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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 3 May 2022 from the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly and has the honour to refer to the candidature of Romania for election to the Human Rights Council, for the term 2023–2025, at the elections to be held during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, in October 2022.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/251](#), the Government of Romania has the honour to submit herewith the voluntary pledges and commitments of Romania, reaffirming its unwavering commitment to the promotion of and respect for all human rights and its active engagement in advancing the work of the Human Rights Council to fulfil its core objectives (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations would be grateful if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

* [A/77/50](#).



Annex to the note verbale dated 3 May 2022 from the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Romania to the Human Rights Council, 2023–2025

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

1. Romania has the honour to present its candidacy to the Human Rights Council, for the term 2023–2025. Our willingness to act as a fully fledged member of the Human Rights Council is rooted in the determination to bring our contribution to peace and security, development and human rights, the three interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of the United Nations.
2. Romania has so far served twice in the Council, during the first three years after its establishment, beginning with 2006, and, more recently, between 2011 and 2014. Inspired by our experience and lessons learned from our previous tenures, as well as by our membership in other United Nations bodies, we will continue to work, if elected, for a strong, cohesive, inclusive, well-functioning and efficient Human Rights Council, capable of tackling all current and emerging challenges.
3. The democratic values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the core human rights instruments, constantly reaffirmed in resolutions and statements, provide the basic tools needed for protection against human rights violations and abuses. Romania will continue to advocate for their respect and fight for their full achievement.
4. Romania's candidature, part of our wider global engagement for democracy and human rights, is based upon, and consistent with, our commitment to multilateralism, to the rules-based international order and to the comprehensive approach to peace and security.
5. As part of this approach, Romania is genuinely committed to promoting and protecting human rights at all levels: at home, in our region (as a member of the European Union, of the Council of Europe and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and worldwide. It is our firm conviction that human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible and interrelated and that there is no human dignity without human rights.
6. Romania has ratified almost all major international treaties and protocols in the field of human rights: the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at the abolition of the death penalty; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
7. The provisions of all human rights treaties to which Romania is a party, as well as those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are directly applicable into Romanian law. Furthermore, in accordance with the Romanian Constitution, international covenants or treaties on fundamental human rights take

precedence over domestic legislation should there be any inconsistencies between them, except where the Constitution or national law provide for more favourable conditions.

8. Romania is committed to engaging actively in the Human Rights Council review, in order to contribute to the consolidation of the Council's effectiveness in protecting and promoting human rights.

9. Romania fully supports the mandate, independence and activity of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and will back up the Office's paramount work carried out worldwide in defence of human dignity and fundamental rights and values. We remain committed to strengthening and supporting the Special Procedures and other United Nations human rights mechanisms and will encourage all member States to cooperate with them and ensure their adequate funding.

10. Romania has issued a standing invitation to the Special Procedures and has a track record of excellent cooperation with the special mandate holders regarding the situation of human rights in our country.

11. Throughout all of the examination cycles, Romania demonstrated an open and constructive engagement in the universal periodic review mechanism and reported on measures taken to follow up on the recommendations received. We will closely watch implementation progress and pledge to be guided by them and by other recommendations received from the United Nations treaty bodies when developing national legislation and policies. We will continue to support the strengthening of the universal periodic review process, as an effective reporting and monitoring tool, completing the work of the Council.

12. We find it imperative to keep the Council focused on the core human rights values, as established by its founding documents, avoiding all politicization, polarization and alleviating centrifugal tendencies. We are guided by transparency, openness and constant dialogue with all the United Nations membership, whether serving or not in the Human Rights Council, and bearing in mind their national and regional specificities.

13. We will endeavour to generate added value through our work and leave our mark on the Council. Throughout the potential new mandate, we will channel our energy and resources into projects and initiatives where the Human Rights Council can make a real impact, encouraging partners to do the same.

14. Guided by the principle of policy coherence in internal-external affairs, we approach this candidature as an opportunity to assess our own achievements and to challenge the areas where we can better ourselves.

15. We recognize the crosscutting and quintessential role played by civil society in the functioning of the Council. Participation and partnership with non-governmental organizations and the young generation will be key for all the démarches and actions we plan to embark upon.

16. In light of the above principles, values and vision, Romania presents the following voluntary pledges and commitments.

