

# Executive Direction and Management

The High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the principal advocate for human rights in the United Nations system, continued to be the voice for victims of human rights violations and abuses worldwide. His global advocacy for the promotion and protection of human rights for all included engaging in dialogue and fostering partnerships with Member States and other relevant stakeholders, such as civil society actors, human rights defenders, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), United Nations system entities and regional organizations. Through his country visits, participation in high-level meetings, briefings to the Human Rights Council and the Security Council and his public outreach activities (speeches, lectures, statements, opinion articles and interviews), the High Commissioner brought attention to the most egregious human rights violations and abuses and drew the international community's attention to critical situations. Building on the

expertise of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, both at headquarters and in the field, the High Commissioner advocated for human rights to be mainstreamed across the United Nations system. The High Commissioner's leadership role was reinforced by the Deputy High Commissioner and the New York-based Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

The Executive Direction and Management (EDM) provides support to the High Commissioner, the Deputy High Commissioner and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights in their endeavours. It is composed of the Executive Office (EO), the New York Office (NYO), the Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Service (PPMES), the Programme Support and Management Services (PSMS), the External Outreach Service (EOS) and the Safety and Security Section (SSS).



The High Commissioner for Human Rights addresses the 35th Session of the Human Rights Council, June 2017. © UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

## Executive Office

### Background

The Executive Office provides direct support to the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner in their daily work, in their management and strategic leadership of the Office and in their interactions with different stakeholders. It ensures that all documentation submitted for their attention is widely consulted, processed in a timely manner and, upon approval, disseminated within the Office for appropriate follow-up. The Executive Office also aims to ensure that OHCHR contributions to UN-system wide processes are timely and well-coordinated, including in relation to the preparation of meetings and the elaboration of joint UN system responses, policies and other documents.

With the support of the Executive Office, in 2017, the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner undertook missions to Australia, Canada, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Libya, Luxembourg, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Slovenia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and Uzbekistan. They also delivered a number of speeches, video addresses and op-eds on a wide array of human rights topics. For instance, the High Commissioner delivered lectures at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.; Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee; Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore; Columbia University in New York; the Lady Margaret Lecture at Christ's College, Cambridge; and the Grotius Lecture on the future of international law at the Law Society in London. The Grotius lecture traced the roots of international law to emotions at the “core of civilization” and detailed in stark terms some of today’s threats to international human rights law in the context of conflict, counter-terror efforts and torture. It also took aim at populists, demagogues and tabloid newspapers that have “remorselessly stoked” xenophobia and bigotry. Like many of the High Commissioner’s speeches, it has been extensively discussed by academics and the human rights community.

The Deputy High Commissioner delivered speeches at conferences and other events, such as the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23) and other large international conferences on, inter alia, humanitarian issues; women’s rights; the role of midwives; adolescent health; the UN human rights system; and population and development. She consistently engaged with the Human Rights Council, including on country-specific issues, and introduced OHCHR’s thematic and coun-



The Deputy High Commissioner speaks to students from around the world at a gathering in Norway. © ISFIT

try reports. Moreover, the Deputy High Commissioner delivered statements at a number of Human Rights Council panels, annual discussions and side events, including on the rights of the child and women’s rights; the right to health, including maternal mortality and access to medicine; migration; indigenous peoples; racial discrimination, human rights mainstreaming and technical cooperation.

## New York Office

### Background

OHCHR’s New York Office is headed by an Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. Its principal objective is to integrate a human rights perspective into discussions and decisions made at United Nations Headquarters by engaging with other UN agencies and departments, Member States, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the media. In recent years, a concerted effort has been made to increase OHCHR’s participation in intergovernmental discussions in New York, including in the General Assembly and its various committees, and in the Security Council. The NYO works closely with other UN departments and agencies to inform and support the development of UN Secretariat and system-wide policies. The Of-

Office also provides direct advice and support on human rights-related matters to the Secretary-General and his Executive Office.

NYO leads OHCHR's global engagement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity issues, including through the ongoing UN Free & Equal public information campaign. It leads the Office's engagement with the peace and security and peacebuilding architecture, the conflict prevention strategy and the Sustaining Peace Agenda in the General Assembly and the Security Council. Furthermore, it co-leads OHCHR's advocacy on the universal abolition of the death penalty and its work on counter-terrorism and human rights. The NYO is also responsible for providing OHCHR's support to the Security Council Team of Experts under Security Council resolution 1888 on sexual violence in conflict.

In 2017, the arrival of a new Secretary-General required the Office to be engaged in a number of structural reforms, including the new management reform initiative, the reconfiguration of the peace and security and counter-terrorism architecture, the development system reform and the evolving Sustaining Peace Agenda.

This year, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights undertook country visits to the Central African Republic, Colombia, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan. He also participated in a number of conferences and meetings, including in Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Morocco, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, related to the work of the Office and in the context of his mandate as the senior United Nations official designated to lead UN efforts to put an end to intimidation and reprisals against those cooperating with the UN on human rights.

## Results

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

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

As part of the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, OHCHR organized an event on "Strengthening cooperation between the international and regional human rights mechanisms on women's rights," which discussed how to enhance cooperation between mechanisms, as well as how to protect gains made in the development of norms and standards on gender and women's rights from the resistance demonstrated in intergovernmental fora. Subsequently, the Secretary-General request-

ed that OHCHR, UN Women and the Department of Political Affairs cooperate to develop a system-wide strategy aimed at protecting norms and standards on gender and women's rights in intergovernmental fora.

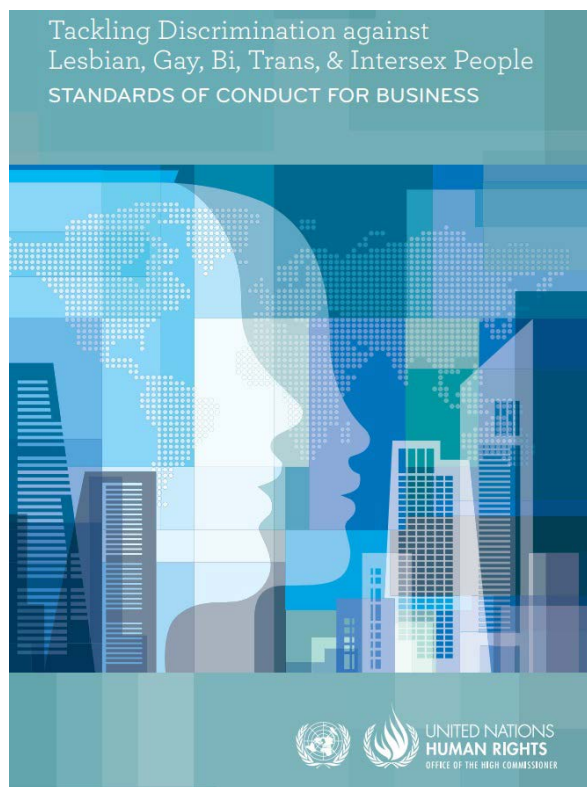
### Enhancing equality and countering discrimination

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

The OHCHR-led UN Free & Equal campaign reached hundreds of millions of people worldwide through its website, traditional and social media, videos, fact sheets and other digital content. In 2017, more than 13.5 million people saw UN Free & Equal videos. This included a mini campaign, #CultureOfLove, aimed at showing how culture, family and tradition can embrace LGBTI members of their communities. Also in 2017, OHCHR supported two high-level events on LGBTI issues that were co-hosted with the LGBTI Core Group. In May, an event, entitled "Standing up for LGBTI Youth," was held for the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. The objective of the event was to raise awareness about bullying and exclusion of LGBTI youth, help amplify the voices of those affected and discuss steps that can be taken by UN Member States to protect young people. In September, the event on "Ending Violence and Discrimination against LGBTI Persons" focused on measures to tackle violent abuse and unfair treatment of LGBTI people around the world. The Office further provided analysis and advocacy materials and briefings for use by the United Nations Country Teams and issued press releases, media briefing notes, statements, feature stories, op-eds, online blogs on LGBTI-related human rights issues to maximize its advocacy efforts.

In September, OHCHR launched a set of global standards to support the business community in tackling discrimination against LGBTI people. The new standards, developed in partnership with the London-based Institute for Human Rights and Business, are the product of more than a year of consultations with hundreds of companies and human rights activists worldwide. They offer practical guidance to companies on how to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and leverage their influence, resources and market presence in order to promote greater respect for the rights of LGBTI people in the countries where they do business. The standards were launched at a series of events in New York, Mumbai, London, Paris, Geneva, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Melbourne, Nairobi and Sao Paulo in late 2017 and early 2018. To date, some 50 global brands, including Adidas, Burberry, the Coca-Cola Company, Deutsche Bank, Dow Chemicals, Google, IKEA Group, Intel, Microsoft, Ralph Lauren Corp., Twitter and Virgin, have signalled their support for the





standards, with many more preparing to announce their formal endorsement in 2018. At that time, the Office will launch a follow-up guide for practitioners to implement the standards, which will highlight examples of concrete actions undertaken by some of the early supporters.

Through its participation in the Global Inter-Agency Programme Advisory Committee of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, OHCHR launched a new grant-making opportunity, in 2017, to address violence against women and girls with disabilities. This will enable participants to engage in efforts to prevent violence from occurring in the first place and complement the actions of the response system to break the cycles of violence against women and girls with disabilities.

The NYO supported the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA) during its eighth session. For instance, the Office ensured that the work of the OEWGA adhered to human rights standards, that its sessions included the participation of NHRIs for the first time and that its discussions shifted from polarized debates regarding the need to elaborate an international human rights instrument for older persons to discussions on the substantive content of such an instrument.

### Combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law

- *Increased awareness among Member States about international human rights norms and rule of law principles relating to the death penalty with a*

*view to encouraging States to adopt a moratorium or abolish the death penalty (EA 1)*

Over the course of the past four years, OHCHR has explored the human rights dimensions of the death penalty through a series of high-level panel events and publications, generally linked to the bi-annual General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The resolution, first passed in 2007, calls on all States that still allow capital punishment to “progressively restrict the use of the death penalty and reduce the number of offences for which it may be imposed” and “to establish a moratorium on execution with a view to abolishing the death penalty.” Subsequently, the General Assembly has adopted various resolutions (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016), which were approved by a progressively growing number of Member States.

In addition, between 2014 and 2017, OHCHR held a series of high-level panel events that focused on lessons from national experiences, wrongful convictions, deterrence and public opinion, discrimination and the death penalty, the voices of victims’ families and victims and the death penalty generally. These panels brought together a range of representatives of Member States, academia and civil society to discuss obstacles to the abolition of the death penalty. The Office also launched a series of publications, including the 2014 report *Moving Away from the Death Penalty: Arguments, Trends and Perspectives* and the 2016 book *Death Penalty and the Victims*, based on thorough academic research and the personal testimonies provided by the families of victims and the wrongfully convicted. The books have been used to support OHCHR’s advocacy with Member States for the abolition of the death penalty or the adoption of a moratorium on its use.

- *Counter-terrorism legal frameworks, policies, strategies and institutions increasingly aligned with international human rights standards (EA 1)*

The NYO sustained its efforts to help implement the UN’s Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, thus contributing to more effective and coordinated UN support to Member States and regional organizations while facing the complex and ever changing threat of terrorism. Through its active participation in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and as co-Chair of the Working Group on Promoting and Protecting Human Rights and the Rule of Law while Countering Terrorism, OHCHR steered the publication of five guidance documents on the following topics: stopping and searching of persons, security infrastructure, conformity of national legislation with international human rights law, right to a fair trial and due process in the context of counter-terrorism and detention in

the context of counter-terrorism. A sixth guide on the proscription of organizations has been finalized and is ready for publication. Furthermore, OHCHR jointly implemented projects in five countries (Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Nigeria and Tunisia) aimed at providing human rights training and capacity-building for law enforcement officials involved in counter-terrorism-related activities.

► *Enhanced coherence and effectiveness of the UN in supporting the rule of law and human rights-compliant counter-terrorism policies (EA 11)*

In 2017, OHCHR continued its collaboration with UN Women to develop guidelines for UN field operations to take into account gender and human rights approaches in the drafting of plans and policies to prevent violent extremism. As part of its work at the CTITF's Working Group on Human Rights and Rule of Law, OHCHR will look into developing these guidelines. OHCHR also established partnerships with leading US-based universities to conduct research on key issues related to the protection of women in the context of counter-terrorism and violent extremism. At the end of 2016, the University of Pennsylvania presented a compilation of 20 cases on how gender and human rights had been integrated into national efforts to prevent violent extremism in distinct parts of the world. In 2017, the University of Chicago finalized a study on actions to prevent violent extremism in Kenya, Tunisia and the USA, and how gender and human rights considerations had been taken into account in these efforts.

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

► *Human rights are integrated into the formulation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda (EA 10)*

With the support of OHCHR, the first questionnaire was developed to measure Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 5.6.2, to identify the number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education. The questionnaire includes recommendations from the international human rights mechanisms and pays special attention to the most discriminated groups in society. The inputs provided by OHCHR helped to solve the challenges of measuring plural legal systems, identifying vulnerable groups and ensuring alignment between what countries reported under the SDG framework and how they were evaluated by the human rights mechanisms. In 2017, OHCHR also successfully advocated for the first inclusion of women human rights defenders and national human rights institutions in the agreed conclusions of the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women.



The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights gives remarks at an event in observance of Human Rights Day in New York, December 2017. © UN Photo/Evan Schneider

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

► *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)*

Through its support to the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, OHCHR contributed to increased responsiveness and the integration of human rights concerns into the UN's response to conflict-related sexual violence in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. In Guinea, since 2012, the Team of Experts has assisted the Government to address accountability for the events of September 2009 in a stadium in Conakry, which resulted in serious human rights violations, including killings, sexual violence, torture and enforced disappearances. The Team of Experts deployed an expert to Guinea, based in the OHCHR field office, who provided technical assistance to a national panel of judges that was established to investigate and prosecute the events. To date, this support has resulted in 16 indictments, including of former President Moussa Dadis Camara and high ranking military commanders, and the hearing of over 450 victims and witnesses. The assistance to Guinean authorities in the area of judicial cooperation also resulted in the December 2016 arrest of Aboubacar Sidiki Diakite, in Senegal, and his extradition to Guinea, in March 2017, where he is currently being held in detention. His arrest and extradition are a powerful demonstration of the commitment of the Guinean authorities to fight impunity for the crimes committed in September 2009. In 2017, OHCHR facilitated a visit to Guinea by a team of Congolese doctors, which resulted in the provision of medical and psychological assistance to over 30 survivors of

sexual violence in relation to the 2009 events. At the request of the Guinean authorities, the Team of Experts will continue to support the Minister of Justice in the operationalization of the Coordination Committee that will oversee the preparations and planning of the trials for the September 2009 events, including the protection of witnesses and victims, sensitization and outreach to Government officials, victims' associations and the general public.

In relation to the Central African Republic's accountability efforts for conflict-related crimes of sexual violence, the Team of Experts deployed an expert to support the work of OHCHR's mapping team to document conflict-related sexual violence crimes that had been committed in the country between January 2003 and December 2015. This work helped to ensure that conflict-related sexual violence remains a priority in all future transitional justice and accountability mechanisms.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the Team of Experts provided technical assistance to the national army for the implementation of its action plan on combating sexual violence. Such measures have translated into a reduced number of violations attributable to the military and, as a result, Côte d'Ivoire's army has been removed from the annex of the 2017 report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence. With the closing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, and to ensure the sustainability of efforts undertaken by Ivorian authorities, OHCHR led the recruitment and developed a work plan for two experienced national human rights officers who will continue to work on legislative review, train judicial officials, support the implementation of the national army's action plan to combat sexual violence and support accountability efforts related to the crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis in 2011.

- ▶ *The protection of human rights is an integral part of the international community's preparedness, response and recovery efforts in the context of humanitarian crises and is effectively integrated into the mandates, policies and actions of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions (EA 11)*

The years 2016 and 2017 saw a greater emphasis of the UN on conflict prevention. In 2016, OHCHR actively participated in the working group on conflict prevention and has contributed to the creation of a UN compendium of prevention cases. In 2017, the Office actively participated in the development of activities linked to the June 13th Appeal, by the Government of Switzerland, to situate human rights at the heart of conflict prevention. Among other measures, the Appeal called for enhanced cooperation between the Human Rights Council and the Security Council in relation to decisions that are relevant to conflict prevention and to improve the Security Council's use of

available information to inform its decisions, including briefings of OHCHR and reports of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

Through its inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security and on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, OHCHR provided valuable information on how the consolidation of protection functions are helping to ensure that women's rights are adequately considered in the work of peace missions in several conflict-affected countries.

## Global Management Outputs

### Organizational work processes and structures are aligned for increased efficiency (GMO 2)

- ▶ In September, the Office of Internal Oversight Services issued the report of its audit to assess the effectiveness of the processes and structures of the NYO, covering the period from January 2015 to March 2017. The Office is currently implementing the recommendations to make the management of its human and financial resources more efficient.

