

18TH EDITION

LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL
HUMAN RIGHTS
BULLETIN

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FEATURES

The inaugural LI Gender Equality Report • Human Rights and the COVID-19 Crisis • LI HRC goes online webinars • LI Committees on the future of the UN • Statements


Astrid Thors
Chairperson of LI Human Rights Committee

Dear liberal friends,

I admit that I have spent too much time this month following the counting of the votes in the US presidential election. The only justification for my behaviour is my grave concern for the fate of one of the biggest democracies in the world. It is unbelievable that so many citizens are suspicious of the fundamental features of their democratic system.

At the same time, the risk of deadly conflict is on the rise in many African countries. What is happening in Ethiopia, on the orders of a Nobel Peace Prize winner, is appalling. The other side is not better, as there are indications of war crimes as well, denied by the accused.

In Cameroon, reports tell of civilian victims in the crisis between anglophone and francophone parts of the country. I question whether the EU and the AU have been able to exert enough diplomatic efforts to prevent further escalation of the crisis.

In other parts of Africa, liberal politicians risk their lives when trying to peacefully participate in elections. The liberal family has been appalled by the threats to our VP Cellou Diallo in Guinea, including the blockade imposed on him and the falsification of the presidential election results in October.

Likewise, we are shocked by the detention of opposition politicians during the election in Tanzania. We have seen awful images of people violated while in custody. In Uganda, as soon as his candidacy for the presidency was filed, Bobi Wine MP was taken into custody by the authorities. Nobody doubts that the longest-serving president on the continent, Yoweri Museveni, is behind this action against someone who could successfully contest the next elections.

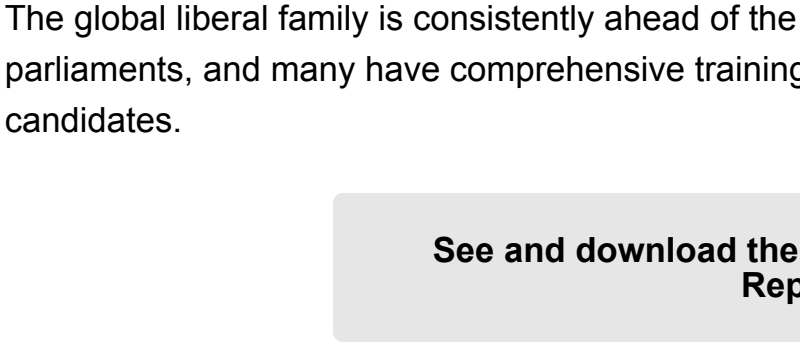
In times of Covid, when rulers want us to turn a blind eye as they grab power using the virus as an excuse, the work we do as liberals and human rights activists is more needed than ever. We are not always able to immediately liberate a friend, but the knowledge that our eyes are on those misbehaving is important and saves lives. We fortunately often have the means to communicate when needed. And we look up to the brave young and old people of Belarus as an example for us to follow. Week after week they defy the dictator and risk their safety and freedom in their longing for democracy and change.

The alliance of democracies that US president-elect Joe Biden has talked about is so necessary. As 2020 comes to a close, we need it to defend the universality and indivisibility of human rights.

Yours sincerely

Astrid Thors

The Inaugural LI Gender Equality Report


The first ever Liberal International Gender Equality Report is now available online

This report presents the findings of the 2020 Women in Political Parties Index, the first of its kind tool developed by Liberal International to assist our membership in evaluating and improving their inclusivity as political parties.

The results find that in many ways, liberals are at the forefront of the global fight for gender equality. The global liberal family is consistently ahead of the regional trends for representation of women in parliaments, and many have comprehensive training programmes to strengthen and empower female candidates.

See and download the 2020 Gender Equality Report

LI HRC ONLINE WEBINARS


Liberal women break down barriers to representation at launch of LI Gender Equality Report

To discuss the barriers that still hinder women's political participation across the world, this event brought together LI Vice President and LI Human Rights Committee Chairperson **Astrid Thors**, Chairperson of the Women's League National Unity Platform **Flavia Kalule Nabagabe**, Director Gender and Women for NDI **Sandra Pepera**, Executive Director of Boris Divkovic Foundation **Anela Lemeš**, Councillor in Sarajevo and International Officer for Naša Stranka Cilir. **Jasmina Mršo** and Councillor in South Dublin County Council for Fianna Fáil Cilir. **Emma Murphy**. The event was moderated by Dutch Senator for D66 **Petra Stienen**.

Liberals gather to end internet shutdowns

Following our successful [first Policy Lab](#) on July 1st, this policy lab gathered experts within the field of digitalisation and human rights from across the global liberal family. The participants discussed some of the key policy issues surrounding digitalisation and human rights, and the work to develop liberal responses to some of the questions which will shape the internet and societies of our future.

