Centre for Civil and Political Rights

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Vision and Mission

A word from the president and the director

CCPR-Centre in 2017 - on a map

CCPR-Centre in 2017 - at a glance

State Parties to ICCPR in 2017 - at a glance

Human Rights Committee in 2017 - at a glance

How we work

1. Advocating for the universal ratification of the ICCPR

2. Supporting civil society to engage with the Human Rights Committee at the early stages of the review process

3. Ensuring the participation of civil society in the Human Rights Committee sessions

4. Facilitating space for dialogue to implement the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations at the national level

5. Mainstreaming the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations through engagement with other UN mechanisms

Looking ahead: our projects for 2018

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Our staff

Our board

Our advisory board
The CCPR-Centre envisions the full and universal realisation of the rights proclaimed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its two Optional Protocols.

The CCPR-Centre aims to fulfil that vision by facilitating the application of the ICCPR and promoting the implementation of Human Rights Committee recommendations, mainly through engaging with national NGOs and strengthening the Committee itself.

We believe that making the most of the reporting, review and follow-up cycle of the Human Rights Committee is one of the best ways to achieve our vision.
2017 was certainly a crucial year for the Centre for Civil and Political Rights. Our regular activities substantially developed with **training provided all over the world for 180 CSO’s representatives and support for the engagement of 188 human rights defenders at the sessions of the UN Human Rights Committee (HR Committee)**. Beside our regular activities ensuring that the concerns of the Civil Society are at the heart of the work of the HR Committee, we developed several initiatives to **reinforce the impact of advocacy efforts** and our long-term engagement with our national partners.

**Efforts occurred at the national level** with a **comprehensive follow-up agenda** to ensure that there was a full implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This includes **new tools for NGOs to elaborate plans of action** for an effective monitoring of the HR Committee’s recommendations as well the specific indicators to monitor the progress made by the State Parties.

In addition, we have reinforced and streamlined **spaces for dialogue** between the authorities and civil society in **Burkina Faso, Kazakhstan and Jamaica** aiming at facilitating an ongoing exchange on the measures taken to implement the recommendation of the HR Committee.

**Efforts were made at the United Nations level** with **new strategies to develop our advocacy work** in a comprehensive manner to ensure that the concerns of the HR Committee are systematically addressed by the other UN human rights bodies, including the UPR process. This approach, which is unique, reinforces the impact of the advocacy work of the human rights defenders, showing very interesting results on **Rwanda, Uzbekistan, Ghana and Burkina Faso** where concerns of the HR Committee were addressed before the other UN Treaty Bodies and in the UPR.

It is with this global approach in mind that we have joined our force with other NGOs to **create “TB-Net”**, a platform devoted to improve the cooperation among NGOs engaging with the UN Treaty Bodies.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who have supported our work over the past year. In particular, we welcome the generous support of the Centre’s donors without which none of this work would be possible.

*Victor Rodriguez Rescia*
*President*

*Patrick Mutzenberg*
*Director*
CCPR-Centre in 2017 - on a map

Our priority countries in 2017
Additional countries reviewed in 2017 where we supported the CSOs engagement with the Human Rights Committee
CCPR-Centre in 2017 - at a glance

January
- Honduras: preparatory mission
- Rwanda: submission to CEDAW
- Bangladesh: preparatory mission

March
- Geneva: 119th session of the Human Rights Committee

May
- Jamaica: follow-up mission

February
- Myanmar: high-level workshop on ICCPR
- Madagascar: preparatory mission

April
- Kazakhstan: follow-up mission
- Swaziland: preparatory mission

June
- Myanmar: civil society workshop on ICCPR
- Kazakhstan: civil society workshop on follow-up

3023 people reached (+1017 in 2017)
through 7 newsletters

3368 likes on facebook (+756 in 2017)
78 posts reaching 16436 people
July
  Geneva: 120th session of the Human Rights Committee

August
  Cameroon: preparatory mission
  DRC: preparatory mission
  Ghana: follow-up mission

September
  Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan workshop on corruption and human rights
  Burkina Faso follow-up mission

October
  Geneva: expert meeting on follow-up; 121st session of the Human Rights Committee

November
  Rwanda submission to CAT
  Costa Rica follow-up mission

December
  Lebanon: preparatory mission
  Myanmar: 2nd high-level workshop on ICCPR
  Burundi: UPR
  Ghana: UPR

