



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

Questionnaire on current levels of representation of women in human rights organs and mechanisms

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**Joint submission**

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*and*

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## **Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council**

### **Questionnaire on current levels of representation of women in human rights organs and mechanisms**

1. Do current processes in the State allow for, or encourage, a consideration of gender balance when nominating, electing and appointing experts for human rights organs such as the Advisory Committee and treaty bodies? Do these processes ensure publicity, transparency, and participation by civil society organizations and/or other actors?

Spain is committed to promoting and protecting human rights, as announced by its voluntary pledges made according to General Assembly's Resolution 60/251 within its candidature to the Human Rights Council (2018-2020).<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with these commitments and promises, Spain implements, within its political decision-making, publicity and transparency mechanisms for the nomination of candidates for human rights bodies, and is informed by the principle of balanced participation of women and men, the latter mainly at the national level, since it should be noted that at present, our country does not have a specific selection process for candidatures for treaty bodies. As confirmed electronically by the Directorate-General for the United Nations and Human Rights, which is part of the Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Spain is working on the development of such a procedure.

Notwithstanding the fact that it is in the process of being drafted, the government's position on the nominations has been one of total support. This has been confirmed electronically by Ms. Carmen Comas-Matas Mira, an active member of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. She was strongly supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (hereinafter "MFA"), the ambassador and members of the Permanent Mission, as well as the institution in which she works, the Spanish Ombudsman, which is also the national human rights institution. They helped her to pass the more than thirty face-to-face interviews she conducted, as well as to lead a successful election campaign. Her opinion is that, in general, States should pay more attention to the qualities of the person presenting the candidacy, since training and experience are very important, but also to gender, knowledge of the UN systems, empathy and commitment to human rights, whereas less emphasis should be placed on usual aspects of diplomatic relations such as reciprocity in voting.

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly. Note verbale dated 8 September 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. Item 115 (d) of the provisional agenda\* Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council. Doc A/72/395, 8 September 2017.

A similar opinion was conveyed by Ms. Soledad Murillo de la Vega, who was a member of the CEDAW Committee between 2009 and 2013. In addition to a solvent educational background and her great activism, her nomination was facilitated by her great experience within the Spanish Government, since she was the Secretary General of Equality Policies in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs from 2004 to 2008. She was fully involved in the drafting and adoption of the organic laws on action against gender-based violence and for the effective equality between women and men. Her candidacy was published by the MFA, before the Law on Transparency was passed, says Ms. Murillo de la Vega. She concludes by stating that parity was designed so that women would not be discriminated against, not so that men, who are in the majority in all areas of power, would be on equality committees, just because they are men.

Following these testimonies of two women who have been active in two human rights protection bodies, we will reflect on how Spain promotes the principle of a balanced gender presence. In this respect, ‘Organic Law 5/1985, of 19 June, on the General Electoral System’,<sup>2</sup> in its Article 44 bis, sets forth the duty of political parties to take into account the principle of gender balance in the list of congressional candidates, and the lists for other elections, such as those in municipalities, island councils (of the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands), assemblies of the Autonomous Communities, and European Parliament. Likewise, when candidates for the Senate are grouped in lists, these must also respond to a balanced composition between men and women.

Article 54 of ‘Organic Law 3/2007, of 22 March, for effective equality between women and men’,<sup>3</sup> which encourages consideration of gender balance in human rights bodies, should also be highlighted. This provision states that the General State Administration and the public bodies linked or dependent on it shall appoint their representatives to collegiate bodies, committees of experts or advisory committees, whether national or international, in accordance with the principle of balanced presence of women and men. Within this framework, the first additional provision of said law establishes what is to be understood by balanced composition or presence, that is, when the persons of each sex do not exceed sixty percent or are less than forty percent.

