

Human Rights Council and Special Procedures Division

Background

The Human Rights Council and Special Procedures Division (HRCSPD) is the OHCHR Division with a core mandate to support the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary mechanisms. HRCSPD is headed by a Director who reports to the High Commissioner through the Deputy High Commissioner. Since 1 January 2014, the Division, which previously consisted of two Branches, the Human Rights Council Branch (HRCB) and the Special Procedures Branch (SPB), also hosts the Universal Periodic Review Branch.

The Division provides substantive support and advice to the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review, and the special procedures. It also supports the Voluntary Fund for Participation in the Universal Periodic Review and the Voluntary Trust Fund for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in engaging with the Council.

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is an intergovernmental body comprising 47 Member

States, elected by the General Assembly for a three-year period that is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. It was established by and is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. During the reporting period, the Human Rights Council continued to address various urgent and chronic human rights situations. It further extended the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and, following an urgent debate, requested in resolution 23/1 that the Commission of Inquiry urgently inquire into the events in Al Qusayr. The Council also established a CoI on the DPRK to investigate the systematic, widespread and grave human rights violations committed in the country.

In addition to the regular annual panel discussions in 2013, the Council held panel discussions on the impact of corruption, the contribution of parliaments to the work of the Council and its UPR mechanism, business and human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the human rights of children of parents sentenced to the death penalty or executed and the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.



Podium of the 22nd session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, February 2013.



The President of the Human Rights Council during its 23rd session, June 2013.

The HRC's special procedures are mandates given to independent experts requesting them to address thematic human rights issues or human rights situations in specific countries. Mandate-holders engage with States, civil society organizations or other relevant actors with a view to examining, publicly reporting and making recommendations in relation to the issues falling under their mandates. Special procedures conduct country visits; send communications to States, and sometimes other actors, about human rights issues and individual cases; undertake awareness-raising activities; contribute to the development of human rights standards; undertake thematic studies and provide advisory services. All mandate-holders submit reports to the HRC and, when mandated, to the General Assembly on questions relating to their mandate and their activities. In 2013, the Human Rights Council established one thematic and two country mandates: on the situation of human rights in Central African Republic and in Mali and on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. As of the end of 2013, there were 51 special procedures (37 thematic mandates and 14 mandates relating to countries or territories) with 73 mandate-holders. In addition, 108 States had issued standing invitations for special procedures to undertake visits (increased from 92 a year earlier). During 2013, special procedures conducted 79 country visits to 66 States and were accompanied and supported by OHCHR staff. They also sent 528 communications to 117 States in which they described allegations of human rights violations or general concerns relating to laws and policies and urged relevant State authorities to take steps to investigate them and, where they proved to

be well-founded, provide redress. Special procedures submitted 168 reports to the Human Rights Council and 36 to the General Assembly. They also issued 379 news releases and public statements in 2013.

Results

The following results were achieved following key interventions undertaken by the HRC and its mechanisms, with the support of OHCHR.

National laws, policies and institutions (EA 1)

- ▶ With the support of OHCHR, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples provided comments to the Government of Chile's draft protocol on consultation with indigenous peoples. A significant component of the observations of the Special Rapporteur was incorporated into a new draft of the protocol, which is expected to be adopted in 2014. The Special Rapporteur provided comments on the Government of Mexico's protocol for people in the justice sector working on cases involving indigenous peoples, which includes information on how to address issues of indigenous customary law. The Rapporteur's comments were reflected in the final draft of the protocol, which was adopted in 2013.
- ▶ Following the 2012 visit of the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice to the Republic of Moldova and a joint communication issued in 2013, the Parliament withdrew proposed discriminatory amendments to national legislation. The amendments had established sanctions for "the public dissemination of information or any actions meant to promote prostitution, paedophilia, pornography or any other relations besides the family and the wedlock relationships, in line with the Moldovan Constitution and the Family Code." The Parliament decided that the phrase "any other relations besides the family and the wedlock relationships, in line with the Moldovan Constitution and the Family Code" had to be removed.

State engagement with human rights mechanisms (EA 6)

- ▶ OHCHR contributed to improving the follow-up to country visits by Special Rapporteurs and their recommendations resulted in concrete and positive changes at the field level. For instance, in line with a specific recommendation of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, following his country visit in 2010, the Albanian Parliament amended the Constitution and enabled

investigations and prosecutions of high-level officials and judges without prior authorization.

