

# Human Rights Council Mechanisms Division

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## Background

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The Human Rights Council Mechanisms Division (HRCMD) is the Division of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with a core mandate to support the Human Rights Council (HRC) and its subsidiary mechanisms, including the special procedures and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It also supports the Voluntary Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States (LDCs/SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council; the Voluntary Fund for Participation in the Universal Periodic Review and the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of the Universal Periodic Review. The Division consists of an Office of the Director, the Human Rights Council Branch (HRCB), the Special Procedures Branch (SPB) and the Universal Periodic Review Branch (UPRB).

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body that is composed of 47 Member States which are elected by the General Assembly for a three-year period. The HRC was established by and is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly that is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. During its annual regular and special sessions in 2015, the HRC continued to address a number of urgent human rights situations, such as on the human rights violations and abuses against Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar, the atrocities committed by the terrorist group Boko Haram and the volatile situations in Burundi, Libya, South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. In addition, in the context of a number of panel discussions, the Council considered issues of importance to the international community, including: the enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights; the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment by all persons of human rights and fundamental freedoms; the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), including the issue of international abductions, enforced disappearances and related matters; a human rights-based approach

(HRBA) to good governance in public service; and the impact of the world drug problem on the enjoyment of human rights.

The special procedures are mandates given to independent experts, through Human Rights Council resolutions, to address thematic human rights issues or human rights situations in specific countries. Special procedures conduct country visits; send communications to States or other actors about human rights issues and individual cases; undertake awareness-raising activities; contribute to the development of international human rights standards; undertake thematic studies; and provide advisory services. The special procedures system currently consists of 55 mandates (41 thematic and 14 country specific), two of which were established in 2015, namely an Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights of persons with albinism and a Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy. In addition, there are currently 79 mandate-holder positions. In 2015, OHCHR assisted the mandate-holders to: conduct 76 country visits to 53 States and territories; transmit a total of 532 communications to 123 States and 13 to non-State actors; submit 134 reports to the HRC, 53 of which were country mission reports; and submit an additional 39 reports to the General Assembly. The Office also organized two major annual forums in 2015: the Forum on Minority Issues and the Forum on Business and Human Rights. The fourth annual Forum on Business and Human Rights brought together more than 2,300 participants from 130 countries.

The second UPR cycle continued to focus on progress made since the previous cycle. OHCHR provided full support to the 21st, 22nd and 23rd sessions of the UPR Working Group, during which 42 State reviews were conducted, by preparing pre-session reports, summaries and other documentation. The Office also encouraged and supported the involvement of civil society actors in the UPR process by circulating information relating to the UPR in a timely manner and facilitating regular briefings to representatives of civil society prior to each session of the HRC.



The Human Rights Council holds its 30th regular session in Geneva, October 2015.

### Special procedures in figures in 2015

**76** country visits carried out by special procedures mandate-holders to **53** States and territories

**532** communications sent to **123** different States and **13** non-State actors. 83 per cent of these communications were jointly issued by two or more mandate-holders. The response rate of States to these communications remained unchanged at **42** per cent

**134** reports submitted by mandate-holders to the Human Rights Council and **39** to the General Assembly

**2** new special procedures mandates established by the Human Rights Council

**6** more Member States extended a standing invitation to the special procedures. A total of **115** Member States and 1 non-Member Observer State have now extended a standing invitation to thematic mandates

## Results

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

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

- *Increased compliance and engagement of Member States with international human rights mechanisms (EA 6)*

Member States increasingly engaged with international human rights mechanisms

and complied with their findings and recommendations. In relation to the HRC, States were involved in no less than 150 meetings, including interactive dialogues and panels, representing a 30 per cent increase over the number of meetings held in 2010. In addition, 21 LDCs/SIDS Member States participated in regular sessions of the HRC and in the Fellowship Programme supported by the Voluntary Trust Fund to Support the Participation of LDCs/SIDS. Member States also increased their engagement with the Working Groups on Situations and the Working Group on Communications. The response rates to communications were higher than 80 per cent.

