

## **Incoming Members Pledge – 2019**

### **Item 2 General Debate, 7 March**

I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of Fiji, Austria, Argentina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, The Bahamas, Togo, and Uruguay.

As incoming members of the Human Rights Council, we are committed to the success and effectiveness of the Council and are convinced that the Council plays an invaluable role in promoting and protecting human rights worldwide.

Resolution 60/251, setting up this Council, makes clear that Council members shall “uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights” and “fully cooperate with the Council”.

In furtherance of these requirements, we commit to strengthening the Council through good practice, and pledge to:

- cooperate in good faith with the OHCHR, the Council and its mechanisms, including responding in a timely manner to Special Procedures’ communications, urgent appeals and country visit requests;
- address human rights concerns on their merits, applying objective and human rights-based criteria in determining whether and how the Council should respond to a situation of concern, and take leadership and responsibility in initiating action when such criteria are met;
- engage in the work of this Council in a spirit of self-reflection with a view to improving our own human rights situation, recognising that no State has a perfect human rights record;
- engage in the work of the Council in good faith and in a transparent manner, including in resolution negotiations;
- avoid procedural tactics when used to block genuine debate and prevent the Council from considering human rights issues on their merits;
- work to fulfill the Council’s prevention mandate through both technical assistance and capacity-building, as well as receiving from the High Commissioner “early warning” information about patterns of violations, and taking early preventive action;
- plan to make progress in the promotion, protection and realisation of human rights at the national level, including through implementation of recommendations and resolutions of the Council and its mechanisms;
- work in cooperation with civil society in relation to our engagement with the Council, support civil society participation throughout the work of the Council, strive to create a safe and enabling environment for civil society, and engage robustly to prevent and address acts of intimidation and reprisals, speaking up to address such incidents when they occur.

We are convinced that these commitments when properly respected and applied will help strengthen the Council's effectiveness and credibility.