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Strengthening the UN Human Rights System: *A Discussion with Human Rights Defenders*

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PARTICIPANTS

Kamala Chandrakirana is among the founders of Indonesia's National Commission on Violence against Women, a unique national mechanism for women's human rights. She just completed 11 years service of which six years was as Chairperson of the Commission (2003-2009). She is also active in various civil society organizations, such as the Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW), a leading anti-corruption advocate; ELSAM, a human rights think-tank; *Syarikat Indonesia*, a network of progressive Muslim activists pursuing grassroots cultural reconciliation to address past human rights violations; the Indonesian Institute for Social History (ISSI), situating past gross human rights violations as part of historical inquiry; *Rahima*, an education center on women's rights within Islam; and, YSIK, a national grant-making institution for social movements. She is also an active member of the Asia Pacific Women Law and Development (APWLD) and one of the founders of *Musawah*, a global movement for justice and equality in the Muslim family.

Roberta Cohen is a nonresident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy at The Brookings Institution. She co-founded and co-directed The Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement for over a decade and now serves as senior advisor to The Brookings Institution-University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement and as senior adviser to Walter Kälin, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. She has served as a Public Member of the U.S. Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and of the U.S. Delegation to the UN Commission on Human Rights. During the Carter administration, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and as senior adviser to the U.S. Delegation to the UN Commission on Human Rights and General Assembly.

Yuri Dzhibladze is the president of the Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights, a Moscow-based public policy and advocacy NGO which he founded in 1998. The Center conducts public policy analysis, human rights monitoring, public education, and advocacy campaigns, focusing lately on freedom of association and assembly, human rights in the army, links between corruption and human rights abuse, and combating racism and xenophobia. The Center is one of the leaders in Russia in international cooperation in human rights and democracy by producing reports, coordinating coalitions, articulating NGO positions, and speaking at the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the EU. Having begun his activism in the mid-1980s, Yuri has participated in many civic initiatives, including missions to the conflict zones in the Caucasus and the Committee for Anti-War Actions during the first war in Chechnya.

Olawale Fapohunda is a leading human rights lawyer in Nigeria and Managing Partner of the Legal Resources Consortium. He is a member of the West African Bar Association, the International Bar Association, and on the Board of Penal Reform International. Fapohunda is civil society representative on the implementation committee of the National Action Plan for Human Rights in Nigeria and Vice-Chairperson of the National Committee Against Torture.

Gustavo Gallon has been the Director of the Colombia Commission of Jurists since its creation in 1988. From 1999 to 2002 he was the Special Representative for Equatorial Guinea in the UN's Human Rights Commission. He served as a visiting fellow at the Kellogg Institute from 1998 to 1999 and since 1979 has been a professor of human rights and constitutional law at universities in Bogota. Gallon is the author of several publications on the rule of law and human rights.

Amiram Gill is Director of Advocacy at Physicians for Human Rights - Israel (PHR-IL). In this role, he is in charge of PHR-IL's government and external relations with diplomats, international organizations, members of the Knesset, and members of the Israeli Cabinet. Before joining PHR-IL, Amiram worked as a lawyer and as a public affairs professional with businesses, NGOs, and political campaigns in Israel and the United States. He is a graduate of Tel Aviv University and Stanford Law School.

Morton Halperin is a Senior Advisor to the Open Society Institute and the Open Society Policy Center. Dr. Halperin served in the Clinton, Nixon and Johnson administrations, most recently as Director of the Policy Planning Staff at the Department of State (1998-2001). He taught at Harvard (1960-66) and, as a visitor at other universities including Columbia, George Washington, and Yale. He has been affiliated with a number of other think tanks including the Center for American Progress, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Century Foundation and the Brookings Institution. He is the author of numerous books and articles including *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, *The Democracy Advantage*, and *Protecting Democracy*.