In relation to the special procedures, mandate-holders transmitted a total of 532 communications to 123 States and 13 communications to non-State actors, including business corporations, in relation to at least 846 individuals. A total of 318 replies were received, 222 of which were related to communications sent in 2015 (a reply rate of 42 per cent), varying from acknowledgements of receipt to substantive replies. The Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances transmitted information to States on 603 new cases of enforced disappearance, 73 of which were clarified. The Working Group on arbitrary detention issued 56 opinions in 2015. As a result of numerous opinions issued by the Working Group, which identified the detention of a complainant as arbitrary, nine individuals were released.

A total of 115 Member States and one non-Member Observer State extended a standing invitation to the special procedures. Responses were received in relation to 42 per cent of the 532 communications sent by the special procedures. States also responded to a number



Joachim Rücker, former President of the Human Rights Council, delivers a statement at the opening of the 28th session of the Council, March 2015.

of findings and recommendations of the special procedures. For example, the Special Rapporteur on torture's 2011 report on solitary confinement was cited in a unanimous decision of the United Kingdom's Supreme Court in 2015 (*Shabid v. Scotland*) that solitary confinement in the case was illegal. In another example, the Special Rapporteurs on the right to food and on extreme poverty sent a joint urgent appeal to the Government of Guatemala expressing concern that plans to reduce the minimum wage in four provinces would have a negative impact on the right to an adequate standard of living. In September, the Constitutional Court of Guatemala issued a decision declaring the proposed minimum wage to be unconstitutional. Furthermore, following a communication issued by the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice, in November, the Belfast High Court referred to the jurisprudence of the treaty bodies in its ruling that legislation in Northern Ireland which denied exceptions to the prohibition of abortion in cases of rape, incest or fatal foetal abnormalities violates the human rights of all citizens of Northern Ireland under the European Convention on Human Rights. In addition, following a joint communication issued by several mandate-holders, the Syrian Government released Mazen Darwish, Director of the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression. States continued to engage with the second UPR cycle and, during 2015, 42 States had their human

rights records reviewed by the mechanism. Important results have been achieved as a consequence of the active participation of States in this process, such as: the abolition of the death penalty in Fiji; the adoption of legislation in Angola to prevent, combat and punish those who commit acts of domestic violence; the amendment of the Australian Criminal Code to criminalize forced marriage, forced labour and organ trafficking; the adoption by Bolivia of legislation on the prevention and elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, on the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) and on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation; the adoption by Bulgaria of legal amendments to ensure the independence of judges; and, in Honduras, the amendment of the Constitution to include the right to water and sanitation, and the approval of the law on the protection of human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and operators of justice. A number of the outcomes of the UPR were achieved with the support of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of the UPR. In 2015, a total of 29 projects were supported, including for the establishment of an inter-institutional mechanism in Paraguay to follow up, monitor and report on the recommendations issued by the human rights mechanisms; and for updating the National Action Plan on the implementation of recommendations in Afghanistan.

- ▶ *Increased number and diversity of rights-holders, and of national human rights institutions and civil society actors acting on their behalf, making use of United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms and bodies (EA 7)*

The participation of NGOs in the HRC was enhanced in 2015, as evidenced by an increase of 25 per cent in the number of statements delivered at HRC sessions and of 27 per cent in the number of side events organized by NGOs. They also submitted nearly 60 per cent more written statements than in 2014. In relation to the UPR, NGOs continued to hold information meetings on States under review and actively participate in the UPR sessions. OHCHR provided support and advice prior, during and after Council sessions to those NGOs that wished to engage with the Council. The number of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) participating through video messages also increased in 2015. There was an average of three video messages for each segment of the HRC.

- ▶ *Advances in the progressive development of international and regional human rights law in*

*areas relevant to the thematic priorities (EA 8)*

A number of mandate-holders contributed to the development of international human rights law and good practices through the preparation of reports and guidelines. In September, the Working Group on arbitrary detention presented the United Nations Basic Principles and Guidelines on Remedies and Procedures on the Right of Anyone Deprived of His or Her Liberty by Arrest or Detention to Bring Proceedings Before Court (A/HRC/30/37), which are intended to provide States with guidance on fulfilling their obligation to avoid the arbitrary deprivation of liberty. The Special Rapporteur on torture contributed to the revised Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners, which were adopted at a meeting in Vienna of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in May, and were subsequently reflected in the text of the *Revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* adopted by the General Assembly in December.