I. Upholding democracy, the rule of law and human rights

17. Romania will continue to promote democracy as the only viable political system which generates peace, stability and prosperity. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic of the past two years has brought about new types of challenges and threats to democracy. The current contenders of democracy we have to face need a robust and cross-cutting response. The resilience of democracies, one that should pass the test of time and times, stems from solid foundations.

18. We pledge to build back better, guided by our strong belief in human rights, the rule of law and democratic governance, and, to this end, to support and assist others in growing resilient.

19. We commit to fighting corruption and to tackling the nexus between this scourge and organized crime, by means of coordinated responses, domestically and internationally. We are equally committed to ensuring a sustainable future for next generations and, to this purpose, we will address corruption affecting the right to health and to a clean and safe environment.

20. We will strive to best employ new technologies to their full potential, for the protection and promotion of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic governance. We will contribute to mitigating their impact and implement the necessary safeguards to prevent and fight whichever threats impact they may pose to democracy and human rights, in coordinated action with other members of the Council.

II. Combating all forms of discrimination

21. Romania has a long-standing principled position to reject and condemn all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and antisemitism. We pledge to further build on this proven track record in order to render such attitudes a matter of the past.

22. We commit to taking a vigorous stance against hate-fuelled speech and incitement to hostile or violent acts. We will rise up against any attempts to employ stereotypes and negative narratives for the purpose of advancing discriminatory agendas. Our goal is to make communities we live in across the world safe and welcoming places for all, regardless of background or personal circumstances.

23. We plan to model a positive approach to countering discrimination, based on proactivity and success stories. We believe that humanity is defined by common values which transcend differences and by the capacity to embrace diversity. We draw our inspiration from the foundational United Nations human rights instruments and from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to find together the best solutions to counter discrimination and leave no one behind, through tolerance, openness, inclusivity and cooperation.

III. Protecting the human rights of women and girls

24. We value the potential of every woman and girl and their unique contribution to our community. We are decided to respect, protect and promote the human rights of women and girls and to advance gender equality in all sectors of life and society. It is our strong belief that gender equality is a key prerequisite for peaceful, prosperous and resilient societies and an enabler of economic growth and sustainable development.

25. We will continue the fight to achieve full and unhindered access of women to public life, decision-making positions and institutional gender parity and to close the pay gaps. To this end, we will step up efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination, barriers and stereotypes which women still face.

26. Romania commits to putting an end to gender-based violence, by working together in partnership with international and domestic actors, as well as with civil society, to raise awareness and educate about this brutal and degrading phenomenon, which impacts beyond measure on the lives, dignity and safety of women and girls. We will strongly condemn all incitements to gender-based violence, and we will spare no effort in seeing such reprehensive acts properly incriminated, prosecuted and sanctioned.

27. We will keep on building upon our common achievements, share our own experience and exchange good practices. Romania will be a reliable partner on all initiatives and actions regarding equality, non-discrimination of women and girls, and the ruling out of gender-based violence, abuse and harassment.

IV. Defending the freedom of expression

28. We believe that freedom of expression is a cornerstone of every functional and well-established democratic society. Romania commits to defending this fundamental freedom, indispensable to the full and effective enjoyment of other human rights, in all circumstances.

29. Concerned by the pace and scale of disinformation, distorted narratives and malicious propaganda, we aim to channel our energy in strengthening the global response to vicious acts of abusing and misusing free speech. Romania pledges to play an active role towards increasing the resilience of the United Nations and of its Member States in the face of this challenge, in a comprehensive, integrated approach, based on a solid partnership with mass media, social platforms and civil society.

30. Romania guarantees the freedom of the media at home and will stand up in defence of it everywhere else on the globe. We will do our utmost to ensure that both traditional and digital mass media enjoys freedom, editorial independence and protection from censorship and political interference. Journalists and media workers act as early warning agents and whistle-blowers when democracies are in danger and when abuses occur and must be therefore guaranteed a safe space for carrying out their work.

31. We aim to devote particular attention to journalists reporting from war or conflict areas, who often willingly risk their lives to account on key developments. We pledge to honour their work and to safeguard their right to practise their profession unhindered and sheltered from hostilities of all natures. We commit to further ensure the protection and safety of women journalists and other media professionals, who are disproportionately subjected to threats, harassment and violence, both online and offline.

32. We commit to invest our efforts and resources in promoting and advancing media education at home and abroad. We consider that media literacy is an essential skill all citizens should acquire. We will focus on building abilities to discern, to fact-check and responsibly distribute media content, which will add up to and strengthen efforts to fight disinformation.