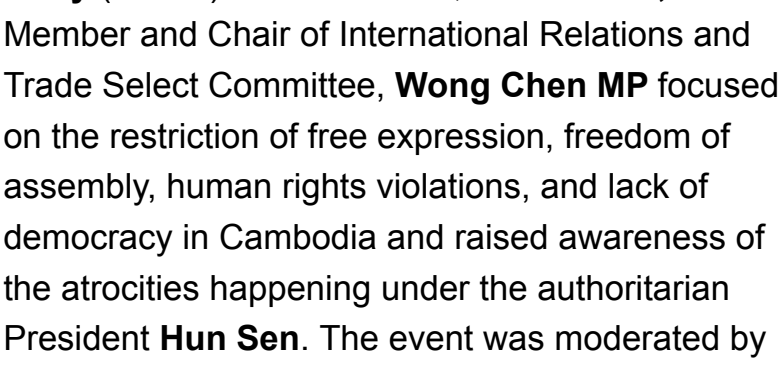
Speakers **Marietje Schaake**, International Policy Director at the Cyber Policy Center, Stanford University, and former MEP for D66, and **Felicia Anthonio**, Lead for the #KeepItOn campaign at Access Now, shared their perspectives in an opening discussion moderated by MEP **Karen Melchior**.

Read about the event

Read about the event

Watch the livestream

Watch the livestream


“Lukashenko knows only one weapon: threats”, Belarus activist Julia Mickiewicz tells LI HRC Chair

As protests calling for free and fair elections and the resignation of Alexander Lukashenko, the dictator who has held power in the country for 26 years, continue across Belarus, Liberal International brought together **Julia Mickiewicz** of the Coordination Council of the Belarusian opposition and LI Human Rights Committee Chair **Astrid Thors** to discuss the latest developments in the country. Julia Mickiewicz joined the conversation directly from Minsk, Belarus.

Cambodia at crossroads: sanctions or prosperity

LI HRC Chair **Astrid Thors** together with APRH Board Member and **Cambodia National Rescue Party** (CNRP) Vice President, **Mu Sochua**, APRH Member and Chair of International Relations and Trade Select Committee, **Wong Chen MP** focused on the restriction of free expression, freedom of assembly, human rights violations, and lack of democracy in Cambodia and raised awareness of the atrocities happening under the authoritarian President **Hun Sen**. The event was moderated by **Emil Kirjas**, founder of Kirjas Global.

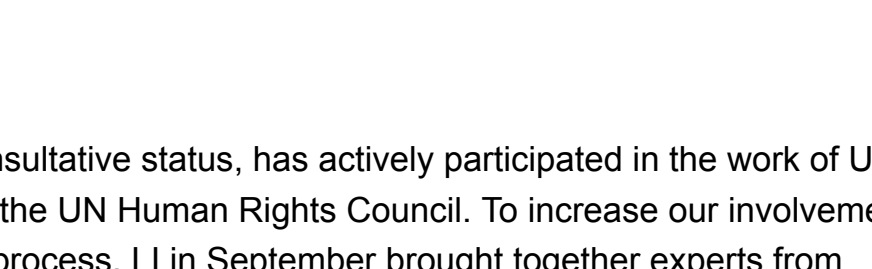
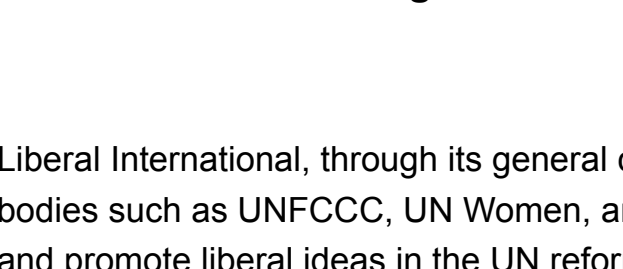
Read about the event

Read about the event

Watch the livestream

Watch the livestream

LI HRC, CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMITTEE, AND FAIR TRADE WORKING GROUP DISCUSS THE UN AT 75


LI Committees gather to discuss liberal answers to the future of the UN

Liberal International, through its general consultative status, has actively participated in the work of UN bodies such as UNFCCC, UN Women, and the UN Human Rights Council. To increase our involvement and promote liberal ideas in the UN reform process, LI in September brought together experts from around the world to discuss the future of the UN and where it is headed. In particular, the event focused on what is needed from the now 75-year-old organisation to achieve these reforms.

LI invited **Per Knutsson**, Director of UN Reform and Special Advisor at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and **Dr Juli Minoves Triquell**, LI President of Honour and former Ambassador to the UN and the WTO, to explain their views on the challenges and opportunities facing the UN as it turns 75. The event was moderated by LI President, **Dr Hakima El Haité**, and brought together the shared expertise of the LI Human Rights Committee, Climate Justice Committee, and newly established Fair Trade Working Group.

Read more about the event

Watch the live stream

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS


Human rights must be considered in exports of surveillance technology

While free trade is a pillar of liberalism and protectionism hampers development, it is crucial to ensure that regulation covering the export of dual-use items is robust enough to avoid systems of mass surveillance relying on European technology to aid authoritarian regimes in oppressing their populations.