► *Enhanced synergies, complementarity and coherence within and between human rights mechanisms (EA 9)*

The special procedures strengthened their engagement with regional human rights mechanisms and undertook several joint activities in 2015. For example, in April, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, undertook a joint working visit to the Caribbean with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' Rapporteur on the rights of women. Moreover, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions provided assistance to the African Commission's Working Group on death penalty and extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killings in Africa. This contributed to the drafting and adoption by the African Commission of a General Comment on the right to life under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

► *Early warning functions of human rights mechanisms are enhanced (EA 10)*

In 2015, the HRC continued to address chronic, emerging or ongoing human rights crises in a number of situations. Under its resolution 28/30, the HRC requested that the High Commissioner urgently dispatch a mission to investigate violations and abuses of international human rights law committed in Libya since the beginning of 2014. The HRC also addressed atrocities committed by the terrorist group Boko Haram and its effects on human rights in the affected States and requested that OHCHR submit a report on violations and abuses of human rights and atrocities committed by the group. Through its



The Chair of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea briefs the Human Rights Council, June 2015.

resolution 29/13, the Council further requested that OHCHR urgently undertake a mission to engage with the Government of South Sudan to monitor and report on the situation of human rights. Additionally, following the special session of 17 December, the Office was requested to urgently dispatch a mission to Burundi to undertake an investigation regarding violations and abuses of human rights. During the regular sessions, the Council took action on the human rights violations and abuses against Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar and in relation to the volatile situations in Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. In February, in light of the escalating global migration crises, the Council took the extraordinary decision to hold an enhanced interactive dialogue on the human rights of migrants without the adoption of a formal resolution in advance.

### 35th anniversary of the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances

The Working Group met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 2 to 6 March, to mark the 35th anniversary of its creation as a response to the disappearances committed by the then-dictatorship. The Group held its 105th session at the former site of one of the largest detention and torture centres that was operating in the country at the time, the Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada. The site currently houses the Remembrance and Human Rights Centre of the National Archive of Memory.

Since its inception in 1980, the Working Group has transmitted 54,557 cases to 105 States. As of the end of 2015, 43,563 cases concerning 88 States had not yet been clarified.



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities and other participants of a UN event to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities pose for a group photo around the “Broken Chair” sculpture outside the Palais des Nations in Geneva, December 2015.

### Enhancing equality and countering discrimination

- ▶ *Legislation, policies and practices increasingly comply with anti-discrimination and equality standards (EA 4)*

Through its Task Force on Accessibility, the HRC adopted practices to improve physical access to the Council and its work for persons with disabilities. One panel per session was made more accessible for persons with disabilities through international sign interpretation, captioning, webcasting and availability of oral statements in braille format. The Council’s website is accessible and electronic documents are now available in an accessible Word format.

### Integrating human rights in development and the economic sphere

- ▶ *Global, regional, and national actors increasingly integrate international human rights principles and standards, including the right to development, in their development, finance, trade and investment policies (EA 10)*

Efforts undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, UN agencies and other stakeholders led to the adoption of a stand-alone goal on water, sanitation and hygiene as well as detailed targets reflecting most of the normative content of the human rights to water and sanitation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The principle of equality and non-discrimination, one of the crucial issues that the Special Rapporteur has advocated for since 2013, was more fully integrated in the 2030 Agenda than in the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, the monitoring framework and all of its goals and targets now require disaggregated data, including on

persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities. The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and the Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights engaged with international financial institutions to promote the inclusion of human rights in their policies and safeguard procedures. Outputs of these engagements included a report by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty on the World Bank (A/70/274) and a joint submission issued by mandate-holders on the draft environmental and social framework of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment presented a compendium of good practices relating to the use of human rights obligations and commitments to inform, support and strengthen environmental policymaking, especially in the area of environmental protection (A/HRC/28/61).

#### Forum on Business and Human Rights

The fourth annual Forum on Business and Human Rights took place from 16 to 18 November under the guidance of the Working Group on Business and Human Rights. The Forum was the largest to date, with 2,300 participants from 130 countries from the private sector, governments and civil society. The Forum is now the world’s foremost multi-stakeholder gathering for constructive dialogue and action on business and human rights, and is attracting a growing interest from business, traditionally absent from international human rights fora.