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

- ▶ In 2017, the Secretary-General issued a policy aimed at achieving gender parity in the workforce by the year 2028. OHCHR was at the forefront of gender parity strategy discussions and strongly supported the use of special temporary measures and targeted efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of qualified female and male staff members where gender imbalances exist. Such temporary measures, in line with human rights norms and standards, have been retained as part of the final policy.
- ▶ The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights committed to devoting specific attention to women's rights in all of his missions and systematically advocating for approaches that uphold women's rights in all of his contributions to UN system-wide efforts in the peace and security, development and human rights pillars. The Secretary-General has subsequently asked all senior UN officials to become Gender Champions and has used the Assistant Secretary-General's voluntary commitments as an example of good practices for Gender Champions who are now joining the initiative.

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

- ▶ Throughout the year, OHCHR continued to engage with and promote the work and recommendations of the human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures in relation to the human rights of LGBTI

persons, including by providing inputs for general comments and thematic reports and supporting the joint initiatives of UN mechanisms and peers from the regional systems on, for instance, the rights of LGBTI persons in detention or combating violence and harmful medical practices against intersex children and adults. OHCHR further supported the UN human rights mechanisms to address violations faced by LGBTI persons through inputs to urgent appeals, allegation letters, general comments and concluding observations.

- ▶ The NYO supported several meetings in New York of the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice and other UN human rights mechanisms, including meetings of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the election of members of their respective committees.
- ▶ The NYO supported the participation in General Assembly meetings of 44 special procedures mandate-holders and 10 Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, as well as the Chair of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi and the Independent Expert of the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty. The NYO provided support in the preparation of and during the visit of the President of the Human Rights Council to UN Headquarters in New York and supported the annual visit of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures.

#### **Improved awareness and understanding of and support to OHCHR's mission and programme by Member States and other stakeholders (GMO 7)**

- ▶ Through partnerships with the Department of Public Information's Strategic Communications and News and Media Divisions, as well as the UN Spokesperson's Office, high-level events carried out by the NYO, such as those on the death penalty, torture and LGBTI issues, received greater visibility through the social media accounts of the UN, websites and news centres. The NYO also increased its outreach to journalists, particularly relating to the Assistant Secretary-General's missions and key statements and through background meetings and interviews on thematic issues, such as climate change and business and human rights.
- ▶ In partnership with the UN Foundation, a round-table discussion on human rights was organized, in Washington, D.C., with the presence of the High Commissioner. The event, which was moderated by CNN Global Affairs Correspondent, Elise Labott, received strong media coverage.

## External Outreach Service

### Background

The External Outreach Service is composed of four sections; the Communications and Public Mobilization Section, the Donor and External Relations Section, the Media and Public Positioning Section and the Meetings, Documents and Publications Unit.

The Communications and Public Mobilization Section, which is composed of the Web Unit, the Editorial Unit and audio-visual and social media officers, works on the branding of the Office as well as its engagement with new audiences. The Section develops and implements outreach strategies addressed to a broad constituency and its main functions include the development and distribution of public information campaigns, the production of print, audio-visual and online outreach materials, engagement with the public through social media and the provision of relevant communications support to the Office as a whole, including field presences.

The Donor and External Relations Section (DEXREL) has primary responsibility for mobilizing adequate financial resources to enable OHCHR to implement its programme of work by building robust relationships with existing donors and exploring further funding opportunities with potential donors. The Section mobilizes funds, negotiates and manages a large number of contribution agreements and organizes and services numerous meetings, briefings and consultations with donors. In addition, it serves as an entry point for Member States and others seeking general information on OHCHR's current work, future priorities and funding needs.

The Media and Public Positioning Section focuses on engagement with the media and promoting the messaging of the High Commissioner and the Office through speeches, news releases, press briefings and other media products and activities.

The Meetings, Documents and Publications Unit (MDPU) is responsible for planning, coordinating and submitting all OHCHR official documents for processing and for providing advice to senior management on documentation and conference management-related issues. It provides advice on the preparation of OHCHR documentation, including format, length and submission deadlines; prepares the yearly calendar of OHCHR official meetings; and processes requests for non-calendar meetings using the facilities managed by the UN Office at Geneva. MDPU is also responsi-



ble for the OHCHR Publications Programme and, in this respect, organizes the meetings of the Publications Committee, advises on publishing and design, processes manuscripts and distributes publications around the world.

## Global Management Outputs

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

- ▶ During 2017, the Office issued several statements and press releases relating to women's rights from the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner. A special social media initiative was developed for the 16 Days of Activism and a number of feature stories focused on women, including in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- ▶ In addition to seeking funding to support OHCHR's gender work, DEXREL aimed at mobilizing resources to support various OHCHR projects specifically focused on gender issues. Most notably, funding was secured from Canada for a project on countering sexual and gender-based violence in Iraq and Syria; from the UK to support OHCHR's work on countering sexual and gender-based violence in a number of field presences; from Australia for work to address sexual violence; from Spain for the gender advisers in Beirut, Dakar and Panama; from two foundations (Wellspring and Ford) for work on discriminatory laws and sexual and reproductive health and for a project in Mexico related to disappearances, including of women and girls.
- ▶ Gender integration has been highlighted as a standard and a priority in the OHCHR Publications Policy and has consistently been promoted and applied during each phase of the publishing process. All concept notes for new publications are aligned with the OHCHR Gender Equality Policy and gender aspects are integrated into the methodological and content development processes, peer review critiques, vetting by the OHCHR Publications Committee and throughout the editing and production processes of OHCHR publications. In addition, in 2017, the Publications Committee considered and reviewed an increasing number of new publications focusing on women's human rights and gender-related issues, including *Born Free and Equal: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics in International Human Rights Law*; a training package on the human rights of LGBTI persons; *Stereotyping and the Judiciary: A Facilitator's Guide for Judges*; *Gender Integration in the Work of the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms: A Handbook*; and *Systematizing Gender Integration: Guidance for Human Rights Investigations*.

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

- ▶ The Office made full and effective use of a wide variety of communication tools and approaches to support the work of the international human rights mechanisms, thereby increasing their visibility and accessibility. For instance, in 2017, OHCHR issued 387 media communications, including advisories and press releases, relating to the work of the special procedures and 111 relating to the work of the human rights treaty bodies. The treaty body outputs were reduced by 65 per cent as part of a rationalization process, through which outputs were combined and sent out on a weekly basis rather than individually.
- ▶ Under the leadership of the Communications Section, good progress was made on the development of the new Human Rights Council website, which is scheduled to be launched in early 2018.
- ▶ DEXREL contributed to ensuring funding for the international human rights mechanisms through discussions with donors and Member States, both during annual consultations and at specific briefings on the substantive work of the Office. Contributions to the mechanisms and the dedicated trust funds, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) trust funds and the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of the Human Rights Council, were received from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey.
- ▶ MDPU has been increasingly called upon to find workable solutions to documentation and meeting-related problems, including regarding mandates, deadlines, translations and room allocations. The regular meetings of OHCHR's Group of Document Focal Points were reinstituted, while the terms of reference of the Group were reviewed. Additionally, MDPU strengthened its dialogue with submitting officers ahead of its submission deadlines and piloted the use of submission follow-up tracking lists in order to improve submission compliance. The final submission compliance rate for all slotted pre-session documents submitted by OHCHR for meetings taking place in 2017 was 84 per cent, meeting the target set for the period 2014-2017.

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

- ▶ The Communications Section worked in partnership with OHCHR field presences and supported them in the production of public information materials and the launch of a campaign on the seventieth



anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and advised them on media and social media issues, among other activities.

- ▶ Colleagues in the field and at headquarters consistently requested DEXREL support for their fundraising efforts. To this end, the Fundraising in the Field Guidance Note, first issued in 2014, was updated in 2017 and a standard operating procedure on the topic was drafted and will be discussed in 2018. Support was also provided for fundraising efforts at the field level through the development of several templates for proposal writing regarding thematic and country-based projects.
- ▶ During 2017, MDPU supported field operations worldwide by responding to and filling orders for OHCHR materials aimed at supporting training activities, the stocking of resource centres and libraries and promoting activism by NGOs and other parties. It also maintained the centralized online repository of in-progress and completed English and local language publications produced by field presences and provided policy and technical publishing advice and pre-press support to field presences.

#### **OHCHR staff has the necessary competencies and skills to effectively implement the OHCHR programme (GMO 6)**

- ▶ In support of fostering and strengthening resource mobilization coherence and coordination across the Office, DEXREL redesigned and populated its intranet with a number of key resources, including templates for funding proposals, fact sheets, infographics, training packages, resource mobilization information, such as voluntary contributions, proposals and reports submitted to donors, calls for proposals and other relevant information. The aim of this revised repository is to contribute to the improved effectiveness and efficiency of resource mobilization efforts across the Office.



The Secretary-General participates at an OHCHR event to mark Human Rights Day in New York, December 2017.

© UN Photo/Evan Schneider

#### **Improved awareness and understanding of and support to OHCHR's mission and programme by Member States and other stakeholders (GMO 7)**

- ▶ On Human Rights Day, the Office launched a year-long campaign to celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which will turn 70 in 2018. The campaign provides an opportunity to promote, engage with and reflect on the Declaration and its relevance in everyday life. The High Commissioner and the Mayor of Paris kicked-off the campaign at a public conference at Palais Chaillot in Paris, the historic site where the UDHR was adopted in 1948. In Geneva, the iconic Jet d'Eau and Palais Wilson were illuminated to celebrate the occasion. In New York, the Secretary-General launched the cam-

### **The “Stand up for someone’s rights today” campaign**

The Stand Up campaign, which was launched on Human Rights Day 2016, allowed UN Human Rights to engage new audiences and increase the reach of its call to “Stand up for someone’s rights today.”

Throughout 2017, UN Human Rights took every available opportunity to promote human rights values through the campaign. For instance, it partnered with the International Olympic Committee on the occasion of the international Day against racial discrimination (21 March) to stand up against racism. On 11 June, the High Commissioner kicked off a Football World Cup Qualifier, in Dublin, alongside the President of Ireland, taking the Office’s

message to the sports field. In another example, on 26 June, on the International Day in support of Victims of Torture, the Office joined forces with the International Bar Association to spread a message of hope and rally the legal profession against torture. Other notable collaborations were established, including with the United Nations Association of the United States of America, which spread the Office’s human rights message in the USA through its local chapters. In 2017, the Stand Up campaign, and its hashtag #standup4humanrights, reached millions of people and offered an opportunity for everyone to defend and promote human rights in their everyday life.

paign alongside the President of the General Assembly, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and two former High Commissioners for Human Rights, Louise Arbour and Navi Pillay.

- ▶ On social media, the High Commissioner participated in a lively Twitter Q&A session, #AskZeid, which was the top media tweet. The hashtag #HumanRightsDay was the top trending topic in Spanish (#DiaDeLosDerechosHumanos) and ranked number three in English worldwide. Several well-known personalities also participated on social media, took the pledge to stand up for the rights of other people or added their own voice, including UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner and Goodwill Ambassadors Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Connie Britton, Michelle Yeoh, Iker Casillas and novelist Paulo Coelho. A new emoji was created for Human Rights Day in partnership with Twitter. The Office partnered with Facebook to create a “cultural moment & camera effect” for Human Rights Day that received 7.9 million likes.
- ▶ Furthermore, the microsite [www.standup4human-rights.org](http://www.standup4human-rights.org), which was created for the “Stand up for someone’s rights today” campaign and launched on the occasion of Human Rights Day in 2016, was revamped to support the UDHR seventieth anniversary campaign. The site includes downloadable materials, such as a commemorative logo in the six official languages of the UN, an animated logo, four posters, a series of the 30 UDHR article illustrations and a variety of materials, such as banners, social media visuals, a wristband, a button, a pin and other items.
- ▶ Throughout the year, OHCHR supported a variety of communications initiatives for International Women’s Day, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, the Business and Human Rights Forum, the Forum on Minority Issues, the Decade for People of African Descent, a UN global campaign to promote the rights of refugees and migrants (the TOGETHER campaign), International Albinism Awareness Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, International Migrants Day and an international conference on human rights education. This was primarily done through social media activities, the development of special web pages, audio-visual materials and feature stories.
- ▶ Also during 2017, the Media and Public Positioning Section produced a total of 791 products for external audiences. These included 153 media products for the High Commissioner (85 news releases and media statements, 37 briefing notes, eight advisories and 10 comments), as well as 387 for the special procedures and 111 for the human rights treaty bodies. Furthermore, the Section’s speechwriter produced 140 speeches, lectures, video statements and other miscellaneous texts for the High Commissioner. As of the end of December, at least 24,010 articles had referenced the High Commissioner, his Office, his spokes-

people and OHCHR senior staff. Although this is approximately 4,000 fewer references than in 2016, it is the second highest total in the organization’s history.

- ▶ Approximately 100 feature stories were produced and published on OHCHR’s website, the “Stand up for someone’s rights today” and UDHR’s seventieth anniversary website and social media platforms.
- ▶ Regarding social media, OHCHR reached a combined following of more than 6.37 million followers, across 45 accounts, mainly in the English-language central accounts. Partnerships with leading social media companies, such as Twitter and Facebook, were established, resulting in unprecedented coverage on Human Rights Day.
- ▶ The Office increased its video production and, in 2017, a total of 116 videos were produced and recorded. Of these videos, 55 were published on YouTube while 36 others were shared with broadcasters (the European Broadcasting Union and the UN Department of Public Information’s distribution channel Unifeed) and received significant coverage by the media. One video featured interviews with an OHCHR team from Yemen, which was replayed 191 times by various television stations globally. Furthermore, OHCHR’s YouTube channel continues to generate public interest with an increase of half a million views during the year.
- ▶ DEXREL disseminated information and generated broad-based support for OHCHR among Member States and the wider donor community. In addition to appealing to existing and potential donors, the Section negotiated new agreements, followed up on contributions received and served as a focal point for Member States and others seeking information on OHCHR’s needs, activities and priorities. Under the leadership of DEXREL, and with an office-wide effort to reach out to donors in 2017, a total of US\$142.8 million was raised in extra budgetary contributions, representing an increase of approximately 10 per cent compared to the previous year (US\$129.6 million), which can be considered a significant improvement in light of the current political climate. The proportion of unearmarked funding increased slightly to 43 per cent (up from 38 per cent in 2016) as unearmarked contributions increased by US\$11.7 million (from US\$49.7 million in 2016 to US\$61.4 million in 2017). The Office received more earmarked contributions due to ongoing efforts to attract more local funding for field activities as well as tapping into non-traditional budget lines from which donors can only provide earmarked funds.
- ▶ Contributions from Member States increased to US\$126.1 million, compared to US\$110.9 million in 2016. These contributions represented 88.3 per cent of the income received by the Office in 2017. During the reporting year, 63 Member States made contributions to OHCHR, three less than in 2016. No

Member States pledged funds for the first time, while ten renewed their support after at least one year of inactivity. A total of 13 others disappeared from the list of donors. Almost all of the countries from the Western Group (25) contributed in 2017 and only 10 of the 33 States in the Latin American Group made a contribution. In the Asian Group, 16 out of 54 Member States contributed and in the Eastern European, 10 out of 23 supported the Office. Only two out of 54 African Member States provided financial support to OHCHR. Finally, a total of 102 funding agreements were signed, 22 of which were multi-year agreements.

- ▶ To encourage an increase in contributions from the development envelopes of OECD members, Dexrel submitted a request to the OECD to increase the rate at which contributions to its work could be reported by its members as official development assistance. As a result of a successful review by OECD's Development Assistance Committee, the rate at which unearmarked contributions provided to OHCHR can be reported as official development assistance is now 88 per cent (compared to the previous 64 per cent). In addition, donor support earmarked to OHCHR's work in developing countries, as per the OECD list of recipient countries, as well as contributions to the Voluntary Funds for Victims of Torture and for Technical Cooperation, can be reported in full as official development assistance.
- ▶ DEXREL participated in the annual OHCHR training on humanitarian planning and financing for field colleagues and provided guidance on available humanitarian funds and processes, whenever required. The funding generated through humanitarian appeal processes amounted to US\$752,332 in 2017 (compared to US\$1,345,507 in 2016).
- ▶ DEXREL's support to field presences was instrumental in increasing the amount raised in the field to approximately US\$28.2 million, compared to US\$25.3 million in 2016.
- ▶ In 2017, 42 calls for proposals from the European Union were examined, 16 of which were shared with colleagues. One application was submitted. While the concept note was approved, the full proposal did not rank among the best candidates. In addition to an increased participation in calls for proposals, the presence of a permanent DEXREL staff member in Brussels resulted in enhanced possibilities for providing colleagues with guidance, particularly in the field, when approaching the EU with regard to directly negotiated funding procedures.
- ▶ DEXREL explored new funding avenues with existing and potential donors throughout the year. For instance, the Section managed to secure additional resources for joint submissions with UN partners and participation in pooled funds, normally through the UNDP-managed Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs). Total funds received through MPTFs decreased in 2017 to US\$3.9 million (compared to US\$5.7m in 2016).
- ▶ In terms of outreach to the private sector, OHCHR's five-year partnership with Microsoft was officially launched on 16 May. In 2017, the partnership entailed the scoping and definition of Rights View, a dashboard that will display country data gathered from a variety of internal and external sources; the organization of events to promote the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; joint advocacy on LGBTI rights; as well as the provision of financial support for the work of the Office. Meetings to discuss potential areas of collaboration were also held with H&M, Marks & Spencer and Unilever, among other business corporations. At the end of the year, H&M announced its intention to engage with the UN Free & Equal campaign.
- ▶ OHCHR's mobile application developed for outreach and fundraising purposes was officially launched on the World Press Freedom Day, on 3 May. In addition, the number of individual donations through

## Human Rights Day 2017

On 10 December, UN Human Rights Chief Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein, in partnership with the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, and the French Government, launched a campaign at Palais de Chaillot to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It was at that site, 69 years ago, on 10 December 1948, that world leaders gathered to unanimously adopt the Declaration. The UDHR was the first document to recognize what have become universal human values, namely, equal dignity and the worth of every person. On this occasion, the City of Paris organized a month-long exhibit of posters that were created by international artists to illustrate the Declaration. In addition, the façade of

the Palais Wilson, the headquarters of UN Human Rights in Geneva, displayed the Office's "stand up for human rights" message while the iconic Jet d'Eau was lit up with blue lights. In New York, the Secretary-General launched the campaign in the presence of two former High Commissioners for Human Rights, Navi Pillay and Louise Arbour. As a special guest, Eleanor Roosevelt, who was portrayed by an actress, spoke about the groundbreaking and triumphant development of the UDHR and responded to questions from the audience. Other activities were organized elsewhere by UN Human Rights field presences, the United Nations family and the global human rights community.

