

Stakeholder Submission to UHR review

Submitted by UNA-USA, Santa Barbara & Tri-Counties

This document was created after a community meeting with Joshua Cooper, UPR Task Force Co-Chair, on March 22, 2025, in Santa Barbara, led and supported by our local UNA-USA Chapter, Santa Barbara, and Tri-Counties, California. Our website is www.unasb.org. We listened to the explanation of the UPR aims and our responsibility to share information with the countries reviewing the United States. After the talk, we broke into smaller focus groups, with each group taking an area of concern. As incoming president, I collated the reports from each group and wrote this report.

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Issues:

The issue that we decided to focus on was security in every area. The areas discussed were economic, social, and cultural justice, corruption in civil and political rights, environmental rights, immigrant and refugee rights, and women's rights.

People in the United States are living in a state of precarity. They are concerned about losing their jobs and their ability to earn enough money to afford adequate housing, food, health care, and quality education, including people with disabilities. Immigrants fear not having the accurate documents or illegal actions being taken by the Federal Government, even if they have the correct documents. Santa Barbara has a high number of immigrants from South and Central America.

They are afraid of losing their jobs or being taken from their homes. Transgender individuals are facing new gender markers on their documents (from passports to driver's licenses and bank accounts) that don't agree with their identities. Women fear that they won't have control over their bodies and they won't have equal rights. We are all concerned about the care of our environment and sustainability. Chemicals, pesticides, radiofrequency radiation, heavy metals, and plastics are degrading the environment. There are more cancers, asthma, and birth defects. We are losing our biodiversity. Our climate is changing, and we want to protect our environment in Santa Barbara.

Many indigenous people live on reservations that are not near stores or health centers. They are not able to access healthy food or healthcare. People with disabilities need support with housing, healthcare, and the social benefits of a satisfying life. Meanwhile, there is a concern about corruption's impact on governance and the steps needed to actualize the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Questions:

Will the government acknowledge and try to guarantee that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family including housing, food, clothing, medical care, the necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age, or other lack of livelihood?

Will you put before Congress and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) this year? Will you promote this treaty and put it into practice by 2026?

We are the only nation that has not passed the Rights Of The Child. Will you put before Congress and ratify The Declaration Of The Rights Of The Child (CRC) by the end of this year? Article 25 (section 2) guarantees that motherhood and childhood

are entitled to special assistance, and all children shall enjoy the same protection. Article 26 states that everyone has the right to free education in the elementary and fundamental stages. Will you guarantee the right to healthy food, adequate housing, healthcare, and preschool education for mothers and children?

Can the government guarantee that everyone has the right to seek asylum from persecution in the U.S.? (Article 14) Will you guarantee that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention? (Article 9). Will you provide the right to a fair trial, equality before the law, and freedom of movement? Will you guarantee that no one will be subjected to torture, cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 5) and that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, or attacks upon his honor and reputation? (Article 12). Can you guarantee that everyone has the right to a nationality and that birthright nationality is a promise of that?

How will you protect people with disabilities, older people who have worked all their lives, and the homeless who are struggling to survive? How will you protect our immigrant population, including people with green cards, students with all of the necessary documents, and citizens? These people work on our farms, in our hospitals and nursing homes, in our restaurants, and for many landscape companies.

How can you support citizens and communities in stopping corporations from polluting and harming our environment? How can we clean up the pollution of our air, water, and land? How can we stop the weather modification programs that are operating under the radar? How can you support communities after disasters and help them get back on their feet?

Corruption is a fundamental human rights issue, and human rights defenders are often attacked for exposing abuse of power. How will the government track, monitor, and report anti-corruption actions? How can the government expose,

eliminate, and discourage corruption in the United States? How can the government elevate legal ethics? How can the government support civics education to help value honesty, transparency, and accountability? How can you ensure continued promotion, implementation, and advancement of our existing multilateral anti-corruption structure in the United States and internationally? What will efficiency look like in departments that maintain anti-corruption accountability?

Will you establish an independent Human Rights Institution following the Paris Principles?

Will you safeguard and honor the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) founded in 1984, and guarantee that they have funding and respect to study and find peaceful resolutions to conflict around the world? Will the United States help protect peace in our country and the world?

Will you protect our journalists and public news and education stations? Will you safeguard our social media and protect the people of the United States from hate speech, violent sexual speech, and name-calling to prevent discrimination and hate crimes? Will you protect our journalists' freedom to write the truth and express themselves without name-calling or threats?

Recommendations:

Focusing on the issue of precarity or lack of predictability and insecurity, our recommendation is to use the extra food from farms, stores, and restaurants to supply lower-income families, families with children, and the elderly with the healthy food needed to thrive. Establish a cash transfer program to support the basic needs of citizens below the poverty line. Help provide housing at a percentage of a person's income that is affordable for them. Protect Social Security for older people when they retire or are disabled. Provide health care for all, as many other countries do. Support a strong Department of Education. Reduce the

size and amount of money spent on the military and invest the money in the Department of Peace and the Department of Education.

Respect and provide Native Americans with adequate housing, healthy food, clean water, medical care, and the right to decide what passes through their tribal land. Allow them to protect the rivers and lakes from pollution.

Protect women's rights over their bodies. Support, put before Congress, and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Protect our children by ratifying The Rights Of The Child (CRC).

Protect and respect the rights of all people, including transgender and gay individuals. Protect immigrants and refugees, including minors, by allowing access to representation in the court and freedom to find shelter, food, and healthcare while waiting for their cases to go through court. Guarantee that no one will be subjected to arbitrary arrest, deportation, or detention without a fair trial.

Protect freedom of thought and speech at school, in the community, and at protests. Protect the journalists and public radio and television. Protect the freedom of the press and the right to speak up without derogatory language on social media.

Recognize that our climate and environment are changing. Due to the degradation of the environment, many plant and animal species are endangered or going extinct. People are getting more cancers, asthma, and birth defects. Everyone needs support, plants, animals, and people alike. Support life by stopping this degradation of the environment caused by chemicals, pesticides, radiofrequency radiation, heavy metals, and plastic. Reign in the big corporations and stop them from polluting and harming the environment and people's health. Clean up the pollution of air, land, and water. Require new studies of pollutants that cause cancer, asthma, and lung disease.

To discourage and eliminate corruption, define strong guardrails characterized by transparency and accountability. Guarantee that sound, relevant, qualified personnel are hired at all levels of government and are dedicated to following the law. Incentivize all governmental departments to seek out savings rather than spending their annual budget. Encourage and protect people who witness corruption and are willing to record details of abuse observed. Expand and support civics education in schools to help the public sector to value honesty, transparency, and accountability. Elevate legal ethics in the court with lawyers. Make every effort to advance the principles of transparency, accountability, and citizen involvement to help prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. Improve how the government shares information and engages with the public. Work on international cooperation and partnership so we don't lose our friends and gain new allies.