



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Building networks to promote universal respect for civil and political rights

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MESSAGE from the President and the Director

We are pleased to present the **Centre for Civil and Political Rights Annual Report 2021**, covering our activities from January to December 2021. While this period will certainly be remembered as one of the most challenging for the Centre for Civil and Political Rights ('the Centre'), we remain convinced that in light of such obstacles, continuing our work on the promotion and protection of human rights is more important than ever. In an international environment where States looked inwards and borders closed, the Centre directed all of its efforts throughout the year towards creating civic spaces and **acting as a link between local, regional, and global advocacy communities**. We believe that enabling and reinforcing the connection between these communities is a crucial step toward universal respect for civil and political rights.

However, we encountered a number of logistical challenges in our work throughout 2021. For instance, **ongoing COVID-19** restrictions impacted not only our engagement, but that of the broader United Nations Human Rights System, including the Human Rights Committee and other Treaty Bodies. As State party reviews continued to be conducted virtually, the number of sessions undertaken throughout the year and opportunities for engagement were significantly reduced. This also impacted the ability of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) to participate safely in the sessions, as well as their engagement with the Committee members. In such circumstances, the **role of the Centre in facilitating participation from civil society was more important than ever**.

We also experienced challenges in engaging with civil society at the domestic level. To **improve our proximity to national actors**, the Centre appointed new national and regional coordinators who served as focal points, and developed new e-tools and processes to maintain regular links with human rights defenders based in remote areas. With a view to **breaking down silos and reinforcing our networks**, the Centre's staff encouraged the sharing of experience and peer-to-peer learning between civil society representatives in different regions who faced similar challenges

(i.e. preparation of country's review in front of the Human Rights Committee). The Centre also **forged new partnerships** with local authorities and reinforced its connection with the international community in order to work towards shared goals, and increase the reach of our activities and publications.

We also witnessed **an increased backlash against civil liberties around the globe**, with States using the health risk of COVID-19 to limit rights and liberties. We identified severe violations of civil and political rights in a number of countries including Myanmar and Nicaragua, where the Centre has been engaged for several years. In these situations, we worked closely with national human rights defenders to **denounce the actions of States and engage the UN frameworks and special procedures**.

These developments continue to prove that **our role is more essential than ever**. The Centre remains committed to ensuring that human rights defenders have access to the UN human rights mechanisms, including the Treaty Bodies, and can share their concerns with these forums safely. This is in line with the long term strategy and engagement of the Centre to ensure that recommendations aimed at improving the civil and political rights are respected and implemented by all applicable national stakeholders.

Of course, all of this work would not have been possible without **our faithful donors**. We thank them for their continued engagement, for supporting new initiatives and for giving us the confidence to adapt our work modalities to the evolving international environment, and always seeking to find new ways to support civil society in their pursuit of universal respect for civil and political rights.

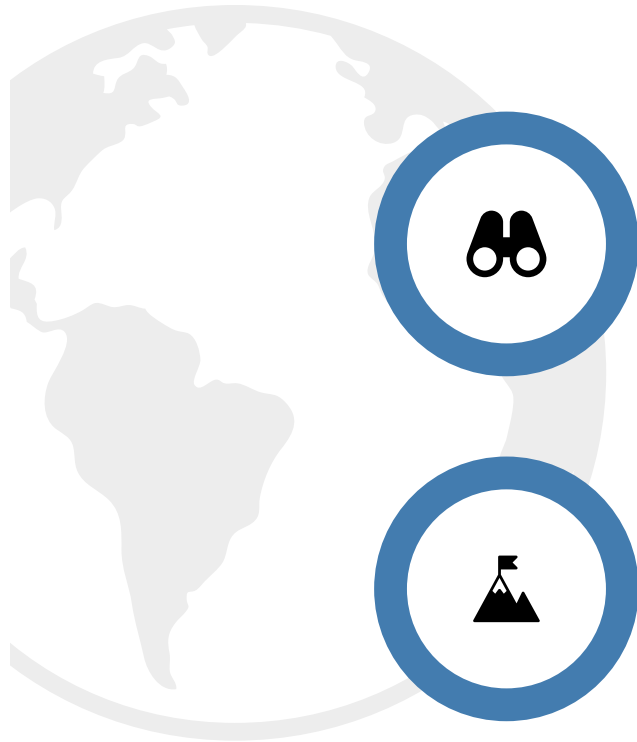
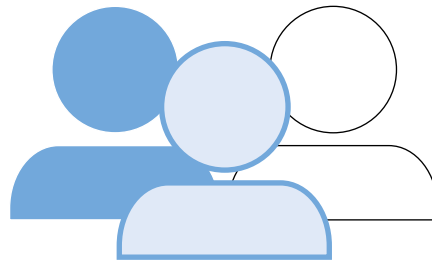


Victor Rodriguez Rescia
President



Patrick Mutzenberg
Director

WHO we are



Our vision

A world where civil and political rights are protected, respected and fulfilled for everyone without discrimination.