- ▶ In November 2013, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food provided advice to the Government of Mexico relating to the possible establishment of new institutional mechanisms related to inter-sectoral coordination and social participation. He also met with members of the Parliament deliberating on a new right to food framework law, in follow-up to the entrenchment of the right to food in the Constitution which took place after his 2011 mission to Mexico.
- ▶ During her visit to Togo in October 2013, the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders noted that the situation of defenders had improved since her 2008 visit and that the overall environment was more enabling, including for women defenders, who benefited from the amended Family Code and certain changes in how authorities perceived their roles.
- ▶ In Thailand, following the 2011 visit undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, during which she highlighted the country's commitment to and progress in combating trafficking in persons and made a number of recommendations, the Government of Thailand enacted the Anti-Transnational Organized Crime Act in 2013. This enabled the Government to: ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; make progress in terms of the establishment of data collection on trafficking in persons; and establish a national hotline to better assist victims of human trafficking.
- ▶ Follow-up to communications was enhanced through the improved dissemination of reports and opinions. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention established a publicly accessible database which includes over 800 opinions that have been adopted by the Working Group since 1992. These opinions have been referred to by regional and national courts, including the European Court of Human Rights in *El Masri v. the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, and in the case of Hugo Sánchez Ramírez, who was ordered to be released by the Mexican Supreme Court in October 2012.
- ▶ The second cycle of the UPR continued in 2013 with the full participation of all 42 States scheduled for consideration during the year, including small island States, namely the Bahamas, Barbados, Tonga and Tuvalu. States under review continued to send high-level representatives and the national reports prepared

for the second cycle increasingly included references to previous cycle recommendations and reported on implementation measures. Likewise, recommending States tended to refer to the recommendations made in the first cycle when asking questions and making new recommendations. Increasingly, countries submitted mid-term reports on the measures taken to implement the recommendations received during the first cycle. To date, 38 countries have submitted such reports.

A two-day interregional seminar to facilitate the participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the HRC and its UPR was held in Mauritius from 30-31 July 2013. Twenty-three delegates representing 14 countries, as well as 15 representatives from Mauritius, participated in the event. The seminar was the first of its kind in that its primary aim was to improve the engagement with and inclusion in the Human Rights Council and the UPR mechanism of LDCs and SIDS. The success of the seminar gave way to genuine suggestions by delegations to establish a more stable training facility for LDCs and SIDS.

Civil society engagement with human rights mechanisms (EA 7)

- ▶ A Practical Guide for Civil Society was made available on the OHCHR website and during sessions of the UPR Working Group to clarify processes and procedures and support rights-holders in accessing the UN human rights mechanisms.
- ▶ A new electronic inscription system for the list of speakers was introduced which greatly improved the accessibility of information for NGO participation in the UPR, including for those not based in Geneva. In addition, during the Council sessions in 2013, both NHRIs and NGOs were able to intervene by video message during the adoption of UPR outcomes, enhancing the participation of national civil society actors and thereby fulfilling one of the recommendations of the report of the Task Force on secretariat services, accessibility for persons with disabilities and use of information technology, which was adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 19th session (A/HRC/DEC/19/119). In 2013, 12 'A' status accredited NHRIs took part in the adoption of UPR outcomes in the Council plenary, immediately following the States under review (three of which were through video messages).
- ▶ In addition to the annual panel on the rights of persons with disabilities, one panel of the Human

Rights Council per session was made accessible to persons with disabilities. Through the same efforts, international sign interpretation, captioning and webcasting were provided and easy-to-read versions of selected basic material about the Council and panel summaries were made accessible. Finally, an accessibility guide to the Human Rights Council was prepared to help enable the participation of persons with disabilities in the work of the Council on an equal basis with others.

- ▶ With the support of OHCHR, the Special Rapporteur on the human right to water and sanitation developed a handbook for realizing the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. The handbook provides practical guidance for stakeholders when developing laws, policies and budgets and will indicate how governments can be held to account for their actions (or inactions) in ensuring universal access to water and sanitation.
- ▶ The Human Rights Council, including its President, and OHCHR continued with awareness-raising and advocacy efforts relating to reprisals. The report of the panel discussion on intimidation and reprisals, submitted to the Council at its 22nd session (2012), sparked further discussions on concrete measures to improve the protection of persons who cooperate with the UN and related human rights mechanisms.