Peggy Hicks is the global advocacy director at Human Rights Watch with specialized expertise on the United Nations, particularly UN peacekeeping, and the Balkans. She served as director of the Office for Returns and Communities in the UN mission in

Kosovo. She was Deputy High Representative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has acted as an expert consultant to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. She has also served as Director of Programs and General Counsel of Global Rights and as clinical professor of human rights and refugee law at the University of Minnesota Law School.

Hina Jilani is Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. From 2000 to April 2008 Jilani served as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders. She has also participated in formal and informal expert group meetings of multiple UN human rights bodies. She has represented UNICEF and UNIFEM at regional and international meetings and conferences as an expert in specific fields of Human Rights. She has been involved in several national and international NGOs and is member of the board of several international Human Rights Institutions. In 1999 she was awarded the Human Rights Award by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and in 2000 she was honored with the Amnesty International Genetta Sagan Award for Women's Rights.

Hamidah Marican has been the executive director of the Malaysian organisation Sisters in Islam (SIS) since July 2009, a non-governmental organisation working on the rights of Muslim women within the framework of Islam. Sisters in Islam is at the forefront of the women's movement which seeks to end discrimination against Muslim women in the name of religion. The group's activities in research, advocacy and public education help to promote the development of Islam that upholds the principles of equality, justice and freedom within a democratic state.

Juan E. Mendez is currently a Visiting Professor of Law at the American University and Special Advisor on Crime Prevention to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Previously, he served as Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General on the prevention of genocide. Until May 2009, he served as President of the International Center for Transitional Justice. Between 2000 and 2003 he was a member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, and served as its President in 2002. He has taught International Human Rights Law at Notre Dame Law School, the Georgetown University Law Center and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, and he teaches regularly at the Oxford Masters Program in International Human Rights Law in the United Kingdom.

Julia Neiva is one of the founders of Conectas Human Rights and currently the coordinator for its Justice Program. She was member of the Board of Directors of the Human Rights Center and founder of several not-for-profit organizations in Brazil. Julia is a human rights lawyer who has worked in human rights for over 8 years, coordinating studies, advocacy, and training programs, and providing legal services for human rights activists from Latin America, Africa and Asia. She has spoken and also facilitated working groups on human rights in Brazil, in the US, and in other countries of the Global South.

Michael O'Flaherty holds the Chair in Applied Human Rights and is the Co-director of the Human Rights Law Centre at the University of Nottingham, U.K. He is a member

of the (United Nations) Human Rights Committee. O’Flaherty has served in a number of senior positions with the United Nations. He established the UN human rights field missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994) and Sierra Leone (1998) and subsequently guided UN headquarters support to its human rights programs across the Asia-Pacific region. He has served as Secretary of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and UN human rights advisor for implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. From 2000 to 2002 he chaired the UN reference group on human rights and humanitarian action. His most recent books (2007 and 2010) are on aspects of human rights protection work in the field.

Ted Piccone is a Senior Fellow and Deputy Director for Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution. Piccone has over 20 years experience in government, law and research. He also serves as an Advisor to the Club of Madrid, an association of over 70 former heads of state and government engaged in efforts to strengthen democracy around the world, and previously served as its Washington Office Director. From 2001-2008, Piccone was the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Democracy Coalition Project (DCP), a research and advocacy organization working to promote international cooperation for democracy and human rights around the world. Piccone served eight years as a senior foreign policy advisor in the Clinton Administration. He was the Associate Director of the Secretary of State’s Policy Planning Staff (1998-2001), Director for Inter-American Affairs at the National Security Council (1996-98), and Policy Advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (1993-1996). He also served as Counsel for the United Nations Truth Commission in El Salvador (1992-93) and as Press Secretary to U.S. Rep. Bob Edgar (1985-87).