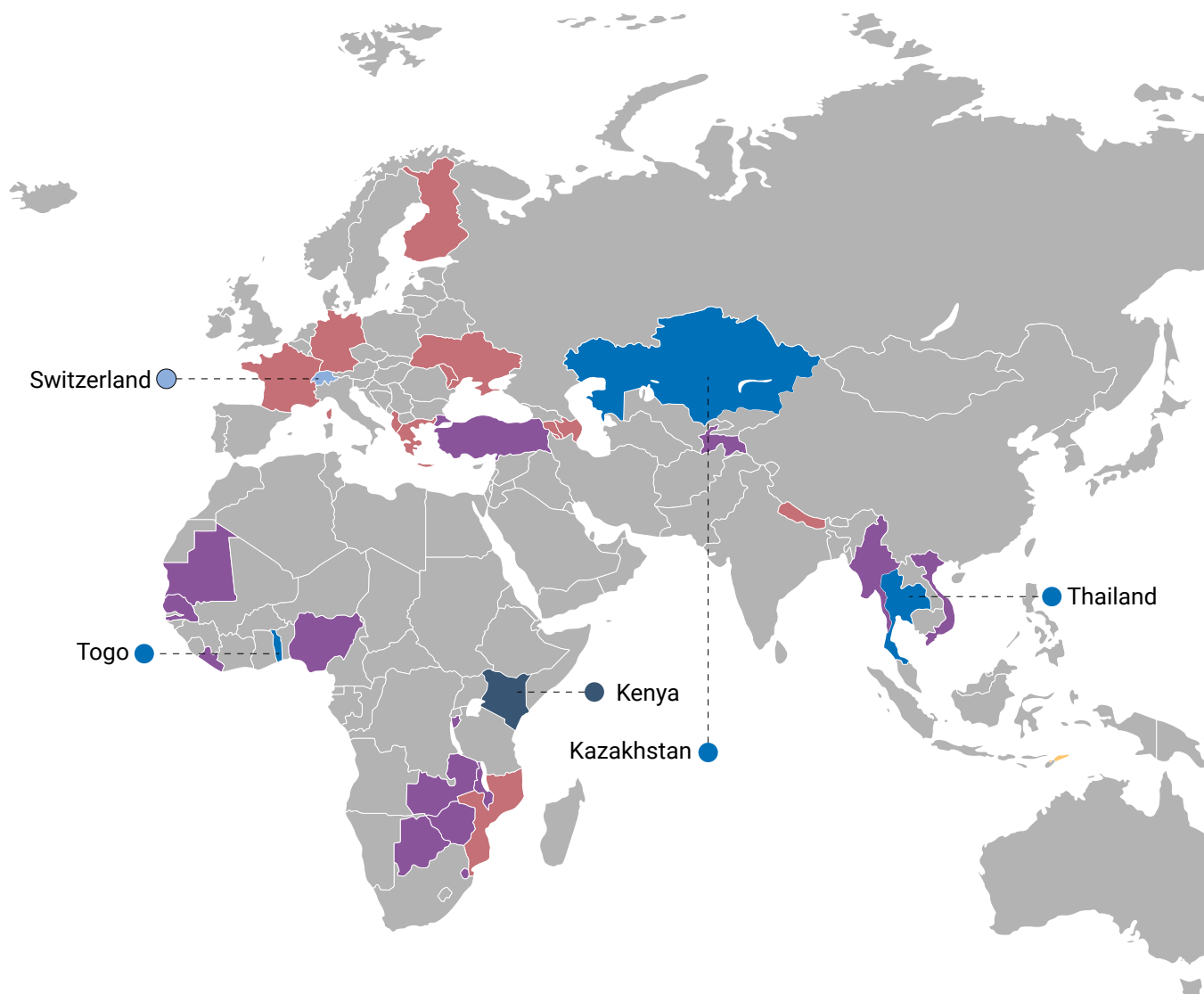
Our mission

To contribute to the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) through support to civil society and through connecting key actors engaged to implement the UN Human Rights Committee's recommendations at the national level.



CCPR staff and members of the Parliament meet to discuss the implementation of Treaty Bodies' recommendations in Kinshasa, DR Congo, in September 2021

WHERE we work



Headquarters

Switzerland (Geneva)

Regional Offices

Costa Rica
Kazakhstan
Thailand
Togo

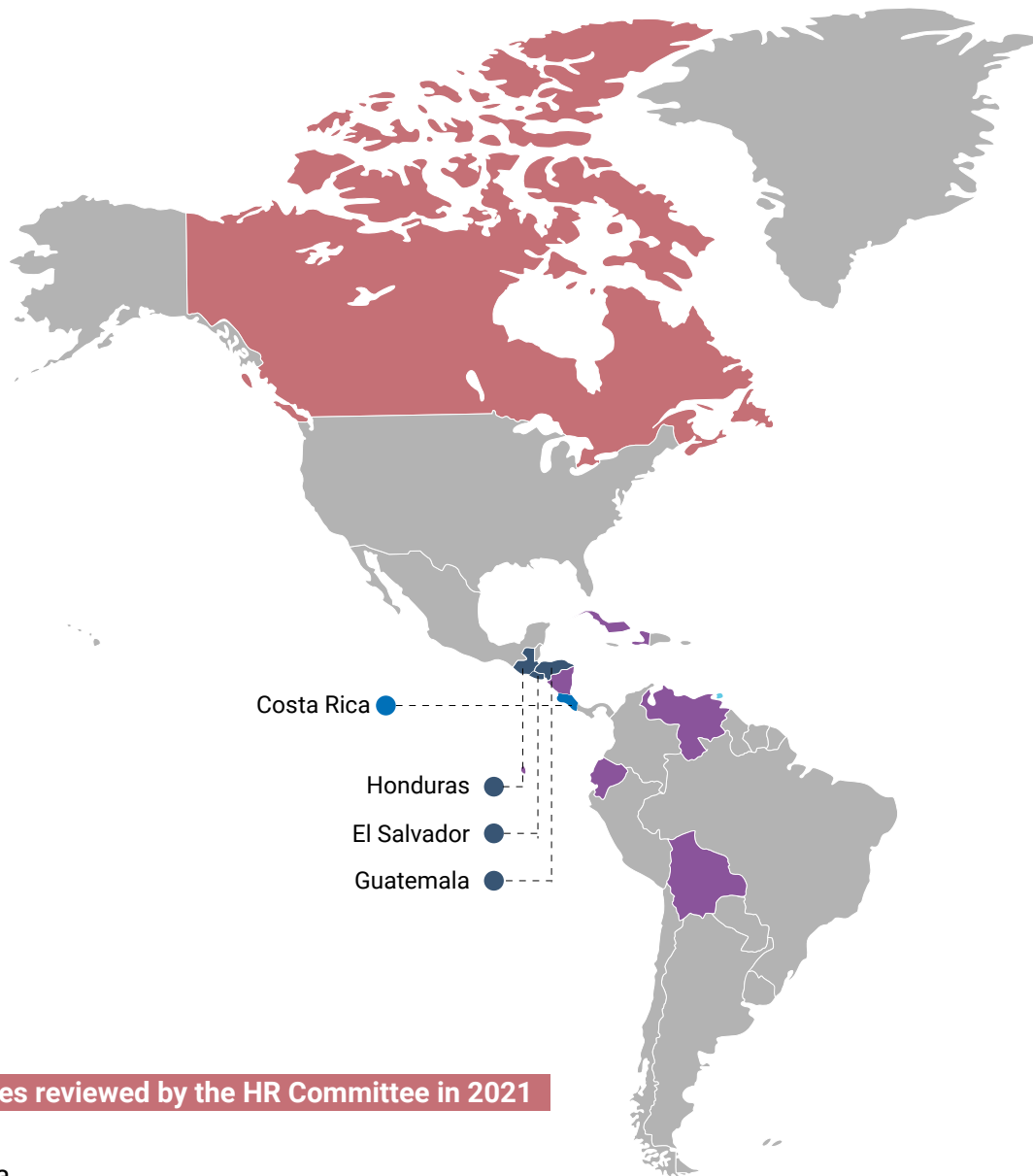
National Coordinators

El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Kenya

Countries of activity in 2021

Bolivia	Malawi
Botswana	Mauritania
Burundi	Myanmar
Cuba	Nicaragua
DR Congo	Niger
Ecuador	Senegal
El Salvador	Tajikistan
Eswatini	Thailand
Guatemala	Togo
Haiti	Turkey
Honduras	Venezuela
Kazakhstan	Viet Nam
Kenya	Zambia
Liberia	Zimbabwe

WHERE we work



Countries reviewed by the HR Committee in 2021

Albania
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Canada
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Moldova
Mozambique
Nepal
Ukraine

A YEAR in figures

Support to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

20

Training and Consultations on Civil and Political Rights

Bolivia, Botswana, Cambodia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eswatini (X2), Finland, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Niger (X2), Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo (X2), Zambia & Zimbabwe (X2)

17

CSOs Reports

Bolivia, Botswana, Burundi, DR Congo, Eswatini, Kazakhstan, Kenya (x2), Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, Togo (x2), Venezuela (x3), Zimbabwe

250

HRDs participating in HR Committee's briefings

Armenia, Botswana, Burundi, Canada, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine

7

Sets of thematic factsheets for UPR advocacy

Eswatini, Haiti, Mauritania, Tajikistan, Togo, Zambia & Zimbabwe

6

Oral statements/advocacy papers on the Human Rights situation in

Burundi, Haiti, Liberia, Myanmar, Nicaragua & Venezuela

Governmental engagement

5

Follow-up missions:

DR Congo
Ecuador
Niger
Sierra Leone (Focused Review)
Togo

3

National consultations with parliamentarians on thematic issues:

DR Congo
Niger
Togo

8

Series of webinars / roundtables on Follow-up:

