



**LDCs/SIDS BENEFICIARY DELEGATES AND FELLOWS
SUPPORTED BY THE TRUST FUND AT THE 54th SESSION
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (HRC54)
(11 September – 13 October 2023)**

Delegates programme at HRC54: 11 September – 13 October 2023

Fellowship programme 2023: 6 September – 30 November 2023

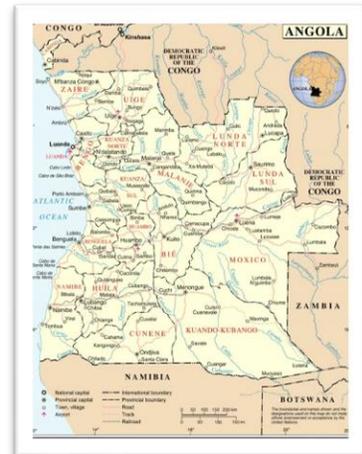
1	Angola	Ms. Sónia Serrão (Fellow)
2	Bahamas	Ms. Akeyra E. Saunders-Gabriel (Fellow)
3	Bangladesh	Mr. Rashed Ahmed
4	Burkina Faso	Ms. Eboubie Agnès Bayili Bassonou
5	Ethiopia	Ms. Kalkidan Tamiru Tesfaye
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8	Kiribati	Ms. Aileen Bauro (Fellow)
9	Lesotho	Ms. Pulane Christina Lechesa
10	Madagascar	Ms. Soafara Ruphine (Fellow)
11	Maldives	Ms. Mizna Waheed (Fellow)
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14	Vanuatu	Mr. Emmanuel Blessing



Angola

Sónia Serrão

Diplomat, 2nd Secretary, Ministry of External Relations of Angola



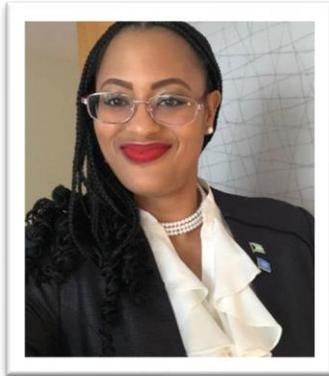
Ms. Serrão considers it a privilege to have been selected for the LDCs/SIDS 2023 Fellowship programme. As a diplomat, she hopes that this experience will enhance her ability to support her country's participation in the work of the Human Rights Council and advise the Angolan authorities on the importance of integrating human rights into the national political framework. She expects to enrich her knowledge about the Council, its mechanisms and processes and to have the knowledge gained reflected in her job performance and engagement on human rights matters.

Subject of research project: CIERNDH (Angolan national system for implementation, reporting and follow-up) - the role of NMIRF in bridging the implementation gap and fulfilling national human rights strategy.

Bahamas

Akeyra E. Saunders-Gabriel

Senior Crown Counsel, Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Legal Affairs



Mrs. Gabriel served in the military with the Royal Bahamas Defence Force from 2005 before joining the Office of the Attorney-General in 2015, where she enjoyed most of her stint as a prosecutor in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. She joined the newly formed “Human Rights Unit” in the Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Legal Affairs in March 2019 and has undertaken several development courses, workshops, and symposiums in human rights matters.

Mrs. Gabriel’s primary responsibility is to ensure that the Government of The Bahamas complies with its international human rights obligations and translates these into national legislation and policies. She assists in raising awareness of these obligations through training sessions with stakeholders and representatives of civil society organizations. Mrs. Gabriel deals with all matters relating to the uniformed branches of Government: the Royal Bahamas Police Force, the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, The Department of Correctional Services, and the Department of Immigration, which includes the Detention Centre. She is also the representative and committee member of the Trafficking in Persons (TIPS) Task Force on behalf of her office.

Mrs. Gabriel holds a Bachelor of Law Degree (Honors) from the University of the West Indies and a Legal Education Certificate from the Eugene Dupuch Law School.

Subject of research project: *Statelessness: The effect of climate change and rising sea levels on small island countries.*

Bangladesh

Rashed Ahmed

Assistant Secretary (United Nations-Human Rights), Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Mr. Rashed Ahmed is a career diplomat who currently works at the United Nations Wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Apart from Bangladesh's engagement with different UN bodies, his portfolio mainly includes international human rights issues concerning Bangladesh. Owing to his current assignment at the human rights desk, he possesses a keen interest in humanitarian diplomacy and human rights.

Mr. Rashed entered the Civil service as a Medical Officer in 2019 but later joined the Foreign Office in 2021. In January 2023, he was awarded Syed Muazzem Ali Memorial Award (for securing the 1st Position) and Rector's Honor of Merit Medal at the 28th Specialized Diplomatic Training Course (SDTC), which is a mandatory training for all the diplomats of the Foreign Office of Bangladesh.

