



To  
All Partners and Friends of Dignity International  
May 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

**Call to partners to join Dignity International in supporting the International NGO Coalition and its Global Campaign for the Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right (OP-ICESCR)**

Dignity International in collaboration with the International NGO Coalition for the OP-ICESCR would like to invite **your organization** to be part of the global campaign on the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social And Cultural Right (OP-ICESCR). As of 5 February 2013, Uruguay deposited its ratification of the OP-ICESCR, becoming the 10th state party to the OP-ICESCR, triggering its entry into force on 5 May 2013. It is now crucial that civil society lobby as many countries as possible to sign and ratify the OP-ICESCR, ensuring that local human rights/ESCR defenders and right holders across all regions can access this mechanism for justice while deepening global recognition and advancement of all human rights.

More information on the OP-ICESCR and campaign toolkits are available at: <http://op-icescr.escr-net.org/>. Below are several recommended steps that can be taken to collectively secure ratifications of the OP-ICESCR and wider realization of economic, social and cultural rights:

1. **Form a national platform** or join an existing platform for the national ratification process of the ICESCR/OP.
2. Develop a **national lobby strategy** to get your governments to ratify the ICESCR/OP and/or enter into engagement process with your national working group for OP-ICESCR ratification.
3. **Write a letter** to your national leaders to ratify the ICESCR/OP (samples available upon request). Get as many national CSOs as possible to endorse it. Send the endorsed letters directly to the head of state and call for a dialogue.
4. **Identify national and local bodies** that can play potential lobbying roles in this process and engage with them, i.e. national human rights institutions, national lawyers association, the attorney general's office, the ministry of foreign affairs, national and local legislative bodies and parliamentarians, etc.
5. **Engage the public** especially **marginalized and vulnerable sectors** on the importance of ratifying the OP-ICESCR and encourage them to advocate with local representatives to support the campaign. Develop creative media and public service announcements' to help this process. This could include video stories, journals, and/or testimonies of people on the struggle for ESCR. Kindly find the link to the **Coalition's Toolkit for Action:** <http://op-icescr.escr-net.org/resources-tools>.
6. Ensure all political parties **include a pledge to ratify** all conventions and optional protocols in their respective **platforms** before elections and throughout their administration.
7. **Develop FAQs** to support your national call for the ratification of the convention as both a tool for public education and for engagement with the relevant government agencies involved. Please refer to ESCR-Net's [\*\*"Challenging Misconceptions around the OP-ICESCR"\*\*](#).

**DIGNITY INTERNATIONAL - NGO Coalition for the OP-ICESCR**



9. Utilize strategically **regional mechanisms**, especially regions that have human rights bodies, to strengthen your campaigns. This refers to bodies like the Council of Europe, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, African Union, Organization of American States.

10. Become a member of the **International Coalition for the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR**, which is coordinated by ESCR Net. For details on how to join the Campaign and a membership form, please visit: <http://op-icescr.escr-net.org/contact-us>.

We hope that you and your organization will give full support towards this campaign and keep struggling till we achieve adoption and full ratification by all countries. Please feel free to contact us for further information; all questions and clarification can be addressed to Adrian Pereira, at: [adrian@dignityinternational.org](mailto:adrian@dignityinternational.org)/skype: [pereira2k](https://www.skype.com/people/pereira2k), or to Ivahanna Larrosa, Campaign Coordinator of the NGO Coalition, at: [ilarrosa@escr-net.org](mailto:ilarrosa@escr-net.org).

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adrian", written over a horizontal line.

Adrian Pereira  
Acting Executive Director  
Dignity International  
[adrian@dignityinternational.org](mailto:adrian@dignityinternational.org)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ivahanna", written over a horizontal line.

Ivahanna Larrosa  
Campaign Coordinator  
International NGO Coalition for the OP-ICESCR  
[ilarrosa@escr-net.org](mailto:ilarrosa@escr-net.org)