# Model letters to be sent to your government in the occasion of 10 December 2015, Human Rights Day

**Model A. If your government has signed the OP-ICESCR**

Dear ---------,

[Insert name/name of NGOs sending this letter or ‘the undersigned NGOs’] express[es] appreciation to the government of [country] for signing the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Protocol).

 **[On the occasion]** of the seventh anniversary of the adoption of the Protocol on the Human Rights Day, 10th December 2015, we urge your government to take all necessary steps to ratify the Protocol without reservations and fully implement it without delay. This anniversary provides a distinct opportunity for governments to reaffirm their commitments to ensure access to justice for all human rights through ratification.

At this key moment for ESC rights, when the international community has adopted the sustainable development goals post-2015, we call on you to show leadership and join those states that have declared their commitment to ensuring that everyone enjoys all human rights and no one is left behind. By becoming a party to the Protocol, you will send an important signal to other States that it is time to ensure that everybody, including the marginalised and disadvantaged, is given a meaningful voice and is able to identify and seek effective remedies to the rights violations that perpetuate poverty and social exclusion. At the same time it would demonstrate a clear commitment to protecting human rights, advancing development and eradicating poverty both at home and internationally.

We therefore encourage your government to ask other States to sign and ratify the Protocol to ensure this treaty is universally ratified at the earliest possible date. We also urge your government to make a declaration recognizing the competence of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to undertake inquiry and interstate procedures under this Protocol.

We hope to have the opportunity to continue working with your government in support of this mechanism. We would be pleased to provide further information and to meet to discuss this issue.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter and look forward to hearing from you.

[You can also end by announcing in advance if you will be telephoning].

Sincerely,

**Model B. If your government has not signed the OP-ICESCR**

Dear ---------,

**[On the occasion]** of the seventh anniversary of the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on 10 December 2015, [**Insert name/name of NGOs sending this letter or ‘the undersigned NGOs’] urge[s]** you to sign and ratify or accede to this Protocol and fully implement it without delay. This anniversary provides a distinct opportunity to sign this treaty and support the call made by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, to sign, ratify or accede to this and other treaties.

The Protocol creates a mechanism through which individuals and groups, whose human rights such as the rights to adequate housing, food, water, health, work, social security and education have been violated, and who have not been able to achieve justice in their own countries, can present a case before a UN body and seek justice.

We also urge you to make a declaration, when you become a party to the Protocol, recognizing the competence of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to undertake inquiry and interstate procedures under this Protocol.

At this key moment for ESC rights, when the international community has adopted the sustainable development goals post-2015, we call on you to show leadership and join those states that have declared their commitment to ensuring everyone enjoys all human rights and no one is left behind. By becoming a party to the Protocol, your Government can demonstrate its commitment to protecting human rights and eradicating poverty at home and internationally. This will also send an important signal to other states that it is now time to ensure that everybody, including the marginalised and disadvantaged, is given a meaningful voice and is able to identify and seek effective remedies to the rights violations that perpetuate poverty and social exclusion.

The Protocol is a much needed and concrete step to rectify the gaps in international protection for victims of violations of economic, social and cultural rights. We hope that you will act to strengthen the recognition and implementation of these rights and access to justice for all victims.

We hope to have the opportunity to continue working with your government in support of this mechanism. We would be pleased to provide further information and to meet to discuss this issue.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,