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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 24 March 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations, in reference to the candidature of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Human Rights Council for the term 2024–2026, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution [60/251](#), has the honour to communicate the voluntary pledges and commitments of the Republic of Bulgaria for the promotion and protection of all human rights (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria would be grateful if the present note verbale and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 117 (c).

* [A/78/50](#).



**Annex to the note verbale dated 24 March 2023 from the
Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to
the President of the General Assembly**

Candidature of Bulgaria to the Human Rights Council, 2024–2026

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

I. Introduction

1. Bulgaria has the honour to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council (2024–2026) for the elections during the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly in New York in 2023.
2. Bulgaria presents its candidature for the second time after completing a successful term as a member of the Council during the period 2019–2021. It pledges to adhere to the same membership standards and further enhance the important role of the Human Rights Council for the mainstreaming of a holistic approach to human rights within the United Nations system. Bulgaria will strive to apply this approach in addressing situations of concern and remains fully committed to further strengthening its cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and all existing international human rights mechanisms.
3. Building on its membership of the Human Rights Council’s Bureau in 2021, its active engagement with United Nations human rights treaty bodies, the experience of successfully chairing the former Commission on Human Rights as well as the Third Committee, Bulgaria will continue to support the work and independence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations human rights mechanisms, the Human Rights Council special procedures and the human rights mandate holders.
4. The membership of Bulgaria in the Executive Board of the United Nations Children’s Fund (2023–2025) and the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) (2023–2025) further contributes to its long-standing commitments related to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and the empowerment of women.
5. Bulgaria pledges to work for the promotion and protection of human rights for all during its prospective membership of the Human Rights Council for the period 2024–2026 through the voluntary commitments set out below.

II. Commitments at the international level

6. Bulgaria will support systematic efforts to sustain and promote the culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and respect for cultural diversity in order to build a positive attitude towards people belonging to different ethnic and religious communities.
7. Bulgaria will engage in all activities of the Human Rights Council to enhance genuine dialogue and interaction among all members of the Council. In its actions for promoting and protecting human rights, it will be guided by 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from a human rights perspective.

8. Bulgaria endeavours to support initiatives aimed at further strengthening the efficiency of the Human Rights Council, improving its methods of work and ensuring its effectiveness and transparency. Bulgaria will continue to facilitate the work on the voluntary rationalization of initiatives. It is committed to promoting non-governmental organization participation in the Human Rights Council.
9. Bulgaria will engage and support all efforts aimed at further strengthening the independence, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of the treaty bodies and the special procedures. Bulgaria will support the strengthening of multilateralism and international cooperation, including through the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights. It will work to further strengthen the role of the universal periodic review as an effective and unique peer review tool. Bulgaria will encourage sharing good practices in the field of human rights and addressing the remaining challenges after the first three full cycles of the review.
10. Bulgaria will continue to work actively for the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to promote the principles of equality in all decisions and actions of the Human Rights Council.
11. Bulgaria will dedicate further efforts to address the new threats and increasing challenges to freedom of expression, both online and offline, the independence of the media and the safety of journalists. It will continue to support regional and international initiatives envisaged to promote good practices and lessons learned, while tackling the negative impact of disinformation and hate speech on freedom of expression and media pluralism.
12. Based on Bulgaria's long-standing traditions in the field, it intends to advance the efforts of the international community for achieving full equality between women and men, the realization of human rights of women and girls and their empowerment. It will continue to advocate for strengthening the role and equal participation of women in political, economic and public life and in decision-making processes at all levels in both the public and private sectors.
13. Bulgaria will continue to support and actively participate in the elaboration of the resolutions on the rights of the child of the Human Rights Council and the Third Committee of the General Assembly, and will work towards preserving their consensual nature. It remains fully committed to the promotion of the rights of young people and encourages their participation in all spheres of political and social life. Bulgaria will increase its support and focus on initiatives aimed at mitigating the effect of climate change on the rights of the child. Recognizing the important role of children and youth in achieving positive changes for sustainable development, it advocates for their more substantial involvement in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
14. Bulgaria remains committed to further promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and facilitating their full participation in all aspects of life. It will continue to encourage inclusive education as an essential tool to ensure the right to education for all children, with a special focus on children with disabilities and their equal participation. Inclusive education constitutes an important part of Bulgaria's efforts on non-discrimination and poverty eradication.
15. In order to contribute to the global fight against corruption, Bulgaria undertakes to promote the adherence to and the implementation of the main international anti-corruption instruments of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, as well as relevant European Union legislation and policies.
16. Bulgaria will advocate for a coordinated United Nations-led approach in addressing the root causes of trafficking in human beings, including poverty,

unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, social exclusion and marginalization, as well as for strengthening human rights through enhanced protection, support and empowerment of victims of trafficking, and accountability for such crimes.