Mr. Rashed holds a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (M.B.B.S.) degree from Dhaka Medical College.

This is his first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and his first time in Geneva.

Burkina Faso

E. Agnès Bayili Bassonou

Cheffe de service de l'éducation non formelle aux droits humains par intérim à la Direction de l'éducation aux droits humains du ministère de la Justice et des Droits humains, chargée des Relations avec les Institutions



Madame BAYILI BASSONOU E. Agnès est titulaire d'une maîtrise en droit, obtenu en 2010. Munie de ce diplôme, en 2015, elle est admise au concours de la fonction publique pour intégrer le corps des Conseillers en droits humains après une formation de deux ans à l'Ecole nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature.

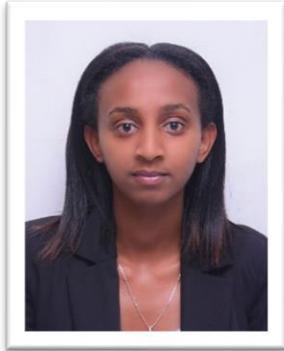
A la fin de cette formation, elle est affectée au ministère de la Justice, des Droits humains et de la Promotion civique en tant que Conseiller en droits humains, plus précisément à la direction générale des droits humains. Depuis sa prise de service, elle participe à la formation et à la sensibilisation des couches sociales ainsi qu'à l'élaboration des documents et textes en lien avec les droits humains. Elle assure également l'appui conseil et l'orientation de victimes de violation des droits humains vers des structures compétentes.

Madame BAYILI occupe actuellement le poste de Chef de service de l'éducation non formelle aux droits humains. De ce fait, elle est chargée de la conception, l'exécution, le suivi-évaluation et l'analyse des programmes en lien avec les tâches ci-dessus citées. A travers son service, elle mène en partenariat avec le bureau pays du HCDH, des activités relatives à la lutte contre le terrorisme, notamment la formation des formateurs des volontaires pour la défense de la patrie sur la prise en compte des droits humains dans les opérations de lutte contre le terrorisme. Elle a, par ailleurs, bénéficié depuis sa prise de service, de formations diverses sur les droits humains.

Elle participe pour la première fois à une session ordinaire du Conseil des droits de l'homme et il s'agit également de sa première visite à Genève.

Ethiopia

Kalkidan Tamiru Tesfaye
Third Secretary Diplomat / Legal Expert



Ms. Tesfaye joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in 2019 as a trainee diplomat. She has worked in various departments of the Ministry. Currently, she is working at the International Legal Affairs Directorate General office of the Ministry. Her responsibilities include preparing, drafting, commenting, negotiating, and finalizing bilateral and multilateral international agreements that Ethiopia signs with other countries and international organizations. She also provides advice to the government on various international legal issues.

Ms. Tesfaye completed her LLB degree at Adama Science and Technology University in 2018. She also studied Business Management at Bahirdar University, earning her degree in 2020. Additionally, she pursued a Postgraduate diploma in International Relations and Diplomacy at Civil Service University, which she successfully completed in 2021. Currently, she is pursuing her master's degree in public international Law at Addis Ababa University.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and her first time in Geneva.

Gambia

Ella Rosaline Dougan

Principal State Counsel, Attorney General's Chambers, Ministry of Justice



Ella Rosaline Dougan started her career at the Ministry of Justice in 2013 as a Public Prosecutor and rose through the ranks as a State Counsel, Senior State Counsel and currently a Principal State Counsel. She is currently the Chairperson of the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Unit of the Ministry of Justice and also supervises the Child Rights Unit and serves as the Vice Chairperson of the Human Rights reporting Committee of the Ministry.

As a Principal State Counsel, she works under the Criminal Division of the Ministry and deals with criminal cases. She prosecutes cases from the High Court up to the Supreme Court which is the highest court in The Gambia. As a prosecutor she felt the urgent need to learn more about the rights of both the perpetrators and the victims and as such had involved and continuous to involve herself in the victim centred nature of the criminal justice system and on Constitutional Law matters as well as human rights issues. She recently concluded training on Constitution Building in Africa at the Central European University in Hungary, Budapest.

Her responsibilities at the Ministry also include reviewing agreements and assisting the Head of the Human Rights Unit in the coordination of the reporting obligations of The Gambia with Treaty Bodies. She has been involved in the training of police officers on Sexual and Gender Based Violence offences.

She had also represented the Gambia at the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice and is currently the Legal Expert for West Africa Police Information System in The Gambia.