International and regional laws and institutions (EA 8)

- ▶ Numerous mechanisms made important contributions to further developing international human rights law with the substantive support of OHCHR. The Advisory Committee, with its report on the issue of hostage taking by terrorist groups, shed light on the definition of terrorist hostage taking, its nature, scope and dimensions as well as its impact on human rights. It recommended that States engage in an open discussion on how

to tackle the challenging issue of addressing the legality of payment of ransom to terrorist hostage takers. In another example, following a consultation process, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food presented the Guiding Principles on Human Rights Impact Assessments of Trade and Investment Agreements to the Human Rights Council in March 2012, which have served as a reference for the UN human rights system in discussions with Member States and informed a range of case studies undertaken by NGOs and independent research institutions. Furthermore, following exchanges with the Special Rapporteur, the Council of the European Union, adopted the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy in June 2012, which commits the European Commission to "insert human rights in impact assessment, as and when it is carried out for legislative and non-legislative proposals, implementing measures and trade agreements that have significant economic, social and environmental impacts, or define future policies" (EU doc. 11855/12, Annex III).

- ▶ The 2013 report to the Human Rights Council of the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression dealt with the impact of surveillance of communications. He called for more attention to be taken to the widespread use of surveillance technologies by States within and outside national boundaries and indicated that national laws regulating State involvement in communications surveillance are often inadequate or simply do not exist. The report received particular attention as it was presented to the Human Rights Council only days before revelations on mass surveillance initiatives. The 68th session of the General Assembly welcomed the report and included some of its recommendations in a resolution on the right to privacy in the digital age.



Members of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria briefing the media, June 2013.



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples meeting with indigenous communities in Panama, July 2013.

Coherence among human rights mechanisms (EA 9)

- ▶ The coherence among HRMs was strengthened in terms of improved coordination between special procedures and increased visibility of the system. OHCHR supported several joint initiatives between mandate-holders advocating for the integration of human rights in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and calling for the elimination of inequalities, the provision of social protection floors and the establishment of a double accountability mechanism to hold countries accountable for their commitments at both national and international levels.
- ▶ On 29 May 2013, the Chair of the Coordinating Committee made a statement during the Human Rights Council debate on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic and the killings in Al Qusayr. This was the first time that special procedures addressed an urgent debate of the Human Rights Council, thereby reinforcing their interaction with the Council.
- ▶ During the 20th annual meeting of special procedures in June 2013, mandate-holders discussed the implementation of the roadmap between the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), which was agreed upon in January 2012 in Addis Ababa. Collaboration between the two systems significantly increased, with a delegation of the Council's special procedures attending the 54th session of the ACHPR. Moreover, the ACHPR Working Group on the death penalty and extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killings in Africa and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions met for the first time in July 2013.

- ▶ The Special Rapporteur on torture was the first mandate-holder on this issue to address the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which endorsed his work on the use of solitary confinement that had been submitted to the Commission in March 2013, as well as his recommendations on the Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners submitted to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in September 2013. A 2013 resolution of the Organization of American States on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression and the Council of Europe's Rapporteur on Forced and Coerced Sterilizations and Castration referred to the Special Rapporteur's report on abuse and violence in healthcare settings.
- ▶ The Special Rapporteurs on the right to food and on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and a member of the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice participated in CEDAW's general discussion on rural women on 7 October 2013, contributing to the preparation of a general recommendation on the issue.

Responsiveness of the international community (EA 10)

- ▶ In 2013, the Council remained attentive to critical human rights situations worldwide. The Syrian Arab Republic was high on the Council's agenda with an urgent debate held in June 2013, and the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry was extended until March 2014. The Council mandated a CoI on the DPRK by consensus during its March 2013 session. In addition, Independent Experts on Central African Republic and Mali were established during the year. Furthermore, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements reported to the Council on its findings.
- ▶ In 2013, the Central African Republic and Somalia requested that the Council address the ongoing and deteriorating human rights situation in their countries - the first time that such requests were put forward. In response, the Council held two high-level interactive dialogues which were attended by dignitaries from each State and elicited pledges of support from many States and civil society actors. As a result, OHCHR worked closely with the Office of the Prime Minister of Somalia, the international community and the African Union Mission in Somalia to step up efforts to finalize the drafting of the Human Rights Roadmap for Somalia.