In short, on account of Recommendation (2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to the Member States on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, adopted on 12 March 2003,<sup>4</sup> Spain undertakes to include positive action measures, which could facilitate a more balanced participation in political and public decision-making, as well as to consider legislative reforms aimed at establishing parity thresholds in candidacies for local, regional,

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<sup>2</sup> Ley Orgánica 5/1985, de 19 de junio, del Régimen Electoral General. Boletín Oficial del Estado («BOE») 21/06/1985.

<sup>3</sup> Ley Orgánica 3/2007, de 22 de mayo, para la igualdad efectiva de mujeres y hombres. «BOE» 24/03/2007.

<sup>4</sup> Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 12 March 2003.

national and supranational elections, as a way of guaranteeing a balanced representation of women and men in all national delegations to international bodies and fora.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the participation, publicity and transparency of civil society candidacies, given that these are individual and not presented by States, the MFA has confirmed, by electronic means, that vacancies are disseminated through the Ministry's website, to guarantee quality candidacies by Spanish experts. This webpage also provides a series of general guidelines on how to present a candidacy, or how to interview for a job in the United Nations system. Vacancies are also published in the United Nations Treaty Bodies' database.

The Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities (2014-2016) of Spain's Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities,<sup>6</sup> under the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, offers a series of objectives aimed at promoting women's associative movement and thus their participation in civil society. To this end, measures such as the following have been implemented: dissemination, among women's associations, of community initiatives, in relation to European Funds, to encourage their participation; technical support to those associations for the presentation and co-financing of projects, in the different calls for proposals of the European Union; measures to make visible to society the contributions made by the women's association movement in favour of equal opportunities and for the benefit of society.

In addition, and responding to Spain's commitment to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, our country takes part in the "Global study of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325" and has approved two national action plans. Adding to what was stated in its first version, the Second National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security (2017-2023) (hereinafter, the II PNAMPS)<sup>7</sup> focuses, among other objectives, on the effective implementation of "the meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts". Among the commitments and actions announced by the plan in terms of government stance and composition, the following can be highlighted: within Objective 1 of the II PNAMPS, the promotion of gender balance in the participation of women and men in Spanish international cooperation on Science, Technology and Innovation (Specific Objective 1, Action 1.5) and, especially, within its Objective 2, the promotion of the presence of women in the bodies and agencies related to Spain's foreign affairs in conflict and post-conflict areas, especially at the political level and within decision-making bodies (Specific Objective 1), the increase in the presence of women in the Spanish foreign affairs service and in the Armed Forces and State Security Forces, as

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<sup>5</sup> Reference should also be made to the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023), which, in line with the aforementioned Recommendation, establishes the principle of a balanced participation of women and men in both political and public decision-making as a key action. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2ZM8SzQ>.

<sup>6</sup> Plan Estratégico de Igualdad de Oportunidades (2014-2016). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3gxxZpO>.

<sup>7</sup> Resolución de 1 de septiembre de 2017, de la Secretaría de Estado de Asuntos Exteriores, por la que publica el II Plan Nacional de Acción de Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad. Boletín Oficial del Estado, Núm. 222, Sección III, de 14 de septiembre de 2017, p. 90402.

well as the increased number of these women in negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution processes, with special attention to United Nations peacekeeping operations and missions, in particular at decision-making levels (Specific Objective 1 and 2, Actions 2.1 y 2.2).

Spain has also shown this willingness to promote women's participation in events on the agenda related to the role of women and in the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

2. Does the State take into account the gender composition of the treaty bodies or the Advisory Committee at the time of nomination or election?

In order to answer this question, it has been deemed appropriate to analyze the national situation in order to review whether the position of women in the nomination and election processes, as well as their parity, is taken into account. The reason why the national perspective is addressed and not the international one is due to the process in which Spain finds itself, mentioned in the previous question.

Worth noting is the continuous increase in the presence of women in the Spanish Congress (the Parliament being formed by Congress and Senate), although there have been some setbacks. In the 2016 term, the number of women deputies at the Congress was 136. After the elections of 28 April 2019, the Congress reached the largest presence in history of women deputies, with 166 (and 184 men). Finally, after the elections of 10 November 2019, there were 197 men and 153 women elected to Congress, an 8% decrease of women deputies with respect to the April 2019 elections.

