

# Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

*NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

## *Check Against Delivery*

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item: Item 5: General Debate – Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Date: 19 September 2018

Speaker: Catherine Morris

## **Oral Statement to the 39th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), NGO in special consultative status**

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada has regularly called on Council to persuade its members to uphold the "highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights" and to "fully cooperate with the Council," as required by General Assembly Resolution 60/251. However, some Council members, such as Saudi Arabia and China, have continued widespread, systematic, and grave human rights violations, including against human rights lawyers and defenders, during their entire Council membership.<sup>1</sup>

Violations include arbitrary detention, due process denial, unfair trials, torture and ill-treatment, discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities, and reprisals against defenders seeking to cooperate with UN bodies. These states persistently disregard recommendations of Treaty Bodies, UPRs and Special Procedures.

The Council's authority is undermined by continued membership of such States. We urge all members of Council and other States to take joint action to recommend that the General Assembly (GA):

1. In consultation with civil society, adopt election reform, nominee pledges and effective procedures for monitoring and suspension of members necessary to ensure that Council membership complies with Resolution 60/251, Article 9; and
2. Suspend China and Saudi Arabia from Council pursuant to Article 8 of the Resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail, see Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, an NGO in Special Consultative Status, and the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR), "**Saudi Arabia**: Persistent gross, widespread and systematic violations of human rights while a member of the UN Human Rights Council," Written Statement to the 39th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, <https://www.lrwc.org/saudi-arabia-persistent-gross-widespread-and-systematic-violations-of-human-rights-while-a-member-of-the-un-human-rights-council/>; Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, **China**: "Human rights advocates suffer detention, ill-treatment and trials in violation of international law," Written Statement to the 38th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, available at: <https://www.lrwc.org/china-human-rights-advocates-suffer-detention-ill-treatment-and-trials-in-violation-of-international-law-written-statement-to-the-38th-session-of-the-un-human-rights-council/>.