# HRC 46 | Mongolia, strengthen the draft law on human rights defenders

19.03.2021

**During the third Universal Periodic Review of Mongolia, the Human Rights Forum of Mongolia and ISHR call on the Government to ensure the draft human rights defenders law complies with international law.**



The original draft bill on the protection of human rights defenders was presented before Parliament in December 2020. It was then sent to a parliamentary working group for finalization. However, changes proposed to the draft law in that process would restrict the rights of human rights defenders.

Contrary to international law, the revised draft restricts defenders' rights to: solicit, receive and utilise resources; freedom of association and assembly; freedom of information and expression; promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms; and participate in public affairs.

The Human Rights Forum of Mongolia and ISHR used the Mongolia's third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to directly call on the Government to strengthen the draft law, remove restrictions on human rights defenders, and ensure it complies with international law.

These calls are in line with calls made by both the former and current UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, who publicly called for the passage of a law that effectively protects the rights of human rights defenders.

We welcome the various UPR recommendations received by Mongolia related to the activities of human rights defenders, and specifically on the draft human rights defenders law. In particular, the recommendation to the Government of Mongolia by Germany echoing the call of the former Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders to 'strengthen' the human rights defenders protection law.

'While we note the Government's direct response during the UPR that it will progress the law on human rights defenders, we are very concerned by its silence in response to clear calls to strengthen the law and ensure it aligns with international law. It is imperative that any law passed protects human rights defenders. We call on the Government of Mongolia to revisit the draft law and remove all elements that restrict the fundamental rights of defenders'.

**Watch the statement here:**

The full statement is available below:

*Madame President,*

*This statement is on behalf of the Human Rights Forum of Mongolia and the International Service for Human Rights.*

*We welcome all recommendations received by Mongolia in its third UPR cycle relating to civic freedoms and the activities of human rights defenders.*

*We urge Mongolia to take all necessary action to implement these recommendations, including:*

- *To protect defenders against attacks, threats and intimidation; investigate attacks against journalists and media workers; and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice; and*
- *To support increased participation in political process and anticorruption efforts by civil society, including defenders.*

*We specifically call on the Government:*

- *To strengthen, in line with recommendations by the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, adopt and implement the draft law on human rights defenders. This law should recognize and protect defenders; promote human rights defence; and ensure defenders are free from threats, intimidation and harassment.*

*Contrary to international law, Mongolia has incorporated into the draft laws on human rights defenders, and on NGOs, provisions restricting civic space and defenders' rights to solicit, receive and utilise resources; the right to freedom of association; the right to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms; the right to freedom of information and expression; and the right to participate in public affairs.*

*We call on the Government to revisit the draft law on NGOs and the draft law on human rights defenders to bring them into conformity with international law, the UPR recommendations and calls from civil society.*

*Thank you*


*Contact: Tess McEvoy, [t.mcevoy@ishr.ch](mailto:t.mcevoy@ishr.ch)*

*Photo: Screenshot of video statement presented at UPR of Mongolia*