- ▶ In 2013, the Council held 15 panel discussions on subjects ranging from the rights of indigenous peoples, the rights of the child, gender integration in the work of the Council, human rights and democracy, human rights and corruption and the rights of persons with disabilities. These panel discussions, supported by OHCHR, provided an opportunity for the international community to focus on new and emerging thematic human rights issues and increasing awareness about these issues from a human rights perspective.
- ▶ The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions collaborated on the issue of armed drones. Their annual reports, presented to the General Assembly in October 2013, assessed the impact of the use of armed drones and formulated recommendations from the perspective of their individual mandates. The presentation of the reports was followed by a number of events, including a joint side event on Drones and the Law, organized by OHCHR. In addition, the resolution on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, adopted by the Third Committee on 26 November 2013, took note of the Special Rapporteur's report on the use of drones and referred to the recommendations contained in the report.
- ▶ The activities of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) prompted the General Assembly to request the mandate-holder to submit a report within 90 days on the situation of IDPs in Syria and provide recommendations to meet the protection needs and strengthen the effectiveness of the international response to displacement, as indicated in its resolution A/RES/67/262. The report provided an overview of the humanitarian, protection and human rights situation of IDPs in Syria, an analysis of challenges in meeting the urgent needs of affected communities and a set of initial recommendations, including considerations to guide durable solutions to internal displacement.
- ▶ Following reports on the safety of journalists from the Special Rapporteur on summary executions and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which were prepared with OHCHR's support, the protection of journalists continued to be a focus of the international community in 2013. The Human Rights Council adopted Decision 24/116 regarding a panel discussion on the safety of journalists, which referred to the



The Chair of the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances briefs journalists at a press conference with the Chair of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

Special Rapporteurs' reports in the preamble of this Decision and on 18 December 2013, at its 68th session, the General Assembly adopted its first resolution on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

- ▶ Following his visit to Japan, the Special Rapporteur on the right to health presented a report on the realization of the right to health in the context of emergency response, recovery and mitigation following the nuclear accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant to the Human Rights Council in June 2013. The report was the first human rights assessment of the impact of the nuclear accident on the enjoyment of the right to health of persons and communities affected by the disaster. After the presentation of the report, numerous public events were organized by civil society on the subject, including on the margins of the Human Rights Council and General Assembly sessions. In addition, in November 2013, the Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation expressed interest in a dialogue with the Human Rights Council on the nuclear accident's impact on health in Japan.

Human rights mainstreaming within the United Nations (EA 11)

- ▶ In relation to the post-2015 development agenda, the Special Rapporteur on the right to water and sanitation, supported by OHCHR, developed concrete proposals for goals, targets and indicators to monitor the achievements on water and sanitation and the progressive elimination of inequalities under the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme.

Special procedures in figures in 2013

79 country visits carried out by special procedures mandate-holders to **66** countries.

528 communications sent to **117** different countries and territories. **84** per cent of these were issued jointly by two or more mandate-holders.

At the end of 2013, the response rate by States to special procedures' communications remained low at approximately **45** per cent but slightly improved compared to 2012 (40 per cent).

168 reports submitted by mandate-holders to the Human Rights Council and **36** to the General Assembly.

108 standing invitations issued by Member States, (compared to 92 at the end of 2012).

Global Management Outputs

Integrating a gender perspective (GMO 3)

- ▶ In 2013, the Human Rights Council held its annual discussion on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system, with a focus on civil society's contribution to the integration of a gender perspective throughout the work of the Council and some of its mechanisms, including the special procedures and the UPR. In order to enhance the equal participation of women in the Human Rights Council, OHCHR continued to compile a statistical report, including the number and percentage of women delegates who attended sessions of the Council, the number and percentage of women delegates who took the floor and the percentages of women and men participating as experts on panels. While there was little progress made in the number of women delegates who took the floor in the Human Rights Council, a visible improvement was noticed in relation to the percentage of women and men participating as experts on panels where parity was almost always observed.
- ▶ Sessions on gender mainstreaming are routinely included in induction sessions for new mandate-holders and in training activities for new staff supporting the special procedures.

Servicing human rights mechanisms (GMO 4)

- ▶ OHCHR continued to provide support to the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures to strengthen the coherence of the special

procedures system. The 20th annual meeting of special procedures was held in June 2013 in Vienna in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Exchanges with other stakeholders were held in the context of this meeting, including with UNODC, regional organizations, NHRIs and civil society. The discussions focused on coordination among mandate-holders, including the role of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures and a number of issues relating to working methods.