3685 twitter followers (+253 in 2017)
1321 retweets (+279 in 2017)
675 likes
104 replies
467 tweets sent out
State Parties to ICCPR in 2017 - at a glance

170 State parties

6 Signatories
(China since 1998, Comoros since 2008, Cuba since 2008, Nauru since 2001, Palau since 2011 and St Lucia since 2011)

22 States not party
(Antigua, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cook Islands, Fiji, Holy See, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Malaysia, Myanmar, Micronesia, Niue, Qatar, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, St Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Tonga, Tuvalu, Oman, United Arab Emirates)

1 new ratifications in 2017
Sao Tome and Principe (January 2017)

ICCPR - OP 1
Individual Communications

116 State parties

3 Signatories

78 States not party

1 new ratification in 2017:
Sao Tome and Principe (March 2017)

ICCPR - OP 2
Abolition of Death Penalty

85 State parties

2 Signatories

110 States not party

2 new ratifications in 2017:
Sao Tome and Principe (January 2017)
Madagascar (September 2017)
Human Rights Committee
in 2017 - at a glance

19 States parties reviewed
119th session (6 - 29 March):
Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Serbia, Thailand, Turkmenistan
120th session (3 - 28 July):
Honduras, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Mongolia, Pakistan, Switzerland
121st session (16 Oct - 10 Nov):
Australia, Cameroon, DRC, Dominican Republic, Jordan, Mauritius, Romania

21 State parties followed-up
119th session:
Chad, Chile, Georgia, Indonesia, Ireland, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Sudan
120th session:
Cote d’Ivoire, Iceland, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Japan, Mauritania, Nepal, Sri Lanka
121st session:
France, Malawi, Macedonia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Follow-up Grades given to the State parties
- 7 largely satisfactory
- 35 not satisfactory
- 44 partially satisfactory
- 3 contrary / rejective action
- 8 no cooperation
(Chad, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Cote d’Ivoire, Mauritania, Nepal, Sri Lanka)

88 individual communications considered
- 44 violation
- 22 inadmissible
- 13 no violation
- 9 discontinued
how we work

The CCPR-Centre supports the engagement of civil society and other relevant national stakeholders, including national authorities, National Human Rights Institutions, National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up, judicial institutions and Parliamentarians, to enhance the implementation of the ICCPR at the national level.

1. Advocating for the universal ratification of the ICCPR

Several stakeholders in Myanmar deepened their knowledge on the ICCPR and analyzed their domestic legal framework in comparison to the provisions of the Covenant.

Myanmar is one of the 22 States in the world that have not yet signed and ratified the ICCPR. Becoming a party to the ICCPR, could be, in this context, a big step forward to more effectively promote and protect the civil and political rights of individuals, bring justice to victims and address the root causes of many human rights issues in the country.

In order to enhance the domestic processes and assist national efforts to join the ICCPR, the CCPR-Centre launched a 2-year project in June 2016.

As part of this project, three visits were carried out. In February, a CCPR-Centre delegation together with Judge Krister Thelin, a former member of the Human Rights Committee met with relevant national agencies and different stakeholders, including the delegation of the European Union as well as civil society organisations.

In June, a workshop was organized for civil society to deepen their understanding of specific provisions of the ICCPR and to analyze the current domestic legal framework.

Lastly, in December the CCPR-Centre gathered 50 representatives of diverse State Ministries, Parliamentarians, Supreme Court, National Human Rights Commission and scholars. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed Myanmar’s desire and eagerness to become a State party of the ICCPR.
Top: Judge Krister Thelin, former member of Human Rights Committee, at the 2nd workshop in December 2017 in Myanmar with representatives of diverse State bodies. Bottom: participants of the 2nd workshop, which provided an unique opportunity for interaction with experts from the Committee, Indonesia and Thailand.
2. Supporting civil society to engage with the Human Rights Committee at the early stages of the review process

Within the year prior to the review of a State party by the Human Rights Committee, the CCPR-Centre facilitates civil society national consultations in target countries to identify the main challenges faced by the country that fall under the scope of the ICCPR. These consultations represent an opportunity to build or strengthen coalitions, to engage with the Human Rights Committee and to develop a civil society advocacy strategy. The Centre also accompanies and provides legal and technical assistance to civil society in preparing a written report to be submitted to the Committee to contribute to the review of a State party.