Ms. Dougan obtained her LLB at the University of The Gambia in 2012, her Bachelor of Law at the Gambia Law School and LLM at the University of The Gambia in 2023. She has travelled extensively in Europe and Africa and she is married with a daughter.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Jamaica

Natalie James

Human Rights Specialist, Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs



Captain Natalie James, JP is the Human Rights Specialist employed to the Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs. She is the head of the Human Rights Division and she coordinates the human rights public education programme for the Ministry.

She is an Attorney-at-Law and a certified Parish Court Mediator. She was commissioned as a Captain for the Jamaica Defence Force and served in the Jamaica National Reserve.

She is a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights. Captain James had the opportunity to be a member of the Jamaican delegation to the 108th session of the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in Geneva in November 2022.

Capt. James holds a Bachelor of Law from the University of the West Indies, Mona, Bachelor in Business Administration from the University of Technology, Jamaica, Master in Project Management and Master in International Trade from the Universidad Internacional Isabel I De Castilla. Capt. James is the Top Recipient of the 2023 Marcus Garvey Post Graduate Public Sector Scholarship award and will be pursuing a Master of Laws in Public Law in September 2023.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Kiribati

Aileen Bauro
Human Rights Officer, Ministry of Justice



Ms. Bauro has been involved in facilitating the Human Rights and Family Peace Act awareness program for communities and outer islands. To date, programme's visits have covered 12 islands with visits scheduled for an additional 3 islands, including 3 islands within the Line and Phoenix islands. The primary objective of the program is to introduce the concept of human rights and to familiarize communities with the new Act adopted following the ratification of CEDAW.

In 2019, she joined the Kiribati delegation for the constructive dialogue held in Geneva with the CEDAW committee on the initial to third periodic reports. She was also involved in preparing the necessary information required by the Kiribati delegation for the 3rd UPR review in 2019.

As part of her duties as Human Rights Officer, Ms. Bauro is supporting the implementation of and reporting on human rights conventions, such as CRC, CEDAW, CRPD, UNCAT, and also UPR.

Subject of research project: Developing an implementation plan of concluding observations adopted by CEDAW and of UPR recommendations accepted by Kiribati.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Lesotho

Pulane Lechesa

Legal Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations



Ms. Lechesa is a legal practitioner with twenty (20) years experience in different capacities within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations. She has excellent research skills, extensive experience in advisory capacity and drafting of international legal instruments. Her exposure has given her an in-depth knowledge of international law and its application to a wide range of legal, human rights and policy issues.

Ms. Lechesa is Deputy Chair of the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the ratified international instruments, including reporting to the Human Rights Council, the African Union Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, and to different Human Rights Specialized Committees.

In addition, Ms. Lechesa is also enrolled as a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Law student and part-time Public Law Lecturer at the National University of Lesotho.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Madagascar

Soafara Ruphine

Foreign Affairs Adviser, Multilateral Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Ms. Ruphine has served in the Department of multilateral relations since early 2020 and holds principal responsibility for coordinating all relationships and activities of the Malagasy Government with International Organizations as well as the human rights activities.

She has been a career Foreign Service Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since October 2017, with extensive experience in multilateral affairs. She acquired this experience from the many years she served at the United Nations Development Programme in Madagascar before she joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ms. Ruphine hold a Master II degree in political science of Catholic University of Madagascar and a Master's in Diplomatic, International Relations and Protocol from the Centre Africain de Management et de Perfectionnement des Cadres (CAMPC), Côte d'Ivoire.

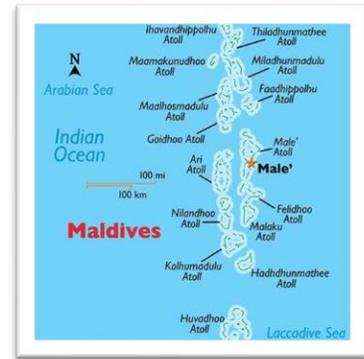
Subject of research project: Economic specificity and human rights: focus on the reality economic of poor country dominated by corruption and illicit assets and on human rights.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and also her first time in Geneva.

Maldives

Mizna Waheed

Chief General Service Officer, South Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Ms. Mizna Waheed is a career diplomat who joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Maldives in May 2021. In her current position as the Chief General Service Officer at the South Asia Division, she is tasked with seeking ways to enhance stronger bilateral relations between the Maldives and other South Asian countries and addressing consular and human rights issues faced by the migrant population from South Asian countries, among others.