OHCHR's website was maintained at approximately US\$1,000 per month, with more contributions being provided on the occasion of Human Rights Day or the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

- ▶ Supported by DEXREL, senior management and other colleagues devoted time to briefing Member States on the Office's work, plans, achievements and outputs, as well as on funding requirements. DEXREL organized over 100 briefings/meetings with Member States and other donors and donor consultations in 2017; almost four times as many briefings/meetings than were held in 2016. These included the launch of the 2017 Annual Appeal in February, the 2016 OHCHR Report in May and a technical briefing on the same report in July. In addition, meetings were held in Amman, Beirut and Jerusalem, in October, with a number of donors. The meetings were organized in cooperation with the Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation. The members spoke as independent human rights experts to highlight some key achievements of OHCHR's technical cooperation work and identified the Office's needs in the region in order to encourage further donor support.
- ▶ In an effort to better communicate OHCHR's added value to its donors, DEXREL invested in improving the Office's storytelling capacity by commissioning a seasoned communications specialist to undertake the two first field missions to Colombia and Kenya to gather stories from the field. The end result of this project will be reported in 2018.
- ▶ In 2017, OHCHR distributed over 78,000 copies of printed materials worldwide, including through several high-profile events during the year, including the Business and Human Rights Forum, where over 3,500 copies of printed materials were distributed to conference participants. MDPU also coordinated the production of seven new and revised English language OHCHR publications and 18 translations in other official UN languages.

## Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Service

### Background

The Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Service leads OHCHR's efforts to become a fully results-based organization. It supports the entire Office and is central to turning the High Commissioner's strategic vision into actionable priorities and operational plans, policies and procedures. It ensures that implementation efforts are monitored, results are evaluated and

lessons learned are identified and factored into planning and programming processes, working with the entire Office in a service-oriented approach.

### Global Management Outputs

#### OHCHR strategic decisions are implemented in a timely manner (GMO 1)

- ▶ In addition to meetings held in the context of OHCHR's internal bodies for senior-level decision-making (i.e., the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Programme and Budget Review Board (PBRB)), as well as discussions in the context of the Policy Advisory Group (PAG), several leadership retreats were held to provide dedicated time and space for managers to engage in collective thinking regarding the operationalization of important policy issues.
- ▶ The PBRB convened 11 in-person and 12 virtual sessions in 2017. The use of the electronic review by the PBRB, as an alternative to in-person meetings, proved helpful in reducing the workload of the in-person meetings and ensured a quick turn-around in addressing urgent matters.
- ▶ In terms of performance assessment, the End of Programme Cycle reporting is a crucial step in OHCHR's programming framework as it contributes to assessing the Office's performance over the previous four years and provides insights into the impact of its work. In this respect, the different parts of the Office were required to reflect on their contributions to the results that OHCHR committed to deliver during the 2014-2017 cycle and analyse any successes, challenges and lessons learned. In the course of 2017, the data collection forms to be used for the assessment of indicators were updated and finalized. Furthermore, a guidance note on the indicators was produced by PPMES, enabling colleagues to use the data collection forms in a consistent and comprehensive way.
- ▶ Information collected through the Office's Performance Monitoring System and subsequent analysis have been shared with the PBRB, triggering actions at the management level resulting in an enhanced monitoring capacity of the Office.
- ▶ On the planning side, in the context of the global consultation for the preparation of the 2018-2021 OHCHR Management Plan (OMP) and in order to facilitate the work of colleagues during the discussions on specific issues, PPMES prepared a number of compilations on activities currently being implemented by OHCHR in specific areas of work. Special attention was given to exploring frontier issues in OHCHR's current work to have a better understanding of the level of engagement that the Office has had on these issues and to link the future implementation of OHCHR's programme with lessons learned.



- ▶ In relation to planning and the development of its next four-year management plan, the Office engaged in internal and external consultations, gathered information, assessed past experiences and opened up the space for creative and innovative thinking. Consultations took place at the country, regional and headquarters levels and those organized with external stakeholders involved a wide range of actors, including Member States, the UN system and civil society. In total, more than 140 external stakeholders participated in the regional consultations (in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Brussels and Panama) and 900 responded to the online survey. The outcomes of the consultations were carefully reviewed by senior management at a retreat held on 23-24 May and their conclusions served as the basis for an OHCHR-wide meeting in July. At the meeting, Heads of field offices and colleagues from New York and Geneva came together to identify and flesh out the key building blocks of the new management plan.
- ▶ The new management plan is built around six pillars that broadly follow the thematic priorities of the current OMP and reflect OHCHR's core mandate, namely, accountability, participation, non-discrimination, the mainstreaming of human rights in development and in peace and security and support to the international human rights mechanisms. At the same time, a number of areas were identified that require greater attention so that OHCHR can adapt its programme to the changing external context. The so-called identified "shifts" are: building a global constituency for human rights, protecting and expanding civic space, preventing conflict, violence and insecurity and delivering human rights in the context of frontier issues, such as climate change, corruption, digital space, inequality and migration. Areas of action to improve the effectiveness of the organization were also identified, including the promotion of diversity and gender equality, building partnerships, enhancing knowledge management, strengthening communication, career development and resource mobilization.
- ▶ Following the approval of its Evaluation Plan for 2014-2017, the Office committed itself to undertaking six strategic evaluations per programming cycle, including two impact studies per programming cycle and one evaluation per headquarters' sub-programme per cycle, as well as three evaluations of field presences per year. In 2017, the evaluations of the Regional Gender Advisers Structure, the Country Programme for Honduras and the Maya Programme in Guatemala were finalized and the evaluation of Support to Legislation in Conformity with International Standards was initiated; all of them under the leadership of PPMES. In addition, PPMES supported an evaluation that was under-

taken by the Office of Internal Oversight Services on human rights protection in peacekeeping operations and an assessment of the Office by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network, both of which began in 2017.

- ▶ In relation to the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of NHRIs, the Regional Office for Central Asia and the Country Programme Review for Mexico, the corresponding action plans have been submitted to the PBRB and are being implemented. Similar follow-up plans are being prepared for other evaluations that have been recently finalized.
- ▶ In addition, an analysis of the results of all evaluations and audits conducted during the programming cycle 2014-2017 was undertaken in order to provide inputs for the formulation of the management plan for 2018-2021. The conclusions, good practices, lessons learned and recommendations were categorized and analysed and used during the consultations and development of the new OMP.
- ▶ With regard to the Performance Monitoring System, time was invested in analysing and eliminating redundancies in the code basis, which has led to the improved performance of the system. In addition, in 2017, new functionalities were added to the system, including new dashboard controls and new data collection forms and view screens that are needed for the end-of-cycle reports.

#### **Organizational work processes and structures are aligned for increased efficiency (GMO 2)**

- ▶ As of the end of 2017, approximately 50 per cent of the approved recommendations related to the change management process that are under the purview of OHCHR were implemented, including the review of job descriptions, the delegated authority for field recruitment and the electronic submission of recruitment memos.

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

- ▶ A gender perspective was systematically integrated into planning and programming and, in particular, in the process to define OHCHR's strategy for 2018-2021. A dedicated Organizational Effectiveness Action Plan on diversity and gender was developed under the co-leadership of PPMES. Gender focal points attended the different stages of the development of the new OMP to ensure that a gender perspective was taken into account.

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

- ▶ PPMES, together with other sections in the Office, initiated a working group to coordinate all aspects related to the Office's engagement with the Peace-

building Fund. In the context of this working group, OHCHR is in regular contact with the Peacebuilding Support Office in New York on opportunities and requirements and is reaching out to its field presences to alert them about upcoming opportunities. As a result, a number of funding proposals have been submitted and an increase in quality was observed.

**Improved awareness and understanding of and support to OHCHR's mission and programme by Member States and other stakeholders (GMO 7)**

- ▶ PPMES provided regular briefings to donors on the Office's achievements related to results-based management, the new OMP, internal governance structure and the Change Initiative.

## Programme Support and Management Services

### Background

The Programme Support and Management Services provides administrative support within the Office. It handles budget and financial management, recruitment and human resources management, procurement, asset management and general logistical support to field activities, travel services, information technology and staff development and training. PSMS has an overall view of the resources of the Office and is consequently in charge of monitoring, coordinating and maximizing the use of those resources.

The transition to Umoja continued to present great challenges for PSMS, while the introduction of the new UN Secretariat Staff Selection and Mobility System heralded more changes and required intensive interaction and coordination within OHCHR and with the Office of Human Resources Management in New York. In this regard, the Staff Development Unit provided training and learning opportunities to support OHCHR staff members within the context of the Mobility System.

### Global Management Outputs

**Organizational work processes and structures are aligned for increased efficiency (GMO 2)**

- ▶ PSMS continued to lead the implementation of Umoja at OHCHR. This has meant, among other things, an ongoing investment of time into the necessary training programmes and the phased roll-out of appropriate modules to OHCHR field presences.

- ▶ In relation to the implementation of a Digital Secretariat, PSMS created a number of extranets that enable stakeholders to concurrently work on documents in a secure paperless manner. As a result of this work, for example, the human rights treaty bodies now often post their documents on their extranets instead of distributing physical copies at their sessions, thus reducing the need for paper copies.
- ▶ The OHCHR Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Access to Classified Records and Declassification was finalized in 2017 and presented to senior managers for approval. The SOP provides guidelines on the classification and handling of OHCHR's sensitive information, in line with the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2007/6.

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

- ▶ With the logistical support of PSMS, a new mandatory course on "Preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse" was introduced for all United Nations Secretariat staff. In addition, the online course, "I Know Gender," was delivered as part of the induction and orientation for new OHCHR staff members.

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

- ▶ PSMS undertook several missions in 2017 to provide direct help and advice to field presences with audits, Umoja roll-out and other administrative issues. Additionally, PSMS organized four week-long Umoja training sessions in the field, in Beirut, Bogota, Dakar and Entebbe, during the second half of 2017, in addition to Webex sessions on the Umoja travel function for staff members in all OHCHR field presences.
- ▶ PSMS contributed to the development of the new National Recommendations Tracking Database and maintained the existing MAYA application for managing financial information at the field level, which is still being used during the transition to Umoja.
- ▶ PSMS continued to provide logistical support to the field with respect to the start-up of the Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, the Fact-Finding Mission for Myanmar, the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism on Syria as well as the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen.

**OHCHR staff has the necessary competencies and skills to effectively implement the OHCHR programme (GMO 6)**

- ▶ PSMS continued to increase the skills and competencies of OHCHR staff through mandatory training, upgrading of substantive skills, peer learning activities, in-house trainings and coaching. During the

period under review, more than 147 staff members attended trainings organized by PSMS. It also supported increased access to learning opportunities for field-based staff members through the promotion of the new learning platform, Lynda.com, and the organization of Umoja trainings.

- ▶ The knowledge and capacities of OHCHR staff members were strengthened through the organization of Coffee Briefings on current substantive human rights issues, which were also made available to field-based staff through podcasts. Furthermore, 48 new staff members benefited from a two-day Orientation Programme on the mandate, strategy and functioning of the Office.

#### **Efficient management of human and financial resources (GMO 8)**

- ▶ Regarding recruitment processes, PSMS continued supporting OHCHR's use of Inspira, the Secretariat's current system for recruitment of staff, consultants and interns, performance management and continuing appointments. The introduction of Umoja generated a number of new processes, which required adjustments regarding the workflows for selections and onboarding of recruited staff.
- ▶ The financial reporting module of Umoja is not yet fully functional. As a consequence, the extraction of financial records to produce numerous donor financial reports has been extremely labour intensive. OHCHR has seen a tendency of the donor community to earmark funds with separate financial reporting requirements, which has nearly doubled the volume of reports prepared by PSMS in recent years.
- ▶ The MAYA system was installed in the Honduras Office in 2017 and the staff member supporting the application was trained on its correct use.
- ▶ In 2017, OHCHR migrated its email platform from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Exchange, as per the strategy of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, in New York. This change brought a reduction of costs to the Office as the Lotus Notes licences were comparatively expensive.
- ▶ Umoja continued to be a major area of focus for PSMS with regard to travel, as it had to engage with UN Headquarters to address some of the specificities of OHCHR-supported travel arrangements that were not foreseen during the development of the travel module of Umoja.
- ▶ PSMS has also seen a significant increase in its workload since the expansion of low-value procurement authority from US\$4,000 to US\$10,000. This meant taking over all low value procurement cases from the UN Office at Geneva and the low value procurement cases from several field offices.
- ▶ Given the instructions from UN Headquarters to phase out the use of UNDP to process travel and

procurement in the field as of 2018, the volume of work for PSMS in these two areas will significantly increase. In preparation for this change, PSMS conducted regional training for field staff in four locations in 2017, and it is expected that additional training will be held in 2018 in other locations.

## **Safety and Security Section**

### **Background**

The OHCHR Safety and Security Section coordinates the security of OHCHR operations, staff and assets worldwide in accordance with the established UN security risk management practices and in close coordination with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. The Section is an integral part of the OHCHR support mechanism to the Human Rights Council's mandated activities, such as fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry. The Section is responsible for coordinating UN security management system coverage to officials and experts, including working groups, special rapporteurs and commissioners, who are travelling on behalf of OHCHR. It also participates in system-wide UN security policymaking fora to ensure that human rights are mainstreamed into staff security policies and procedures applicable to all UN agencies, funds and programmes. At the operational level, the Section conducts risk assessments and analyses of security situations, both globally and in relevant field locations. It provides technical supervision and assistance on policies, procedures and minimum operating security standards for all staff, field presences and activities and manages the global security clearance and travel advisory service.

### **Global Management Outputs**

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

- ▶ Dedicated security support is provided to special rapporteurs and treaty body experts during their official missions, as well as to members of the commissions of inquiry, fact-finding, assessment and mapping missions. This support, based on detailed security concepts of operations and security risk assessments that are developed in accordance with the UN security management system policies, has been very effective in ensuring a safe working environment. In 2017, the Section supported and coordinated 28 missions of special procedures and treaty body experts,

and 32 field visits of commissions of inquiry, fact-finding missions and missions of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

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

- ▶ During 2017, the Section deployed security officers to the field on missions covering several countries to conduct security assessment and security coordination missions and supported 33 elevated risk field missions.



# Research and Right to Development Division

## Background

The Research and Right to Development Division (RRDD) conducts thematic research and contributes to policy development and the mainstreaming of human rights across the work of the United Nations, produces tools and learning packages and provides expertise on human rights themes to many stakeholders, as mandated by the Human Rights Council (HRC), the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council or under internationally agreed development goals. The Division leads efforts to advance the right to development in accordance with the High Commissioner's mandate to "promote and protect the realization of the right to development and to enhance support from relevant bodies of the United Nations system for this purpose." RRDD undertakes human rights research and advocacy work and contributes to country-level implementation through the provision of advisory services, legal and policy reviews and capacity-development, which is often undertaken by OHCHR field presences.

The Division's main functions are:

- ▶ Supporting the High Commissioner's global leadership role in advocacy on thematic human rights issues. The Division led the global engagement around themes in relation to all six thematic priorities for the period 2014-2017 in terms of research, advice, advocacy and capacity-development.
- ▶ Developing methodology and policies relating to human rights work, namely translating international human rights law and principles into practical methods, approaches, standards, procedures and tools for the human rights work that is being carried out by OHCHR and other UN, international and national actors.
- ▶ Promoting the integration of human rights into all policy, management and operational work of the UN, development, peace and security, humanitarian affairs and economic and social affairs in order to strengthen the overall normative and operational linkages. This is primarily done in the course of OHCHR's work with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), in connection with the Human Rights up Front (HRUF) Action Plan and through

participation with inter-agency groups, during meetings and through bilateral cooperation with agencies and programmes, including UN Women, UNESCO, FAO, WHO, ILO and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provide the framework for this work.

- ▶ Contributing to increased knowledge and understanding of human rights through education and training, the development of materials, policies, methodologies and programmes and the provision of training, advice and coordination under the Plan of Action for the Third Phase (2015-2019) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.
- ▶ Supporting the international human rights mechanisms and providing substantive input and organizational assistance to the HRC.
- ▶ Taking the lead in the implementation of OHCHR's Global Management Output 3, which requires that a "gender perspective is effectively integrated into all OHCHR policies, programmes and processes" and contributing to the enhancement of staff skills in line with Global Management Output 6.

