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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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The permanent Mission of Republic of Albania to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to inform that the Government of the Republic of Albania has decided to present the candidature for membership to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the terms 2006-2009, on the elections to be held on 9th of May 2006.

Herewith enclosed are the Albanian Government's Voluntary Pledges and Commitments in accordance with resolution A/RES/60/251.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, April, 18th, 2006

The Secretary-General
to the United Nations
New York



ALBANIAN CANDIDATURE TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Albania welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Council and is very much committed to contribute so that the Council becomes a vigorous and efficient body of UN system, in promoting and protecting human rights worldwide.

Albania has engaged itself in achieving the highest standards of human rights and has kept on working seriously for their accomplishment in the day to day life.

Right after the establishment of the democratic system in Albania, the protection and promotion of human rights have assumed a new dimension by improving the legal framework, by monitoring the situation, encouraging respect for and protection of human rights, increasing public awareness of the whole society on this issue, adopting concrete measures for the improvement of the domestic situation, promoting debates among national actors. A major legislative reform has been carried out to bring the national legislation in compliance with the relevant international requirements. Albania remains strongly committed to further progress in this field and pledges to uphold the highest standards of human rights.

Albania has been committed to comply with the international human rights obligations. Albania has been submitting periodic reports to the UN bodies on the implementation of the main human rights Conventions, under its legal obligations as a state party.

Albania is already party to the following relevant international instruments:

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide;
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Convention against Tortures and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity;
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Optional Protocol to the Convention against Tortures and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment;

- The Frame Convention of the Council of Europe on the Protection of Minorities
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
- The Republic of Albania is part of almost all Council of Europe Human Rights Conventions or different Protocols etc.

- Albanian Government cooperates with the Steering Committee of Human Rights (CDDH) and the Committee for the Improvement of the Remedy Mechanisms on Human Rights (DH-PR), which reviews cases related to the implementation of the Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in terms of the implementation of the European Convention of Human Rights from the member countries. Likewise, it's worth-mentioning the cooperation with the structures on the protection of human rights attached to the Council of Europe such as: the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Committee for the Prevention of Tortures.
- Another aspect of the engagement of Albania in the context of the human rights protection is the implementation of the Frame Convention on the Protection of Minorities and the Report submitted by our country in this respect.

Albania will remain committed and active to advance human rights both on national and international level.

On national scale

Albania will continue to meet all its obligations in the human rights field, by attaching priority to the increase of public awareness, inclusion and harmonization of work among actors from the civic society, the Government and private sector. NGOs are and will remain actively operating in this field.

Albania will continue to promote a human rights based approach through a better integration of human rights, both in the decision-making process and policy implementation.

The respect for and the practical promotion of minority human rights remains a priority of the domestic policy for the Albanian Government. Big strides have been already made in the field of minority education, conduct of their own rights in the spheres of political, economic, social, cultural and religious life. The National Committee on Minorities is expected to be established soon under the Prime Minister, with the objective of observing the protection and respect of human rights for the minorities.

Albania has concluded the drafting of national strategies on the following:

- o **Rights of the Children**
- o **Women Rights**
- o **Anti-trafficking of human beings**
- o **Roma minority**

On international scale

Albania will soon ratify:

- **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**
- **Optional Protocols of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **Amendments to articles 17(7) and 18 (5) of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,**
- **Amendment to Article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women**
- **Amendments to article 43(2) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **Albania will render its contribution to the adoption this August of the Draft Comprehensive and Integral Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.**

Albania strongly supports the efforts to strengthen the Office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Human Rights. Albania will closely cooperate with the UN Commissioner for Human Rights and pledges to lend continuous voluntary contributions.

Albania pledges to fully cooperate with the Human Rights Council and with its Special Procedures.

Albania commits itself that, in case of membership, will contribute that the Human Rights Council handles human rights issues with impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, both in the discussion and decision-making process; foster the constructive dialogue and cooperation among civilizations, cultures and religions; responds effectively and quickly to human rights violation or human rights crisis wherever they occur; increase opportunities for NGO-es contributions.

It would be an honour and privilege for the Republic of Albania to serve in the newly established Human Rights Council. Albania believes that representation of new democracies and small states in the Council will absolutely add to its values and contributions.