17. Bulgaria will continue to foster multilateral cooperation in the field of sustainable development and participate in the joint efforts to address the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change on human rights. Bulgaria will contribute to efforts aimed at the fulfilment of the rights to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation to ensure healthy and protected environments for all.

18. Bulgaria will actively participate in the upcoming discussions and will be involved in actions in the Human Rights Council on the impact of new and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, on human rights. It will support regional and international initiatives aimed at ensuring that the development and use of digital technologies support democratic institutions and enhance digital resilience.

19. Recognizing that bullying, including cyberbullying, can take both direct and indirect forms, from acts of physical, verbal, sexual and relational violence or aggression to social exclusion, and also acknowledging the need to prevent and eliminate bullying among children, Bulgaria will support and promote initiatives on this subject.

III. Commitments at the national level

20. Bulgaria will remain committed to upholding the international standards in the field of human rights and the rule of law. Bulgaria will endeavour to enhance a broad interministerial and public dialogue with all stakeholders and to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of the human rights of all persons residing in its territory. Bulgaria will continue to support the human rights-based approach in the planning and implementation of its national policies.

21. Bulgaria will continue the reforms aimed at promoting the independence of the judiciary as well as increasing its capacity for effectively investigating and prosecuting persons engaged in high-level corruption in conformity with the national anti-corruption strategy 2021–2027.

22. Bulgaria will take further measures to strengthen and ensure the independence of national human rights institutions, including through their active participation in the National Coordination Mechanism for Human Rights.

23. Based on its long-standing tradition of tolerance, Bulgaria will continue to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue, strengthening the protection of freedom of religion or belief. Bulgaria confirms its commitment to fighting all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and hate speech.

24. As achieving the full integration of the Roma in all national policies is a strategic priority of Bulgaria, Bulgaria declares its commitment to the full implementation of the national strategy for equality, inclusion and participation of the Roma (2021–2030).

25. Bulgaria pledges to continue to introduce and implement measures to defend freedom of expression, including the safety of journalists, and closely monitor the protection of media freedom through effective implementation of the national legislation.

26. Building on its national traditions, Bulgaria will continue to advance equality between women and men and further support women's and girls' empowerment in all

spheres of political and social life to achieve the goals of the national strategy for the promotion of equality between women and men for the period 2021–2030 and its annual action plans. Bulgaria has adopted a strong legal framework for preventing and combating violence against women and will continue to implement policies and programmes in this regard in compliance with the relevant international standards.

27. Bulgaria pledges to fulfil its first national action plan to implement the United Nations agenda on women and peace and security 2020–2025. Bulgaria is committed to strengthening the role of women in peace and security and the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security and related Security Council resolutions through its national action plan to implement the United Nations agenda on women and peace and security 2020–2025.

28. Bulgaria will continue to elaborate and implement adequate policies and measures to ensure the fulfilment of the rights of all children without discrimination, including through strengthening cooperation and coordination between all relevant authorities and stakeholders. Bulgaria will continue to provide for the participation of children in the decision-making process by guaranteeing their meaningful participation in the Children’s Council of the Chairperson of the State Agency for Child Protection to allow their views on government policies affecting them to be taken into account. It will also provide protection from existing and future risks in the digital environment by focusing on digital literacy and online safety.

29. Bulgaria will continue to enhance the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and their equal access to health care, education, employment and recreational activities.

30. Bulgaria will intensify its efforts to plan and implement measures to combat trafficking in human beings in order to enhance the identification, protection and support of victims, especially women, children and other persons belonging to vulnerable groups, as well as to foster the prosecution of the perpetrators of such crimes.

31. Bulgaria will continue to effectively involve civil society representatives and organizations, social partners and other stakeholders in all human rights-related policymaking and decision-making processes at all levels.
