



CANDIDATE FOR THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

SPAIN
2018-2020



Introduction

01

Spain is firmly committed to contributing to the defence and promotion of human rights around the world.

Protecting and promoting human rights is a priority for Spain. Our country attaches particular importance to participating for the second time in the United Nations' principal human rights body during the 2018-2020 term. That's why we presented our candidacy in June 2013. Five years after its first term (2010-2013), Spain wishes to provide continuity—with renewed momentum—to our staunch commitment to human rights and, in particular, to the multilateral human rights protection and promotion system.

Spain has taken on wide-ranging obligations regarding the protection of human rights, submitting to oversight by international treaty bodies. Our country is an active party to eight fundamental International Treaties on human rights and to nine Optional Protocols.

We have prioritized five areas in our foreign policy actions concerning human rights: death penalty abolition; non-discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation or gender identity; rights of persons with disabilities; the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation; and business and human rights. Together with these priorities, Spain has also been paying special attention to mainstreaming support for human rights defenders, including national protection mechanisms.





The defence and promotion of human rights clearly reflects the demands of Spanish society.

Spain's commitment to defending and promoting human rights internationally is in line with its domestic policy as regards legislation, institutions and public policies. This was highlighted during the 2nd Universal Periodic Review (UPR) that we underwent in early 2015. Spain is firmly committed to continue working towards implementing and developing human rights, with the UPR final report as our roadmap.

Spain's public administration is collaborating with our national human rights institution—the Ombudsperson's Office—and with non-governmental organizations, carrying out consultations during the drafting process of legislation, policies and programmes, and fostering wide-ranging involvement in regional and international forums.

The presence of Spanish experts in six treaty bodies is further proof of our society's commitment to the fight for human rights in different areas, as well as of the quality of our national experts and academics in this sphere.



Reliable and committed to protecting and promoting Human Rights

02

We contribute to the effective functioning of the Human Rights Council, and support the independence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Our country plays an active role on the Human Rights Council. We engage in interactive debates and dialogues, participate in negotiations for resolutions and other documents, and present our own initiatives.

Spain supports the work of special procedures and, in particular, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.

We have made substantial contributions to the consolidation of the human rights regulatory framework.

Spain has actively promoted the ratification of agreements, especially through the recommendations it makes to countries undergoing the Universal Periodic Review. But we have also set an example.

We were the third country to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; we are a member of its Group of Friends; and we have submitted to the procedure of individual complaints established in the Protocol. We were one of the first countries to ratify the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women. We were also one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.



HUMAN RIGHTS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

Spain has also promoted recognition by the Council and the United Nations General Assembly of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation as essential components of the right to an adequate standard of living (Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), as agreed in Resolution 70/169 (2015) of the UN General Assembly. We support the implementation of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation through our development cooperation policies and through specific initiatives, such as our Cooperation Fund for Water and Sanitation.

We have fostered multilateral initiatives in the sphere of human rights.

Together with Germany, Spain presented to the Human Rights Council and to the United Nations General Assembly the resolution on “the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation” which advocates the practical realization of that right. Likewise, together with Ecuador, Morocco, the Philippines, Italy and Romania, Spain presented to the Human Rights Council the resolution on “the contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and to its Universal Periodic Review”, with a view to combining efforts for the effective promotion and protection of human rights through the contribution of parliaments.





We support and actively participate in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

The UPR has proved to be invaluable for promoting and protecting human rights around the world. Spain has twice been reviewed under this mechanism, first in 2010 and again in 2015, when it received 189 recommendations—a number similar to that for other States—of which 169 have been directly supported. We participate actively in UPR sessions, making constructive comments and recommendations to all the countries reviewed, as proof of our commitment to a mechanism whose two essential pillars are universality and dialogue.

We are open to monitoring of our human rights policies.