- ▶ In terms of information tools, OHCHR updated the Directory of Special Procedures Mandate-Holders twice in 2013 and continued to produce weekly updates for mandate-holders to ensure coordination and knowledge-sharing. The Office improved and regularly updated the website and OHCHR continued to support the production of the joint communication reports, which have been issued since 2011. OHCHR also pursued its work to create an internal database to record information on country visits to make updated information available to users. In addition, press releases, web-based stories relating to country visits, thematic issues, country situations and individual cases of human rights violations were issued with the support of OHCHR.
- ▶ A prospective planning calendar with all activities of the Human Rights Council, including the UPR, special procedures and treaty bodies, is regularly updated by OHCHR to ensure coordination between the different mechanisms.
- ▶ The Human Rights Council's social media presence continues to grow rapidly as evidenced by a significant increase in "likes" on Facebook (from 4,400 at the end of 2012 to nearly 15,000 at the end of 2013) and the number of followers on Twitter (from 6,000 at the end of 2012 to nearly 15,000 at the end of 2013). The Council's Secretariat provides regular updates about the



The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief with participants of the first interreligious roundtable in Nicosia, September 2013.

Council's activities via SMS alerts which has proven to increase operating efficiency at the Council meetings. A new YouTube channel with video clips of Council proceedings and a tablet application that enables users to access key information on sessions of the Council were launched. The extranet continues to enable users to locate practical information about past, current and future Council sessions and access key documentation. Finally, both the Human Rights Council and UPR webpages provide links to the webcast page.

Supporting field operations (GMO 5)

- ▶ In 2013, the Human Rights Council Branch enhanced its cooperation with field operations by consulting and coordinating with the OHCHR Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division on urgent debates and interactive dialogues for three different commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions and 12 different country mandates during the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council.
- ▶ The Special Procedures Branch continued to work closely with field presences in terms of verifying information relating to allegations as well as in terms of country visits. Regarding the latter, cooperation with field presences started at the planning stage of country visits and continued during the follow-up to mandate-holders' recommendations. In several cases, special procedures reports were used by field presences for awareness-raising and advocacy purposes. For instance, the report on the visit of the Working Group on discrimination against women to the Republic of Moldova in May 2012 has been used as an advocacy tool by the Human Rights Adviser and was an important reference in domestic law reform efforts. Similarly, the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of assembly and of association regarding the ability of associations to access financial resources was used by OHCHR to analyze the compliance of draft legislation with international human rights norms and standards in a number of countries, including in Indonesia, Myanmar and the Russian Federation.

Human Rights Council – Outcomes of sessions held in 2013

22nd Session (25 February – 22 March 2013)

The Council adopted resolutions, decisions and President's Statements on:

- Promoting reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka;
- Composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- Human Rights in a number of thematic areas, including the work and employment of persons with disabilities, rights of the child, right to food, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protests, birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law, combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief, protecting human rights defenders, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: rehabilitation of torture victims, question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights, rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, education as a tool to prevent racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and freedom of religion or belief;
- Panel on the human rights of children of parents sentenced to the death penalty or executed;
- The negative impact of the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin to the countries of origin on the enjoyment of human rights, and the importance of improving international cooperation;
- Contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review;
- The situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, the occupied Syrian Golan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the Syrian Arab Republic, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;
- Assistance to Haiti, Libya, Republic of Mali in the field of human rights;
- Follow-up to the report of the United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict;
- Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan;
- Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination;
- Follow-up to the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;
- Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;
- Promotion and protection of human rights in post-disaster and post-conflict situations;
- Prevention of genocide;
- Open-ended intergovernmental working group to consider the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security;
- Human Rights Council webcast;
- Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights;
- High-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty;
- Mainstreaming human rights throughout the United Nations system;
- Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review: Argentina, Benin, Czech Republic, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Japan, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Ukraine and Zambia.

