

## Universal Periodical Review

*Forth Cycle*

*47th Working Group*

# COSTA RICA



## Life and Peace Constitutions Related Human Rights Issues

8<sup>th</sup> of April 2024

*“From the politics of taking life to the politics of affirming it”*

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*Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)*

**We understand the right to life as being – for everyone – the full enjoyment of life,  
as being the right not to be killed,  
as being everyone’s responsibility not to kill or let others die.**

The Center for Global Nonkilling works for the fulfillment of life, individually and universally. It has a unique mission, that is both inspirational for individuals and transformative for societies:

*“To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world  
by means open to infinite human creativity in reverence for life”.*

The Center was founded by various persons, notably by Glenn Paige (1929-2017), Professor of Political Science and author of the book “Nonkilling Political Science”, widely translated<sup>1</sup>. We are a worldwide congregation of persons, including scholars and practitioners coming from all walks of life. We use our freedoms, responsibilities and knowledge, our conscience to create societies and institutions that do not kill, enabling all individuals, all institutions and societies to live fulfilled nonkilling lives. Valuing and protecting life is the most enhancing and empowering mission of each and all, of everyone and of all human social groups and institutions<sup>2</sup>. As humans, we are all and shall all be nonkilling centres. As citizens of the future, we are all global. We hereby partake with, sustain our institutions towards the services to life, happiness and well-being, in present time as for the future.

We are all global on our single planet.  
May we all be and become nonkilling!

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The Center for Global Nonkilling uses the Universal Periodic Review and its cycles to highlight and follow the implementation of all aspects of life and of the right to life.

Presently, we make four types of UPR submissions:

- A systematic call for *the urgent and universal ratification of the Genocide Convention*.
- A systematic call for *the urgent and universal decriminalization of suicide*.
- On demand or if accurate, we do a comprehensive *country portrait*<sup>3</sup> staging all the domains of life where the People and the concerned States can and shall progress towards fulfilling life and the right to life, valuing and protecting life, avoiding all preventable accidents and injuries<sup>4</sup>.
- On demand or if accurate, we do a comprehensive *country portrait* staging all the domains of peace where the People and the concerned States can and shall progress towards fulfilling life in peace and the right to peace, valuing, progressing within and protecting peace, avoiding violence and armed conflict.

### **Life and peace constitutions**

We stand in our dignity and recall that all rights are equal, interlinked, indivisible and mutually reinforcing and that all rights are needed to lead all lives into well-being and happiness, in a peaceful, sustained and sustainable manner.

The right to life stands as the forward of all human rights. If life is cancelled, all rights are canceled. The right to peace fully surrounds life: without peace, all human rights remain yet they lack the space needed to thrive and be achieved in their common universality. If peace is missing, human rights are always violated.

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## Universal Periodic Review of Costa Rica

*We wish a happy and constructive UPR to the people and to the country of Costa Rica.*

### Summary

This is our second submission for Costa Rica<sup>5</sup>.

Costa Rica has ratified 9 of the 10 basic human Rights Treaties<sup>6</sup> and all the major international humanitarian law and disarmament treaties, a major achievement.

### The right to life

#### Birth registration and statelessness

Everyone has a right to be recognized by the law and has the right to a nationality.

As it was during the previous cycle, the data for Costa Rica on birth registration is still missing in the UNICEF database<sup>7</sup>. Birth registration for all is sustainable goal 16.9.

**I. Henceforth, we encourage the Government of Costa Rica to urgently publish relevant information on birth registration, including in view of guaranteeing a nationality to all.**

Homicides rates are, sadly, increasing in Costa Rica since the last UPR from 11.9/100,000 persons to 17.6/100,000, a huge increase. Every life counts. 915 persons lost their lives in 2023 in the Country<sup>8</sup>. Much more must be done to value life, social cohesion and basic needs, to limit organized crime and small arm's flow. Considering other peace and human rights achievements of Costa Rica, it would be advisable for the country to consider the possibility of becoming a *killings-free* country.

**II. We encourage the people and the authorities of Costa Rica to show greater respect for life, to adopt more solid prevention measures and to persist in achieving progress on SDG 16.1, to report on such efforts for the UPR and for the forthcoming SDG VNR reports<sup>9</sup>.**

Traffic casualties' rates are rising as well in Costa Rica.

We recall that SDG target 3.6 if to halve traffic casualties by 2020.

**III. We encourage the people and the authorities of Costa Rica to show greater respect for life on traffic issues, to adopt more prevention measures and to regularly report on SDG 3.6 in the UPR and VNR reports<sup>10</sup>.**

Suicide rates are slightly increasing in Costa Rica while diminishing in the world (8.1/100,000 and 9.2/100,000). However, there is huge gender imbalance as rate for males is 14.1, increasing while only 2.0 for females, decreasing<sup>11</sup>. There is need for everyone, inasmuch for boys and men to value and to see their lives valued better.