## Results

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

- ▶ *Advances in the progressive development of international and regional human rights law in areas relevant to the Office's thematic priorities (EA 8)*  
OHCHR has been instrumental in supporting normative development and has undertaken a more proactive role in advising the human rights mechanisms and Member States on existing gaps and areas where additional guidance was required. Positive examples of the successful engagement with the human rights treaty bodies are General Comment No. 22 by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to sexual and reproductive health and General Recommendation No. 35 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on gender-based violence against women. Both texts contain ground-breaking guidance in key areas of women's rights and gender equality. These standards

have already been applied by human rights mechanisms in specific national contexts, including in decisions on individual complaints (i.e., *Mellet v. Ireland*, *Whelan v. Ireland*), as well as in submissions by special procedures to national judicial processes in the form of amicus briefs relating to reproductive health and rights issues in Brazil and the United Kingdom. The Office also supported the elaboration of general recommendations on racist hate speech and on people of African descent by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

OHCHR supported the eighth session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, as part of the joint Secretariat with UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is mandated to consider the feasibility of developing a new international instrument dedicated to the human rights of older persons. The Office contributed to greater awareness of older persons' human rights issues and focused on normative gaps, through thematic discussions on equality and non-discrimination, as well as neglect, violence and abuse. The Office took steps to strengthen the role of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) in this process, which participated in the Working Group for the first time after a landmark decision that enabled NHRIs that had been accredited with 'A' status to participate in all General Assembly subsidiary bodies except the Human Rights Council. In addition, the Office contributed to ensuring the recognition of the human rights of older persons in the regional five-year review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and in other international fora, such as the second International Conference on the Human Rights of Older Persons that was held in September within the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting.

On 3 October 2017, the Third Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights issued a judgment on the case of *N.D. and N.T. v Spain* and found that there had been a violation of the prohibition of collective expulsions and of the right to an effective remedy, in line with the arguments put forward by the High Commissioner in 2015 as a third party.

### Enhancing equality and countering discrimination

#### ► *Increased use of anti-discrimination and equality standards by judges and prosecutors (EA 1)*

OHCHR's research on judicial gender stereotyping with a focus on case law and practices unearthed a significant number of legal cases where gender stereotyping occurs, either because judges have not addressed stereotypes in their deliberations or decisions or because they themselves have perpetuated gender stereotypes, negatively impacting on the rights of women. The Council of Europe has recognized the importance of this work. In 2016, the Office and the Council of Europe cooperated to



Eighth working session of the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, July 2017. © UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

support the development of the Training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women's Access to Justice.

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

Through the provision of technical advice and guidance, OHCHR contributed to the adoption of gender equality laws in the Republic of Moldova, Tanzania and Zambia. Legislation on specific women's rights issues has benefited from OHCHR expertise, including on domestic violence in Belarus and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, criminal codes in Burundi and Haiti, female genital mutilation in the Gambia and forced marriage in Kyrgyzstan. To this end, OHCHR provided materials on international human rights standards related to women's human rights, including a publication entitled *Women's Rights are Human Rights* and an information series on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Based on a request by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Office provided comments on a draft law to combat discrimination in line with existing international standards, which is still under consideration.

In 2017, OHCHR launched an online course of the Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women as part of its efforts to promote the application and dissemination of tools seeking to strengthen the capacities of justice systems to apply human rights standards on gender-related crimes. In its first year of implementation, the online course has benefited more than 250 judicial officials and key actors dealing with femicide cases from Argentina, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama.

OHCHR also worked closely with indigenous peoples and Member States to advance the implementation of indigenous peoples' rights through its annual reporting to the Human Rights Council and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and at side events, panels and through other tools. In terms of country-level engagement, in a number of countries in Central and South America and in other regions, the Office helped to integrate the rights of indige-

nous peoples into national law by providing technical assistance to national partners seeking to align their legal frameworks with the rights outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Additionally, the Office played a leading role as the coordinator of the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Together with UN and civil society partners, OHCHR launched a Guidance Tool on Descent-Based Discrimination in Nepal, in March 2017, at a gathering of governmental and civil society representatives from several countries in the region. The Office further organized a seminar, in Santiago de Chile, on integrating minorities into development programming in line with the Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on racial discrimination and the protection of minorities.

- ▶ *National human rights institutions and civil society create and support participatory mechanisms to enhance equality and counter discrimination (EA 5)*  
The 2017 edition of OHCHR's minorities and indigenous fellowship programmes helped 48 advocates from 46 indigenous and minority communities to learn about the UN human rights machinery and enhance their international advocacy skills. Many of the fellows subsequently invoked their rights in UN bodies and mechanisms. The impact of the fellowship programmes was showcased in a promotional video that was launched in February 2017 and through other outreach materials.
- ▶ *Increased integration of human rights into international and regional processes relevant to migration (EA 10)*

Through the Global Migration Group, OHCHR provided support to and actively intervened in the inter-governmental process of the Global Compact on Migration. It also continued to support the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration, including through seconding a staff member to her office. Furthermore, the Human Rights Council continued to address the issue of migrants in vulnerable situations. Civil society actors at the international and regional levels increas-

ingly made reference to the work of the Office in advocating for the human rights of migrants.

The Office organized the Second Regional Meeting of the International Decade for people of African descent focussing on trends, priorities and challenges at the national and regional levels to effectively implement the Decade's Programme of Activities, and exchange good practices. This second regional meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on ways and means that governments from Central Asia, Europe and North America may integrate the provisions of the Programmes of Activities in their policies, programmes and strategies. The meeting brought together Member States, United Nations agencies, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, equality bodies and civil society representatives. OHCHR also organized the Annual Fellowship Programme for people of African descent, which benefitted 12 fellows from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Guyana, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, United States of America, United Kingdom and Venezuela, who deepened their understanding of the United Nations human rights system, with a focus on issues of particular relevance to people of African descent. OHCHR further supported the Working Group of Experts on people of African descent in undertaking country visits to Germany and Guyana, and its 20th session on the theme "Leaving no one behind: people of African descent and the Sustainable Development Goals." The Working Group concluded that the Sustainable Development Goals provide a comprehensive framework to effectively combat the racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, Afrophobia and related intolerance that people of African descent face every day around the world, and urged Member States to make a genuine commitment to the standard of leaving no one behind.

#### Combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law

- ▶ *Constitutions, laws, administrative measures and policies respect, protect and guarantee freedom of opinion and expression, including the prohibition of*

So, I think that's  
a huge part of  
combatting  
xenophobia.  
It's redefining  
community.



#StandUp4HumanRights



Snapshots of two of the animated videos, released by OHCHR, featuring stories about migrants and their communities.



## Human rights and technology

Digital technology increasingly shapes our world, creating both great opportunities and risks for the promotion and protection of human rights. UN Human Rights has taken up the challenge and began engaging on some of the new and emerging issues arising in this context. In statements and at events, the High Commissioner has spoken out on diverse topics, such as online freedom of expression, hate speech, misinformation, online bullying, the gender digital divide, artificial intelligence, privacy and the fourth industrial revolution. One of his most notable statements was delivered during a mission to Silicon Valley, in September 2017, where he attended key events at the World Economic Forum and Berkeley University.



The Deputy High Commissioner speaks at the Geneva Lecture Series on Internet governance challenges, Geneva, November 2017. © UN Photo/Elma Okic

UN Human Rights contributed extensively to the AI for Good Global Summit, a multi-stakeholder event that took place in June 2017 and shed light on the latest developments in artificial intelligence and their implications for regulation, ethics, security and privacy. The Office was also involved in the Internet Governance Forum 2017, which included sessions on cybersecurity, violent online extremism and the gender digital divide. Cybersecurity featured prominently in a widely attended high-level dis-

cussion between the Deputy High Commissioner and Microsoft's Chief Legal Officer, Brad Smith. Finally, work has been carried out on gender and digital technology. UN Human Rights presented a well-received report to the Human Rights Council, entitled "Ways to bridge the gender digital divide from a human rights perspective." The findings of the report will be used as a springboard for ongoing work in this field.

*incitement to hatred, peaceful assembly, association, conscience, religion and belief (EA 1)*

The Office addressed issues around freedom of expression online by co-organizing two events at the Internet Governance Forum 2017, a multi-stakeholder forum for policy dialogue on issues of Internet governance. A half-day event, co-organized with civil society actors, focused on developing a human rights-based approach to cybersecurity, while another session focused on responses to violent extremism online. Civil society actors, human rights experts and business representatives from across the globe analysed law-related trends in this context.

- ▶ *National justice systems established and functioning in accordance with international human rights norms and standards and increasingly apply these norms and standards, including economic, social and cultural rights (EA 1)*

In 2017, OHCHR elaborated guidance for trial monitoring and co-organized and participated in a number of trainings at the national level on human rights in the administration of justice. For instance, in Eritrea, the Office collaborated with the Government to organize a workshop on the human rights aspects of the administration of justice, such as the independence of the judiciary, the protection of persons deprived of their liberty, the right to a fair trial and the rights of persons in situations of vulnerability. About 70 representatives attended the event, including judges, prosecutors, police, correction personnel, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior and civil society representatives. Also at the national level, the Office provided technical assistance to the Government of Colombia in the development of a policy to eradicate the cultivation of illicit drugs in a manner that is compatible with human rights. At the global level, under the umbrella of a project led by UNDP and the Inter-



national Centre for Drug Policy and Human Rights, the Office contributed to the drafting of the International Guidelines on Drug Policy, which will seek to provide guidance to States and other stakeholders on issues related to human rights and drug policy.

- *Increased number of States that have abolished the death penalty and/or pending abolition, increasingly comply with relevant international human rights obligations (EA 1)*

The Office provided technical advice and carried out advocacy with States that retain the death penalty in order to encourage a moratorium in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/176, and urge the implementation of international standards guaranteeing the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, including in Belarus, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Mauritania, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, the State of Palestine and the United States of America. The Office also engaged with the Government of Maldives to urge it to maintain its long-standing de facto moratorium on the death penalty. In addition, with a view to encouraging States to move away from the death penalty, the Office provided support to the UNCT for Barbados in hosting a seminar, in September 2017, on attitudes towards the death penalty in the Caribbean. The seminar was linked to an ongoing research project that explores public opinion on the death penalty in the Caribbean and followed a day of discussions with the public to survey their views on the death penalty in Barbados.

- *Counter-terrorism legal frameworks, policies, strategies and institutions increasingly aligned with international human rights standards (EA 1)*

Through the “Faith for Rights” initiative, the Office engaged with faith-based actors to provide space for cross-disciplinary reflections on the connections between religions and human rights. In March 2017, the theistic, non-theistic and atheistic participants of an OHCHR expert workshop adopted the Beirut Decla-

ration and its corresponding 18 commitments, which articulate how “faith” can more effectively stand up for “rights” so that both can enhance the other. The Beirut Declaration addresses incitement to religious hatred (following up on the Rabat Plan of Action) and covers the full spectrum of human rights responsibilities of religious leaders. Furthermore, in July 2017, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women raised the “Faith for Rights” framework in their dialogues with three States Parties.

- *Transitional justice mechanisms established and increasingly operating in accordance with international human rights norms, standards and good practices (EA 3)*

The Office actively contributed to transitional justice discussions within the UN system and in the Gambia, Iraq, Kosovo<sup>16</sup>, Nepal, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan (Darfur) and Tunisia, in particular regarding laws establishing transitional justice mechanisms. For instance, OHCHR provided support to the national consultation taskforce on reconciliation mechanisms, established by the Government of Sri Lanka, and provided training to members and advisory panels, representatives and experts of the taskforce on the substantive content of transitional justice. In the Gambia, support was provided for the development of strategies to integrate a gender perspective into transitional justice initiatives, while advocacy was carried out to promote the participation of women and girls in transitional justice mechanisms. In Colombia, the Office supported the national efforts for the establishment of judicial and non-judicial mechanisms to deal with serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed during the armed conflict. In Guatemala, OHCHR facilitated the participation of civil society and victims in the Zepur

<sup>16</sup> Reference to Kosovo should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

## Faith for Rights

To provide space for and enlarge human rights engagement with religious leaders and faith-based actors, UN Human Rights has spearheaded the “Faith for Rights” initiative. It is hoped that this initiative will facilitate reflections across disciplines regarding the connections between religion and human rights. In March 2017, the theistic, non-theistic and atheistic participants of a UN Human Rights expert workshop adopted the Beirut Declaration and its corresponding 18 commitments, which articulate how “faith” can stand up for “rights” more effectively so that each one enhances the other. The Beirut Declaration addresses incitement to re-

ligious hatred and sets out the human rights responsibilities of religious leaders. Several thematic and country-specific reports by the Secretary-General, High Commissioner, special procedures and treaty bodies make reference to this Declaration. Furthermore, in December, more than 100 States, national human rights institutions, regional organizations, religious authorities and civil society actors participated in a symposium, in Rabat, to present projects and areas of future cooperation in order to combat discrimination on the basis of religion and enhance the role of faith-based actors in the defence of human rights.

Sarco trial that resulted in the conviction of military officials for the sexual exploitation of indigenous women and it is providing technical assistance for the implementation of appropriate reparation measures. In the Central African Republic, the Office collaborated in the preparation of the mapping report which documents the serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law that were committed in the country between 2003 and 2015 by Government forces and various local and foreign armed groups, as well as international and foreign defence forces. The report, which was released in May 2017, provides an important factual basis for transitional justice processes, including vetting and truth seeking mechanisms and the appointment of members of the National Human Rights Commission.

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

- ▶ *Constitutions, laws and policies increasingly protect human rights, especially land and housing rights, with particular attention paid to non-discrimination and gender equality, in the context of development and the exploitation of natural resources (EA 1)*

In the areas of land and housing rights, the Office supported the human rights-based implementation of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, including by strengthening partnerships with local and regional authorities and facilitating interactions with UN human rights mechanisms and other key stakeholders. The Office also supported the joint “Make the Shift” initiative with the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing and the United Cities and Local Governments organization, which will provide a platform for a multiplicity of local, national and regional voices and actions to reclaim housing and land as human rights.

As a follow-up to Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/32/10, the Office convened two expert workshops to discuss the interface between human rights due diligence and standards for legal liability and to explore how to more effectively prosecute companies involved with human rights abuses. These discussions enhanced the understanding of States about the challenges and complexities deriving from their obligations to provide an effective remedy to victims of corporate-related human rights abuse. It also contributed to an increased focus on access to remedy in law and policy. The workshops fed into some of the normative and practical discussions during the 2017 Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, which focused on challenges faced and progress made in ensuring that domestic public law regimes provide access to remedy. The Office supported the OECD to incorporate core concepts from the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights into its processes and guidance

documents, thereby contributing to the development of sector-specific guidance for the footwear and garment sector and institutional investors and ensuring an increased focus on the human rights chapter of the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises and the work of the OECD National Contact Points.

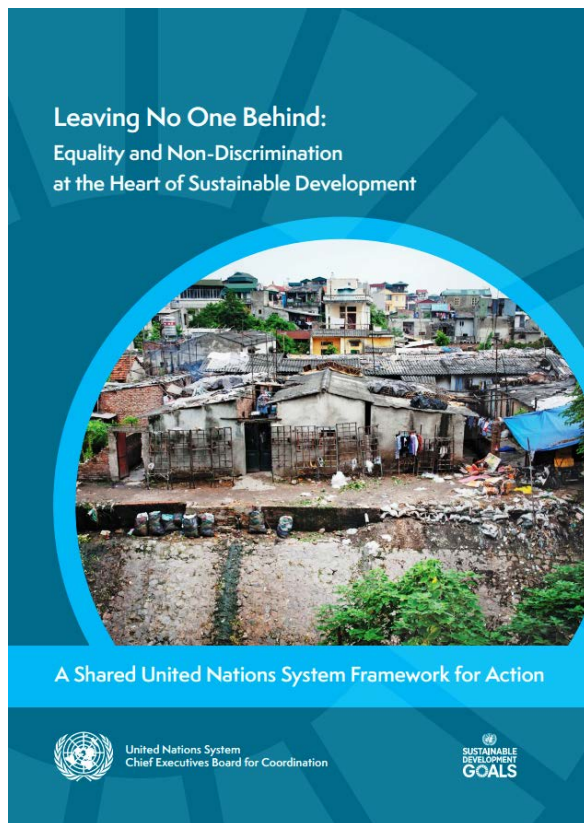
- ▶ *Rights-holders meaningfully participate in the design and monitoring of public policies, budgets and development projects particularly affecting their human rights (EA 5)*

OHCHR engaged with the World Bank in relation to the integration of indigenous peoples’ rights in its guidance notes on new environmental and social safeguards. The Office also developed a tool to empower stakeholders to explore the linkages between international human rights obligations and national budgets, highlighting the importance of human rights-based budgets in the context of SDG implementation.

- ▶ *Human rights are integrated into the formulation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda (EA 10)*

OHCHR helped to ensure that UN development system guidance on SDG implementation and monitoring integrates human rights, including the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms. The Office co-led a UN system-wide initiative to place the imperative of addressing inequalities and discrimination at the heart of the UN’s support to SDG implementation, focusing on practical strategies for reducing inequalities within and among countries and eliminating multiple forms of discrimination. The UN’s Chief Executive Board adopted this framework (entitled Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development) for the UN system and published it in 2017.