### **Early warning and protection of human rights in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity**

- ▶ *Legal frameworks, public policies and institutions are in place and functioning to combat sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking and related exploitation (EA 1)*

During her visit to Malaysia from 23 to 28 February, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, reviewed the country's legislative, policy and institutional framework to combat trafficking and made a number of recommendations. Following her visit, the Government took a number of steps to tackle the issue of trafficking, including through the revision of its anti-trafficking law as it relates to freedom of movement of victims of trafficking who are living in shelters, the opportunities for employment and the regularization of the migration status of victims who fulfil certain criteria and the payment of compensation and unpaid salaries to victims.

- ▶ *Increased responsiveness of the international community to potential, emerging or existing human rights crisis situations, with human rights protection as an integral element of this response (EA 10)*

The follow-up report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants related to the management of the external borders of the European Union and its impact on the human rights of migrants had a significant international impact and influenced the terms of debate regarding effective solutions to deal with the unprecedented number of migrants and asylum-seekers arriving in the European Union. The Special Rapporteur's recommendations have been instrumental in influencing the European Agenda on Migration.

## **Global Management Outputs**

### **A gender perspective is effectively integrated into all OHCHR policies, programmes and relevant processes (GMO 3)**

- ▶ OHCHR made special efforts to promote gender equality in the context of the HRC. For example, disaggregated data was made available to delegations in order to increase their awareness about gender balance in the number of interventions and speaking time during each HRC session. During the process of selection and appointment of special procedures mandate-holders, gender-related statistics were prepared for the Consultative Group and the President of the Council to sensitize them to the gender and geographic distribution of current mandate-

holders. The Consultative Group adopted new working methods to better integrate gender in its work and ensure its consideration at all stages of the selection process.

- ▶ Due to active outreach efforts undertaken in 2015, the Trust Fund to support the participation of LDCs/SIDS in the work of the HRC increased the number of women beneficiaries from three in 2014 to 11 in 2015.
- ▶ A session on gender in the work of the special procedures was included in the 2015 induction session for new mandate-holders.
- ▶ In the context of the UPR, OHCHR included a section dedicated to gender and women's human rights in the template for all UPR pre-session documents. OHCHR also included specific reference to HRC resolution 6/30 on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system in its correspondence inviting States to submit funding requests to the Voluntary Fund for Participation in the UPR.

### **Increased effectiveness in supporting human rights mechanisms (GMO 4)**

- ▶ In 2015, OHCHR assisted the HRC to hold its three regular sessions and two special sessions. A total of 150 fully serviced meetings were organized, prepared and followed-up on by OHCHR; representing a 30 per cent increase over the number of meetings held in 2010. In addition, OHCHR serviced 70 per cent more interactive dialogues and 50 per cent more panels on a wide array of topics than in 2010.
- ▶ The percentage of documents that were submitted on time for consideration by the HRC reached 76 per cent. Over the year, OHCHR assisted the special procedures to submit 134 reports to the HRC. For the UPR, OHCHR prepared 84 pre-session reports relating to the consideration of 42 States. It also processed 42 national reports and 40 addenda to working group reports that were submitted by States.
- ▶ OHCHR continued to provide advice and briefings to State delegations on the Council's procedures and practices. It also used the Extranet to regularly provide them with updated information on the programme of work, draft resolutions and the minutes of the Bureau's meetings. A brochure on the Human Rights Council Complaint Procedure was disseminated to various stakeholders to raise awareness about the availability of the Procedure. Moreover, a second briefing was held in February for representatives of civil society in order to contribute to their increased engagement with the Procedure.
- ▶ With the financial support of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Participation in the UPR,

which is administered by OHCHR, a total of 17 States (Armenia, Guinea-Bissau, Grenada, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia, Myanmar, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Sao Tomé and Príncipe) participated in the sessions of the Working Group at which they were reviewed or during the HRC plenary sessions when the UPR outcomes were adopted.