**IV. We encourage the people and the authorities of Costa Rica to do much more for suicide prevention and therein, to specifically address the problem of suicides by males.**

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## The right to peace

Dignity is present in all human rights. Life precedes them all and peace is always interlinking them all or needed to interlink them and to routinely fulfil them. Peace also interlinks, is needed to link the individual person with all social and political groups and institutions, reciprocally to link institutions and all social groups, among themselves as with individuals.

Costa Rica is one of the 26 countries in the world that has achieved total disarmament<sup>12</sup>, they have no armed forces and reached a state of non-militarisation. Noteworthy, Costa Rica has ratified all the disarmament or arms control conventions and treaties listed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as part of international humanitarian law, including the Nuclear weapons ban treaty<sup>13</sup>. It has also accepted the reciprocal jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice as a peace-making mechanism and the amendment on the Crime of Aggression of the Rome Statute.

As improvements come from foreseeing, prospective and evaluation, we still recommend to the State of Costa Rica:

**V. To regularly report on the progress of peace, ideally both in the UPR and in the SDG VNR reports.**

**VI. To create at the United Nations a group of link-minded countries about non-militarization, disarmament and the achievement of peace.**

To enhance human rights, peace and well-being within the country, we encourage the Authorities and the peace ministry of Costa Rica to:

**VII. Guarantee education for peace and non-violence at all levels of the school system, as promoted by SDG 4.7 and to educate to human rights as advocated by numerous UN resolutions, action plans and Costa Rica's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights pledge.**

To increase participation:

**VIII. Increase direct participation rights such as referendums, public consultations and initiative rights, as examples by lifting the various limitations to these possibilities (the limitation to one referendum a year present in article 102 of the Costa Rican Constitution) or by allowing the people of Costa Rica to directly and ideally always vote changes to the constitution<sup>14</sup>.**

To settle local and broader conflicts peacefully:

**IX. To keep forwarding peaceful settlement of disputes within the country as described in its 2020 VNR, as it is internationally by upholding and making mediation procedures easily available to all individuals and social groups.**

X. If not yet done, adopt a youth violence prevention plan as advocated for by the World Health Organisation<sup>15</sup>.

XI. If not yet so, criminalize war and violence propaganda as prescribed by article 20 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

XII. To train the police and all law enforcement forces in non-violent techniques to avoid or strictly limit any use of force and to set up a totally independent mechanism to control any use force, including non-violent force. To equip law enforcement forces with non-lethal weapons.

XIII. To set up a special peace fund, within the tax system, to allow individuals and corporations to dedicate funds, a legitimate part of their taxation, directly and exclusively to the uncompromised with any form of violence or force promotion, enhancement and establishment of peace, locally and worldwide, achievement of peace as required by the preamble, the principles and the aims of the United Nations Charter.

*Calling on each and every one to create a peaceful and nonkilling world.*

*A world where life can be lived happily,*

*A life which can be universally and infinitely sustained on Earth,*

*We welcome the delegations of Costa Rica to Geneva,*

*A City of Peace.*

*We wish to all the people of Costa Rica,*

*And to their Authorities*

*A successful Universal Periodic Review,*

*A rewarding, constructive and fulfilling life.*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://nonkilling.org/center/publications-media/books-translations>

<sup>2</sup> <http://nonkilling.org/center/how-to-help>

<sup>3</sup> All our UPR submissions are or will be available here: <https://nonkilling.org/center/nonkilling-monitoring-programs/nonkilling-activity-at-the-un>

<sup>4</sup> Shall you wish to see done such a scan of your own country's status of life and the right to life or done for any other country, please contact our office, the author of this submission, or our UN team.

<sup>5</sup> Our previous submission is here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/uprbn-stakeholders-info-s33>

<sup>6</sup> We include the genocide convention and the and the International Convention of the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant workers and members of their Families is not ratified.

<sup>7</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/country/cr/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/2023/Global\\_study\\_on\\_homicide\\_2023\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/2023/Global_study_on_homicide_2023_web.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/costarica>

<sup>10</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/costarica>

<sup>11</sup> <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/16BBF41>

<sup>12</sup> Christophe Barbey, « *Non militarization: countries without armies. Identification criteria and first findings*». APRED and Åland Islands Peace Institute Working papers series. Octobre 2015, online version. March 2016, paper version.

<sup>13</sup> <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Costa\\_Rica\\_2011.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Costa_Rica_2011.pdf?lang=en)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/status\\_report/2014/report/report/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/report/report/en/), page 73, 232.