3. Does the State have any good national practices related to the nomination, election and appointing processes for human rights organs such as the Advisory Committee and treaty bodies? Do these processes take into account gender when nominating, electing, or appointing?

Bearing in mind the information provided by the Directorate-General for the United Nations and Human Rights already referred to in Answer No. 1, the fact that Spain is working on a specific selection procedure for human rights bodies makes the search for good practices at the national level in this specific area more complex. Even so, we will remark a series of practices carried out by Spain, which have an impact on the international scene.

First, the Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation 2005-2008<sup>8</sup> noted a series of practices that could be used to implement mechanisms for the institutionalization and integration of gender mainstreaming in every program and project, which implies the need to observe the principle of balanced presence between women and men. Progress has been made in this regard, as the latest Master Plan 2018-2021<sup>9</sup> advances gender equality. One of its goals is to support a legal and institutional framework favoring gender mainstreaming in public policies and society. Other planned measures include the

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<sup>8</sup> Plan Director de la Cooperación Española 2005-2008. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3gC7vtJ>.

<sup>9</sup> V Plan Director de la Cooperación Española, aprobado por el Consejo de Ministros, el 23 de marzo de 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2XvGW0c>.

adoption of harmonized equality laws, the creation of public bodies or agencies responsible for equality policies and the training of their staff, the adoption of gender mainstreaming strategies, the implementation of statistical and information systems, observatories, etc. It also provides for the promotion of actions aimed at strengthening women's leadership and participation in decision-making in the public sphere, explicitly mentioning the implementation of formal and non-formal capacity-building and awareness-raising programs to enhance the empowerment of women and girls. The Master Plan also makes reference to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda within the framework of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 2242 on Women, Peace and Security and the II Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 provides a legal framework for gender mainstreaming in the prevention, management and resolution of armed conflict,<sup>10</sup> which is complemented by Resolution 2242.<sup>11</sup> It reflects the need for States and regional organizations to undertake additional actions and to commit to bridging the gap between law and practice. Within this framework, the II PNAMPS becomes a driving factor for implementing specific measures at the national level, as well as in Spain's external action, namely by: promoting the participation of women in peacekeeping missions, promoting a gender perspective in all peacebuilding activities, ensuring specific training for the staff involved in peace operations, in matters of equality and on the different aspects of Resolution 1325, promoting the empowerment and participation of women in dispute settlement processes and in the implementation of peace agreements, among others.

On the other hand, the Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities (2014-2016) responds to the Government's commitment to achieving effective equality between men and women, and reflects in its fourth axis the need to empower women, through their participation in the political, economic and social contexts. To this end, research should be conducted on the balanced presence of women and men in representative and decision-making positions, and follow-up should also be made in order to assess its evolution and to detect obstacles that may hinder such compliance. In addition, the Strategic Plan foresees the possibility of adopting specific measures in response to the difficulties detected in achieving a balanced presence of women and men in the aforementioned spheres.

4. How does the State take into consideration its obligations concerning non-discrimination and women's right to equal access to participation, as well as its obligations under Article 8 of CEDAW to ensure women's equal participation in the work of human rights organs when nominating or appointing candidates for those organs and mechanisms?

The response to this section needs to be addressed from both a national and an international perspective. Within the national context, we can already advance

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<sup>10</sup> Security Council Resolution 1325 (4213<sup>th</sup> meeting), adopted on 31 October 2000, S/RES/1325(2000).

<sup>11</sup> Security Council Resolution 2242 (7533<sup>rd</sup> meeting), adopted on 13 October 2015, S/RES/2242(2015).

information on the fact that as we reach higher levels in the bodies' hierarchies, the presence of women diminishes. Such is the case of the Supreme Court (20.8 per cent female representation) and the Constitutional Court (16.7 per cent).