As part of strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights in SDG implementation at the country level, the Office led efforts to integrate human rights into the UN system-wide development policies and programmes under the UNDG, including by co-leading the update of the 2017 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Guidance. It further organized two retreats for resident coordinators on “Leveraging synergies in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs and human rights,” in the Latin America and Middle East and North Africa regions. These events contributed to increasing the awareness of participants about the linkages between the SDGs and human rights and between the international human rights system and its recommendations. As a result, participants made commitments to integrate human rights into SDG implementation at the national level and to build relationships between SDG decision makers and human rights actors at the national level, including by opening spaces for civil society wherever possible. In addition, the Office held



a series of “Dialogues on SDGs and human rights,” in New York, to identify good practices across different countries in terms of integrating human rights into the implementation of SDGs.

The majority of the SDG indicators adopted by the General Assembly are directly related to the realization of human rights, including the right to development. In fact, the interdependence between human rights and sustainable development is increasingly recognized in the development of SDG indicators, including for data disaggregation. This is reflected by the growing support for implementation of the guidance developed by the Office on a human rights-based approach to data. The Office also advanced methodological work for the compilation and reporting on SDG indicators for which it received custodianship by the international community, including indicators on the prevalence of discrimination, violence against human rights defenders, existence of national human rights institutions and conflict-related deaths (not covered by traditional homicide statistics). At the country level, the Office was able to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between human rights and statistical organizations for the development of indicators in Kenya, the Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, the State of Palestine, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and Uzbekistan. In July, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics signed an agreement to collaborate on the development and use of indicators that are relevant to human rights.

In terms of work on health and human rights, OHCHR carried out capacity-building on human rights monitoring in health care settings, supported the increased prioritization of sexual and reproductive health by national human rights institutions and enhanced its engagement with the judiciary on economic, social and cultural rights. The Office, together with WHO, also supported the High-Level Working Group on the Health and Rights of Women, Children and Adolescents (HLWG), which is mandated to secure political support, at both national and international levels, for the implementation of the human rights-related actions of the Global Strategy on Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health. The Global Strategy is a key implementing platform for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes the role of human rights in securing improved health outcomes for women, children and adolescents. In May 2017, the HLWG issued its report, the first to be presented to both the Human Rights Council and the World Health Assembly, with recommendations for the creation of an enabling environment, partnering with people and strengthening evidence and accountability. Furthermore, in response to the call by HLWG for OHCHR and WHO to establish a joint programme of work to support the implementation of its recommendations, the organizations signed a Framework of Cooperation to this effect on 21 November 2017.

During 2017, the Office chaired the Inter-Agency Group against Trafficking in Persons, successfully leading the Group through the General Assembly’s appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to combat trafficking. The Group’s submission, coordinated by OHCHR, contained a number of provisions with direct relevance to human rights issues and was featured prominently in the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly. The Office was also successful in mainstreaming the human rights-based approach into the Inter-Agency Group’s joint policy papers, such as the issue brief on trafficking in persons and conflict, trafficking in persons and gender and the intersectionality between trafficking in persons and refugee status.

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

In July 2017, the Human Rights Impact Assessment of the Continental Free Trade Area agreement in Africa was launched. The Office shared policy recommendations with negotiators and policymakers to help with the design of a more inclusive, human rights-compliant trade agreement. The next step is to ensure that the findings of the assessment are implemented.

## International Conference on Human Rights Education “Bridging our Diversities”

UN Human Rights, together with Equitas, co-organized the International Conference on Human Rights Education, “Bridging our Diversities,” which was held in Canada from 30 November to 3 December 2017. Approximately 300 educators, scholars and human rights defenders from over 50 countries participated in the four-day event. The conference documented and shared good human rights education practices in addressing today’s most pressing global challenges, such as countering extremist violence, ensuring the inclusion of refugees and migrants, supporting human rights defenders, empowering women and girls; eliminating inequality and discrimination and ensuring renewed relationships with indigenous peoples.

In October 2017, the Office collaborated with the University for Peace in Costa Rica and the UN University’s International Institute for Global Health in Malaysia to launch an interactive e-learning module on operationalizing the right to development in implementing the SDGs. This module brings together the combined contributions of 10 experts from around the world with a common commitment to ensure the mainstreaming of the right to development in the process of SDG implementation in a rights-based manner. The course will be launched in 2018.

- *Human rights standards and principles are integrated into UN development frameworks and the work of UN agencies, particularly on housing, water, sanitation and land (EA 11)*

The Office continued to advocate for the integration of human rights language into climate laws and policies, including at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties decided to establish the first Gender Action Plan and the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Knowledge Platform, which contain clear human rights references.

### Widening the democratic space

- *Increased participation of rights-holders, including women and discriminated groups, in public life at the national and local levels (EA 5)*

The Office, in collaboration with The Carter Center, concluded a two-year project aimed at bringing together the electoral observation and human rights communities. The objective was to advance strategies for collaboration and strengthen a human rights-based approach to elections, including through the increased use of jurisprudence of human rights mechanisms by electoral observers. As a

result, a group of experts endorsed a Human Rights and Elections Plan of Action, which identified key ways these stakeholders can work towards more inclusive and credible elections.

The issue of safety of women journalists was featured in all sessions of the Multi-stakeholder Consultation to review the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists. The Issue of Impunity, co-organized by OHCHR and UNESCO, in June, brought together approximately 250 representatives of UN agencies, Member States, regional intergovernmental organizations, civil society, media, Internet intermediaries and academia. The resulting Outcome Document contains a number of recommendations directed at different stakeholders that are specifically aimed at addressing the safety of women journalists. This is also a priority area of the newly re-established UN network of focal points for the safety of journalists.

- *Civil society, in particular youth and women, increasingly advocate for and claim their rights and protect themselves more effectively against reprisals (EA 5)*

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples continued to play a crucial role in facilitating the participation of 94 indigenous representatives in international human rights mechanisms, including in the UPR process and meetings of the human rights treaty bodies. The beneficiaries of the Fund also played a key role in launching the new mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples. A new booklet on the Fund was released to show its impact at the country level to donors, indigenous representatives and other stakeholders.

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

- *Mechanisms and initiatives are adopted to increase human rights protection in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity (EA3)*

The Office contributed to substantive discussions and the development of strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism, including the Barcelona Plan of Action (January 2017), the Beirut Declaration on “Faith for Rights” (March 2017) and the Rabat+5 Symposium (December 2017). Furthermore at the global level, OHCHR worked with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Working Group on Promoting and Protecting Human Rights and the Rule of Law while Countering Terrorism. In so doing, the Office moved forward with the delivery of a global human rights capacity-building project for law enforcement in order to support the integration of human rights into the counter-terrorism initiatives of security and law enforcement officials and through their cross-border and regional cooperation. Training sessions and engagement with senior govern-



ment officials have taken place in Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Nigeria and Tunisia, with further plans to provide training sessions in Cameroon, as well as nationalized training curricula and trainings of trainers in all six countries. In Tunisia, with technical support from OHCHR, the Independent High Authority for audio-visual communication developed a national barometer to monitor incitement to hatred, which is based on the Rabat Plan of Action. This initiative is being replicated in Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco.

Moreover, the first report to the Human Rights Council on the impact of arms transfers on the enjoyment of human rights (A/HRC/35/8), highlighted some key aspects of its impact, set out the relevant international and regional legal frameworks and suggested elements that may be used by States and other stakeholders to assess the relationship between arms transfers and human rights. In his report to the General Assembly (A/72/316), the Secretary-General highlighted the critical role of human rights in preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism, with reference to observations by and initiatives of OHCHR, the Human Rights Council, the special procedures mandate-holders and human rights treaty bodies. The good practices that were identified included policies and laws that combat social exclusion and marginalization as essential elements in the effective prevention and countering of violent extremism. The Office also engaged in capacity-building initiatives, including a joint project with UNODC for offi-

cials and civil society representatives in countries in the Lake Chad Basin region. In this context, the Office helped to develop guidance materials and delivered training on mainstreaming a gender perspective and women's rights into the investigation and prosecution of offences by terrorist groups, as well as into the support provided to victims. Additionally, the Office supported capacity-development on human rights in the context of trafficking and slavery through technical assistance to processes aimed at drafting national action plans in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Furthermore, at the request of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, OHCHR facilitated a workshop, in Juba, where the Commissioners and the Secretariat had the opportunity to discuss internally its strategy to overcome challenges for the investigation and documentation of sexual violence. As a result, the report of the Commission included a comprehensive section on sexual and gender-based violence, which captures the experiences of women, men, girls and boys as well as the long lasting impact of sexual violence crimes in the lives of survivors.

► *Human rights are integrated into United Nations preparedness, response and recovery efforts of crises emanating from natural disasters, conflict and other situations of violence and insecurity (EA 11)*

In line with OHCHR's commitments at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the Office developed two methodological tools on integrating human rights into humanitarian action, an assessment and analysis tool for OHCHR staff in emergencies and a new chapter in the OHCHR manual on human rights monitoring addressing the specificities in monitoring in emergencies. In addition, OHCHR launched the Arabic version of the online mandatory course for United Nations staff on United Nations human rights responsibilities. The course is now available in four languages on the learning platforms of the UN Secretariat and UNICEF. As of December 2017, 21,170 staff members had completed the course. As of July, six UN entities have made the course available to their staff on their learning platforms, while five other have committed to doing so.

OHCHR continued to provide advice and support on the implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) to UN entities in the field and at headquarters level. It also facilitated exchanges of experiences enabling the UN system as a whole to more coherently and consistently implement the HRDDP. In the field, advice was provided to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya in the adoption of its standard operating procedure (SOP) and its General and Preliminary Risk Assessment Framework (GPRAF). In addition, advice was extended to the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office



**UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples:  
30 years of empowering indigenous peoples  
to claim their rights**



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

in Guinea-Bissau on strategies to ensure HRDDP implementation, to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the SOP for its HRDDP Secretariat and to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali on the revision of its SOP. The Office supported field presences in Guinea, Kenya and Lebanon to develop and finalize GPRAFs and establish HRDDP working groups within the local UNCTs. At headquarters level, the HRDDP was integrated into the United Nations Military Observers Policy as well as into a number of United Nations Police guidelines. The “Screening Plus” framework was agreed upon between OHCHR and DPKO, whereby assessments of the human rights record of existing and prospective troop/police contributing countries will systematically inform UN decisions on recruitment and rotation.

In the context of the Human Rights up Front (HRUF) initiative, OHCHR integrated HRUF requirements into UN action at the country and headquarters levels, including early warning analysis when engaging with other UN entities on human rights issues. The inter-agency report on establishing a common UN information management system on violations, led by OHCHR, served as a reference point guiding relevant UN colleagues on issues related to human rights and information management. OHCHR also continued the development of an analytical framework to integrate economic, social and cultural rights into early warning analysis, which was first presented in the 2016 report of the High Commissioner to the Economic and Social Council and tested at the field level in Fiji, in December.

Upon taking office, the Secretary-General set out to develop a strategy on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, which was released in March. OHCHR provided significant assistance during its development through its membership on the Task Force that drafted the strategy. OHCHR subsequently contributed to the implementation of the strategy’s four priority areas, namely, putting the rights and dignity of victims first, ending impunity, engaging with civil society and external partners and improving strategic communications for education and transparency. The Office contributed to various other policies on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and provided input to the Secretary-General’s Voluntary Compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse in Member States. In accordance with its mandate to monitor, investigate and report on allegations of human rights violations, including allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving non-UN international forces operating under a Security Council mandate, OHCHR included data on such allegations, for the first time, in the February 2017 report of the Secretary-General



OHCHR staff member training UN military force in Entebbe on human rights integration in military operations. © OHCHR

on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. In the report, OHCHR reported on 20 allegations against non-UN forces, involving 20 victims. During 2017, OHCHR followed up on the allegations with the respective Member States in order to promote accountability.

## Global Management Outputs

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

- ▶ In 2017, special emphasis was placed on strengthening the capacity of OHCHR regional offices to implement and support activities promoting women’s rights and gender equality. An independent evaluation of OHCHR’s regional gender advisers structure found that it was a highly effective mechanism for achieving regional-level results. It also provided recommendations to strengthen and improve the efficiency and sustainability of the structure.
- ▶ Three female OHCHR staff members benefited from the new joint UN programme for Emerging Women Leaders in Geneva, while four female staff members participated in the Leadership, Women and the UN Training course in Nairobi.
- ▶ At the UN system-wide level, OHCHR actively participated in the International Geneva Gender Champions initiative and at the annual UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) Workshop that took place in Geneva, strongly contributing to shaping UN frameworks on gender integration, in particular the new UN-SWAP 2.0.
- ▶ Special emphasis was placed on ensuring that gender was integrated into the OHCHR planning process for 2018-2021, leading to the formulation of the four new gender-related thematic results for

the Office, as well as an Organizational Effectiveness Goal on Gender and Diversity.

- Efforts continued to support field presences, commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions to document and analyse cases of sexual and gender-based violence. Regular support provided to field presences in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia led to their strengthened capacity to integrate a gender analysis into their reports, including with disaggregated data on incidents and violations and attention to the specific impact of violations on women and men.

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

- RRDD provided substantive, secretariat and logistical support to a number of human rights mechanisms, including the Working Group on the right to development; the Expert Mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples; the mechanisms established to follow up on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; the Social Forum; and the recently created Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. The Division also assisted open-ended intergovernmental working groups, such as the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group to elaborate the content of an international framework on regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies; the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on a United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; and the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.

#### **OHCHR staff has the necessary competencies and skills to effectively implement the OHCHR programme (GMO 6)**

- In 2017, 153 staff (84 men, 69 women), primarily based in OHCHR field presences, improved their

human rights monitoring skills through nine training courses. In addition, briefing sessions on peace-keeping issues were delivered to more than 70 participants, including senior mission leaders, military and police personnel, OHCHR and DPKO staff.

- Staff ability in using the Human Rights Case Database improved through 13 remote briefings attended by 64 participants (32 women) by November 2017. In addition, an online course on the use of the Database, launched in 2016, improved knowledge of how to use the tool and is accessible to all OHCHR staff everywhere at all times. Some 100 staff from 17 field presences completed the online course, which has enabled the effective sharing of key messages on the importance of thorough, systematic and accurate documentation in monitoring work.
- With a view to strengthening OHCHR's capacity to better engage in humanitarian emergencies, RRDD delivered the annual five-day OHCHR training course on human rights in humanitarian action, in Geneva, for 26 staff members from field presences and headquarters.
- In addition, support was provided to field presences in terms of responses to humanitarian crises (i.e., Mexico after the earthquakes), before rapid deployments (i.e., team deployed to Bangladesh) and capacity-building activities (i.e., to the Regional Office for Southern Africa in designing a training for the UNCT in Angola).
- The OHCHR Library's online catalogue registered more than one million visits, an increase of 19 per cent compared to 2016. In addition, the Library maintains the Human Rights and Education and Training (HRET) database, which now contains information on 1,219 institutions and 356 active human rights training programmes. These training programmes are part of global efforts to increase knowledge of human rights. The Library's HRET collection was increased by 116 items, which were either purchased or donated. In 2017, the Library started a project to digitize the HRET public domain publications so as to provide wider access to these resources.





# Human Rights Treaties Division

## Background

The human rights treaty bodies are independent committees established under the international human rights treaties. The treaty bodies are composed of experts, serving in their personal capacity, who are elected by States Parties. These committees monitor the implementation of the human rights treaties through a reporting process that is based on the review of periodic reports submitted by the States Parties to each treaty. All of the core international human rights treaties are supplemented by optional protocols or contain optional provisions that empower the committees to receive and consider individual complaints. The treaty bodies issue recommendations to States Parties in order to assist them with the implementation of their treaty-based obligations at the national level. The treaty bodies also publish general comments/general recommendations and statements on thematic issues and conduct inquiries regarding allegations of violations. The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment undertakes visits to States Parties aimed at preventing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The 10 treaty bodies are:

- ▶ The Human Rights Committee (HR Committee)
- ▶ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- ▶ The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- ▶ The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- ▶ The Committee against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- ▶ The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)
- ▶ The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- ▶ The Committee on Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW)
- ▶ The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- ▶ The Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

In 2017, the number of treaty body experts totalled 172 (versus 125 in 2010 and 97 in 2000). In addition,



OHCHR training of trainers on reporting to the human rights treaty bodies for civil servants from West Africa, September 2017.  
© OHCHR/West Africa

the allocated meeting time of the treaty bodies was 93 weeks (versus 72 weeks in 2010 and 56 weeks in 2000).

The treaty bodies, as part of the international human rights mechanisms, form the backbone of OHCHR's work. Their analysis, investigative work, monitoring and interaction with States and a wide array of stakeholders help to amplify opportunities and identify weaknesses and gaps in relation to all human rights. The recommendations issued by the treaty bodies are used in a wide variety of contexts in the work of OHCHR, including as background documentation for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), reference material for thematic research undertaken by the Office and to support the work of the special procedures and the activities of OHCHR field presences.

In addition to supporting the treaty bodies by facilitating their activities, the Human Rights Treaties Division (HRTD) is responsible for:

- ▶ Administering the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and the Special Fund of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OP-CAT).
- ▶ Promoting the continued improvement and harmonization of the work of the treaty bodies through the annual Meeting of Chairpersons of the Human

Rights Treaty Bodies and consistent follow-up with the individual treaty bodies.