Spain has ratified all the protocols that establish individual complaints procedures regarding the international conventions to which we are party. In recognition of the essential role of the Human Rights Council's special procedures in verifying and providing technical support for compliance with international obligations, Spain extended, in 1991, an open and permanent invitation to all special procedures (Working Groups, Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts) to visit our country whenever they so request. We are always open to engaging in an enriching dialogue within the framework of all States' obligation to cooperate with the treaty bodies and all other oversight mechanisms. Since the last time we sat on the Human Rights Council, Spain has received the visits of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism; of the Working Group on enforced disappearances; of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence; and of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice. Spain is also fully compliant with its obligation to submit periodic reports to the different treaty bodies.

FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

First country to present its Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in May 2010. Spain was distinguished with the 2013 Franklin D. Roosevelt International Disability Award in recognition of its international commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities.

We promote human rights issues at the Security Council.

During its latest term on the Security Council (2015-2016), Spain has actively advocated that the Council should pay proper attention to human rights issues. Respect for human rights is a prerequisite for peace. We have highlighted the importance of preventing, and combating impunity in, cases of human rights violations. We have promoted human rights language in negotiating the UN mission mandates. We have supported and actively participated in meetings addressing human rights issues. We have paid close attention to the reports to the Security Council by the High Commissioner and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

Spain remains firmly committed to the agendas of children and armed conflict, of the protection of civilians, and of women, peace and security. Coinciding with the 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, in October 2015 the Spanish Presidency of the Security Council organized a high-level open debate during which Resolution 2242 was adopted unanimously, taking up the torch of Resolution 1325 and blazing a trail for the full participation of women in peacebuilding.

We have promoted conflict prevention and early warning, convinced that large-scale and systematic violations of human rights—which are, in themselves, unacceptable—may lead to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.







JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Spanish Cooperation's MASAR programme, accompanying democratic processes in the Arab world, APIA programme, supporting inclusive public policies and the participation of civil society in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Intercoo-nect@ programme, promoting knowledge transfer, exchange and management for development in Latin America and the Caribbean, all in line with respect for human rights.

Human rights are an essential part of Spain's Development Cooperation.

The "Manual for the Implementation of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)", published by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), constitutes the conceptual framework for human development processes based on international human rights standards. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, human rights, gender equality and combating inequalities are priority issues for Spain. We will continue to foster a rights-based approach for all the Sustainable Development Goals.

Ten pledges for the 2018-2020 term

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01 / As in our previous term, we will play an active role in seeking consultations and negotiations, with high, **unwavering standards in the defence and promotion of human rights.**

02 / We will continue to maintain fluid relations with Human Rights Council members, and with countries that are not members, in order to address key questions of our day with a **generous and transparent information policy.** We will be keenly aware of the views of civil society, defending its role as a stakeholder of the Human Rights Council.

03 / We will work towards **achieving truly equal opportunities and ending discrimination,** in line with our active participation in defining policies and creating instruments and institutions to combat gender discrimination, particularly gender violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation.

04 / We will continue working actively to defend the **rights of persons with disabilities,** promoting the ratification and implementation of the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and actively participating during Council sessions in the negotiations on the resolutions regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.

05 / The defence and promotion of **economic, social and cultural rights** also constitute key aspects of our country's actions. We will continue to promote the **human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation,** whose effective realization in turn constitutes a prerequisite for the realization of other rights, with such noteworthy examples as the right to health, to education, and to food.



06 / We will **foster democracy and the rule of law**, as essential instruments for the development and effective realization of human rights.

07 / We will persevere in **combating racism, xenophobia, and hate crimes**.

08 / We will contribute to the institutionalization and improvement of the **effective functioning of the Human Rights Council**, we will support the work of special procedures and universal instruments and mechanisms for human rights, in particular the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review.

09 / We will remain faithful to our nature as a **country at the crossroads** between North and South, East and West—a **plural, open country with a spirit of solidarity**.

10 / In sum, at the Human Rights Council Spain will offer its commitment to working for **a world that is more just, a world with solidarity, a world that shows respect for human rights**.



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