our impact in 2017

8 national consultations in Swaziland, Madagascar, Honduras, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Cameroon & DRC

179 HRDs trained on the ICCPR and strategic advocacy in: Swaziland (40), Madagascar (29), Honduras (38), Bangladesh (15), Lebanon (14), Cameroon (29) & DRC (29)

177 NGOs worked in coalition to submit reports to the Committee in: Swaziland (7), Madagascar (14), Honduras (56), Bangladesh (15), Cameroon (14) & DRC (40)

Our impact in Lebanon

Lebanon's implementation of the ICCPR will be examined by the Human Rights Committee in March 2018 in Geneva. The last review of Lebanon by the Committee dates back to twenty years ago, making 2018 a unique opportunity to assess the main challenges regarding civil and political rights in the country.

In this context, CCPR-Centre together with its local partner, ALEF, organised a national consultation on the implementation of the ICCPR in Lebanon.

Among others, these areas of concern were highlighted by civil society representatives during the national consultation:

- Discrimination of women and LGBTI persons in law and in practice
- Restrictions to freedom of assembly and association as civil society organisations often do not get permission to carry out a peaceful demonstration or other public events and do not obtain the permits to register their organisations.
- Inhumane conditions of detention, including overcrowding
- Lack of independence of the judiciary

Representatives of the national NGOs will attend the Human Rights Committee review of Lebanon in March 2018.
George Ghali, from ALEF, leading the discussion of the thematic groups in a national CSO consultation on the implementation of the ICCPR in Lebanon. The main outcome was a CSO report on Lebanon which was submitted to the Human Rights Committee addressing the main concerns on civil and political rights.

Our impact in 2017

Mainstreaming regional coordination

The national consultation also served as a space to share experiences with representatives of the Jordanian Coalition Against Torture (JoCAT), who recently participated in the Human Rights Committee review of Jordan. Both the NGOs from Lebanon and from Jordan have similar concerns, for example about discrimination against women and freedom of expression. This exchange proved very useful to the Lebanese civil society because JoCAT was able to give very concrete examples and straightforward explanations based on their recent experience.
3. Ensuring the participation of civil society in the Human Rights Committee sessions

The Centre supports the direct participation of civil society in the Human Rights Committee sessions by inviting civil society representatives of target countries to attend the sessions in Geneva, and facilitating formal and informal briefings between the Human Rights Committee members and Human Rights Defenders for all countries under review. The Centre plays an important role in preparing NGOs for these briefings and coordinating their participation to ensure optimal use of the available time. This process serves to streamline NGO concerns and clearly highlight the key human rights issues for each country under review.

**Our impact in 2017**

- **188** HRDs supported to engage with the Committee through country briefings
- **12** HRDs from: Swaziland, Madagascar, Honduras, Bangladesh, Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo sponsored by CCPR-Centre to attend the Committee sessions

**Our impact in Swaziland**

Swaziland was reviewed by the Human Rights Committee in July 2017 in absence of the State's report. **Main concerns** were the monarchical traditions, the dual legal system of common law and customary law and the freedom of association since political parties are banned in Swaziland.

The Committee members were also concerned about **other issues**: women experience discrimination when it comes to property rights, polygamy, and marital rape. Abortion is strictly prohibited in Swaziland. The broad powers of the King are problematic concerning the appointment of public officials and members of the judiciary, which are often relatives of the King.

Thanks to CCPR-Centre’s work in Swaziland, together with its national partner COSPE and its regional partner SALC, civil society was able to participate at this review. Additionally, the State delegation was encouraged to engage with the Human Rights Committee even in the absence of report, which was highly appreciated by Committee members.
Top left: Andrea Meraz, Programme Manager of CCPR-Centre, at the national consultation with Swazi NGOs; Top right: NGOs brainstorming on advocacy strategies for the implementation of the ICCPR in Swaziland; Bottom: Participants at the national consultation to prepare a report in reply to the List of Issues of Swaziland.
4. Facilitating space for dialogue to implement the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations at the national level

The CCPR-Centre contributes to the implementation of the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations through follow-up activities, including country visits with Human Rights Committee members and meetings with high-level authorities and other relevant stakeholders to encourage them to take steps towards the full implementation of recommendations. The Centre also supports civil society to develop action plans for monitoring the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations and to produce assessment notes and evaluations on the progress made by States. Since 2016, the Centre has also facilitated spaces for dialogue between NMRF, NHRIs and civil society in several countries.