Burundi	Kazakhstan
DR Congo	Mauritania
Eswatini	Senegal
Guatemala	Thailand

Raising awareness on ICCPR

120

Journalists trained on how to report on Human Rights issues in

Guatemala, Honduras & Nicaragua

4

Series of visual posters to disseminate Follow-up recommendations

Kenya, Mauritania, Senegal & Togo



4

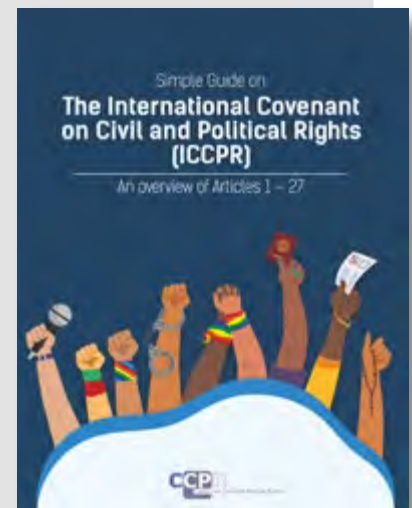
Interactive tools on reporting procedures

- **CSOs Advocacy Guidelines**
- **3 videos** on ICCPR, the HR Committee and the CCPR Centre

4

Guidance publications on ICCPR provisions and UNTB jurisprudence

- **Simple Guide on Peaceful Assembly** (English and Thai)
- **COVID-19 tools** in Thai, Taj, Kaz, Kyrgyz, & Russian
- **Yearbook** on UNTBs' 2020 jurisprudence
- Research on **Human Rights & Corruption** in Moldova



Twitter

5'795 followers
+238 new followers compared to 2020
1'901 likes+retweets
20'980 profile visits



Facebook

5'125 followers
+483 new followers compared to 2020
78'971 people reached
4'084 reactions, comments & shares



Newsletters

3'517 contacts on our database
3 Newsletters on HR Committee's sessions
3 Newsletters on Follow-up procedure

YEAR 2021 timeline

JANUARY

- **Mauritania** - CSOs Consultations for UPR report
- **Burundi** - CNIDH Training on Treaty Bodies & COBs' Follow-up
- **Guatemala** - Roundtable with authorities and CSOs on Follow-up to COBs

Myanmar - HRC46 - Release of a [joint statement](#) calling for restoration of democracy

Thailand - Online consultations on the use of force and freedom of expression

DR Congo - CIDH / CSOs / INDH consultations for COBs Follow-up on ICCPR and CAT

FEBRUARY

MARCH

- **HR Committee 131st Session** - CSOs Informal Briefings (online) for Kenya, Finland, Nepal & Malawi
- **Honduras** - Online forum on the Follow-up to the 2020 UPR recommendations
- **COVID-19** - Launch of tools to monitor ICCPR violations during COVID-19 ([Thai](#))
- **Zimbabwe CSO** - Training on UPR, specifically focusing on SOGIE
- **Art.25** - [Guidelines on the Right to Participate in Public Affairs](#) (3 languages)
- **Eswatini** - Submission of the UPR report
- **HRC 46** - Oral statement on Burundi

Senegal - Launch of the CSOs Coalition's action plan for Follow-up of HR Committee's recommendations

DRC - Webinar on NPM with CIDH, INDH, CSOs

GC37 - Publication of [Simple Q&A](#) (English and Thai)

Latin America - First regional meeting of coalitions from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua with OHCHR participation

Togo - CSOs workshops to prepare the UPR report and the ICCPR Review

Burundi - NHRC Burundi visit to GVA

APRIL

MAY

Moldova - Publication of a study on Corruption & Human Rights

Mauritania - Virtual roundtable on the "Passif Humainitaire"

Eswatini - Virtual roundtable on the implementation of HR Committee's COBs

Honduras - Ad hoc introductory trainings (8) to the UN Human Rights System

Zimbabwe - Submission of UPR report

Thailand - Online seminar for State officials on Freedom of Expression & Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

HR Committee 132nd Session - CSOs briefings (Togo, Burundi, Canada, Turkey, Albania, Ecuador, Mozambique, France)

Myanmar - Advocacy at HRC47 (Written Statement; Oral Statement; Oral Statement to SR; [Op-ed](#) in Global Geneva)

DRC - CSOs Consultation on gender equality in political process

HRC47 - Oral statement during the ID with the independent expert on SOGIE

HRC47 - Oral statement on Burundi

CCPR General Assembly - Re-election of Victor Rodriguez as President of the Board and adoption of Centre's Institutional Policies

Thailand - [Interview](#) with former Chair of HR Committee on Right to peaceful Assembly

Burundi - Launch of new [SOS Torture Burundi](#) website

JUNE

JULY

El Salvador - HRDs training on legal options to protect them from arbitrary detentions

Venezuela - Submission of UPR reports

Latin America - Regional Training for Media

Niger - Submission of UPR report

AUGUST

Niger - CSOs consultations and submission of the Follow-up report to the HR Committee

Tajikistan - Thematic Fact Sheets on HR Committee's COBs

SEPTEMBER

HRC 48th Session - Five video statements (Myanmar, Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela & Burundi)

DRC - Three-day consultations with MPs on HR Committee's priority recommendations Prevention of torture & Participation of women in the public affairs

Thailand - Online consultations on use of force and freedom of expression

Ecuador - Trainings to authorities on the application of international human rights treaties at the domestic level

Ecuador - High-level conferences on the State's international human rights obligations

Nicaragua - Training to journalists on how to monitor the Human Rights Council and the specific recommendations to the country

Bolivia - CSOs workshop on CAT & coordination to draft a coalition report

Honduras - Training to students on protection mechanisms for HRDs

OCTOBER

HR Committee 133rd Session - CSOs Briefings for Armenia, Botswana, Germany & Ukraine

Zambia - Preparatory mission ahead of the review by the HR Committee

Zimbabwe and Eswatini - Thematic CSOs consultation on LGBT on UPR advocacy

Tajikistan - Informal briefing for Geneva-based diplomatic missions on UPR and development of 3 advocacy tools on 1. Freedom of Expression; 2. Freedom of Association and HRDs; 3. Discrimination

Bolivia - Submission of CSOs coalition report to CAT

Haiti and Togo - Four thematic UPR online trainings

Botswana - Informative session to CSOs on the ICCPR review and support to draft a report to the HR Committee

CIS – Covid tools translated into [Kyrgyz](#), [Khazakh](#), [Tajik](#) & [Russian](#)

Kazakhstan - CEDAW Follow-up report

NOVEMBER

- El Salvador** - CSOs training on Follow-up recommendations from Human Rights mechanisms
- Honduras** - Training to journalists on Human Rights mechanisms and standards in the electoral context
- Nicaragua** - Launch of campaign to create a special mechanism for international investigation and accountability
- Haiti** - In-country UPR pre-session with diplomats in collaboration with UPR-Info and our national partner
- Venezuela** - Support to 6 HRDs from Venezuela to do UPR advocacy with diplomatic missions in Geneva
- Togo** - Parliamentary and HRDs consultation on protection of the HRDs
- Niger** - Follow-up mission with MPs consultations on the law to protect HRDs
- DRC** - Submission of progress report to CEDAW on Follow-up recommendations

Publication of updated Guidelines on CSOs engagement in the Human Rights Committee work

Latin America - Second regional meeting of coalitions from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador & Nicaragua

Bolivia - CSOs consultation prior to upcoming HR Committee review

Venezuela - Online event for diplomatic missions on Human Rights situation

Guatemala - CSOs session to draft a Follow-up report to the HR Committee

Launch of the publication - "UNTB - A Year in Review 2020" and litigators webinars

Corruption & Human Rights - Panel on Corruption and Human Rights at the UNCAC Conference

Sierra Leone - First Focused Review on joint UN Treaty Bodies follow-up activities carried jointly with the Geneva HR Academy

Nicaragua - Oral statement at the Human Rights Council and side event "Towards the Creation of a Justice and Accountability Process"

Guatemala - Training to journalists on the Follow-up to recommendations of Human Rights mechanisms

Viet Nam - Workshop on the rights of minority children and reporting to CRC

Cambodia - CSOs consultation prior to upcoming HR Committee review

DECEMBER

OUR objectives and our progresses

In 2021, the CCPR Centre continued the implementation of our general objectives as outlined in our **2019-2023 Strategic Plan**. These objectives require us to:

1

Strengthen and assist the efforts of civil society in the protection of civil and political rights

2

Increase ratification and enhance implementation of the ICCPR, and

3

Contribute to the strengthening of the Human Rights Committee's work.