- Managing the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme that was established by General Assembly resolution 68/268 of 9 April 2014.

In recent years, the human rights treaty body system expanded significantly with the creation of four new treaty bodies (Committee on Migrant Workers, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture, Committee on Enforced Disappearances) and three new procedures for individual complaints under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

As noted above, all of the core human rights treaties have individual communications procedures. Only article 77 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW) has not entered into force. The number of registered individual communications to the treaty bodies increased from 170 in 2013 to around 300 at the end of 2017. The urgent action procedure under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED), which has been in force since December 2010, has faced a substantial increase in registered requests for urgent actions; from 50 in 2014 to over 440 as of the end of 2017.

As one of the outcomes of the treaty body strengthening process, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/268 which, among other actions, granted the treaty bodies an additional 20 weeks of meeting time to enable them to review more State Party reports and individual petitions. The resolution also established a comprehensive capacity-building programme, led by HRTD, to promote the ratification of the human rights treaties and support States Parties in their timely reporting.

## Results

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

- *Increased ratification of international human rights instruments, including optional protocols, and review of reservations with a focus on instruments and regions with low ratification rates (EA 2)*

In 2017, a total of 42 new ratifications of or accessions to the human rights treaties were deposited with the Secretary-General. OHCHR worked to promote ratification and the withdrawal of reservations

### Treaty bodies in figures

**9** core international human rights treaties

**10** treaty bodies

**42** new ratifications and accessions

**158** State Party reports considered in 2017

**118** reports received during the year and

**230** reports pending consideration

Approximately **7,500** recommendations adopted annually

Over **300** individual communications registered for consideration and final decisions adopted on **221** communications

Over **440** registered requests for urgent actions under CED

**93** weeks in session in 2017

**10** country visits by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture

through various means, including the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme, which was established following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/268.

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

Member States took concrete steps to follow up on recommendations issued by the treaty bodies and OHCHR supported them in their efforts. Through the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme, State officials from approximately 70 countries received training on the human rights treaties and the reporting process. Trained State officials committed to applying their new skills by replicating the training activities at the national level and assisting OHCHR in other subregional training activities to stimulate peer-to-peer learning and exchanges of good practices. To underpin these capacity-building efforts, OHCHR launched a Training Manual on Reporting to the Treaty Bodies and an accompanying Facilitators Guide. Support was also provided for the establishment and effective functioning of National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRFs) in order to institutionalize interministerial structures and processes on engagement with the international human rights mechanisms and to facilitate the coherent implementation of their recommendations. For instance, the State of Palestine created an interministerial committee charged with coordinating the

implementation of its international human rights obligations. In April, the Government of Tajikistan adopted new regulations in relation to its NMRF, which contributed to expanding the participation of civil society and promoting the increased coordination of relevant State bodies in the implementation of international human rights obligations. In order to facilitate the coherent implementation of all human rights recommendations, work continued on upgrading the Universal Human Rights Index, which compiles all of the recommendations issued by the UPR, the special procedures and the treaty bodies. The tool has been enhanced in its design and search options and is now capable of matching recommendations with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- *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 number of registered individual communications increased from 170 in 2013 to over 300 in 2017. The number of registered requests under CED's urgent action procedure rose from 50 in 2014 to over 440 in 2017. In response, OHCHR supported initiatives that were undertaken by all of the human rights treaty bodies to address reprisals against individuals cooperating or seeking to cooperate with the treaty bodies. As of 2017, all of the committees had taken action in this regard, including by establishing working groups or focal points on reprisals.

- *Advances in the progressive development of international and regional human rights law in areas relevant to the treaty bodies (EA 8)*

With the support of OHCHR, work proceeded on various draft general comments/general recommendations. In 2017, seven new general comments and recommendations were adopted in relation to: gender-based violence against women (CEDAW); the rights of girls and women to education (CEDAW); State obligations in the context of business activities (CESCR); children in street situations (CRC); the rights of children in the context of international migration (CRC and CMW); and the right to live independently and within the community (CPRD). Additionally, OHCHR continued to analyse and reply to all individual communications submitted under the different treaties (approximately 9,500 per year) and ensured the adoption of final decisions in 221 cases.

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

At their twenty-ninth annual meeting, the Chairpersons of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies considered the following matters: late and non-reporting by States Parties; implementation of the Addis Ababa Guidelines on the independence and impartiality of

treaty body members; implementation of the San José Guidelines against intimidation or reprisals; engagement of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) with the treaty bodies; and follow-up by the treaty body system to General Assembly resolution 68/268 on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the treaty body system. The Chairpersons adopted, inter alia, recommendations to: inform the General Assembly of overdue reports to the treaty bodies, with a request to add an item on this subject to the agenda of the General Assembly; adhere to agreed parameters when engaging in the strengthening and enhancing of the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system; strengthen a common treaty body approach to engagement with NHRIs; closely follow the accountability framework for the implementation by States of the commitments made in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and ensure that OHCHR has the necessary human and material resources to enable the treaty bodies to perform their work. In particular, they stressed that further growth in the workload of the system cannot be absorbed by existing resources.

### 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, into their development, finance, trade and investment policies (EA 10)*

Many States are discussing and adopting national strategies on the SDGs, as well as the mechanisms



The Chairperson of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances addresses the General Assembly high-level meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, February 2017. © UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

## Treaty bodies provide access to justice for victims with disabilities

After a long battle to seek redress through the national legal system, Mr. X, a person with albinism, brought an individual complaint against Tanzania to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and obtained redress. In 2010, the complainant was fetching firewood when two men attacked him and hacked off half of his left arm. A man was arrested but as Mr. X did not recognize the accused as one of his aggressors the investigation was stopped. Mr. X wanted to initiate a civil claim before the High Court but since he had no means to reach the Court, it was impossible for him to plead his case. Consequently, Mr. X filed his complaint with the CRPD, in June 2014, contending that his attack took place in the context of targeted violence against people with albinism in Tanzania and that the State had violated his rights under the CRPD because authorities failed to take measures to protect him and provide him with an effective remedy. In 2017, the Com-

mittee concluded that Mr. X had been a victim of a direct discrimination based on his disability, in violation of article 5 of the Convention. It further pointed out that States Parties have an obligation to prevent and punish torture and inhuman and degrading treatment committed by State and non-State actors and that such cases must be quickly and effectively addressed. The Committee concluded that the failure by the State to investigate the case and prosecute the suspected perpetrators resulted in the re-victimization of the author, who endured psychological ill-treatment and a violation of his physical integrity. The Committee requested that Tanzania provide Mr. X with an effective remedy, including compensation and the support needed to enable him to live independently. The Committee also called on Tanzania to conduct an impartial, speedy and effective investigation and to prosecute the perpetrators of the attack.

or processes for their implementation and follow-up. At the same time, some States have already established NMRFs to follow up on recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. By engaging with States, OHCHR can capitalize on this momentum to encourage synergies and linkages between the various follow-up and reporting mechanisms, procedures and processes for SDGs and human rights to ensure meaningful participation by rights-holders. Identifying linkages and building synergies can help States to reduce their reporting burdens, while ensuring more coherence in implementation plans. Moreover, OHCHR sought to strengthen the link between the work of the mechanisms and the actions that are required at the country level, inter alia, by building new and enhanced partnerships with the UN system and other stakeholders, making better use of key entry points for engagement and implementation, such as the UPR, the SDGs and the Secretary-General's prevention agenda, and by providing tailor-made tools to support efforts to implement the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms.

In addition, OHCHR co-organized two retreats for the resident coordinators in the Americas and the Caribbean (23-24 November 2017 in Santiago) and the Arab region (7-8 December 2017 in Beirut), to enable participants to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing United Nations development agencies in the area of human rights, explore the synergies between the SDGs and human rights agendas in those regions and outline recommendations relating to the role of resident coordinators and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in the years ahead.

## Global Management Outputs

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

- ▶ The performance appraisal documents of all HRTD staff members now include the goals of integrating a gender perspective into draft lists of issues, concluding observations, statements, briefing notes and talking points and ensuring the equal representation of women and men in all capacity-building activities.
- ▶ Equal representation of women and men was ensured in most capacity-building activities undertaken by HRTD.

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

- ▶ In 2017, HRTD provided secretariat, logistical and substantive support to the 10 treaty bodies for the organization of 93 weeks of meetings, the consideration of 158 State Party reports, the drafting and adoption of approximately 7,500 recommendations and the adoption of final decisions on 221 communications. The Secretary-General issued his first report on the status of the human rights treaty body system in 2016 (A/71/118 and 20 statistical annexes). The report notes that the measures undertaken in accordance with resolution 68/268 have so far enabled the treaty body system to remain effective by addressing some of its most pressing short-term challenges but stresses that the linear growth of the treaty body system is unsustainable. The report includes a request for additional resources in concordance with the increased submission of State Party reports and





A delegate to the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, New York, June 2017. © UN Photo/Kim Haughton

individual communications. At its seventy-second session, the General Assembly decided to support five temporary positions rather than the 11 posts requested by the Secretary-General in his report.

- ▶ In line with General Assembly resolution 68/268 on treaty body strengthening, HRTD continued to provide live webcasts of treaty body meetings. In 2017, though a pilot project that started in 2016, OHCHR and the Department of Public Information facilitated the broadcast of live and archived webcasts of all public meetings of the treaty bodies (158 public re-

views) that were held in 2017. Webcast equipment is operational in the two meeting rooms at OHCHR's Geneva headquarters.

- ▶ In 2017, the Special Fund of the OP-CAT issued a call for applications for projects to be implemented in 2018. With OHCHR's support, the Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture awarded grants to support redress and rehabilitation for over 45,000 victims in more than 75 countries. It also extended immediate support through emergency grants for projects that are providing assistance in Argentina, France, Italy, Libya, the Russian Federation and Senegal.

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

- ▶ Since the establishment of the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme, teams and work processes have been developed and are now running smoothly at 11 duty stations in all regions of the world. As of the end of 2017, members of the team have engaged in approximately 80 activities, including by supporting OHCHR's work in the field to offer technical assistance to NMRFs and providing training materials and methodology on treaty reporting and individual communications.

#### **OHCHR staff has the necessary competencies and skills to effectively implement the OHCHR programme (GMO 6)**

- ▶ As a result of targeted training sessions, staff members from the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme increased their knowledge and skills related to the human rights treaty bodies, especially CRPD. They received a basic introduction to the work around human rights indicators, increased their understanding of the nuances of action plans for the implementation of the recommendations issued by international human rights mechanisms, and are able to apply human rights training and knowledge management techniques.

### **Humanitarian funds help in the fight against female genital mutilation**

Soumayya's mother died after giving birth to her due to health complications resulting from female genital mutilation (FGM). Her father refused to have the practice inflicted on Soumayya and her sisters but after his death, she was told that she must be circumcised in order to be married. She refused and instead began a women's organization to advocate an end to this practice through community education and protests. In 2012, as a result of these activities, Soumayya was arrested and sent to jail. During her imprisonment, Soumayya was physically abused and raped multiple times and became pregnant. She was then accused of prostitution and sentenced to

beatings by stick, resulting in the death of the foetus. She was brought to a clinic for treatment from which she managed to escape. She reached Belgium in 2013 and was brought to a humanitarian assistance NGO that receives support from the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. The NGO provided immigration authorities with a medical affidavit to support her asylum request. It was thanks to their support that she was able to speak for the first time about the violence and abuse suffered. Soumayya has now started another NGO to provide support to women who are suffering from infections and other health complications as a result of female circumcision.

## Overview of treaties, committees and competences

Treaty body	No. of States Parties	No. of weeks in session annually	Periodicity of obligation to report	Reviews, reports and issues/recommendations to States Parties	Considers individual complaints	Conducts visits to countries	Urgent action procedure
<b>CESCR</b>	166	10	5 years	Articles 16-17 Number of reports examined in 2017: 17 Number of reports pending examination: 14	Optional Protocol Number of registered communications pending examination: 10	Article 11 Optional Protocol Confidential inquiries on systematic violations	No
<b>HR Committee</b>	169	14.4	3, 4 or 5 years as per the Committee's decision	Article 40 Number of reports examined in 2017: 21 Number of reports pending examination: 20	Optional Protocol Number of registered communications pending examination: 645	No	No
<b>CERD</b>	179	9.6	2 years Allows the merging of two reports into one. De facto periodicity of 4 years	Article 9 Number of reports examined in 2017: 20 Number of reports pending examination: 27	Article 14 Number of registered communications pending examination: 5	No	No
<b>CEDAW</b>	189	16.2	4 years	Article 18 Number of reports examined in 2017: 27 Number of reports pending examination: 38	Optional Protocol Number of registered communications pending examination: 43	Articles 8-10 Optional Protocol Confidential inquiries on systematic violations	No
<b>CRC</b>	196 OP-CRC-AC: 167 OP-CRC-SC: 174 OP-CRC-IC: 37	12.6	5 years	Article 44 Number of reports examined in 2017: 36 (including OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC reports) Number of reports pending examination: 96 (including OP-CRC-AC and OP-CRC-SC reports)	Optional Protocol Number of registered communications pending examination: 6	Articles 13-14 Optional Protocol Confidential inquiries on systematic violations (entered into force on 14 April 2014)	No
<b>CAT</b>	162	11.2	4 years	Article 19 Number of reports examined in 2017: 17 Number of reports pending examination: 26	Article 22 Number of registered communications pending examination: 170	Article 20 Confidential inquiries on systematic violations	No
<b>SPT</b>	87	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Articles 11-16 Subcommittee visits places of deprivation of liberty and communicates its recommendations by confidential report	No
<b>CMW</b>	51	3.4	5 years	Articles 73-74 Number of reports examined in 2017: 8 (including non-reporting States Parties) Number of reports pending examination: 2	Article 77 (not yet entered into force)	No	No

Treaty body	No. of States Parties	No. of weeks in session annually	Periodicity of obligation to report	Reviews, reports and issues/recommendations to States Parties	Considers individual complaints	Conducts visits to countries	Urgent action procedure
<b>CRPD</b>	175	8.5	4 years	Articles 35-36 Number of reports examined in 2017: 14 Number of reports pending examination: 52	Optional Protocol Number of registered communications pending examination: 27	Article 6 Optional Protocol Confidential inquiries on systematic violations	No
<b>CED</b>	58	4	As per Committee's decision	Article 29 Number of reports examined in 2017: 5 Number of reports pending examination: 16	Article 31 Number of registered communications pending examination: 0	Article 33 Visit on serious violations	Article 30 Urgent actions being considered: 327 under active consideration





# Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division

## Background

The Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division (FOTCD) is responsible for conceptualizing, overseeing and supporting the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the country and regional levels, including through advisory services, technical assistance to governments and other counterparts. FOTCD also provides substantive, programmatic and administrative support to the OHCHR field presences. Moreover, FOTCD supports the special procedures of the Human Rights Council (13 until March 2017 and 11 after the termination of the mandates on Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti), as well as commissions of inquiry and other investigative entities mandated by the Human Rights Council.

FOTCD, in cooperation with other parts of OHCHR, contributes to strengthening the understanding of national authorities and civil society actors about international human rights standards and their capacities to translate them into legislation, regulations and policies. The ultimate objective of this work is to ensure that duty-bearers are better equipped to address chronic and emerging human rights issues and that rights-holders are better protected and empowered. FOTCD fulfils its role in consultation and cooperation with national, regional and international partners, including government actors, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), civil society, regional organizations and the United Nations system.

FOTCD is composed of three geographic branches (Africa; Asia-Pacific and Middle East and North Africa; Americas and Europe and Central Asia), which are each divided into two sections; and three specialized sections (the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section; the Emergency Response Section; and the Peace Missions Support Section). The geographic branches and sections are responsible for the day-to-day work of OHCHR, which entails following human rights developments at the country and regional levels; country engagement, including interactions with governments, NHRIs, civil society actors and the United Nations system; advising the OHCHR leadership; supporting field presences; and engaging with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.



A young boy at the Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan.  
© UN Photo/Sahem Rababah

The Emergency Response Section coordinates OHCHR's engagement in and effective responses to ongoing or emerging crises or, in a preventive mode, potential emergency situations. This includes the deployment of human rights teams in the context of complex emergencies or natural disasters or for the purpose of preventive advocacy and action, including participation in multidisciplinary United Nations teams under the Secretary-General's Human Rights up Front (HRUF) Action Plan. The Section is also responsible for the operationalization of activities mandated by United Nations intergovernmental bodies (mainly the Human Rights Council), such as the establishment of and support to commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions. Moreover, the Section leads the provision of early warning information and analyses to various United Nations processes, including the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Early Warning/Early Action process.

The Peace Mission Support Section, located in OHCHR's New York Office, ensures that the United Nations peace and security agenda integrates human rights at the political, strategic and operational levels. The Section provides support and guidance to the human rights components of United Nations peace missions by gathering and sharing good practices and

information, including through its resource centre on the integration of human rights into peace missions.

The National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section provides advice and support for the establishment and strengthening of NHRIs that are compliant with the Paris Principles and serves as the Secretariat for the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). The Section is fully engaged in strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms and contributes to enhancing the critical partnerships between OHCHR and civil society organizations. It also supports their engagement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.

