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REFERENCE: OHCHR-IACHR/33/2019

Joint report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on “The situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas”

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) presents its compliments to Permanent Missions to the United Nations Offices in Geneva and New York and has the honour to inform that the Office, together with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), is preparing a public report on the situation of human rights defenders in the Americas. The report falls under the general framework to enhance cooperation between OHCHR and the IACHR, and will be launched late in 2019. Please find the concept note for the joint report attached.

The Office would welcome input by Member States in the region regarding the situation of human rights defenders. In particular, information is requested on the following issues:

- **Situation of human rights defenders:**

What are the contextual factors— be they positive and/or negative - that have had the greatest impact on the situation of human rights defenders in your country and/or region since 2016?

What are the main causes and/or situations of risk that contribute to the generation of violence and vulnerability against human rights defenders?

What are the main advances and strengths concerning the protection and promotion of the work of human rights defenders in your country or in the region? What are the main setbacks and obstacles/challenges?

What should be changed in your country or region to contribute to a safe and conducive environment for the defence of human rights?

- **Defenders most at risk:**

Which groups or types of human rights defenders are most at risk? Please explain the distinct nature of the risks and threats faced by defenders who are women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and members of other groups.

With regard to the type of groups that are most at risk, have you observed any type of change since 2016?

What are the main protection concerns and challenges faced by human rights defenders when carrying out activities, in both the public and private spheres, including in the digital sphere?

- **Attacks and/or restrictions against human rights defenders:**

What are the most recent statistics on attacks against human rights defenders and restrictions of their work in your country or region? Please indicate the source of the information and the period covered.

What are the main types of attacks and restrictions faced by human rights defenders in your country or region? Have you observed any change since 2016? If possible, identify if there is a geographic area that needs to be highlighted.

Could you identify one or more trend with regard to who the perpetrators are? Are these state or non-state actors?

What are the consequences and impact of the attacks and restrictions against human rights defenders at the individual and collective level (related to their own organizations and in the broader social space)?

What types of attacks do you consider to affect in particular women human rights defenders (in urban and rural areas, members of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, and other groups)?

- **Guarantees for the free exercise of the defence of human rights:**

Do you consider there is any aspect of the normative, institutional and public policy framework of your country that promotes or hinders the free exercise of the defense of human rights?

In your country, have you identified as an existing problem relating to the misuse of criminal law to criminalize human rights defenders for their activity? If so, please indicate in which contexts this takes place, which actors are involved, and what are the main causes or factors that generate it.

If applicable, what are the types of crimes human rights defenders are wrongly accused of? If possible, provide concrete examples.

- **Access to justice and reparations:**

Please provide information on the state of investigations of crimes committed against human rights defenders.

What measures has the State taken to guarantee adequate reparations and guarantees of non-repetition? Please refer to concrete examples.



- **Preventive and reactive actions concerning attacks against human rights defenders:**

What measures, legislation, policies and mechanisms have had a positive or negative impact on generating safe contexts for human rights defenders? What examples can illustrate this?

If applicable, please include an assessment of national mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders. What has been their real scope and effectiveness? Please indicate the reasons for this assessment.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights would be grateful if any information Member States wish to provide could be sent by **10 June 2019** to: adesouza@ohchr.org

Inputs received from stakeholders will be made available for consultation on the Office's website at www.ohchr.org

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva and in New York the assurances of its highest considerations.



Geneva, 9 May 2019