André Afanou, CCPR-Centre Regional Coordinator for Africa, addresses parliamentarians during a Follow-Up mission to Kinshasa, DR Congo, in September 2021

I. A civil society better able to monitor human rights violations and advocate for change



Members of Eswatini civil society attend a training organised by CCPR Centre in preparation to UPR review in Mbabane, Eswatini, in October 2021

Increase civil society engagement in reporting to the Human Rights Committee effectively

The core mandate of the Centre is to **enable Human Rights Defenders** (HRDs), as advocates for civil and political rights at the national level, **to effectively engage with** the Human Rights Committee. Improving this engagement increases the likelihood that human rights violations can be raised with State authorities and also that appropriate remedies are included in the Human Rights Committee's recommendations.

To fulfil this mandate, the Centre engages with HRDs at the earliest possible stage of the country review cycle through extensive national consultations and capacity building sessions, and encourages civil society organisations to work in coalition and to develop joint reports. In 2021, the Centre organised [national consultations in 14 countries](#) and supported the [submissions of 7 alternative reports](#). These joint submissions documented the concerns of civil society before, during and after the review process and were extremely well received by the Human Rights Committee as an important source of first-hand information.

To keep up with the influx of online training developed as a result of COVID-19, the Centre also [updated its Civil Society Advocacy Guide](#). The guide is a tool which outlines the essential elements of the Committee's review process and the steps of an effective civil society engagement. The new edition is available in three languages, [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#), and includes an [interactive web](#) version as well as video storytelling modules which can be used during online training sessions.

The digital transformation driven by COVID-19 also reinforced one of the core values of our work: [acting as a link between national, regional, and global communities](#), and encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experience on the promotion of civil and political rights. As an example, during the civil society consultation in Zambia ahead of its Committee review, the Centre invited a representative from Kenyan civil society to share their recent experience of engagement with the Human Rights Committee. This innovative approach was well received by Zambian civil society who found the peer-to-peer briefing highly effective, as it introduced practical solutions to challenges faced by civil society in reporting to the Human Rights Committee.

Encouraging direct interaction between civil society and the Human Rights Committee during the pandemic

In 2021, the Centre also continued to facilitate direct interaction between HRDs and Committee members through formal and informal virtual briefings. By [extending briefings to all countries ahead of the adoption of the List of Issues](#) and by conducting briefings virtually, we were able to significantly increase the number of civil society actors who engaged with the Committee. In an environment where physical interactions are limited, this proved extremely beneficial for both civil society and for the Committee, as it is easier for civil society to advocate for a subject to be included in the List of Issues before its adoption, and the Committee is provided with valuable, first-hand information which assists in the preparation of the List of Issues.

Promoting a holistic utilisation of UN Human Rights Mechanisms by civil society

The Centre also continued its efforts to foster a [more systematic and holistic utilisation of the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee in the other UN Human Rights Mechanisms](#). To this end, the Centre provided online courses to CSOs on how to effectively use the existing UN Human Rights Mechanisms as advocacy tools. We also organised workshops designed to assist civil society in the follow-up of recommendations related to civil and political rights issued by other Treaty Bodies (CEDAW, CAT and UPR). The Kenya/Zambia peer-to-peer exchange was also scaled by [interlinking the experiences](#) of

two geographically distant countries, [Togo and Haiti](#), ahead of the UPR review to enable the sharing of experiences, and to distil best practice in the fight against corruption. The Centre's [advocacy work](#) at both the national and international level was also reinforced through increased engagement during Human Rights Council sessions, the organisation of briefings to diplomatic missions and the publication of Op-eds and joint statements on areas of focus.



Members of Eswatini civil society attend a thematic CSOs consultation on LGBT organized by the Centre in light of the upcoming UPR in Mbabane, Eswatini, in October 2021

Impact Story

Reinforcing regional collaboration among civil society organisations

Interview with Làzarie Eckeloo, Human Rights Officer at the CCPR Centre and Masuzyo Mvula Chakwe, representative of Zambian civil society



Làzarie Eckeloo, can you briefly describe the context that led to the peer-to-peer briefing between representatives of Zambian and Kenyan civil societies?

During a preparatory mission to Zambia, civil society connected with their Kenyan colleagues to share their experiences. Kenya was reviewed by the Human Rights Committee in March 2021, and Zambia will undergo the same process in one of the upcoming sessions of the Committee. Our consultation with civil society was the ideal opportunity for both groups to come together and for Kevin Mwangi - a representative of Kenyan civil society and national coordinator for the CCPR Centre in Kenya - to share his take on the review and the preparatory process.

What were the main challenges faced by Zambian civil society in the preparation of the review and what kind of questions did they ask to the representative of Kenyan CSOs?

Zambian civil society asked several questions: what was Kenyan civil society's strategy in order to be coordinated ahead of the review, how did the government respond to their reports, how does civil society deal with the fact that government contests civil society's reports, what are key elements for a successful engagement, and how can we create space within the political process for the protection of civil and political rights. Mr. Mwangi was able to provide useful advice: it is important that several stakeholders are represented within civil society, and that they concentrate on a broad range of issues in their work. It is also crucial that reports contain statistics, in particular from the NHRI, and that lived realities are included as well, to substantiate allegations. Engagement from civil society, as well as political will are essential to create a successful engagement and can be created by using all international mechanisms at their disposal, as well as all reporting opportunities, so that all concerns are repeatedly addressed in the international community. Lastly, it is important for civil society to be well organized and to have a clear work plan.

What is, in your opinion, the added value of this kind of activity?

This Q&A session served to create links between civil societies from different countries. The representative of Kenyan civil society was able to share how they experienced the process before and during the review, which was helpful for Zambian colleagues, who are undergoing the same process now. These bridges are important, as it allows the participants to learn from each other.

Mvula Chakwe, you are an active member of Zambian civil society. What are your takeaways from your Q&A with the representative of Kenyan civil society?

My main take away from the Kenyan presentation is the unity and solidarity that CSOs exhibit when preparing for their report to the Human Rights Committee. It was evident that CSOs in Kenya have been more influential and united in holding the government accountable to the Committee. The Kenyan experience also proves that there will always be differences between the reports by CSOs and the government as presented at the UN.

You are also a journalist: can you tell us why is it important to train the media on human rights and on the State review process?

The training is important for journalists because it brings out particularly important human rights commitments that the government has endorsed to follow. Therefore, as a journalist I can confidently expose any human rights violations that the State has perpetrated, especially where contrary to international conventions it has ratified. With the knowledge I acquired I can competently help by holding the government accountable to its international obligations the government accountable to its international obligations. I can now also measure how CSOs are doing in holding the government accountable. This training was therefore a big revelation in as far as covering human rights is concerned.

Impact story

Maintaining direct contact with civil society in time of pandemic



Interview with Prof. Dr. Vasilka Sancin - Member and Vice-Chair of the UN Human Rights Committee

Why is direct contact with civil society so important, especially during COVID-19?