## Results

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

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

In the Middle East and North Africa region, the Office continued to support engagement between Member States and civil society with the international human rights mechanisms. For instance, it organized three study tours on the international human rights mechanisms, in March, June and September. Over 57 participants attended from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. These study tours provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences and the challenges they face in implementing the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms to increase their understanding of the work and relevance of the mechanisms. It also ena-

bled them to engage with various parts of OHCHR. In March, FOTCD provided training, in Geneva, to 22 diplomats from Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on establishing a National Plan of Action for the Implementation of Recommendations stemming from International Mechanisms for Human Rights.

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

FOTCD participated in several regular sessions of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, including for the purpose of exchanging information on thematic issues and country situations in the Americas. In October, OHCHR and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights launched a Joint Action Mechanism to Contribute to the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas that would enable the two organizations to closely collaborate on emblematic cases and situations concerning human rights defenders. A programme of joint studies, monitoring and protection, advocacy, promotion and technical cooperation activities is foreseen for the coming years.

- *Enhanced systematic engagement by United Nations Country Teams with international human rights mechanisms (EA 11)*

FOTCD provided technical assistance, advice and capacity-building to United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) to support their follow-up to the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. For instance, the technical support that was offered to the UNCT in the Maldives in the context of a political crisis ensured that the recommendations issued by international human rights mechanisms were integrated into United Nations interventions; in Bangladesh, OHCHR provided advisory support for the UNCT to prepare its submissions to the Committee on the Elimination of Dis-

## Accountability and justice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 31/35 on "Ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem," OHCHR undertook a comprehensive review detailing the status of the implementation of recommendations that had been addressed to all parties since 2009 by relevant Human Rights Council mechanisms. The resulting report (A/HRC/35/19) and addendum were presented under agenda item 7 of the Human Rights Council on 19 June 2017. The final analysis was based on 63 reports that were issued between 2009 and 2016 and a total of 929 recommendations issued by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Human Rights Council mecha-

nisms and included recommendations addressed to the Government of Israel, the Government of the State of Palestine and other Palestinian duty-bearers, the United Nations and the international community, other Member States, businesses and civil society. As requested by resolution 31/35, the report identified patterns of non-compliance, non-implementation and non-cooperation and documented failures by all the parties to fully implement the vast majority of recommendations addressed to them. The report concluded that compliance with international law is the condition sine qua non for peace and that the political will and commitment of all parties is essential to advancing the two-State solution.

crimination against Women and the Human Rights Committee, as well as its first input to the United Nations stakeholders' report in anticipation of the country's third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR); and OHCHR's support to the UNCT in Iran facilitated United Nations programming to follow up on recommendations issued by the human rights treaty bodies.

### Enhancing equality and countering discrimination

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

During 2017, enhancing equality and countering discrimination was a priority focus area for OHCHR. Engagement with UNCTs in Bangladesh and Nepal ensured that country assessments included an analysis of discriminatory social and legal norms and resulted in programming that seeks to address structural inequalities and the needs of vulnerable groups.

- *Increased integration of human rights into international and regional processes that are relevant to migration (EA 10)*

During the year, unprecedented levels of large-scale displacements of women, men and children across the globe continued, contributing to large numbers of refugees and migrants. OHCHR worked closely with international and regional partners to highlight and address concerns about the human rights of migrants and refugees. In the Asia Pacific region, significant attention was given to the human rights situation of the Rohingya crossing borders to escape persecution in the Rakhine State and the impact on them of the migration policies of receiving countries.

### Helping ethnic minority youth to find employment in State structures

Since 2015, UN Human Rights has been working to help ethnic minority youth in Kyrgyzstan to gain better employment opportunities within the country's State authorities. One of the avenues that had a significant impact was the creation of internships in State institutions for motivated youth from ethnic minorities. In 2017, UN Human Rights, together with the Osh State University, selected 30 interns on a competitive basis, 15 of which have a minority background. The Office also reached an agreement with the State Personnel Agency to provide selected interns with opportunities in different State bodies ranging from mayor's offices, regional government institutions and law enforcement agencies. The ultimate goal of the programme was to encourage minorities to join the civil service by actively engaging them in public service and preparing them to pass entrance exams.



The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights meets with members of the G5 Sahel Joint Force in Mali. © UN Photo/Sahem Rababah

In relation to the ongoing high levels of migration to the European Union through North Africa, OHCHR headquarters ensured sustained coordination with its field presences in Africa and Europe and close engagement with the European Union. The OHCHR report, *Detained and Dehumanized: Report on human rights abuses against migrants in Libya*, released in December 2016, was widely used as a reference to engage European Union and Libyan officials about the dire conditions in detention centres holding migrants in Libya and their treatment in subsequent migration processes. In addition, OHCHR conducted missions to countries in Europe and the Americas and reported on human rights concerns and protection gaps in the context of migration. The High Commissioner issued several press statements to express concerns about the situation of migrants in various countries and frequently reflected such concerns in statements to the Human Rights Council and other fora. The Office consistently engaged with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council to strengthen advocacy on such issues. These efforts have led to a significant increase in awareness about the situation of migrants throughout the world and facilitated the introduction of some measures to improve their protection. Further work is required to address protection gaps.

- *Implementation of the Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the UN Indigenous Peoples' Partnership Initiative (EA 11)*

In 2017, OHCHR and the Resident Coordinator's Office in Nepal jointly organized a regional launch of the Guidance Tool on Descent-Based Discrimination: Key Challenges and Strategic Approaches to Combat Caste-Based and Analogous Forms of Discrimination. The launch brought together participants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand, in order to build the capacity

of UNCTs, NHRIs and civil society organizations to combat caste-based discrimination through good practices; promote changes in laws, policies and practices; and ensure the participation of affected descent-based communities.

### Combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law

- *Increased number of States that have abolished the death penalty and/or, pending abolition, increasingly comply with relevant international human rights obligations (EA 1)*

In 2017, OHCHR continued to advocate for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide and raise human rights issues relating to the use of the death penalty. Several letters were sent by the High Commissioner to governments currently applying the death penalty, which requested stays of execution or commutations of death sentences, particularly for minors and persons with mental disabilities and in cases of serious breaches in due process.

In Barbados, a two-day discussion was organized with scholars, judges, lawyers and other experts on public opinion around the death penalty as part of ongoing advocacy towards its abolition. Advocacy with the authorities in the Maldives focused on sustaining the Government's moratorium on the death penalty after the President announced that executions would resume. Interventions by the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran resulted in sparing the life of at least

one juvenile at risk of imminent execution. Moreover, OHCHR's advocacy with Iran contributed to an intensified debate among judicial officials regarding the efficacy of the death penalty as a deterrent to crime. This led to the adoption of amendments, in November, reducing the scope of the application of the death penalty for some drug-related offences.

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

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

OHCHR worked with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung to create awareness of the human rights impact of the Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (CFTA) through a joint report that was launched in July 2017. The report analyses the impact on agricultural livelihoods, agro-manufacturing and informal cross-border trade, with a particular emphasis on women and vulnerable groups, such as smallholder farmers. The findings of the report were discussed at a dedicated panel at the World Trade Organization Public Forum, on 27 September. The panelists agreed that a human rights-based approach to trade issues was welcome in the context of the global backlash against trade and regional integration. It was emphasized that a human rights-based approach should be used to address the potential negative distributional aspects of trade liberalization. It was also recommended that the partnering organizations invest in efforts to ensure the effective uptake of the report's recommendations; inform the design of a human rights-friendly monitoring and evaluation mechanism under CFTA; and carry out an ex-post assessment of CFTA to identify the corrective measures that are needed to ensure inclusive gains.

- *Human rights standards and principles are integrated into United Nations development frameworks and the work of UN agencies, particularly on housing, water, sanitation and land (EA 11)*

Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, OHCHR headquarters and field presences prioritized the increased capacity of UNCTs to apply a human rights-based approach to their United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). As a result, UNDAFs in many countries significantly integrate human rights, including in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo<sup>17</sup>,

### Justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights in Uganda

In January 2017, a landmark judgment handed down by a judge of the High Court in Uganda established jurisprudence on the justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights in Uganda, in particular on the right to health. Prior to this, because Uganda's Constitution did not protect all of the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), many rights were not raised before the courts. Civil society organizations filed cases, but judges declined to address those related to economic, social and cultural rights. To help overcome this situation, UN Human Rights developed a strategy to work with the Judicial Training Institute to build the capacity of the courts with regard to economic, social and cultural rights and developed a training curriculum that was incorporated into the training syllabus for judicial officers. The Office also provided technical assistance to judicial officers on the justiciability of these rights and advocated for the domestication of the ICESCR into national laws.

<sup>17</sup> Reference to Kosovo should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.



Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Nepal, Pakistan, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

### Widening the democratic space

- *National human rights institutions established and effectively functioning in accordance with the Paris Principles and other relevant international standards and recommendations (EA 1)*

OHCHR supported the establishment and/or strengthening of NHRIs in 70 countries by working with relevant stakeholders to have an institution that is compliant with the Paris Principles and outlining their roles and responsibilities in promoting and protecting human rights. As the Secretariat of GANHRI, FOTCD organized annual conferences for the Global Alliance and its regional networks, including the biennial general meeting of the African Network of National Human Rights Institutions and the annual meeting of the Arab Network of NHRIs. FOTCD provided secretariat support to the process of NHRI accreditation and participated in the review process of 26 NHRIs by the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation. In 2017, the accreditation committee downgraded the status of several NHRIs from 'A' to 'B' status because it assessed that they no longer met the Paris Principles standards. As of December 2017, 121 NHRIs (compared to 105 in 2014) were accredited, including 78 with 'A' status.

FOTCD supported the engagement of NHRIs with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms and facilitated the circulation of 17 written NHRI submissions as official United Nations documents, 13 pre-recorded video statements and 45 oral statements that were presented by NHRIs, GANHRI and its regional networks. FOTCD also submitted 210 briefing notes to the human rights treaty bodies in relation

### Human rights defender released after an unfair conviction

After four years of arbitrary detention, Jorge Montes was released from jail on 5 October 2017. Throughout his life, Jorge had worked to defend the rights of the farming community in the Montes de María region, Colombia, which had been severely affected by an internal armed conflict. Before his detention, Jorge and other grassroots leaders had led a massive but peaceful march to demand better living conditions for farmers in more than 50 rural districts. After the march, an agreement was reached with the President of Colombia. Five months later, in September 2013, the Attorney General's Office ordered the arrest of Jorge and charged him with rebellion and the murder of three people who had been killed by members of the FARC-EP. Despite the weak evidence against him and the contradictory statements given by local authorities and several farmers, he was sentenced to 39 years in prison, in March 2017.

UN Human Rights monitored this case from the beginning, contacted relevant authorities, provided advice to civil society organizations that were supporting Jorge, visited him in jail, monitored the judicial process and published an op-ed on his unfair conviction. All of these advocacy efforts, along with the actions of the farming communities and some civil society organizations, contributed to his release in October 2017.

to NHRIs in States under review. With regard to the engagement of NHRIs with New York-based human rights mechanisms, FOTCD facilitated the participation of eight 'A' status NHRIs, GANHRI and its regional networks in the eighth session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing.

The network of focal points of Regional Human Rights Mechanisms, supported by OHCHR, was strengthened during the reporting period. Memoranda of understanding were concluded between OHCHR and the European Union and between OHCHR and the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights. A human rights strategy was agreed upon between OHCHR and the African Union's human rights mechanisms. Continued implementation of the Addis Ababa Road Map, which guides cooperation between the special rapporteurs of the African System and the United Nations Human Rights Council, was another positive development that was manifested in joint visits, statements and other activities. FOTCD further facilitated the participation of representatives from regional human rights mechanisms in key United Nations human rights meetings, including the Conference of States Parties to the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Commis-



Panel on election related and political violence during the Annual Conference of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, March 2017. © Jeff Vize for the UN Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai

sion on the Status of Women and the annual meeting of special procedures mandate-holders.

- *Civil society, in particular youth and women, increasingly advocate for and claim their rights; and protect themselves more effectively from reprisals (EA 5)*

OHCHR continued to undertake efforts to promote and protect space for civil society actors in international human rights fora, including by facilitating their engagement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms and building their capacity and knowledge in relation to human rights issues. FOTCD developed practical guides and publications, as well as weekly newsletters, which were disseminated to over 9,000 civil society actors. It disseminated over 27,000 copies of the Civic Space Guide (in 29 languages) and the How to Follow-up Guide (in 16 languages). The OHCHR online Toolkit for Civil Society was expanded to include a publication entitled Realizing Human Rights through Government Budgets that was introduced in regional trainings. The Office organized three regional capacity-building workshops on civil society space and United Nations human rights recommendations. The workshops were held in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific and included the participation of 100 civil society actors from 43 countries. The Asian workshop, held jointly with the Diplomacy Training Programme of the University of New South Wales (Sydney, Australia), invited indigenous civil society actors from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines and Timor-Leste to discuss human rights, indigenous peoples, the private sector and development. The African workshop gathered 25 civil society participants from Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uganda to discuss strategic engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms. The Pacific workshop was organized in partnership with the Pacific International Association of NGOs and included 28 civil society participants from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and West Papua.

- *Increased interventions of the international community to promote and protect civil society actors, including against reprisals (EA 10)*

Following the Secretary-General's 2016 request that the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights lead United Nations system-wide efforts to address reprisals against those cooperating with United Nations human rights mechanisms, FOTCD ensured the collection of information on cases and trends of

## Increased human rights awareness in the Middle East and North Africa

With OHCHR technical and financial support, 11 NGOs are implementing human rights projects in five countries of the Middle East and North Africa region (Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, the State of Palestine and Yemen). The impact of the projects were manifest in communities in Erbil and Mosul, Iraq, generating increased awareness about human rights and the rights of women and providing training for judicial investigators. In the State of Palestine, NGOs strengthened their capacity to conduct human rights advocacy while university students were made aware of the human rights of women and violence against women. In Yemen, in Sana'a, Abyan and Aden, the launch of the media campaign "Here I Am" led to greater awareness about the human rights of persons with disabilities. It also encouraged the engagement of political and community leaders and youth in peacebuilding dialogues at the community level to combat extremism and terrorism. In Lebanon, the capacity to undertake human rights monitoring of human rights violations has been strengthened and an advocacy campaign to improve access to justice for migrant domestic workers continued. In Morocco, more young people are participating in political processes to increase awareness of human rights and civil and political rights.

reprisals, as well as the development of strategies to address them.

## 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 all forms of human exploitation, including trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence (EA 1)*

Under the mandate of the United Nations Special Coordinator to Improve the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in peace operations, OHCHR has been fully involved in the work streams launched by her Office. This has included undertaking a gap analysis and mapping of roles and responsibilities, developing a uniform protocol on victims' assistance and a protocol on handling allegations, creating a glossary of terms, preparing a comprehensive manual on prevention and response, initiating an online survey to establish a baseline on the conduct, behaviour and perceptions of personnel related to sexual exploitation and abuse, information sharing on the protection of victims and preparing a newsletter for public dissemination.

- *Legal frameworks, public policies, State institutions, as well as non-State actors, increasingly comply*

*with international standards in the area of prevention and response to human rights violations in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity (EA 1)*

In 2017, FOTCD cooperated with the Qatari National Human Rights Committee to organize a regional conference, in Doha, Qatar, on the application of a human rights-based approach to address conflict situations in the Arab regions. This event enabled the Office to reach out to a wide range of stakeholders, including State officials and civil society actors from across the region, who exchanged information and recommendations about the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of conflicts.

- *Mechanisms and initiatives are adopted to increase human rights protection in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity (EA 3)*

With regard to implementing Security Council resolution 2320 (2016), OHCHR collaborated with the African Union Peace and Security Department to conduct joint activities aimed at developing the human rights, conduct and disciplinary framework of African Union peace operations. OHCHR strengthened the human rights capacity of the African Union by placing two staff members in the African Union Department of Political Affairs, in 2017, to facilitate dialogue on human rights within the organization and support the development and implementation of the African Union Ten-Year Action and Implementation Plan on the Promotion and Protection of Human and Peoples' Rights in Africa. Within this framework, between 2014 and 2017, OHCHR supported the development of various initiatives, including a human rights strategy for Africa, a policy framework on transitional justice, guidelines on business and human rights and the Ten-Year Action and Implementation Plan. The Plan is intended to serve as a continent-wide blueprint for the African Union to advance the human rights agenda and it is anticipated that it will be adopted in 2018.

- *Increased responsiveness and integration of human rights concerns into the international community's response to potential, emerging or existing situations of conflict, violence and insecurity (EA 10)*
- FOTCD coordinated the establishment of six investigative bodies. One of these is mandated by the General Assembly (International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism on Syria) and five are mandated by the Human Rights Council (two commissions of inquiry (Burundi II and South Sudan II); one fact-finding mission in relation to Myanmar; and two human rights investigation missions dispatched by the High Commissioner (Yemen and Kasai, DRC)). In addition, FOTCD organized 12 human rights monitoring missions, including two remote monitoring exercises (Turkey and Venezuela) and 11 field deployments, including one to Angola to monitor the human rights violations committed in the Kasai region of the DRC;

three missions to Bangladesh to monitor the human rights violations of the Rohingya population in Myanmar; two missions to Kenya to monitor the human rights situation in the context of elections; one to Qatar to gather information on the impact of the Gulf crisis on the human rights situation; one to Guatemala to assist the Office with human rights monitoring related to the crisis in the child welfare system; one to Haiti to assist with the establishment the human rights section of the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH); one to Honduras to assist the Office with human rights monitoring following the crisis that unfolded after the elections; and one to Togo to monitor the human rights situation.