**Our impact in 2017**

- **8** follow-up missions in: Ghana (1), Jamaica (1), Costa Rica (1), Burkina Faso (2) & Kazakhstan (2)
- **69** advocacy meetings with high-level authorities at the national level in: Ghana (16), Jamaica (5), Costa Rica (13), Burkina Faso (21) & Kazakhstan (14)

**Our impact in Kazakhstan**

The CCPR-Centre organized a follow-up mission in Astana in April 2017, jointly with its national partner Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law (KIBHR), an NGO based in Almaty with several regional branches.

The objective of the follow-up mission was to ensure that the recommendations of the Committee were widely known by the different stakeholders, as well as to engage in a dialogue with the national authorities on their implementation. Specific attention was given to the recommendations selected for the follow-up procedure, namely:

- Accountability for human rights violations in connection with Zhanaozen events
- Torture and ill-treatment
- Freedom of association and participation in public life
The delegation of the mission was composed of Kote Vardzelashvili, former Member of the HR Committee and Patrick Mutzenberg, Director of the CCPR-Centre, who were able to meet several key State representatives, including the Ombudsman, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and the Head of Department of Criminal Police. They also met with 25 NGO representatives from all the country. This meeting allowed genuine discussions on the main concerns of NGOs related to the implementation of the recommendations in Kazakhstan and initiate the drafting process of the NGO follow up report that was submitted to the Human Rights Committee.
5. Mainstreaming the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations through engagement with other UN mechanisms

In addition to the activities mentioned above, the Centre engages with other UN bodies, such as the Human Rights Council (through the UPR), the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Committee Against Torture (CAT). The objective of this engagement is to ensure that the Human Rights Committee’s recommendations are taken into consideration by these UN bodies when reviewing the target countries.

Our impact in 2017

7 NGO submissions to other UN bodies on: Azerbaijan (1 submission to the UPR), Burundi (1 submission to the UPR), Ghana (1 submission to the UPR), Rwanda (1 submission to CAT and 1 to CEDAW), Togo (1 follow-up submission to the UPR) and Uzbekistan (1 submission to the UPR)

Our impact in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan

The Centre organized a workshop in Geneva on Human Rights and Corruption in September 2017. We invited civil society representatives from Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan to support them in submitting a thematic report to the UPR. Both countries will undergo the UPR in May 2018.

In view of the submission of a report, we analyzed how the UPR process has addressed the issue of corruption in the past. This research proved useful when establishing an advocacy strategy for the future. The representatives also met with Ana Maria Rodriguez from the Colombian Commission of Jurists, who was able to share her advocacy experience for the UPR of Colombia. The representatives also met with Matthew Jones, from the Human Rights House Foundation, who shared his experience as International Advocacy Officer. Afterwards, both the Uzbek and Azerbaijani NGOs submitted a report for the upcoming UPR.
Participants from Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan at the workshop on Corruption and Human Rights organised by the CCPR-Centre in Geneva to prepare a thematic report and an advocacy strategy for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
A Year in Review


The purpose of this report was to provide a clear understanding of the jurisprudence of the Human Rights Committee for the year 2016 (sessions 116, 117 and 118). The report aims to present the jurisprudence developed by the Committee through a thematic lens, but also contains an analysis of the findings of other UN Treaty Bodies, namely the CERD, CRPD, CMW and CRC. This approach allows to compare the relevant Committee’s interpretations on specific issues.

It was the second time that this research had been carried out in collaboration with the Law Clinic of the LL.M. in International Law at the Graduate Institute of Geneva. The inclusion of the analysis emanating from the other UN Treaty Bodies was possible thanks to the close partnership with TB-Net, the NGO platform working on the UN Treaty Bodies.
looking ahead: our projects for 2018

2018 is an exciting year for the CCPR-Centre as we will continue to develop our skills and expertise on ICCPR thematic issues. We will continue to work on the negative impact of corruption on the enjoyment of civil and political rights, with the objective to ensure that this issue is comprehensively and systematically addressed by the UN human rights mechanisms.

To this end, the Centre will organise a high-level international conference on human rights and corruption, to get a complete overview of the UNTB’s practice regarding the issue of corruption and identify gaps in the way the corruption is addressed. The conference will be followed by an expert consultation to address the gaps and strengthen the participation of the anti-corruption groups within the UN mechanisms. This consultation, organised together with the Geneva Academy and OHCHR, will provide the substantive base for a practical user-friendly guide for anti-corruption practitioners, which explores how a human rights–based approach and the human rights system can be used to strengthen anti-corruption efforts.