On 30 January 2020, the plenary session of the General Council of the Judiciary adopted the Second Plan for Equality in the Judiciary. Observing the fact that the number of applications submitted by women for top positions in the judiciary is 27.8 per cent for the Supreme Court and 37.5 per cent overall in the period from December 2013 to December 2019, this Plan, among other things, considers it necessary and urgent to conduct a sociological study to analyze in depth the causes of the low participation of women in this kind of process.<sup>12</sup>

In the international sphere, the mechanism used by Spain to nominate candidates for the European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter, ECHR) should be highlighted. Resolution of 25 January 2017 of the Under-Secretariat of State of the MFA, states that once the *curricula vitae* of all candidates have been received, “as a general rule, efforts shall be made to integrate candidates of both sexes” (Article 17) by a competent Committee.<sup>13</sup> Thus, there is no legally established procedure to ensure, at the very least, parity between the sexes; on the contrary, its implementation is left to the discretion of the Committee. Within the same framework, the procedure for selecting interested candidates to be part of the list of possible *ad hoc* judges for certain cases at the ECHR, approved by Resolution of 18 February 2019, of the Secretariat of State for Justice within the Ministry of Justice, states that in the assessment leading to the selection of candidates “the principles of gender balance shall be taken into account”.<sup>14</sup>

Continuing in the international sphere, also worth noting is the selection process for candidatures to become European Public Prosecutors and Deputy European Public Prosecutors in Spain. Royal Decree 37/2019 of 1 February<sup>15</sup> does not force the Committee responsible for the election of the candidates to consider gender parity. This should be legally mandated. Article 4 of the Royal Decree briefly mentions Article 14 of the Spanish Constitution (hereinafter CE), which enshrines equality among all Spanish citizens. However, no provision is adopted to make this equality effective, whether by means of setting minimum thresholds or specific percentages.

Although the question refers to equal access to participation of women in general, another issue that should be highlighted is the lack of mechanisms ensuring the political

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<sup>12</sup> The measure referred to can be found on page 26 of the document available at: <https://bit.ly/3c8ivv7>.

<sup>13</sup> Resolución de 25 de enero de 2017, de la Subsecretaría, por la que se publica el Acuerdo del Consejo de Ministros de 20 de enero de 2017, por el que se establecen pautas para la elaboración de una terna de candidatos para la elección de Juez titular del Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos. «BOE» 31/01/2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2XFNBi2>.

<sup>14</sup> Convocatoria de candidaturas para el proceso de selección de los Jueces *ad hoc* en el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2TNaghJ>.

<sup>15</sup> Real Decreto 37/2019, de 1 de febrero, por el que se crea la Comisión de selección y se regula el procedimiento para la designación de la terna de candidatos a Fiscal Europeo y candidatos a Fiscal Europeo Delegado en España, a los que se refieren los artículos 16 y 17 del Reglamento (UE) 2017/1939 del Consejo, de 12 de octubre de 2017, por el que se establece una cooperación reforzada para la creación de la Fiscalía Europea. «BOE» 02/02/2019.

participation of women belonging to minority groups such as migrants, Roma, Muslim or of African descent.<sup>16</sup> This issue may well be a question to be further discussed in future calls.

To conclude, actions undertaken by Spain to ensure equality between men and women in international bodies should be improved, insofar as there are no standards setting minimum thresholds to expressly guarantee gender parity.

5. How many women has the State nominated to human rights organs and mechanisms in the last five years (such as the Advisory Committee or treaty bodies)?

In the last five years, Spain has had the following women join the corresponding bodies:

- Ms. Ana Peláez Narváez:
  - (a) Member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the period from 2013 to 2016
  - (b) Active member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022.
- Ms. Milena. Costas Trascasas: active member of the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2022.
- Ms. Carmen Comas-Mata Mira: active member of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2022.

Three Spanish male candidates were also elected and are currently active, so our country shows full parity (50-50% balance) in these positions.<sup>17</sup>

6. Does the State take any action to publicize and encourage women to apply for the special procedures mandate-holders vacancies?