The COVID-19 pandemic also seriously disrupted the work of the human rights Treaty-Bodies. Although the Human Rights Committee was able to temporarily and on an exceptional basis continue its work online, no online meeting can be as effective as in-person sessions. Nevertheless, maintaining direct contact with civil society even during these on-line sessions was of paramount importance and assisted the Committee members in obtaining additional information relevant for the fulfilment of its diligent preparation and periodic reviewing of the States parties.

Why are LOIPR briefings important for the Committee members and how do they make it easier for you to adopt the List of Issues?

Although the Committee adopted an 8-year review cycle, the process of working on each review is a continuous one, and it is important that the members of the Committee are informed about important developments in a particular State Party at different stages of this process. It is particularly important before adoption of the LOIPR (or LOI for those States parties that have opted-out from the simplified reporting procedure), in the process of the Follow-up to Concluding Observations, as well as prior to the 8hrs constructive dialogue with a State party. These briefings provide Committee members with an additional insight that can shed light on important aspects, latest developments or statistics in relation to a particular concern, which is all relevant for the constructive exchanges with a State party and for the ensuing adequate recommendations.

What guidelines should civil society follow for the briefing to be useful for the Committee?

I would say that briefings are most useful for the Committee members if civil society organisations are presenting their views on as wide an array of topics of relevance under the ICCPR. It is also extremely useful if representatives of the CSOs are aware of the mandate, methods of work and documents to be adopted by the Committee, and take that into account when preparing for such briefings.

II. Increase ratification and enhance implementation of ICCPR



Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party had won the 2020 elections, was arrested on 1 February 2021 following a coup d'état that returned the Tatmadaw to power

Advocate and engage key stakeholders for the ratification of the ICCPR and its two Optional Protocols

In Myanmar, **the Centre was planning to continue its multi-year engagement with national stakeholders, assisting their efforts and enhancing the process for ICCPR ratification.** Building upon progress thus far and the results of the national election in November 2020, various activities were planned to support the signing of the ICCPR by Myanmar, and to build capacity of national stakeholders to constructively engage with Treaty Bodies and other UN Human Rights Mechanisms, in particular the 3rd UPR and initial review by CESCR.

However, **the coup d'état in Myanmar on 1 February 2021 drastically changed the situation of democracy,** human rights, and the rule of law in Myanmar. In support of the people of Myanmar and the resistance movement, we reoriented the focus of our engagement toward **engagement toward the restoration of the rule of law,** human rights, and democratic governance of the country through documentation and advocacy calling for urgent actions from States, international and regional bodies. Partnerships were also established with human rights defenders at the regional and international levels for co-ordinated action, in which the Centre played a lead role in targeted advocacy at the UN level, in particular at the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary bodies.

Engaging visual artists to improve visibility of the Human Rights Committee's recommendations at the national level



One of the most consistent observations made by the Centre is that the recommendations made by UN Treaty Bodies are not widely known to the general public, especially in large and decentralised countries. To address this, the Centre has produced and **distributed Guides and other content designed to enable easy dissemination of the Human Rights Committee's priority recommendations to civil society and authorities.**

The Centre produced content for **Togo, Kenya, Mauritania, and Senegal** in 2021, in the form of posters outlining the Committee's priority recommendations immediately after the examination by the Human Rights Committee. As with prior resources, **these posters were illustrated by local artists and explained** issues and recommendations that are often technical and complex **in a simple and culturally appropriate way.** The dissemination of posters at the national level and in online media helped to raise awareness of the human rights issues of concern in the relevant countries and to legitimise the work undertaken by national CSOs. We also see the posters as useful tools in guiding the State in deciding which issues to prioritise.

To further assist with the dissemination of recommendations, **the Centre has also developed country specific databases that compile recommendations across all UN human rights bodies.** The databases allow users to search and filter for specific topics and themes, and display recommendations using interactive graphics to increase accessibility. The Centre has developed databases for **DR Congo, Belarus, Vietnam and Tajikistan**, and will soon release websites for Bolivia, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru.

Supporting the role of the parliamentarians in the follow-up to the Committee's recommendations



CCPR Centre staffs and members of the Parliament meet for consultations on Treaty Bodies' priority recommendations in Kinshasa, DR Congo, in September 2021.

Since its inception, the Centre has worked extensively with representatives of State parties in order to improve the promotion of and respect for civil and political rights. Through this exercise, we have observed that **parliamentarians** (MPs) also play a key role in the promotion of and respect for human rights at three key levels. Firstly, it is the responsibility of those involved in legislative procedures to **adopt specific recommendations by the Human Rights Committee** in line with international standards. Secondly, the legislature exerts a significant degree of **influence on the adoption of budgets**, which serve to ensure that there are sufficient resources allocated towards human rights issues. Finally, the legislature also has a **key role in monitoring and evaluating governmental progress**, and ensuring the State is accountable to its citizens. In 2021, the Centre therefore decided to strengthen its work with parliamentarians in many countries, including the DR Congo, Niger, and Togo.

In **Niger and in Togo**, the Centre worked to amplify the Human Rights Committee's priority recommendations by organising consultations with parliamentarians on draft legislation on the protection of human rights defenders, and urged them to enact laws which increase access to protection. A similar exercise was also carried out in **DR Congo**, where the Centre organised consultations with the Congolese parliamentarians in collaboration with the Human Rights Commission (CNDH-DRC), with the intention of increasing their awareness of the UN Human Rights system. Around 60 Members of Parliament participated in these exchanges which took place at the National Assembly in Kinshasa. Bamariam Koita, keynote speaker and former member of the Human Rights Committee, reinforced the role that parliamentarians can play in implementing recommendations made by the Treaty Bodies. The second and third consultations addressed priority themes such as the prevention of torture and the participation of women in public affairs.

The consultations were well received by the parliamentarians, as evidenced by the reflection of Ms. Christelle Vuenga, Chair of the Gender, Family and Children Committee of the Parliament, who noted: "We greatly appreciated these lively exchanges on key issues for our country. With the support of the Centre, we are committed to following up on what was discussed during these three days to make progress on these themes." To allow MPs from different countries to benefit from each other's experience, the Centre also plans to extend these consultations to representatives from across the country over the coming months, by organising a **sharing**

of experience between parliamentarians from different states in the region. As underlined by Mr. Moligi, President of the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights, “Even if each country is different and we have to take into account the specificities of the DR Congo knowing what has been done in neighbouring countries, the challenges they have faced, and the solutions found will certainly help us in our approach”.

Impact Story

Supporting Parliamentarians in their work to uphold civil and political rights



Interview with Hon. Prof. IYANANIO Simon-Pierre MOLIGI, President of the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights

Why is it important to work with parliamentarians on civil and political rights issues? What role can they play in implementing the priority recommendations of UN bodies?

In their constituencies, MPs are considered the primary defenders of citizens' rights. Whenever citizens are victims of human rights violations, national MPs are among the first people they call to ask them to intervene. It is more important than ever that MPs are sufficiently informed and trained on human rights, so that their interventions are based on a good knowledge of the human rights they are called to defend every day.

As a national representative, the National Assembly includes members who have worked in sectors where the subtleties of human rights were not addressed. It is important to train them, to bring them up to speed, which some MPs desperately need.

Finally, the implementation of several priority recommendations of the United Nations requires the adoption of certain laws on the one hand; with follow-up and monitoring on the other. National MPs vote both on laws and on the monitoring of government action. They need to be well equipped to perform both tasks.

What were the main conclusions of the 3 days of consultations? How were they received by parliamentarians?