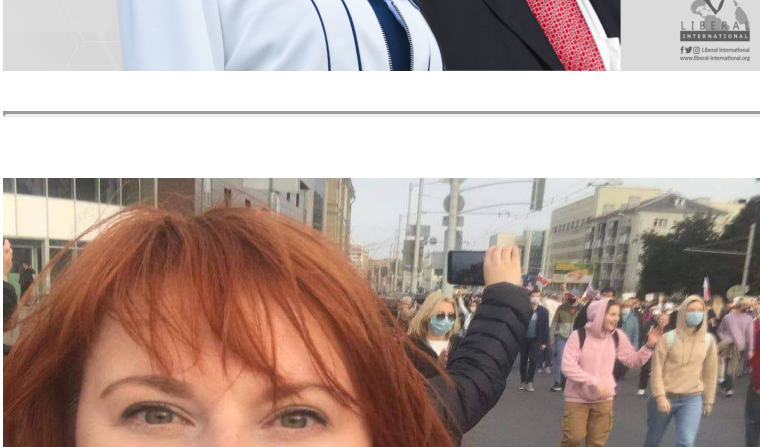
'Vaccine nationalism' is the latest threat to global cooperation

While populist nationalism has already challenged liberal values of global cooperation, human rights, and openness, vaccine nationalism is showing signs of becoming the latest threat to international cooperation. The pandemic is by its nature global, and the world must act together to be able to defeat it.

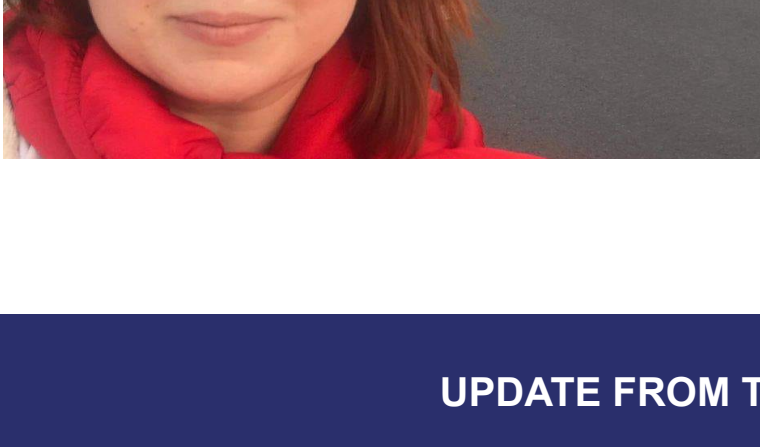
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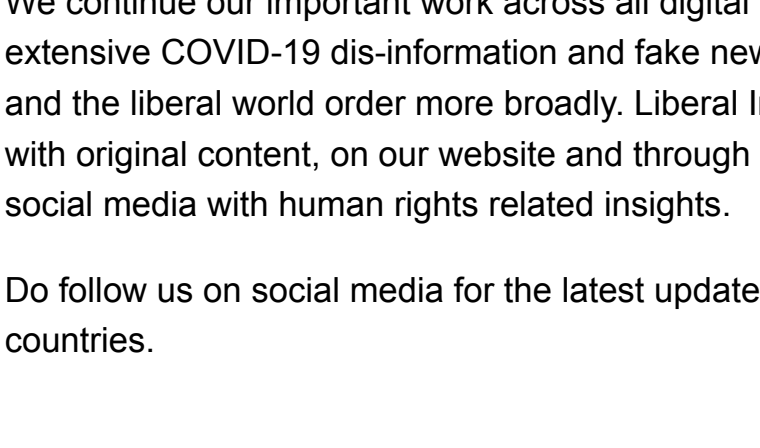
STATEMENTS


In a statement to the 45th session of the **UN Human Rights Council**, Liberal International has called for female representation to be guaranteed at the upcoming parliamentary elections in **Gambia**.

Read the statement


LI HRC Chair **Astrid Thors** and LI HRC member **Darren Bergman** MP called on the international community to not abide by this election fiction and condemn, loudly, what is transpiring in African countries like **Guinea** and **Tanzania**.

Read the statement


Belarusian activist **Julia Mickiewicz** was due to be in Stockholm, meeting with among others LI Bureau member **Abir al Sahiani**, MEP, and **Kerstin Lundgren**, MP, foreign policy spokesperson for Centerpartiet (LI full member). Instead, she was arrested. Nordic liberals called on the Belarusian authorities to release her and all other political prisoners.

Read the statement

UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

In reaction to the coronavirus outbreak, Liberal International has postponed or moved our human rights-related events to more suitable dates and platforms.

We continue our important work across all digital platforms, specifically refining our focus to resist the extensive COVID-19 dis-information and fake news campaigns being run against liberal democracies and the liberal world order more broadly. Liberal International is frequently providing the liberal family with original content, on our website and through our newsletter. We are also frequently updating our social media with human rights related insights.

Do follow us on social media for the latest updates, and share with us what is happening in your countries.

Sign up for our newsletter

Follow us on social media:



UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE

EVENT

Until further notice

Liberal International Office working remotely

14 December

LI Human Rights Committee Administrative Meeting

INSTAGRAM

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

WEBSITE

OUR SUPPORTERS