No information has been found in this regard. For example, in the recent vacancy notice for the mandate holder for the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, the Ministry of the Interior issued a press release announcing the application deadline and explaining the characteristics of the special procedures,

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<sup>16</sup> General Assembly. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2011. 66/130. Women and political participation. Sixty-sixth session Agenda item 28 (a) A/RES/66/130(2012).

<sup>17</sup> Mr. Marcos Gómez Martínez, Director General of the Human Rights Office in Spain, is responsible, among other tasks, for defining and coordinating the position and institutional representation of Spain in the United Nations Human Rights Council; Mr. Mikel Mancisidor is an active member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and Mr. Juan José López Ortega is an active member of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances until 30 June 2023. Considering the scope of the last five years, it should also be noted that Dr. Jorge Cardona Llorens was a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, during his second mandate, between 2014 and 2019.



without any further clarification.<sup>18</sup> No similar press release has been made with regard to the other three special procedures mandates whose renewal is taking place during the 44<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (15 June to 3 July 2020).

With regard to Spain's candidacies for the post of Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, the following persons have been nominated: Ms. Concepción Anguita Olmedo, Ms. Helena Maleno Garzón, Ms. Carmen Pérez González, Ms. Carmen Quintanilla and Ms. Ana Salinas de Frías. The calls for applications for the remaining mandates have received three applications from Spanish women and four from men of this same nationality.<sup>19</sup>

7. What are the main challenges within your country in tackling the issue of gender balance when nominating and electing candidates for human rights organs and mechanisms such as the Advisory Committee, treaty bodies and the special procedures?

Successive changes of government, the fact that some political actors consider it a non-priority issue, and, as a consequence, the lack of State agreements on this matter, limit and sometimes prevent the achievement of the objectives and the practical application of standards and recommendations to ensure a balance between women and men in the calls for applications to fill vacancies in human rights bodies.

This is due to the persistence of structural gender inequality reinforced by stereotypes, traditional (and modernized) notions of gender roles, and misogynist and sexist beliefs rooted in society that make it difficult for women to access decision-making positions. Some political sectors hinder the eradication of these practices and ideas and do not include in their agenda the implementation of policies aimed at closing any gender gaps.

8. Are there good practices by the State or other stakeholders that ensure gender parity? If yes, could you please share these practices?

Organic Law 3/2007 enshrines the “balanced participation of women and men in electoral candidacies and decision-making” in its Article 14. As mentioned above, this law amended Organic Law 5/1985, regulating the general electoral system, to include the new Article 44 bis. This provision provides for an almost symmetrical parity in the composition of the candidacies for the elections held in Spain, which “must have a balanced composition between women and men, so that in the whole of the list the candidates of each sex represent at least forty percent”, with the exception of municipalities with a small population. A numerical exception is made in the case of elections to the Senate, where it is required that when candidates for the Senate are grouped in lists, these shall have “a balanced composition of women and men, so that the proportion of one to the other is as close as possible to a numerical balance”. It

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<sup>18</sup> Ministerio del Interior (3 de abril de 2020). *Convocatoria de vacante a titular de mandato para Relator Especial sobre trata de personas, especialmente mujeres y niños de Naciones Unidas*. Madrid. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3bt8EQo>.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council (2020). *Appointments at the 44<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (15 June to 3 July 2020)*. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3bCx3D0>.

should be noted that the constitutionality of Organic Law 3/2007 was confirmed by the Constitutional Court in its ruling of 29 January 2008.<sup>20</sup>

However, the amendment of the general electoral regime by virtue of Article 44 bis does not require that women and men succeed each other on the list, but that there be a proportion of no more than 60% of men or women on it. It is therefore likely that women will be relegated to the last positions of the list, thus eliminating any possibility of them being finally elected, without this breaching the legal mandate.