If I must mention two main takeaways, I would firstly note that these consultations highlighted the need for national MPs to be involved in the full UPR and UN Treaty Bodies' processes (preparation, reporting and monitoring of the implementation), and to undergo more comprehensive training on human rights issues (history, categories, reference texts etc.).

Overall, the three days of consultations organised in September were very well received by the members of the Standing Committee on Human Rights of the National Assembly of the DR Congo. The Centre has an demonstrated extensive experience in supporting MPs, and the workshop organised in Kinshasa in 2021 showed that the Centre can provide MPs with consultants who have knowledge of human rights issues and a methodology adapted to their circumstances. The Commission hopes and expects that the CCPR will support it in carrying out the activities foreseen in its 2022 planning.

III. Strengthening the work of the Human Rights Committee



For a meaningful civil society participation in the work of the Human Rights Committee

Since our inception, the Centre attached significant importance to the [enabling of meaningful participation of civil society in the work of the Human Rights Committee](#). To this end, the Centre updated its [Civil Society Advocacy Guide](#) in 2021, which provides civil society organisations with comprehensive [guidance on the application of the ICCPR](#) and the reporting processes of the UN Treaty Bodies. Due to the popularity of virtual engagement, the Centre also developed online versions of this tool, using an [interactive web platform](#) as well as video storytelling to communicate our guidance clearly and with widest reach.

For the [work of the Human Rights Committee to be effective, it must be easily accessible](#). To increase accessibility, the Centre produced several new tools in 2021 that helped highlight the work of the Committee:

1. 6 Newsletters were shared with a database of more of 3,500 contacts providing comprehensive overviews of the Human Rights Committee's sessions as well as an overview of the follow-up procedure;
2. Update of the Centre's database on cases decided by the Human Rights Committee;
3. In collaboration with TB Net, production of the [UN Treaty Bodies Yearbook 2020](#), which provides our in-depth analysis of the movement of treaty body jurisprudence.

Finally, we also organised several international training sessions for journalists in Nicaragua, Honduras and across Latin America. These sessions helped to introduce the universal human rights framework to the journalists, and provide them with background on the importance of reporting on human rights issues and obligations relevant to their country.



We have also come to understand the importance of **ensuring that the Committee's work and recommendations are reflective of the reality** within the country under review. In December 2021, the Centre, in collaboration with the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, the Geneva Human Rights Platform and the Commonwealth Secretariat, implemented a **pilot project for a first-ever in-country 'Focused Review'**. The pilot session took place over two-and-a-half days, from December 7 to 9 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This pilot consisted of a review carried out between full reporting cycles at the national level, designed to assess and compare differences in how countries implement specific recommendations, in particular where issued by different Treaty Bodies. Throughout the Focused Review process, we worked to identify synergies between activities undertaken to implement different recommendations, and in particular where thematic recommendations by different bodies may be complementary.

The participation of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in this project has allowed us to combine in-field observations with a more academic approach. Similar projects are currently being planned for 2022, as well as the development of a methodology that will allow us to conduct a large-scale review and assessment of the UN Treaty Bodies' recommendations using this new in-country approach.



A journalist standing in front of a mural painting advocating for freedom of expression in Kinshasa, DR Congo, in September 2021

Impact Story

Field Focused Review: Making the work of UN Treaty Bodies' more accessible to national stakeholders



Interview with Domenico Zipoli, Research Fellow and Project Coordinator at the Geneva Human Rights Platform

In a few words, what is a Focused Review? How does it work?

This new pilot procedure consists of a review carried out between full reporting cycles at the national level, designed to provide an update on how countries implement specific recommendations issued by different Treaty Bodies. The pilot project in Sierra Leone focused on the recommendations for follow-up of four Treaty Bodies, namely the Human Rights Committee, the CAT, the CEDAW and the CRC.

Collaboration with the CCPR Centre in this project was essential to facilitate the participation of Sierra Leonean civil society representatives. Further, the follow-up visits implemented by the CCPR Centre in a number of countries represented an important “best practice” to learn from and adapt to the focused review pilot initiative.

In your opinion, what is the added value of this type of Review?

As the Treaty Bodies system is based in Geneva, many national stakeholders are either required to attend online or cannot attend. And it is not just about including the government, but also the crucial non-state actors that make the Treaty Bodies system an open and independent review of human rights standards and practices in any one country. At the same time, it is important for Treaty Bodies' members to visit these countries, observe the problems that these countries are facing, and hear from local civil society organisations who cannot often attend the sessions in Geneva. The benefit is that the Treaty Body members are exposed to important local context which can result in more tailored recommendations in the long run, while also facilitating access to the Treaty Body system by promoting it in the country and the region.

Moreover, to be able to have a face-to-face meeting in a country may strengthen the independent, thorough monitoring of human rights standards, as well as providing important context for future recommendations. In the case of Sierra Leone, following the review, both Ministerial representatives and civil society organisations felt the Treaty Bodies system was more accessible to them when present in the country, and they were very eager to learn from the process and increase their participation going forward. It helped them build a relationship, trust, and confidence, and provided the opportunity to increase engagement with the Treaty Bodies system in the future.

What was the role of the Geneva Human Rights Platform of the Geneva Academy during this first Focused Review?

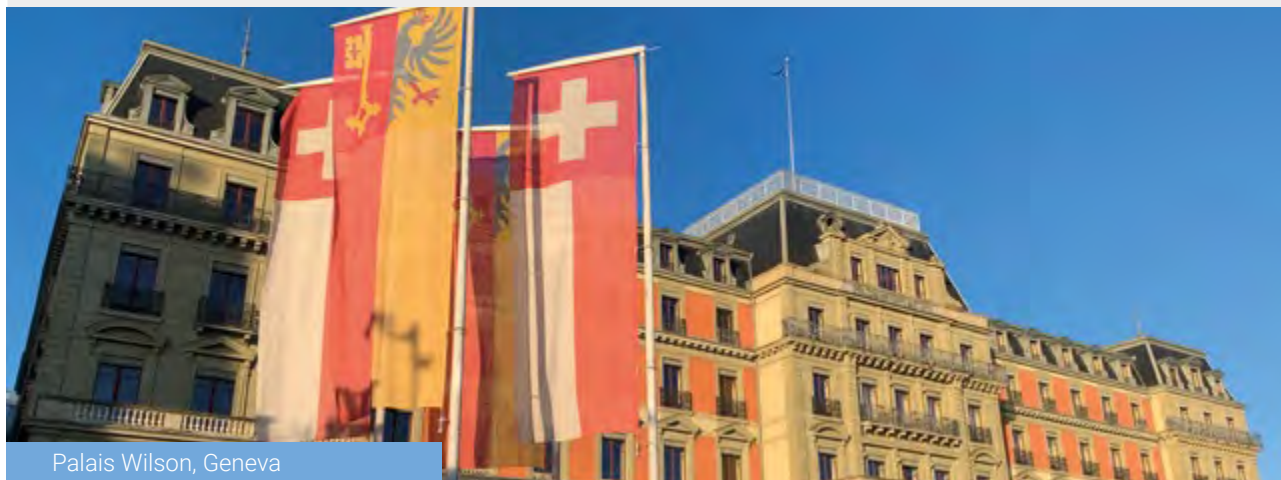
The Geneva Human Rights Platform has been the lead coordinator of the pilot project. The link between international and domestic human rights monitoring mechanisms is also at the core of our research here at the Geneva Academy and at the Geneva Human Rights Platform. The mapping of national actors invited to participate and the overall design of the pilot, including the agenda of the focused review session, was inspired by our ongoing research on National Human Rights Systems (NHRSSs). This project aims to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses affecting different NHRSSs. It also inspects the effectiveness of international human rights recommendations by focusing on national monitoring and implementation strategies.

