



DEMOCRACY
COALITION
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DCP welcomes US decision to seek seat on UN human rights body
Calls on democratic governments to support competitive process

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The Democracy Coalition Project welcomes the decision by the United States to seek a seat on the United Nations Human Rights Council in the upcoming elections in May. There are few better opportunities to demonstrate to the world that the United States is truly dedicated to multilateral solutions and to human rights than by seeking membership to the Human Rights Council.

“This decision symbolizes U.S. reengagement with the UN and a renewed commitment to work with others to improve the state of human rights around the world,” said Dokhi Fassihian, Executive Director of the Democracy Coalition Project. “As a member of the Council, the U.S. will be able to work from within the institution and improve its ability to address the most urgent human rights situations.”

The announcement by the Obama Administration is tempered with the announcement by New Zealand that it has withdrawn its bid for election in the same regional group, ensuring that the United States and two other candidates, Norway and Belgium, run unchallenged. In explaining its decision on its website, the government of New Zealand stated that it was doing so to avoid four nations contesting three positions.

The Democracy Coalition Project has along with over [30 NGOs from around the world called for competitive elections](#) in May to allow the international community to decide which candidates meet the membership standards set by the UN General Assembly when it created the Council three years ago. “We are deeply disappointed that states in three regions this year, including the Western Group, have chosen to support non-competitive elections,” said Fassihian. “While we applaud the important decision made by the United States, we continue to call on all democratic governments committed to human rights to present their candidacies and to support healthy competition.”

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