- ▶ OHCHR organized two parallel events during the June and September sessions of the HRC. The events brought together, for the first time, beneficiaries of and donors to the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of LDCs and SIDS in order to assess the impact of the increased participation of the beneficiaries on the discussions and decisions taking place in the Council.
- ▶ The Office also facilitated seminars for LDCs/SIDS, which provided them with an opportunity to share their experiences in preparing for their second UPR cycle. In 2015, three such seminars were organized in Barbados for English-speaking Caribbean States, in Brazil for Portuguese-speaking States and in Fiji for Pacific Island States. A total of 122 participants, including NHRIs, attended the seminars.
- ▶ Prior to each session, information meetings were organized to brief delegations on the modalities of the UPR process and on the overall work of the Council. Social media was used to keep stakeholders informed of actions and developments. Indeed, the HRC's social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter were used to effectively disseminate information about the HRC in a timely and accurate manner. The success of this approach is evident from the considerable increase in the number of Facebook "likes" which increased from 85,500 at the end of 2014 to 112,500 at the end of 2015. The number of Twitter "followers" has likewise increased from 33,800 at the end of 2014 to 54,400 at the end of 2015. Furthermore, live webcasts were broadcast and archived for the HRC's three regular sessions in 2015, the special sessions on Boko Haram and Burundi and the three sessions of the UPR Working Group.
- ▶ OHCHR's outreach efforts also significantly heightened the visibility of the Council. A record number of 22,000 original media articles (in English, French and Spanish) made specific reference to activities of the Council, marking an 18 per cent increase over the number recorded in 2014.
- ▶ OHCHR supported mandate-holders to issue 323 press releases, 53 media statements and 75 media advisories, either individually or jointly.



The Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order (centre) and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (right) brief journalists in New York, October 2015.

These activities enabled the mandate-holders to raise awareness and express their concerns over a wide array of issues related to their mandates. In addition, OHCHR assisted the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures to issue eight press releases and public statements in relation to attacks against a mandate-holder; human rights abuses and violations committed by Boko Haram; the migrant crisis; the 50th anniversary of the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the situation of human rights in Burundi.

- ▶ Throughout 2015, approximately 100 HRC-dedicated webpages were created or regularly updated with new content. These included pages for the Advisory Committee and the HRC Complaint Procedure, the commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions and the Council's 28th, 29th and 30th regular sessions and special sessions. The webpage of the Voluntary Trust Fund to support the participation of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council has been upgraded and is now available in English and French. The pages of States undergoing their second UPR cycle were updated and all pre-session documents were posted, including the advanced questions, the Working Group reports and any additional information submitted by States.
- ▶ A database to streamline the information related to country visits by special procedures was developed, tested and deployed in a staggered way. All historical information related to country visits was verified and recorded. The database has assisted OHCHR staff members in their daily work and is a valuable source of information on country visits. The internal OHCHR database, which stores and processes special procedures

communications, has been updated. An online questionnaire for the submission of cases to the special procedures has been finalized after consultations with civil society organizations and mandate-holders. The questionnaire is expected to be launched in 2016.

### **Increased effectiveness in supporting field operations (GMO 5)**

- ▶ Through the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of the UPR, a total of 29 projects in the field were funded to support States in: establishing and/or strengthening inter-institutional bodies to coordinate follow-up to recommendations issued by the human rights mechanisms; mainstreaming those recommendations into national human rights action plans; implementing key priority human rights recommendations; and providing support in the context of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).
- ▶ Cooperation with OHCHR field presences helped to effectively prepare country visits by special procedures mandate-holders and enabled the verification of information related to allegations. A significant number of the 76 country visits that were undertaken by special procedures mandate-

holders in 2015 took place with the logistical and substantive support of OHCHR field presences.

#### **The Social Forum – access to medicines**

The 2015 Human Rights Council Social Forum was devoted to a human rights issue that, although it impacts on the lives, health and well-being of millions of people, has received insufficient attention in the past, namely access to medicines in the context of the right to health. The Forum saw an unprecedented number of participants (approximately 300), including representatives of States, international organizations, civil society organizations, pharmaceutical companies, medical professionals, patients and other relevant stakeholders. Access to medicines was addressed as a cross-cutting theme involving human rights, health, development, trade and investment, intellectual property, science, technology and innovation, international cooperation and financing and the strengthening of health systems. Discussions touched on laws and policies and a number of recommendations were proposed in relation to areas such as research on neglected diseases and access to generic drugs.



