



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 43rd SESSION

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Opening of the session: High-Level Segment

24 February 2020, 09h00-10h00

President of the Human Rights Council – H.E. Ms. Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger

The Human Rights Council should be guided by the **impact** that it has on the ground. Record number of 100 dignitaries during this session shows the importance the states attach to its work. 10 delegates from the LDCs and island states were able to participate thanks to the contributions of the Voluntary Fund. During the times of increasing challenges and decreasing financial means, the **efficiency** is paramount. New initiative – Code of Conduct – meant to prevent harassment, including during the UN events. The President will follow-up on all **allegations concerning acts of reprisal and intimidation** committed against members of civil society and NHRIs.

President of the General Assembly – H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

Institutional relationships and strengthening of partnership between the Human Rights Council and General Assembly (GA) is fundamental for promoting human rights, especially in view of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations.

Main topics tackled: Right of the child, Education, Gender Equality, Refugees.

Secretary-General – H.E. Mr. António Guterres

Launches *The Highest Aspiration – A Call to Action for Human Rights*.

Challenges addressed: wars, humans trafficking, global hunger, unemployment, climate change, democratic changes; struggles of women and girls, civil society activists, religious minorities, journalists, minorities, indigenous people, migrants, LGBTIQ community. Robust treaty body system is in place, along with special procedures system. Human rights are under assault.

Approaches to work: a) hand-in-hand with governments to promote national mechanisms; b) identifying perpetrators and violations; c) working behind the scenes, d) the combination of all.

Main topics tackled: 1) Rights are at the core of SDGs; 2) Rights in time of crisis; 3) Gender equality; 4) Civic space is shrinking; 5) Rights of future generations; 6) Collective action needed to address today's crisis. 7) New frontiers of Human Rights.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Ms. Michelle Bachelet

In finding solutions, it is fundamental to include young people as a part of it. OHCHR is committed to work with all stakeholders to implement **SDGs** and to dialogue with businesses to address accountability.

Main topics tackled: Responsible governance, broader participation, transparency of institutions, policies that uphold equality and combat discriminations, greater justice and assistance.

Host Country (Switzerland) – S.E. M. Ignazio Cassis, Chef du Département fédéral des Affaires étrangères de la Confédération suisse

Switzerland, as the host country, is honoured to provide a **platform for dialogue** and action in the international Geneva.

Two main topics addressed: Digital technologies and Climate change.

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