Paulo Sergio Pinheiro serves as Commissioner and Rapporteur on Children in the Inter-American Commission on Human Right, at the Organization of American States. From 2003 to 2008, he served as the Independent Expert for the UN Secretary-General’s study on violence against children that concluded with the 2006 publication, *The World Report on Violence against Children*. Pinheiro has been UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burundi (1995-1998) and in Myanmar (2000 - 2008). Pinheiro was also a member of the former UN Sub-Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (1998-2006). He was secretary of state for human rights, under President Cardoso, Brazil. Currently, he is adjunct professor of international relations at the Watson Institute, Brown University and a research associate at the Center for the Study of Violence, University of Sao Paulo, NEV/USP, which he founded in 1987.

Bertrand Ramcharan is Professor of International Human Rights Law at the Geneva Graduate Institute of International Studies, Chancellor of the University of Guyana, and Senior Fellow at the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies at The CUNY Graduate Center. He has a doctorate from the London School of Economics and is a Barrister of Lincoln’s Inn. He was a member of the UN Secretariat for 32 years. He served in the position of Deputy and then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2003 – 2004) at the level of Under-Secretary-General. Previously he had been Director with the International peacemakers and peacekeepers in the Former Yugoslavia, Director of the Africa I Division of the Department of Political Affairs, and head of the

speech-writing service of the Secretary-General. He has taught as an Adjunct Professor at Columbia University and as Visiting Professor at of International Law in Lund University, Sweden. He is the author or editor of some twenty-five books on international law, human rights, and the United Nations.

Andrea Rossi is the Director of the Measurement & Human Rights Program at Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. He is the former UNICEF research coordinator on child trafficking and the child protection advisor on trafficking and migration. He has previously worked for the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the East Africa Area Office, Tanzania as officer in charge of research and statistics. He is member of the faculty of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) for the World Bank.

Nancy Rubin is the former US Representative to the UN Commission for Human Rights. She was confirmed as Ambassador in 1998. She served in the Carter, Clinton & Obama Administrations. Among boards she currently serves on are NDI, Women for Women International, and the Washington Center. She served on the board of the International Human Rights Group and headed election observation and participated in helping build a framework for human rights and democracy in the Philippines, Chile, Czech Republic, South Korea and South Africa. She was a director of the Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Association, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women & Children, and established the National Lawyer's Committee to build legal literacy clinics in Asia, Africa and Latin America. She was an advisor to the Council on Women World Leaders and was on the Leadership Council for Amnesty International and the Strategy Committee for Harvard University's Project on Justice in Times of Transition. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Karin Ryan is director of the Human Rights Program at the Carter Center. As director, Ryan works with former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter on a range of issues, including assisting their efforts on behalf of victims of human rights violations through personal interventions with heads of state. She has represented the Center in many international negotiations, including the International Criminal Court, the human rights of women, the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and most recently on the establishment of a U.N. Human Rights Council, and has worked closely with the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize expert consultations designed to strengthen the role of the OHCHR within the United Nations system. She has participated in the Center's election observation missions to Haiti, the occupied Palestinian Territories, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nigeria. She has also coordinated the annual "Human Rights Defenders Policy Forum," from 2003-2006, whose aim is to support those on the frontlines of the struggle for human rights and democracy all over the world.

David Weissbrodt is Regents Professor and Fredrikson & Byron Professor of Law, University of Minnesota and the former UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of non-citizens. From 1996 to 2003, He was a member of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Elected chair of the sub-commission in 2001, he became the first U.S. citizen since Eleanor Roosevelt to head a U.N. human

rights body. He has also served as an officer or board member of Amnesty International, the Center for Victims of Torture, the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, Readers International, and the International League for Human Rights.

Richard Williamson is currently a Partner at Winston & Strawn LLP and the former US Special Envoy to Sudan. His many diplomatic posts have included serving as Ambassador to the United Nations offices in Vienna; Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; a member of the President's General Advisory Committee on Arms Control; Ambassador to the United Nations for Special Political Affairs; and Ambassador to the UN Commission on Human Rights. He is a long-time member of the board of directors of the International Republican Institute, a trustee of Freedom House and Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Notre Dame University Center for Human and Civil Rights.