With a basis in Sustainable Development Goal 16, both the pilot and our research activities rely on the underlying assumption that in the absence of a receptive domestic human rights infrastructure, UN initiatives are at risk of structural complications which may undermine a more interconnected system of human rights monitoring. The Focused Review procedure fosters interconnectivity, and creates an opportunity for different national human rights actors to interact and build coalitions as well as to engage with Treaty Bodies members.



Participants who took part to the first-ever Focused Review in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in December 2021

Strengthening and mainstreaming the work of the Human Rights Committee on specific thematic issues



Palais Wilson, Geneva

The Centre also continued its research into thematic areas of focus for the Human Rights Committee. In 2021, we continued our work on the link between [corruption and human rights](#) at the international level, by participating in a series of [CSOs events](#) at the Ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in Egypt in December 2021, and [advocating for the need for an independent expert](#) on corruption and human rights.

We also continued our engagement with the Human Rights Committee on recommendations relating to corruption and its impact on civil and political rights. In this manner, the Centre participated in a study commissioned by UNDP Moldova on the 'Impact of corruption on Human Rights in Moldova', which outlined a series of policy recommendations and interventions aimed at limiting the impact of corruption on human rights. This research partnership approach was new for the Centre, as we endeavour to work closer with national experts on the implementation of UN recommendations. Going forward, the findings of our research will be shared with other national actors in the region. We also plan to conduct a similar exercise with experts in other countries as an effort to improve the implementation of recommendations made by UN bodies.

Unsurprisingly, the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and related restrictions continued to impact the fulfilment of civil and political rights worldwide. The Centre continued its efforts initiated in 2020 with the production and dissemination of tools, guidelines and other materials designed for advocates to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on respect for human rights during the pandemic. In 2021, we expanded the reach of our materials by translating both guidelines and flashcards into other languages (including [Thai](#), [Tajik](#), [Kyrgyz](#), [Russian](#) & [Kazakh](#)) and distributing them with authorities and civil society in the respective countries.

The Centre also continued its work in [expanding the collective understanding of complex areas of the ICCPR](#) and promoting their application worldwide. In 2021, we focused on article 21 and 25 of the Covenant relating to the Right of Peaceful Assembly and the [Right to Participate in Public Affairs](#) respectively. Regarding [Art. 21](#) and the recent HR Committee's General Comment No. 37 on the right of peaceful assembly, the Centre published a [simple Q&A document](#) which stepped readers through answers to twenty-four questions designed to improve understanding of the General Comment and the right of peaceful assembly. The Centre also [interviewed](#) Yuval Shany, former Chair of the HR Committee, for this publication.

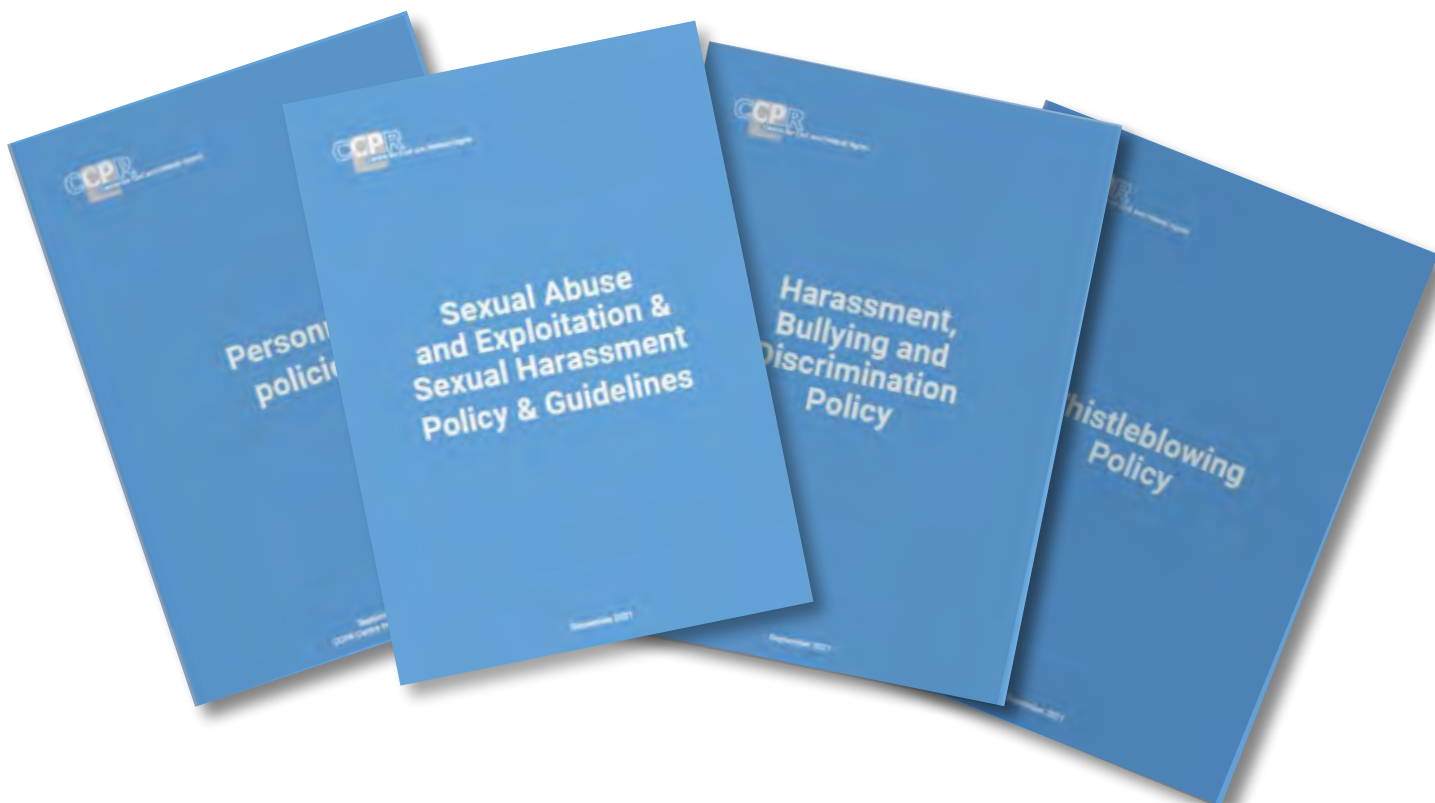
INSTITUTIONAL Policies

In 2021, the Centre also focussed on establishing its **internal policies and procedures**, and developed internal governance and frameworks protocols on the following areas:

- 1 **Personnel and Salary Rules (internal)**
- 2 **Sexual Abuse and Exploitation & Sexual Harassment**
- 3 **Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination**
- 4 **Whistleblowing**



These policies clarify the values upon which the Centre is built and outline our expectations for each of our staff and partners. We will endeavour to update them on a regular basis as required.



THE WAY forward



CCPR Centre staff meet with members of civil society to discuss a road map for the implementation of Treaty Bodies' priority recommendations in Kinshasa, DR Congo, in September 2021

2022 will be a pivotal year for the Centre. It will be the year of an established 'new normal'; one that combines the advantages of in-person engagement with the added value of virtual engagement discovered during COVID-19: reduced costs, increased inclusiveness, suppression of geographical barriers and increased exchanges between regions and continents.

The Centre will continue to adapt its strategy to the human rights situation of each country we work in. In **locations new to the work** of the Centre and the Human Rights Committee, we will continue to advocate for the respect of civil and political rights and assist civil society in engaging with the UN Human Rights Committee. This will be our approach in locations such as Cambodia, as a State party scheduled for review at the Committee's March session and where we have recently appointed a new national coordinator.

