



25th Session Human Rights Council

You are cordially invited to a side event on

## CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE:

# Emerging threats and actions to restore freedoms

Wednesday, 12 March 2014

13:30 – 14:30, Room VIII (8), Palais des Nations

Civil society relies on physical and digital spaces to perform their functions. In doing so they are protected by the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, opinion and expression. However, these freedoms are under attack through a worsening policy and legal environment that seemingly seeks to restrict civil society. Over the past year, we have witnessed a proliferation of laws that aim to: criminalise and deter peaceful protests; limit political participation and advocacy; undermine digital security and erode internet freedoms; undermine association, assembly and expression of LGBTI and other minorities; and introduce impunity for attacks on civil society actors. This side event will seek to identify what the emerging threats are to civil society operations, and reflect on key steps that States and the UN must take to protect the spaces in which civil society operate.

The side event is co-sponsored by, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, Article 19, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, World Movement for Democracy, and the Governments of Ireland, Sweden, Sierra Leone and Tunisia.

**Panelists:**

- Maina Kiai**, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association
- Oleksandra Matviychuk**, Ukraine, Center for Civil Liberties, Civic Initiative EuroMaidan SOS
- Ahmad Fuad Rahmat**, Malaysia, Projek Dialog
- Patricia Galdamez**, El Salvador, Fundacion DTJ
- Mahmoud Bader**, Libya, H2O

**Moderator:** **Michael O'Flaherty**, Irish Centre for Human Rights

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*Refreshments will be provided*

**#ProtectCivicSpace**

*This event is organized by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, ARTICLE 19, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the World Movement for Democracy in partnership with the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, through the Civic Space Initiative, a three-year project funding by the Government of Sweden that aims to protect and expand civic space by fostering an enabling legal environment for civil society.*