## Human Rights Council – Outcomes of sessions held in 2015

### 28th session (2 - 27 March 2015)

The Council adopted resolutions, decisions and President's statements on the following subjects:

- International cooperation in the field of human rights; use of remotely piloted aircraft or armed drones in counter-terrorism and military operations; effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights; rights of the child; rights of persons with disabilities; albinism; world drug problem; combating intolerance, discrimination and incitement to violence against persons based on religion or belief; environment; economic, social and cultural rights; birth registration; democracy and the rule of law; right to food; right to work; right to privacy; freedom of religion or belief; prevention of genocide; effects of foreign debt; negative impact of the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin; international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies; and composition of staff of OHCHR;
- The 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War;
- The continuing grave deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; the situations of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Haiti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, the occupied Syrian Golan, the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem; right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; technical assistance and capacity-building in Guinea, Iraq (in light of the abuses committed by Daesh and associated terrorist groups), Libya and Mali;
- Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review in relation to Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, the Gambia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, San Marino and Slovenia.

### 23rd special session (1 April 2015)

The Council adopted a resolution on the atrocities committed by the terrorist group Boko Haram and its effects on human rights in the affected States.

### 29th session (15 June - 3 July 2015)

The Council adopted resolutions, decisions and President's statements on the following subjects:

- Protection of the human rights of migrants, including migrants in transit and unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents; international solidarity; elimination of discrimination against women and against persons affected by leprosy and their family members; efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage and to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence; climate change; independence and impartiality of the judiciary, jurors and assessors and the independence of lawyers; the right to education; the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; human rights and the regulation of civilian acquisition, possession and use of firearms; negative impact of corruption on the enjoyment of human rights; protection of the family; contribution of the family to the realization of the right to an adequate standard of living for its members; the Social Forum; incompatibility between democracy and racism; and enhancing the efficiency of the Human Rights Council;
- The 50th anniversary of the adoption and the 40th anniversary of the entry into force of the International Covenants on human rights;
- The grave and deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; the situations of human rights in Belarus and Eritrea; the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar; ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem; cooperation and assistance to Ukraine in the field of human rights; capacity-building and technical cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire; and the mission by OHCHR to improve human rights, accountability and reconciliation in South Sudan;
- Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review in relation to Armenia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Spain, Sweden and Turkey.

**30th session (14 September - 2 October 2015)**

The Council adopted resolutions, decisions and President's statements on the following subjects:

- The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by enhancing capacity-building in public health against pandemics; unilateral coercive measures; indigenous peoples; the question of the death penalty; the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination; human rights in the administration of justice, including juvenile justice; equal participation in political and public affairs; the right to development; the right to peace; democratic and equitable international order; the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; preventing and countering violent extremism; a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; forum on people of African descent in the diaspora; national policies and human rights; promoting international cooperation to support national human rights follow-up systems and processes; regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights; and enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights;
- Contribution of the Human Rights Council to the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in 2016; review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review; reports of the Advisory Committee; and follow-up to President's statement PRST 29/1;
- The grave and deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka; technical assistance and capacity-building for Burundi, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen in the field of human rights;
- Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review in relation to Andorra, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Panama and the United States of America.

**24th special session (17 December 2015)**

The Council adopted a resolution on preventing the deterioration of the human rights situation in Burundi.