The Centre will also continue supporting HRDs to engage with the Human Rights Committee through all stages of the review process. In particular, we will work with HRDs in Algeria, Angola, Lebanon, Liberia, Tajikistan and Vietnam, by supporting them to hold national consultations on the implementation of the ICCPR in their countries, to submit coalition reports to the Committee, to attend and directly participate at the Committee’s sessions in Geneva, and to follow-up on the implementation of the Concluding Observations at a domestic level.

We will also strengthen the follow-up phase in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Honduras, Rwanda, Swaziland to advocate for the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations. To this end, together with our local partners, the Centre is developing new tools such as posters, videos and brochures on the priority recommendations in order to widely disseminate the Committee’s concerns and recommendations. The Centre will continue to organise high-level follow-up visits with Committee members to the above-mentioned countries and identify key thematic issues to be addressed more in depth in each of the countries.

We will continue to advocate for the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations through other UN mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review in order to strengthen the links between the different UN mechanisms. In particular, this will include work in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan.

In 2018, the CCPR-Centre will work closely with the members of TB-Net, including by contributing to a transparent and effective election process as well as to strengthen the quality, independence and diversity of the Treaty Bodies.

The project to assist the national efforts for ICCPR ratification by Myanmar will continue in 2018 and will hopefully be further developed in other regions of the world.

Finally, the CCPR-Centre will continue updating the largest online database on Human Rights Committee views on individual communications and disseminating the Committee’s work through its periodic newsletters and social media.
2017 accounts

In 2017, the Centre for Civil and Political Rights reported a total income of CHF 599’950.- which is an increase of 5% compared to 2016 (CHF 570’804.-). In 2016, the Centre continued to save 1% of the total of funding received to improve its reserves which are now of CHF 24’746.-.

The number of donors was similar in 2016 and 2017 with several donors providing support for multi-years projects. The main challenge for the Centre is to secure and increase core funding in order to carry out activities in countries where no related projects exist.

Income and costs statement for the year 2017
1st January - 31st December, in CHF
(This is an extract of the audited financial statements for the 2017. A full version is available upon request at pmutzenberg@ccprcentre.org)

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Total 599’950
our staff

Geneva Office

Patrick Mutzenberg
Director

Andrea Meraz
Programme Manager

Lazarie Eeckeloo
Legal Researcher

Laure Kialanda
Administrative and Financial Officer (until July 2017)

Asia Pacific Office

Daisuke Shirane
Coordinator

West Africa Office

André Afanou
Coordinator

Webmaster and IT Support

Haewen Fortunato
Codex Design

Interns

Thais Penalber
Komla Bassah
Sanjna Dhawan
Deepsha Dipan Dhal
Somil Kumar
Jannat Majeed
our board

Víctor Rodríguez Rescia (President)
Former Member of the HR Committee and SPT

Hassan Shire (Vice President)
Chairperson of the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP), a regional Human Rights Defenders Network based in Uganda

Florian Irminger (Treasurer)
Head of Advocacy, Human Rights House Fondation

Rafendi Djamin
Senior Adviser Human Rights Working Group (HRWG) - Indonesia

Camilla Lissa Asano
Coordinator of the Foreign Policy and Human Rights Program at Conectas
Human Rights – Brazil

Victoria Kuhn
Lawyer, Special Procedures Branch Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Philippe Tremblay
Senior Legal Advisor, Lawyers without Borders Canada

Marina Narvaez
Lawyer, Human Rights Officer, Americas Section, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Chantal Mutamuriza
Lawyer, Human Rights Officer, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Asger Kjaerum
Director of Advocacy, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
our advisory board

Sihem Bensedrine
Journalist,
Human Rights Activist and President of the Conseil National pour les Libertes en Tunisie, Tunisian NGO

Rafael Rivas Posada
Professor,
Former Member (President) of the UN Human Rights Committee

Sarah Joseph
Director of the Castan Centre for Human Rights Law – Monash University (Melbourne) – Australia

Jakob Th. Moller
Former Chief of the Communications Branch of the OHCHR and Former Judge at the Human Rights Chamber for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Krister Thelin
Judge,
Former Member of the UN Human Rights Committee