23rd Session (27 May – 14 June 2013)

The Council adopted resolutions, decision and President's Statements on:

- National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights;
- Human rights and international solidarity;
- Attacks and discrimination against persons with albinism;
- National policies and human rights;
- Economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to education, the negative impact of corruption on the enjoyment of human rights, promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for cultural diversity, the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights and access to medicines in the context of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;

- Human rights in a number of thematic areas, including the role of freedom of opinion and expression in women's empowerment, elimination of discrimination against women, accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: preventing and responding to rape and other forms of sexual violence, promotion of the right to peace, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, jurors and assessors, and the independence of lawyers, human rights of migrants and trafficking in persons, especially women and children: efforts to combat human trafficking in supply chains of businesses;
- Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons;
- The deteriorating situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic, the recent killings in Al-Qusayr and the deterioration of the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic and the need to grant immediate access to the Commission of Inquiry;
- Situation of human rights in Belarus and Eritrea;
- Assistance to the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Somalia and South Sudan in the field of human rights;
- Situation of human rights in Myanmar as regards Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State and other Muslims;
- Outcomes of the UPR of Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Burundi, France, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mali, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tonga and United Arab Emirates.

24th Session 9-27 September 2013

The Council adopted resolutions, decision and President's Statements on:

- World Programme for Human Rights Education;
- Economic, social and cultural rights, including the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;
- Human rights in a number of thematic areas, including arbitrary detention, the right to development, the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, the human rights of older persons and human rights and indigenous peoples, equal political participation, local government and human rights, preventable mortality and morbidity of children under five years of age as a human rights concern, human rights in the administration of justice, including juvenile justice, human rights and unilateral coercive measures, conscientious objection to military service, strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage: challenges, achievements, best practices and implementation gaps, the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination and impact of arms transfers on human rights in armed conflict;
- Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal;
- Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences;
- The Social Forum;
- The role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Civil society space: creating and maintaining, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment;
- Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights;
- From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- The continuing grave deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic;
- Assistance to Cambodia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen in the field of human rights;
- Enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights;
- Technical cooperation for the prevention of attacks against persons with albinism;
- Postponement of renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context;
- Panel discussion on the safety of journalists;
- High-level panel on the identification of good practices in combating female genital mutilation;
- Establishment of a special fund for the participation of civil society in the Social Forum, the Forum on Minority Issues and the Forum on Business and Human Rights;
- Reports of the Advisory Committee;
- Outcomes of the UPR of Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Cuba, Djibouti, Germany, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu and Uzbekistan.

| Special Procedures Mandate-Holders 2013 | | |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Mandate | Established | Mandate-holder |
| Country mandates | | |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus | 2012 | Mr. Miklós Haraszti (Hungary) since October 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia | 1993 | Mr. Surya Prasad Subedi (Nepal) since May 2009 |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic | 2013 | Mandate-holder to be appointed at the “Special session on CAR” or the 25th session of the Human Rights Council in 2014. |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Côte d’Ivoire | 2011 | Mr. Doudou Diene (Senegal) since November 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea | 2012 | Ms. Sheila B. Keetharuth (Mauritius) since October 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea | 2004 | Mr. Marzuki Darusman (Indonesia) since August 2010 |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti | 1995 | Mr. Gustavo Gallón (Colombia) since May 2013 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran | 2011 | Mr. Ahmed Shaheed (Maldives) since August 2011 |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali | 2013 | Mr. Suliman Baldo (Sudan) since October 2013 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar | 1992 | Mr. Tomás Ojea Quintana (Argentina) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 | 1993 | Mr. Richard Falk (United States of America) since May 2008 |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia | 1993 | Mr. Shamsul Bari (Bangladesh) since May 2008 |
| Independent Expert on the situation on human rights in the Sudan | 2005 (SR) 2009 (IE) | Mr. Mashood Baderin (Nigeria) since October 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic | 2012 | Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro (Brazil) will start once the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry ends |
| Thematic mandates | | |
| Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context | 2000 | Ms. Raquel Rolnik (Brazil) since May 2008 |
| Working Group of experts on people of African descent | 2002 | Ms. Verene Shepherd (Jamaica), Chair-Rapporteur, since April 2010 Ms. Mirjana Najcevska (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), since November 2008 Ms. Monorama Biswas (Bangladesh) since November 2008 Ms. Mireille Fanon Mendes-France (France) since May 2011 Ms. Maya Sahli (Algeria) since August 2008 |
| Working Group on arbitrary detention | 1991 | Mr. El Hadji Malick Sow (Senegal), Chair-Rapporteur, since May 2008 Ms. Shaheen Sardar Ali (Pakistan), Vice-Chair, since August 2008 Mr. Vladimir Tochilovsky (Ukraine) since May 2010 Mr. Mads Andenas (Norway) since August 2009 Mr. Roberto Garretón (Chile) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography | 1990 | Ms. Najat Maalla M’jid (Morocco) since May 2008 |