Special Procedures Mandate-Holders 2015		
Mandate	Established	Mandate-holder
<b>Country mandates</b>		
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in <b>Belarus</b>	2012	Mr. <b>Miklós Haraszti</b> (Hungary) since October 2012
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in <b>Cambodia</b>	1993	Ms. <b>Rhona Smith</b> (United Kingdom) since May 2015
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>Central African Republic</b>	2013	Ms. <b>Marie-Therese Keita Bocoum</b> (Côte d'Ivoire) since January 2014
Independent Expert on capacity-building and technical cooperation with <b>Côte d'Ivoire</b> in the field of human rights	2014	Mr. <b>Mohammed Ayat</b> (Morocco) since December 2014
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in <b>Eritrea</b>	2012	Ms. <b>Sheila B. Keetharuth</b> (Mauritius) since October 2012
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the <b>Democratic People's Republic of Korea</b>	2004	Mr. <b>Marzuki Darusman</b> (Indonesia) since August 2010
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>Haiti</b>	1995	Mr. <b>Gustavo Gallón</b> (Colombia) since May 2013
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the <b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>	2011	Mr. <b>Ahmed Shaheed</b> (Maldives) since August 2011
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>Mali</b>	2013	Mr. <b>Suliman Baldo</b> (Sudan) since October 2013
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in <b>Myanmar</b>	1992	Ms. <b>Yanghee Lee</b> (Republic of Korea) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the <b>Palestinian territories occupied since 1967</b>	1993	Mr. <b>Makarim Wibisino</b> (Indonesia) since June 2014
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>Somalia</b>	1993	Mr. <b>Bahame Nyanduga</b> (United Republic of Tanzania) since June 2014
Independent Expert on the situation on human rights in the <b>Sudan</b>	2005 (SR) 2009 (IE)	Mr. <b>Aristide Nononsi</b> (Benin) since December 2014
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the <b>Syrian Arab Republic</b>	2012	Mr. <b>Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro</b> (Brazil) will start once the mandate of the commission of inquiry ends
<b>Thematic mandates</b>		
Working Group of Experts on People of <b>African Descent</b>	2002	Mr. <b>Ahmed Reid</b> (Jamaica) since November 2015 Mr. <b>Michal Balcerzak</b> (Poland) since December 2014 Mr. <b>Ricardo III Sunga</b> (the Philippines) since December 2014 Ms. <b>Mireille Fanon-Mendes-France</b> (France) since May 2011 Mr. <b>Sabelo Gumedze</b> (South Africa) since August 2014
Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with <b>albinism</b>	2015	Ms. <b>Ikponwosa Ero</b> (Nigeria) since August 2015
Working Group on <b>arbitrary detention</b>	1991	Mr. <b>Sètondji Roland Jean-Baptiste Adjovi</b> (Benin) since May 2014 Mr. <b>Seong-Phil Hong</b> (Republic of Korea) since May 2014 Mr. <b>Vladimir Tochilovsky</b> (Ukraine) since May 2010 Ms. <b>Leigh Toomey</b> (Australia) since August 2015 Mr. <b>José Guevara</b> (Mexico) since June 2014
Working Group on transnational corporations and other <b>business enterprises</b>	2011	Mr. <b>Puvan Selvanathan</b> (Malaysia) since November 2011 - resigned December 2015, position vacant Mr. <b>Michael K. Addo</b> (Ghana) since November 2011 Mr. <b>Pavel Sulyandziga</b> (Russian Federation) since November 2011 Mr. <b>Dante Pesce</b> (Chile) since May 2015 Ms. <b>Margaret Jungk</b> (USA) since November 2011
Independent Expert in the field of <b>cultural rights</b>	2009	Ms. <b>Karima Bennoune</b> (United States of America) since November 2015
Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with <b>disabilities</b>	2014	Ms. <b>Catalina Devandas Aguilar</b> (Costa Rica) since December 2014