Organic Law 3/2007 also included a number of recommendations for the private sector. Its Article 75 addresses the participation of women on boards of directors and major companies and sets forth that they “shall attempt to include on their board of directors a number of women that will allow for a balanced presence of women and men to be achieved within eight years of the entry into force of this Law”. This is not an imposition, but a recommendation, and it has been poorly complied with.<sup>21</sup> That is why the government announced its intention to make it an obligation, and this was reflected in a legislative proposal on equal pay in 2016 of the Socialist Parliamentary Group. The draft included the inclusion of quotas to ensure women’s access to management positions and boards in private companies and cooperative ventures in order to “achieve equal representation of women and men in economic management bodies”.<sup>22</sup> This was later included as point 7.1 of the coalition agreement between left-wing parties Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and Unidas Podemos to form the current Spanish government. This time, they announced they would extend it to other decision-making bodies: “Likewise, measures will be adopted to ensure the balanced presence of women and men (...) in public bodies and on the boards of public and private companies, progressively over the next four years; and in decision-making bodies regulating working conditions, electoral processes, collective agreements or professional agreements [referred to union agreements], as required by the EU Directives”.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, the election of two women to head human rights bodies in Spain should be noted. During the period from 2012 to 2017, Ms. Soledad Becerril Bustamante served as Ombudsman, and since 2018,<sup>24</sup> Ms. Ángeles Solanes Corella has served as President of the Council for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Tribunal Constitucional (2008). Sentencia 12/2008, de 29 de enero. «BOE» 29/02/2008. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2yZaiMq>.

<sup>21</sup> LÓPEZ, C. (2018). *El Gobierno obligará a tener órganos directivos paritarios*. La Vanguardia (3 de octubre de 2018). Available at: <https://bit.ly/360fPyt>.

<sup>22</sup> Grupo Parlamentario Socialista (2018). *Proposición no de ley sobre la igualdad salarial entre mujeres y hombres*, presentada el 1 de agosto de 2016. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2LxmiYg>.

<sup>23</sup> PSOE y Unidas Podemos (2019). *Coalición progresista: un nuevo acuerdo para España*. Recuperado de: <https://bit.ly/3g1hPuW>.

<sup>24</sup> Europa Press (2017). *Soledad Becerril deja el cargo de Defensora del Pueblo*. Eldiario.es (5 de junio de 2017). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3fRtmg7>.

<sup>25</sup> Universitat de València (2018). *El Gobierno nombra a la profesora Ángeles Solanes presidenta del Consejo para la Eliminación de la Discriminación Racial*. UV noticias (5 de octubre de 2018). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2LIoDQh>.

9. Are there recommendations directed to States, international bodies, or other entities, that you wish to make in order to strengthen and inform this report?

A first recommendation that we consider important is that the Spanish government sends lists with gender quotas for the vacancies of human rights bodies or special procedures, that is, lists with a minimum figure or percentage of women on them. The demand for absolute parity could limit the participation of women, since, for example, in the last call for nominations, eight women and four men were nominated. If symmetrical parity is established, four women would have not been able to be on the list. A possibility to address this would be to consider the option of requiring a minimum of 50% of women. On the other hand, there is no mechanism to ensure the participation of women in the candidatures of Spanish civil society. For this reason, it would be necessary to at least ensure their presence on the lists sent by the Spanish government, demanding a minimum, but not a maximum, of women's presence in them.

Also, and despite the fact that the MFA has stated that it publishes civil society vacancies on its website with the aim of disseminating them, access to the search form and its use may not be entirely intuitive and, in any case, it is a purely informative tool, with no intention of promoting the presence of women in human rights bodies (or ensuring any other form of equality). The calls for applications should be more widely disseminated in general, for example by advertising them in the Official State Gazette ('Boletín Oficial de Estado'), and those at the levels of the Spanish autonomous communities, and should reach organizations and institutions working for equality with the aim of providing more specific dissemination aimed at women in particular. The Spanish Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities could be involved in advertising vacancies.