

# Elections for the Human Rights Treaty Bodies

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UNITED NATIONS



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**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

# What are the international human rights treaty bodies?

- 9 treaties / 10 bodies
- 8 result of treaty and elected by SPs, 1 result of OP (to CAT – SPT), 1 ECOSOC resolution (elected by ECOSOC)
- Members are independent experts, nominated by SPs, serve in personal capacity. Number varies most 18, CAT and CED 10, CMW 14, CEDAW 23, SPT 25
- Functions: review State party reports, individual complaints, inquiries, country visits but also offering authoritative guidance through general comments.



# What is the relationship between the treaty bodies and the UN?

- Independent
- OHCHR serves as secretariat supporting the committees on substantive and organisational matters.
- All treaty bodies meet in Geneva
- Budget provided by the UNGA (regular budget)
- Reporting to the GA (C.3 in October each year) / CESCR reports to ECOSOC as its functional committee



# ELECTIONS

- In general: terms for 4 years and every 2 years elections for around half of the membership....but sometimes vacancies.
- CAT and OP-CAT at MoSPs in Geneva. CESCR at ECOSOC regular elections (every two years, next in 2024).
- CRPD during the CoSP, organized by DESA.
- Remaining 6 – CRC, CEDAW, ICCPR (HRC) - CED, CMW, CERD stand-alone MoSPs – elections in New York, organized by OHCHR.
- JUNE = election month



# NOMINATIONS

- NV sent 6 months ahead of time. 3 month window usually, deadline in April.
- Gender and geo balance desired, no geo quota except for CESCR (ECOSOC stipulated quota)
- Expertise and high moral standing
- Independence and impartiality (Addis Ababa Guidelines)
- Nominations deadline – administrative, not legal!!!

# NOMINATIONS

- Withdrawal of candidates – possible to do up to balloting
- List of candidates on OHCHR site
- The committees with no limit on terms of membership are CERD, CMW, CAT, CESCRC, HRCttee, CEDAW and CRC
- CED, CRPD and SPT are the committees in which members can only be re-elected once

# CREDENTIALS

- HoS or MFA need to sign.
- Credentials for several meetings in the same document possible (June grouping).
- Each meeting does usually adopt provisional credentials, however that could theoretically be legally challenged.



# NUMBERS

- QUORUM 2/3s, meeting won't start without.
- HIGHEST number of votes AND ABSOLUTE MAJORITY of states present and voting.





## Upcoming elections

- Committee on Enforced Disappearance: 12 June (Chair WEOG)
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: 22 June (Chair GRULAC)
- Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families: 27 June (Chair ASIA PACIFIC)



# Questions?