Mandate	Established	Mandate-holder
Working Group on <b>enforced or involuntary disappearances</b>	1980	Mr. <b>Bernard Duhaime</b> (Canada) since December 2014 Ms. <b>Houria Es-Slami</b> (Morocco) since June 2014 Mr. <b>Ariel Dulitzky</b> (Argentina/USA) since August 2010 Mr. <b>Henrikas Mickevicius</b> (Lithuania) since November 2015 Mr. <b>Tae-Ung Baik</b> (Republic of Korea) since August 2015
Special Rapporteur on the right to <b>education</b>	1998	Mr. <b>Kishore Singh</b> (India) since August 2010
Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable <b>environment</b>	2012	Mr. <b>John Knox</b> (USA) since August 2012
Special Rapporteur on <b>extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions</b>	1982	Mr. <b>Christof Heyns</b> (South Africa) since August 2010
Special Rapporteur on the right to <b>food</b>	2000	Ms. <b>Hilal Elver</b> (Turkey) since June 2014
Independent Expert on <b>foreign debt</b> and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights	2000	Mr. <b>Juan Bohoslavsky</b> (Argentina) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to <b>freedom of opinion and expression</b>	1993	Mr. <b>David Kaye</b> (USA) since August 2014
Special Rapporteur on the rights to <b>freedom of peaceful assembly and of association</b>	2010	Mr. <b>Maina Kiai</b> (Kenya) since May 2011
Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental <b>health</b>	2002	Mr. <b>Dainius Pūras</b> (Lithuania) since August 2014
Special Rapporteur on adequate <b>housing</b> as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context	2000	Ms. <b>Leilani Farha</b> (Canada) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the situation of <b>human rights defenders</b>	2000	Mr. <b>Michel Forst</b> (France) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the <b>independence of judges and lawyers</b>	1994	Ms. <b>Mónica Pinto</b> (Argentina) since August 2015
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of <b>indigenous peoples</b>	2001	Ms. <b>Victoria Lucia Tauli-Corpuz</b> (the Philippines) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of <b>internally displaced persons</b>	2004	Mr. <b>Chaloka Beyani</b> (Zambia) since November 2010
Independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable <b>international order</b>	2011	Mr. <b>Alfred de Zayas</b> (USA) since May 2012
Independent Expert on human rights and <b>international solidarity</b>	2005	Ms. <b>Virginia Dandan</b> (Philippines) since 1 August 2011
Working Group on the use of <b>mercenaries</b> as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination	2005	Mr. <b>Anton Katz</b> (South Africa), Chair-Rapporteur, since August 2011 Mr. <b>Saeed Mokbil</b> (Yemen) since June 2014 Ms. <b>Patricia Arias</b> (Chile) since August 2011 Ms. <b>Elzbieta Karska</b> (Poland) since August 2011 Mr. <b>Gabor Rona</b> (USA/Hungary) since August 2011
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of <b>migrants</b>	1999	Mr. <b>François Crépeau</b> (Canada) since August 2011
Special Rapporteur on <b>minority issues</b>	2005	Ms. <b>Rita Izsak</b> (Hungary) since August 2011
Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by <b>older persons</b>	2013	Ms. <b>Rosa Kornfeld-Matte</b> (Chile) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on extreme <b>poverty</b> and human rights	1998	Mr. <b>Philip Alston</b> (Australia) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the right to <b>privacy</b>	2015	Mr. <b>Joseph Cannataci</b> (Malta) since August 2015
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of <b>racism</b> , racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance	1993	Mr. <b>Mutuma Ruteere</b> (Kenya) since November 2011

Mandate	Established	Mandate-holder
Special Rapporteur on freedom of <b>religion or belief</b>	1986	Mr. <b>Heiner Bielefeldt</b> (Germany) since August 2010
Special Rapporteur on the <b>sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</b>	1990	Ms. <b>Maud De Boer-Buquicchio</b> (the Netherlands) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of <b>slavery</b> , including its causes and consequences	2007	Ms. <b>Urmila Bhoola</b> (South Africa) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering <b>terrorism</b>	2005	Mr. <b>Ben Emmerson</b> (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) since August 2011
Special Rapporteur on <b>torture</b> and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	1985	Mr. <b>Juan Ernesto Méndez</b> (Argentina) since November 2010
Special Rapporteur on <b>trafficking in persons</b> , especially women and children	2004	Ms. <b>Maria Grazia Giammarinaro</b> (Italy) since August 2014
Special Rapporteur on the promotion of <b>truth, justice, reparation and guarantees on non-recurrence</b>	2011	Mr. <b>Pablo De Greiff</b> (Colombia) since May 2012
Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the <b>unilateral coercive measures</b> on the enjoyment of human rights	2014	Mr. <b>Idriss Jazairy</b> (Algeria) since May 2015
Special Rapporteur on <b>violence against women</b> , its causes and consequences	1994	Ms. <b>Dubravka Šimonović</b> (Croatia) since August 2015
Special Rapporteur on the human rights obligations related to environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and <b>wastes</b>	1995	Mr. <b>Baskut Tuncak</b> (Turkey) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking <b>water and sanitation</b>	2008	Mr. <b>Léo Heller</b> (Brazil) since December 2014
Working Group on the issue of discrimination against <b>women in law and in practice</b>	2010	Ms. <b>Kamala Chandrakirana</b> (Indonesia) since May 2011 Ms. <b>Emna Aouij</b> (Tunisia) since May 2011 Ms. <b>Alda Facio</b> (Costa Rica) since June 2014 Ms. <b>Frances Raday</b> (Israel/United Kingdom), Chair-Rapporteur, since May 2011 Ms. <b>Eleonora Zielinska</b> (Poland) since May 2011