

Justice **NOW!** Ratify to Protect all Human Rights

CAMPAIGN FOR THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE INTERNATIONAL
COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS



Steering Committee

Amnesty International

Centre on Housing
Rights and Evictions
(COHRE), Switzerland

Community Law Centre,
South Africa

FoodFirst Information
and Action Network
(FIAN), Germany

Inter-American Platform
of Human Rights,
Democracy and
Development
(PIDHDD), Paraguay

International
Commission of Jurists
(ICJ),
Switzerland

International
Federation for
Human Rights (FIDH)
France

International Network for
Economic, Social and
Cultural Rights (ESCR-
Net),
United States

International Women's
Rights Action Watch –
Asia Pacific (IWRAP
Asia Pacific), Malaysia

Social Rights Advocacy
Center (SRAC),
Canada

*Coordinated by
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H.E.

Minister of Foreign Affairs

cc: Permanent Representatives of your Country to the United Nations in New York and in Geneva

October 19, 2009

Dear Minister.....,

On behalf of the NGO Coalition for an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, we want to express our appreciation to (Country) for becoming one of the first signatories of the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR. The decision of your country to sign this mechanism of redress during the 2009 Treaty Event signals the commitment of (Country) to bring this important legal instrument into force as soon as possible. It also sends a message of hope to victims of ESCR violations through the pledge of the international community to create an effective avenue to find justice within the United Nations when mechanisms of redress are not available at the domestic level.

We look forward to the prompt ratification by your country of this treaty and respectfully request any information you are able to share in relation to the plans and expected timeframes to accomplish this ratification. We also ask your country to please encourage other States to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol.

Your Excellency, as you are aware, the term of 9 of the 18 members of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will expire in December 2010. The quality of the elected individual members will have significant impact on the effectiveness of the Optional Protocol once it enters into force and on the overall quality and effectiveness of the CESCR in its wider functions of monitoring compliance with the ICESCR. In addition, a positive

result of this election will ensure the independence, expertise and competence of this Committee creating a motivating factor for countries to become parties to the Optional Protocol.

Therefore, we kindly ask (Country) to motivate member countries of ECOSOC to vote only for independent and impartial candidates with strong expertise in the field of economic, social and cultural rights, keeping in mind the need to maintain gender balance in the composition of the Committee. At the national level, processes for the identification and selection of the candidates should be fair and transparent and geared towards identifying independent and impartial candidate with strong relevant expertise.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to hearing from you in relation to your plans around ratification and the election of members of the CESCR.

Respectfully,

Suad Elías Atala

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the International NGO Coalition for an Optional Protocol to the ICESCR.

**The NGO Coalition for an Optional Protocol is formed by more than 300 organizations and individuals from more than 60 countries working for social justice worldwide*