We will also continue our engagement in countries such as Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, and many others in which the **presence of the Centre is well established and civil society networks are operational**, as we remain convinced that a long term approach is most effective. In these areas, increased focus will also be placed upon conducting **training and activities at the regional level**, allowing stakeholders from different countries to engage, share challenges and best practices and learn from each other. We will also strengthen our **thematic work**. For instance, we will conduct a regional roundtable in Africa focused on the need to preserve civic space, a theme that comes across often in the Committee's Concluding Observation to the States in the region. In Latin America, we will continue to empower local and grassroots organisations and strengthen the interaction between the regional system of protection and the Human Rights Committee. In Asia, the Centre will continue work advocating against restrictions placed on civil and political rights and actors who perpetuate human rights abuse. In particular, we will work to build civic spaces where possible, especially where they are limited due to oppressive authorities, political instability or armed conflict through deeper utilisation of the UN human rights frameworks and special procedures.

A key part of operationalising our strategy will be to continue engagement with **countries that are still not party to the ICCPR, or those that are failing to meet the requirements enshrined by the ratification** of the Covenant. In countries that have still not ratified the ICCPR, the Centre will work with stakeholders on the ground to increase their knowledge of the content of the Covenant and provide them with information sharing tools and advocacy materials. In countries where citizens continue to suffer violations of their civil and political rights despite the ratification of ICCPR by the State, the Centre will continue to engage with and support human rights defenders, and ensure their voices are heard within the UN human rights framework.

In order to continue **building capacity with human rights defenders and authorities**, the Centre will **continue to explore new interactive tools** to support civil society and government authorities in their efforts to uphold and protect civil and political rights in their respective countries.

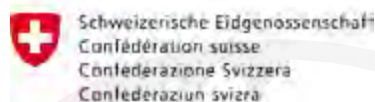
2022 will also be the year that the Centre embarks on our **new strategic ambition** that will inform our work in the coming years. However, strengthening our presence on the ground, continuing to act as a link between local, regional, and international bodies and building capacity for actors on the ground and improving their engagement with UN bodies will stay at the core of the Centre's purpose and activities. In our view, this remains the best way to promote respect for civil and political rights on a global scale.

OUR supporters and partners

+ 100'000.- CHF



+ 50'000.- CHF



+ 25'000.- CHF



+ 15'000.- CHF



FINANCIAL statements

(1st January – 31st December, in CHF)

This is an extract of the audited financial statements for 2021. A full version is available upon request at info@ccprcentre.org.

In 2021, the Centre reported a total income of CHF of 572'249.- CHF. This is slightly less compared to 2020. This can be explained because several funds for activities to be carried out in 2021 were received in 2020 or will be received in 2022. In addition, due to the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19, some funds expected were not received in 2021 as the activities were postponed in 2022. However the number of donors remain similar throughout the recent years, with several projects funded over several years.

Regarding the expenses, as for 2020, the Centre carried out most of its activities in connection with the Human Rights Defenders (objective 1) and its thematic work (objective 2). In the same vein, expenses related to the advocacy work with other stakeholders such as the national authorities were more limited due to the health situation and the related travel ban. It is expected that the travels initially scheduled in 2021 will be carried out in 2022.

Income	2021	2020
Governments	347'293.- CHF	436'719.- CHF
Foundations	171'648.- CHF	275'216.- CHF
UN Agencies and related intergovernmental bodies	26'402.- CHF	66'575.- CHF
Other revenue	27'369.- CHF	6'600.- CHF
Total	572'712.- CHF	785'110.-CHF
Costs	2021	2020
Obj.1: HRDs support for ICCPR implementation	373'253.- CHF	293'649.-CHF
Obj. 2: ICCPR ratification and implementation	74'533.- CHF	38'747.- CHF
Obj. 3: Support to the HRCtee and thematic work	70'059.- CHF	167'197.- CHF
Administration, Finance, Communication Fundraising	145'915.- CHF	173'293.- CHF
Governance and strategy	10'608.- CHF	9'913.- CHF
Net movement in funds	(90'016.- CHF)	2'699.- CHF
Total costs	584'453.- CHF	685'498.-CHF
Income (deficit) for the year (inc. reserve fund)	(11'641.- CHF)	99'612.-CHF
Assets	2021	2020
Cash and equivalents	260'898.- CHF	359'439.-CHF
Debtors	0.- CHF	0.- CHF
Transitory assets	0.- CHF	0.- CHF
Total	260'898.- CHF	359'439.-CHF
Liabilities and reserves	2021	2020
Short term liabilities	34'649.- CHF	31'532.- CHF
Deferred grants	(8'013.- CHF)	82'003.- CHF
Free capital and reserve funds	234'262.- CHF	245'903.- CHF
Total	260'898.- CHF	359'438.-CHF

OUR team

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Director



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Human Rights Officer



Paola Barioli
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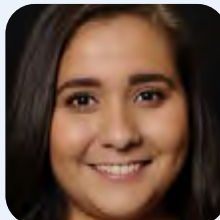
Abigail Koshimo Brown
Human Rights Officer Asia Pacific



Rustam Kypshakbayev
Central Asia Office Coordinator



Elisabeth Jimenez
Latin America Office Coordinator
(Till June 2021)



Mariel Merayo
Latin America Office Coordinator
(Since July 2021)



Patricia Tarre
Latin America Office Coordinator
(Since December 2021)

National Coordinators



Ekaterina Kavlis
National Coordinator for Kazakhstan



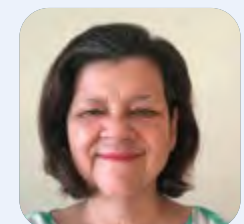
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National Coordinator for Kenya



Lesly Ramirez
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Palma Monferrer and Marc Abersold
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Codex Design
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Amanda Alonso
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Tadeja Urbas

Graphic design

Celacanto Productions
Gabriel Hernández


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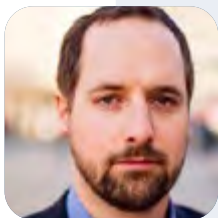
Victor Rodriguez-Rescia - President -  Costa Rica

Former Member of the HR Committee and SPT, Human Rights professor and President of Inter-American Institute of Social Responsibility and Human Rights



Hassan Shire - Vice President -  Somalia

Executive Director of the DefendDefenders (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project) and Chairperson of the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network (PAHRD-Net)



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Secretary General of "Les Verts Suisses" and Former Head of PRI-International



Rose Katharina -  Germany

GANHRI Geneva Representative

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Professor, Former Member of the UN Human Rights Committee



Krister Thelin -  Sweden

Judge, Former Member of the Human Rights Committee

GLOSSARY

UN building, Geneva

CAT	Committee Against Torture
CEDAW	Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CIDH	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
CNIDH	Commission Nationale Indépendante des Droits de l'Homme du Burundi
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CSI	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FoE	Freedom of Expression
FoPA	Freedom of Public Assembly
FU	Follow-Up
GC37	General Comment No. 37 on the right of peaceful assembly
HR Committee	Human Rights Committee
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ID	Interactive Dialogue
INDH	National Institute of Human Rights
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
LOI	List of Issues
LOIPR	List of Issues Prior to the Reporting
MoJ	Minister of Justice
MPs	Members of Parliament
NHRI	National Human Rights Institutions
NPM	National Preventive Mechanisms
 OCDH	Observatoire Congolais des Droits de l'Homme
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression
UNCAC	United Nations Conventions against Corruption
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNTBs	United Nations Treaty Bodies
UPR	Universal Periodic Review



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