

## States: Implement UPR recommendations on the protection of human rights defenders

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'Civil society can play a vital role providing input to recommending States on the implementation of the recommendations by the State under review. We urge recommending States to follow up on the implementation of their recommendations both with the State under review and with civil society,' Ms McEvoy said.

Numerous recommendations were made during the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the UPR in relation to human rights defenders, as well as recommendations for the protection of civil society space, freedom of assembly, association and expression. In particular, Turkey was called on to repeal the Internet Law which restricts the right to freedom of expression and Spain was called on to repeal the Citizens Security Law and reforms to the Criminal Code which restrict the right to freedom of assembly. Both of these recommendations echoed those made by ISHR in its briefing papers on [Spain](#) and [Turkey](#), respectively.

In fulfilling its commitment to strengthening the UPR as a tool for human rights defender protection, ISHR made a [statement](#) during the Council's adoption of the UPR report of Spain calling on Spain to implement UPR recommendations and protect space for human rights activism. ISHR also made a [statement](#) during the Council's adoption of the UPR report of Kuwait calling on the government to respect human rights defenders, cooperate with UN human rights mechanisms, and desist from reprisals.

In the statement ISHR welcomed calls made by a number of States in the review of Honduras in May to implement the law on defenders that was developed as a result of recommendations made during Honduras' last review. These calls are consistent with recommendations set out in [ISHR's briefing paper on the situation of human rights defenders in Honduras](#) and echo a demand made by [ISHR and other civil society organisations](#) to the Honduran Congress to incorporate civil society feedback into the draft law.

Ms McEvoy finished the statement by expressing concern regarding ongoing incidents of intimidation and reprisals of NGO and National Human Rights Institutions for their engagement with the UPR, including most recently the judicial harassment of, and unacceptable legal restrictions imposed on, the National Human Rights Commission of the Maldives.

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