| Mandate | Established | Mandate-holder |
|--|-------------|---|
| Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights | 2009 | Ms. Farida Shaheed (Pakistan) since November 2009 |
| Independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order | 2011 | Mr. Alfred de Zayas (USA) since May 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on the right to education | 1998 | Mr. Kishore Singh (India) since August 2010 |
| Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances | 1980 | Mr. Olivier de Frouville (France), Chair-Rapporteur, since November 2008 Mr. Jeremy Sarkin (South Africa), since May 2008 Mr. Ariel Dulitzky (Argentina/USA) since August 2010 Ms. Jasminka Dzumhur (Bosnia and Herzegovina) since May 2010 Mr. Osman El-Hajje (Lebanon) since August 2009 |
| Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment | 2012 | Mr. John Knox (USA) since August 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions | 1982 | Mr. Christof Heyns (South Africa) since August 2010 |
| Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights | 1998 | Ms. María Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona (Chile) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the right to food | 2000 | Mr. Olivier De Schutter (Belgium) since May 2008 |
| Independent Expert on foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights | 2000 | Mr. Cephas Lumina (Zambia) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association | 2010 | Mr. Maina Kiai (Kenya) since May 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression | 1993 | Mr. Frank William La Rue Lewy (Guatemala) since August 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief | 1986 | Mr. Heiner Bielefeldt (Germany) since August 2010 |
| Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health | 2002 | Mr. Anand Grover (India) since August 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders | 2000 | Ms. Margaret Sekaggya (Uganda) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers | 1994 | Ms. Gabriela Knaul (Brazil) since June 2009 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples | 2001 | Mr. James Anaya (United States of America) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons | 2004 | Mr. Chaloka Beyani (Zambia) since November 2010 |
| Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity | 2005 | Ms. Virginia Dandan (Philippines) since August 2011 |
| Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination | 2005 | Mr. Anton Katz (South Africa), Chair-Rapporteur, since August 2011 Ms. Faiza Patel (Pakistan) since August 2010 Ms. Patricia Arias (Chile) since August 2011 Ms. Elzbieta Karska (Poland) since August 2011 Mr. Gabor Rona (USA/Hungary) since August 2011 |

| Mandate | Established | Mandate-holder |
|---|-------------|--|
| Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants | 1999 | Mr. François Crépeau (Canada) since August 2011 |
| Independent Expert on minority issues | 2005 | Ms. Rita Izsak (Hungary) since August 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation & guarantees on non-recurrence | 2011 | Mr. Pablo De Greiff (Colombia) since May 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism , racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance | 1993 | Mr. Mutuma Ruteere (Kenya) since November 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery , including its causes and consequences | 2007 | Ms. Gulnara Shahinian (Armenia) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism | 2005 | Mr. Ben Emmerson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) since August 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment | 1985 | Mr. Juan Ernesto Méndez (Argentina) since November 2010 |
| Special Rapporteur on the human rights obligations related to environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes | 1995 | Mr. Marc Pallemerts (Belgium) since October 2012 |
| Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons , especially women and children | 2004 | Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo (Nigeria) since August 2008 |
| Working Group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises | 2011 | Mr. Pavel Sulyandziga (Russian Federation), Chair-Rapporteur, since November 2011 Mr. Puvan Selvanathan (Malaysia) since November 2011 Mr. Michael K. Addo (Ghana) since November 2011 Ms. Alexandra Guaqueta (Colombia/USA) since November 2011 Ms. Margaret Jungk (USA) since November 2011 |
| Special Rapporteur on violence against women , its causes and consequences | 1994 | Ms. Rashida Manjoo (South Africa) since August 2009 |
| Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation | 2008 | Ms. Catarina de Albuquerque (Portugal) since November 2009 |
| Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice | 2010 | Ms. Frances Raday (Israel/United Kingdom), Chair-Rapporteur, since May 2011 Ms. Kamala Chandrakirana (Indonesia) since May 2011 Ms. Emna Aouij (Tunisia) since May 2011 Ms. Patricia Olamendi (Mexico) since October 2012 Ms. Eleonora Zielinska (Poland) since May 2011 |