



2019 - 2021



**ITALY FOR THE HUMAN  
RIGHTS COUNCIL**

Human Rights for Peace

## CANDIDATURE OF ITALY TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, 2019-2021

### Human Rights for Peace

**Protecting and promoting Human Rights** is at the heart of Italy's policy and action, at the national and international levels, as also enshrined in its Constitutional Chart. Italy's action is founded and anchored on the principles of **universality, indivisibility and interdependence of Human Rights**.

**Respecting Human Rights is pivotal** to international peace and security, conflict prevention, sustainable development, peace and reconciliation, and **to build stable and inclusive societies**. The Human Rights Council (HRC) plays a key role by promoting cooperation among countries on Human Rights issues.

**Global challenges** too, such as trafficking in human beings, international terrorism and climate change **have a direct impact on Human Rights**. This is why Italy believes that the HRC's role and action are part of a broader integrated effort. In this sense **the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a key tool**.

Italy actively works to **strengthen the United Nations Human Rights system**, closely cooperating with the HRC and its instruments and bodies including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Italy is committed to enhancing the protection and promotion of Human Rights in all bilateral and multilateral contexts, including within the European Union, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

As a member of the HRC, Italy will continue with determination to **promote an open and inclusive approach to Human Rights**, focusing on ownership by local actors and on cooperation with civil society organizations. Italy will keep working to support the role of the HRC, in line with the principles of **universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity**.

Italy is committed to promoting and protecting all Human Rights, including civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

As a member of the HRC, it will engage actively and work constructively and with determination to continue to:

- **meaningfully streamline Human Rights promotion and protection** in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and in long term peaceful conflict settlement;
- further improve the effectiveness of the **UPR process**;
- support **Special Procedures** established by the HRC, and foster participation in the “Interactive Dialogues”;
- prevent and combat **international crimes and impunity**;
- support prompt response to **Human Rights emergencies**;
- further promote **Human Rights education** and awareness raising campaigns on Human Rights and fundamental freedoms;
- enhance the role of civil society, in particular in the formulation and implementation of Human Rights policy and programs, including early warning and prevention; **support the participation of civil society organizations in the Human Rights Council**; establish new channels for collaboration and dialogue with civil society organizations.





## FIGHT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is a threat to the full enjoyment of Human Rights. Italy is strongly engaged in **combating racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia, intolerance and all forms of discrimination, including when based on sexual orientation and gender identity.**

Italy is part of the Equal Rights Coalition and actively supports all its initiatives to promote and protect the rights of LGBTI persons. Italy is a member of the LGBTI core group in New York.

Italy will continue to support specific initiatives and resolutions, including by further **promoting ambitious educational programmes, supporting the engagement of civil society** organizations and further **preventing and combatting the diffusion of hate speech**, including online.

## RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Ensuring women's rights and increasing the focus on **women's meaningful participation at all levels** is essential to **making our societies more inclusive and resilient** and to removing existing constraints and barriers to sustainable development. Italy will:

- do more to **empower women and girls** and to advance their Human Rights in line with the 2030 Agenda;
- continue to work with determination to **prevent and combat violence against women in all its forms**;
- continue its strong and active engagement in international campaigns for the **eradication of female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage**, and in supporting international initiatives for the **prevention of sexual violence in conflict and emergency situations**.

Italy attaches great importance to ensuring the **full and active participation of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict efforts**, in line with the "Women, Peace and Security" Agenda.





## RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Children are among the most exposed to Human Rights violations, especially in conflict and post-conflict contexts and in situations of underdevelopment, extreme poverty and social tension. Italy actively supports international initiatives and programs aimed at **preventing and combating the involvement of children in armed conflict** and will continue to work to **ensure the enjoyment by all children of their economic, social and cultural rights, without discrimination**, contributing to creating a safe and enabling environment in which the well-being of the child is ensured. Special effort is and will be devoted to **protecting children victims of trafficking, particularly those who are unaccompanied**, in terms of identification, assistance, healthcare, education and exemption from detention.

Italy will continue to **prevent and combat child pornography, support child victims** of violence, sexual abuse and trafficking and take all necessary steps to strengthen international cooperation for the investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible for acts involving the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism. Italy believes in the importance of promoting education and Human Rights education as a basis for guaranteeing the realization of all Human Rights. Therefore Italy will continue to **promote education for all children, adolescents and young people, enabling adolescents and young people to be agents of positive transformation**.

## MORATORIUM ON THE DEATH PENALTY

The establishment of a **universal moratorium on the death penalty** with a view to its complete abolition is one of Italy's top priorities.

Italy actively supports the adoption of the biennial resolution of the UN General Assembly on this issue by raising awareness of third countries and promoting initiatives in close cooperation with civil society organizations and partner countries. In this context, **Italy will strengthen its efforts, encouraging national discussions and debates on the possibility of moving away from capital punishment.**





## FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF AND PROTECTION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Italy is working with determination to enhance the international action for the protection and promotion of freedom of religion or belief and the rights of persons belonging to religious minorities. We support initiatives aimed to **promote pluralism, inclusion, tolerance as well as interreligious and intercultural dialogue** as we consider them **pivotal to preventing Human Rights violations**. This includes supporting the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief and close work with the UN and other international organizations in order to strengthen the analysis and assessment tools at our disposal to timely and systematically identify the risk of atrocity crimes.



## FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Trafficking in human beings is a heinous, intolerable and very serious crime, and a daunting challenge for the international community. Italy believes it is necessary to **promote a victim-centred, Human Rights-oriented, gender and child-sensitive approach** in the way such challenge is managed. **Italy is actively committed to the fight against trafficking in human beings, including by proudly being at the forefront in saving thousands of lives in the Mediterranean Sea and by strongly supporting the activities of the UNHCR and the IOM.** Italy will continue to actively **protect the victims** of human trafficking at both the national and international levels, **paying particular attention to those in a situation of vulnerability, such as women and children, including unaccompanied minors,** and to support the activities of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Italy will also promote with determination international law enforcement and judicial cooperation.





## RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Italy is engaged in **protecting the rights of persons with disabilities**, especially in emergency and post-conflict situations, and **will further promote their rights**, also by supporting the widest accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the implementation of its principles. Italy will also strengthen its efforts on **advocacy and awareness raising programs** to enhance the understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.

## PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

**Cultural heritage is the bedrock of civilization**, a testament to human identity, history and prosperity. The right of access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage is a human right guaranteed by international law.

The destruction of cultural and religious heritage, revealing the determination to eradicate all traces of diversity and different cultural and religious identities in a specific area, has a detrimental impact also on stability and pacific coexistence of different communities in that area. **Protecting cultural and religious heritage is therefore key not only to protecting the rights of persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, but also to fostering peace and stability.**

Italy will continue its pivotal and active work in this field, in concert with all other relevant international actors, to protect cultural heritage, with a view to **promoting universal respect for cultural rights** and will support the activities of the Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights.





Image Source:  
European Commission

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

**Human Rights defenders are key players in promoting and protecting Human Rights.** Italy recognizes the importance of the **role of civil society**, as a vibrant civil society contributes to democratic societies, stability and prosperity. Italy is committed to **safeguarding the safety and rights of Human Rights defenders** and will continue to actively support them and **step up its efforts against all forms of reprisal**. Italy will continue to support the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights defenders.

**For further information:**

[https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica\\_estera/temi\\_globali/diritti\\_umani](https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica_estera/temi_globali/diritti_umani)