Prior to working in the South Asia Division, Ms. Waheed served at the Ministry's Human Rights Division, where she facilitated the realization of national foreign policy goals concerning human rights. As such, she actively mediated the engagement of the Maldives at the Human Rights Council and various United Nations mechanisms and liaised with a wide range of stakeholders, including Government agencies and the civil society to advance the fulfillment of international human rights obligations. She also represented the Maldives on various international platforms and was a member of the national committee responsible for the implementation, reporting and follow-up of the international human rights instruments to which the Maldives is a party. Notably, she greatly contributed to the campaign that led to the election of the Maldives to the membership of the Human Rights Council for the term 2023-2025.

Ms. Waheed holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Relations from the Maldives National University and a Master of Management in International Affairs and Global Governance from Zhejiang University, China.

Subject of research project: *Enhancing Maldives participation in the Human Rights Council.*

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and also her first time in Geneva.

Marshall Islands

Balton Nathan

Foreign Service Officer at the Multilateral Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of the Marshall Islands



Mr. Balton Nathan has worked with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for almost four years. In his current position, he works directly with the country's missions at the United Nations and in Geneva on matters relating to human rights, the SDGs, health, and various others. Mr. Nathan also represents the Ministry in various governmental committees and policy working groups relating to energy, economics, communications, climate change, and transportation.

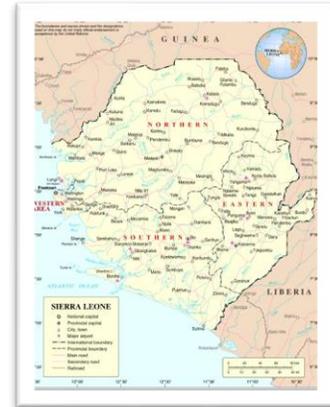
Prior to working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, he served as a Special Revenues Accountant at the Ministry of Health and Human Services of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. It was here that he first worked with United Nations agencies such as Humanitarian Aid Organization (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was here and while working and collaborating with various multilateral organizations that sparked the interest to participate in the global community.

This is his first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and his first time in Geneva.

Sierra Leone

Marilyn Saal-Kamara

Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation



Ms. Saal-Kamara joined the Foreign Ministry as an Assistant Secretary in 2020 and has served in several directorates, including Europe, Middle East and Asia, as well as the Research and Knowledge Management Directorate. Currently, she is attached to the Legal and ECOTEC directorate where she serves as the Treaty Reporting Officer at the National Reporting Mechanism Secretariat housed within the Foreign Ministry.

In her capacity as a Treaty Reporting Officer, she has actively participated in and benefited from various capacity-building training workshops on human rights, including those related to the UPR, African Charter, Maputo Protocol, and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. She has also collaborated with civil society organizations and other stakeholders to report the progress made by the Government in upholding human rights within the nation.

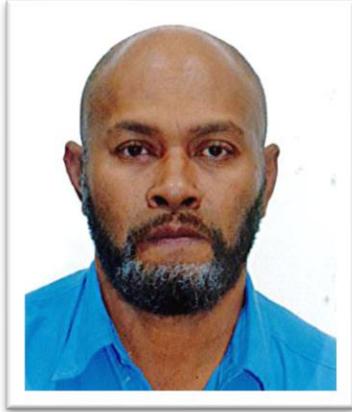
Her role within the Secretariat encompasses coordinating the timely preparation and submission of national reports, as well as addressing overdue reports on human rights to treaty monitoring bodies. She also ensures the adherence to reporting schedules for various treaty body reports. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree (Hon) in Public Sector Management from the University of Sierra Leone and is awaiting graduation for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Law (Hon) from the University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College.

This is her first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and her first time in Geneva.

Vanuatu

Emmanuel Blessing

Senior Desk Officer, Treaties and Conventions Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and External Trade



Mr. Blessing currently holds the position of Senior Desk Officer at the Treaties and Conventions Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and External Trade. He is responsible for managing Vanuatu's international commitments to treaties and conventions the country is a party to. He is currently the focal point for UN reporting through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and External Trade of Vanuatu.

He is a sitting member of Vanuatu's National Human Rights Committee, GRPD National Committee, CRC National Committee, and National Anti-Corruption and Integrity Committee. Moreover, he is Team leader for CRC, Anticorruption, ICCPR and Universal Periodic Review (UPR) reports for Vanuatu. He assists in most human rights reporting in Vanuatu arising from the country's treaty obligations. He is also responsible specifically for the Arms Trade Treaty and currently serves as Vanuatu's National Liaison Officer to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Blessing has served in the Vanuatu public service for 19 years, and currently 12 years with the Foreign Ministry.

This is his first time attending a regular session of the Human Rights Council and his first time in Geneva.
