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## **UN Human Rights Council appoints Dr Nazila Ghanea as UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief**

HRWF (12.07.2022) - The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has appointed Dr Nazila Ghanea as the new Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (FoRB).

Dr Ghanea, confirmed by the Council on 8th July, is a professor of international human rights law and director of international human rights programmes at the University of Oxford. She will take over the mandate from Dr Ahmed Shaheed, who served as rapporteur from 2016-2022.

The Special Rapporteur on FoRB is an independent expert appointed by the UNHRC and tasked with identifying "existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and [presenting] recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles."

The position was established by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1986 under the title of 'Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance', which was subsequently changed to 'Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief' in 2000.

Human Rights Without Frontiers congratulates Dr Ghanea for her well-deserved appointment and looks forward to working closely with her.

### **Biography**

Dr Nazila Ghanea is Professor in International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford.

She serves as Associate Director of the Oxford Human Rights Hub and is a Fellow of Kellogg College (BA Keele, MA Leeds, PhD Keele, MA Oxon).

She serves as a member of the OSCE Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief and on the Board of Trustees of the independent think tank, the Universal Rights Group.

She has been a visiting academic at a number of institutions including Columbia and NYU, and previously taught at the University of London and Keele University, UK and in China.

Nazila's research spans freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, women's rights, minority rights and human rights in the Middle East.

Her publications include nine books, five UN publications as well as a number of journal articles and reports.

Her research has been funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Board, the UK Economic and Social Research Council, Open Society and the QNRF.

She has been invited to address UN expert seminars on seven occasions. From 2012-2014 she is co-leading a research team to look at the Domestic Impact of UN Treaty Ratification in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

From 2010-2013 she was part of a research team investigating 'Religion and Belief, Discrimination and Equality in England and Wales: Theory, Policy and Practice' (2010-2013). She has also received a number of university scholarships and academic awards. Nazila has acted as a human rights consultant/expert for a number of governments, the UN, UNESCO, OSCE, Commonwealth, Council of Europe and the EU.

She has facilitated international human rights law training for a range of professional bodies around the world, lectured widely and carried out first hand human rights field research in a number of countries including Malaysia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

She is a regular contributor to the media on human rights matters.

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