Furthermore, in 2017, OHCHR established the first Emergency Response teams for its regional offices in Southern Africa (Pretoria) and South-East Asia (Bangkok). These teams will increase the output of human rights analyses and early warning information at the regional level to facilitate targeted preventive action and swift responses to potential, emerging or actual crises.

During 2017, OHCHR raised the awareness of national authorities and key stakeholders on the need to increase human rights protection in the context of conflict and prevent or minimize civilian casualties. In Yemen, the High Commissioner issued regular press releases to highlight the violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law that were allegedly perpetrated by both sides to the conflict. In this context, the Office advocated for the establishment of an independent, investigative mechanism on Yemen. These efforts contributed to the adoption by the Human Rights Council, in September 2017, of a consensus resolution establishing a group of eminent international and regional experts. In December, the High Commissioner appointed the experts.



Staff members from OHCHR and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights undertake a joint monitoring mission to Petén, Guatemala. © OHCHR/Guatemala



- *Human rights are integrated into United Nations preparedness, response and recovery efforts of crises emanating from natural disasters, conflicts and other situations of violence and insecurity (EA 11)*

Over the past four years, OHCHR sustained strong engagement in humanitarian action at the country, regional and global levels, to ensure that the protection of human rights contributes to shaping humanitarian decision-making. OHCHR ensured that human rights principles were part of relevant policies, strategies and operational fora, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) at the level of the Principals, Working Group and Emergency Directors Group, and through several IASC subsidiary bodies (i.e., the Task Teams on the Humanitarian Development Nexus and on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action).

OHCHR deployments in the context of humanitarian actions included missions to Bangladesh (in relation to Myanmar) and the Caribbean. The Office further maintained three human rights officers to advise the humanitarian leadership working on the Syria crisis (based in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey), and deployed six human rights monitors to north-east Nigeria to support the UN humanitarian response. The Office also maintained its leadership of the Protection Cluster in the State of Palestine and led or co-led Protection Working Groups/Sectors in Haiti, Mauritania, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. Moreover, OHCHR ensured that members of the Security Council were regularly informed of the human rights situation in relevant countries through informal updates, situational awareness sessions, white notes and infographic tools. OHCHR's engagement with the Security Council led to the inclusion of strong human rights mandates and language in some resolutions.

- *Increased integration of human rights standards and principles, including the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN support to non-UN security forces, into the UN's security policies and programmes (EA 11)*

OHCHR's work during 2017 ensured that standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the application of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) were adopted in almost all peace missions and some political missions and that HRDDP task forces were established to oversee the implementation of the HRDDP in each concerned mission. The Office's work also led to a unified SOP for the implementation of the HRDDP in the Central African Republic, the DRC and South Sudan, with the aim of creating a homogenous application of the HRDDP by UNCTs and peace missions. A number of Security Council resolutions continued to reinforce the message that strict compliance with the Policy, particularly in relation to UN support to non-UN security forces, is an essential element of the implementation of mission mandates.



OHCHR staff members interviewing a woman residing in the Luhansk region, Ukraine. © OHCHR/Ukraine

## Global Management Outputs

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

- Gender considerations were integrated into the work of FOTCD and information on gender-related issues was regularly shared with field presences, including guidance to actively apply gender equality principles to planning and programming exercises. A gender perspective was mainstreamed into the Office's interventions in the context of technical cooperation programmes, the development of UN-DAFs, support for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, human rights work in the context of elections, security sector reform, human rights monitoring and the implementation of the Human Rights up Front Action Plan. FOTCD worked with the Department of Field Support to ensure that the planning, design and deployments of peace operations integrate a gender perspective. During 2017, FOTCD worked towards the operationalization of women protection advisers in United Nations peace operations to ensure that a critical gender focus is brought to conflict-related human rights work.
- Information gathered by FOTCD in a humanitarian crisis and situations of conflict, violence or insecurity contained a tailored gender perspective and included detailed information on the impact on women's rights. Additionally, in collaboration with UN Women, eight gender advisers were seconded to commissions of inquiry and other investigative bodies that were established by OHCHR in accordance with Human Rights Council mandates.



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

- ▶ FOTCD implemented resolutions of the Human Rights Council by providing continued support for 13 special procedure country mandates until March 2017 and 11 mandates thereafter (the mandates of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire and in Haiti ended in March 2017). FOTCD also coordinated the establishment of six investigative bodies, including one mandated by the General Assembly (International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism on Syria) and five mandated by the Human Rights Council (two commissions of inquiry (Burundi II and South Sudan II); one fact-finding mission in relation to Myanmar; and two human rights investigation missions to Yemen and Kasai, DRC).

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

- ▶ Supported by FOTCD, the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights and of the Voluntary Fund for UPR Implementation and Technical Assistance, analysed successes and challenges in technical cooperation work that has been undertaken by OHCHR in the field. The Board of Trustees visited OHCHR field presences in Beirut, Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and engaged with all local partners, resulting in a series of recommendations to guide and strengthen OHCHR's technical cooperation work.
- ▶ FOTCD continued to ensure the timely recruitment and deployment of human rights advisers, in accordance with the United Nations Development Group's (UNDG) Strategy for the Deployment of Human Rights Advisers. In 2017, 24 human rights advisers were based across a number of regions. At the beginning of 2017, this programme faced numerous challenges in terms of financial sustainability, which resulted in the termination of several positions. Towards the end of 2017, however, in response to the requests of resident coordinators and UNCTs, OHCHR closely cooperated with the UN Development Coordination Office and the UNDG and secured funding from Member States to ensure the continuity of existing deployments in 2018.

- ▶ FOTCD improved its collaboration with the Department of Field Support, which led to the development of tools and modalities for human rights start-up teams in field presences and for staffing the human rights components in peace missions. OHCHR participated in the Civilian Staffing Reviews of the peace missions in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kosovo\*, Mali and Sudan (Darfur) and provided its expertise about target human rights staffing levels to the analysis of overall mission staffing needs. This has been increasingly important in a climate of shrinking mission budgets.
- ▶ In 2017, as part of OHCHR's four-year cycle planning process, regional planning workshops were held for the regions of Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific and the Americas. The workshops brought together OHCHR Heads of field presences with government, civil society and international stakeholders to identify the key challenges, opportunities and areas requiring intervention over the next four years. Subsequently, OHCHR Heads of field presences were brought to Geneva to formulate the vision, priorities and strategies for OHCHR for the period from 2018 to 2021.

### Improved awareness and understanding of and support to OHCHR's mission and programme by Member States and other stakeholders (GMO 7)

- ▶ FOTCD regularly interacted with Member States, donors, representatives of NHRIs, civil society organizations and other United Nations entities to raise awareness about human rights developments of concern and to update them on OHCHR's work at headquarters and in the field.
- ▶ In 2017, OHCHR issued over 150 press statements, press briefings, media statements and media advisories on country situations with the input and advice of FOTCD and OHCHR's field presences. In addition, FOTCD reviewed approximately 30 reports that have been published by OHCHR on country situations, including 14 reports that were jointly released with United Nations peace missions. FOTCD also reviewed over 30 reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. The reports primarily focused on thematic matters and country situations and the activities of some of its field presences, including the provision of technical cooperation.



# Human Rights Council Mechanisms Division

## Background

The Human Rights Council Mechanisms Division (HRCMD) is the Division of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 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). The work of the Division has most recently focused on supporting States in implementing the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in close partnership with the UN system organizations on the ground, in particular the resident coordinators and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs). In this regard, outreach and strategic partnerships have been strengthened by engaging key external stakeholders to jointly develop tools to support States in their implementation of the recommendations emanating from the international human rights mechanisms, including those of the human rights treaty bodies, the UPR and the special procedures.

HRCMD also administers the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (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. In 2017, the Council discussed a wide range of thematic issues at its three



The Human Rights Council in session, March 2017. © UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré





The High Commissioner for Human Rights meets with women members of national human rights institutions during a special session of the Human Rights Council to mark International Women's Day, March 2017. © Jeff Vize for the UN Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai

regular sessions, including during the panel discussions on topics such as climate change; public health and access to medicine; unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents; racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration; the death penalty; the role of local governments; the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of all human rights; unilateral coercive measures; and the impact of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence in the context of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance on the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls. The Council continued to respond to human rights emergencies and emerging or chronic issues and addressed urgent situations in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Myanmar, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. In 2017, the Council adopted a total of 114 resolutions, decisions and President's Statements.

By November 2016, all 193 Member States had been reviewed by the UPR mechanism for the second time. The third cycle, which began in May 2017, has provided OHCHR with an opportunity to strengthen its engagement with all States on the implementation and follow-up of the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms, in particular those issued by the UPR, including through cooperative efforts and the sharing of good practices between States and other stakeholders. It also provided an important basis for States to achieve greater results in both the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and hu-

man rights protection at the country level by potentially drawing upon the efficiencies created through national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up and comprehensive national human rights action plans or implementation plans, as suggested in the Secretary-General's report A/72/351 and HRC resolution 36/29.

In 2017, OHCHR provided full secretariat support (legal, policy and technical) to the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions of the UPR Working Group (WG), during which 28 State reviews were conducted. The Office provided all of the background documentation for the reviews (summaries and compilations for each country, as well as the UPR WG reports, which include the summaries of the interactive dialogues, the recommendations and the report of the HRC Plenary (item 6)) to facilitate the adoption of the UPR WG reports. OHCHR was fully engaged in promoting the implementation and follow-up to the UPR recommendations by organizing briefings for various stakeholders, including States, UN human rights mechanisms, such as the human rights treaty bodies, special procedures, UN entities, NGOs, national human rights institutions, regional human rights mechanisms, academics and others. It also prepared background information and training materials to increase the visibility of the mechanisms and encourage the implementation of its outcomes.

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 undertake thematic studies; conduct country visits; send communications to States and other actors regarding human rights cases and issues; contribute to the development of international human rights law; engage in awareness-raising activities; and provide advisory services. The special procedures system currently consists of 56 mandates (44 thematic and 12 country-specific). In 2017, a new mandate was established on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members. The Human Rights Council abolished two country mandates (of the Independent Experts on the situation of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire and in Haiti), which took effect in March 2017.

## Results

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

### Strengthening international human rights mechanisms

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

Member States continued to increase their engagement with the international human rights mechanisms. Through the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council, OHCHR provided support to enable 27 delegates from 26 LDCs and SIDS (13 from Africa, four from the Caribbean and Latin America and nine from Asia and the Pacific) to participate in sessions of the HRC. Member States also increased their engagement with the Working Group on Communications and the Working Group on Situations of the HRC's complaint procedure by sending substantive replies to questions posed by both working groups. The response rates to communications increased from 80 to 90 per cent during the year. Some States reported concrete measures to redress allegations of consistent patterns of gross and reliably-attested violations of human rights in 2017, including the release of political opponents, sentence reductions for detainees, compensation granted to victims of human rights violations and independent and impartial domestic investigations for human rights violations. In addition, concrete actions were undertaken to facilitate country visits by some special procedures mandate-holders.

Regular contacts and advocacy with States and stakeholders contributed to the 100 per cent participation rate in the second cycle of the UPR. From the outset of the third cycle of the UPR, in May 2017,

## Special procedures in figures in 2017

**87** country visits carried out by special procedures mandate-holders to **67** States and territories

**534** communications sent to **117** States and **1** non-State actor, of which **423** were jointly issued by two or more mandate-holders. The response rate of States to these communications increased significantly to **68** per cent

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

**1** new thematic mandate established and **2** country mandates abolished

**1** more Member State extended a standing invitation to the special procedures. A total of **118** Member States and **1** non-Member Observer State have now extended a standing invitation to special procedures mandates

there has been greater focus on the implementation and follow-up to the recommendations on the ground. After the review of each State, the High Commissioner sent letters to its respective Minister of Foreign Affairs, and indicated specific issues that the High Commissioner believed needed particular attention ahead of the next cycle of the UPR. The letters have received positive feedback both from the States and civil society. In 2017, fourteen such letters were sent to the States that had undergone the review at the 27th session of the UPR Working Group. The letters also provided the United Nations system at the national level with an opportunity to strengthen engagement with States in promoting



OHCHR workshop on national human rights mechanisms for reporting and follow-up in Cape Verde, February 2017.  
© OHCHR/West Africa

and protecting human rights and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. OHCHR worked to improve its HRC webpage and the country pages of States undergoing their reviews. In 2017, it changed the format of its webpage, updated all of the information that is posted, added comprehensive background materials and made it more user-friendly. All pre-session documents, including the advance questions, working group reports and additional information submitted by the State were posted on the relevant country pages. Furthermore, the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms are made accessible to persons with disabilities. All reviews are webcasted. In May 2017, OHCHR started organizing briefings during the UPR Working Group sessions for members of delegations participating in the review of their countries. The briefings provided visiting delegations with an overview of follow-up processes and measures for the implementation of recommendations of human rights mechanisms, in particular the UPR, in light of existing good practices. In relation to the special procedures, a total of 118 Member States and one non-Member Observer State have extended a standing invitation. In 2017, 67 States and territories hosted 87 country visits of mandate-holders. With respect to communications, 534 were sent to 117 States and one non-State actor. A total of 423 communications were jointly issued by two or more mandate-holders, covering at least 1,843 individuals, including 655 women. The response rate of States to these communications increased significantly to 68 per cent, although the replies varied from acknowledgements of receipt to substantive replies.

In 2017, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances transmitted 990 new cases of enforced disappearance to States, 154 of which were being addressed under its urgent action procedure. The Working Group was able to clarify 111 cases, including the release of two individuals in Bangladesh and Libya following communications of the Working Group and other special procedures mandates. Moreover, in the period from January 2016 to July 2017, 30 individuals were released who had been the subjects of opinions issued by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

States responded to a number of findings and recommendations issued by the special procedures. For example, during the country visit to Australia of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, in March, she raised a concern regarding the lack of adequate legal aid and the Government's funding cuts to organizations providing indigenous peoples with legal aid. Due in part to the public concerns raised by the Special Rapporteur, the Government announced, in May, that it would reverse the budget cuts for indigenous legal aid organizations.

## Sixth Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights

OHCHR continued to assist the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises in its efforts to promote the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. These efforts included consultations regarding national action plans on business and human rights that were organized in Santiago de Chile (January and December) and in Paris (June), in cooperation with the OECD.

In November, OHCHR organized the sixth Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, which is guided and chaired by the Working Group. Once again, the Forum attracted a record number of participants, with an increase in the number of business representatives and government delegations from capitals. More than 2,500 participants from close to 130 countries took part in the three-day programme of more than 60 sessions, making it the largest global event on business and human rights ever held.

In October, the Special Rapporteur sent a joint communication with the OHCHR Regional Office for South America urging the Government of Chile to ensure that accused indigenous Mapuches in the country be provided with fair trial guarantees under the ordinary justice system and not be prosecuted under anti-terrorist legislation. Within a matter of days, the accused Mapuches in the high-profile case were acquitted due to the prosecution's reliance on a witness statement that had been obtained under torture as its key piece of evidence. In another case, the accused Mapuches who had spent nearly one and a half years in pretrial detention were released on bail. In December 2016, the Ministry of Interior in Ecuador sought to shut down an organization that advocates in favour of environmental causes and the rights of the indigenous Shuar peoples. The Special Rapporteur, together with other mandate-holders, sent a communication and issued a public press release, expressing concern over restrictions to freedom of expression and association. In January 2017, the Ecuadorian Environment Ministry announced that it had rejected the Interior Ministry's request to shut down the organization.

In July, a number of special procedures mandate-holders sent a communication to the Government of Turkey to raise their concerns about the arrests, incommunicado detention and investigations of 11 human rights defenders and experts based on their suspected membership in terrorist organizations. On 25 October, 10 of the 11 defenders were released. Although they are still facing terrorism charges, they

believe that the statement made by the special procedures had a tremendous impact on the decision of the authorities to release them.

Non-State actors also engaged with the special procedures. For example, the sixth Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, held in November, attracted a record number of participants, with an increase in the number of business representatives and government delegations from capitals.

- *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 number and diversity of NGO participants attending sessions of the HRC remained very high in 2017. Overall, with the assistance of OHCHR, there was an increase of 14 per cent in the number of oral statements delivered (2,361), 6 per cent in the submission of written statements (583) and 15 per cent in the number of side events that were organized by NGOs in parallel to sessions of the Council (502). The Office held regular briefings for representatives of civil society prior to each session of the Council. Moreover, in order to respond to allegations of threats and reported cases of reprisals against civil society representatives during UPR or HRC sessions, OHCHR continued to follow up on the allegations and bring them to the attention of the President of the Council. In the course of 2017, the President followed up on reported cases through bilateral meetings, formal correspondence or informal interactions during the sessions.

In 2017, OHCHR received almost 1,300 UPR submissions from different stakeholders, including 99 submissions from different UN entities. Approximately 50 NGOs based in Geneva and many more that are based in the field were regularly engaged during the UPR process. OHCHR cooperated with European regional organizations, such as the Council of

Europe, and enhanced its efforts aimed at developing partnerships with other regional mechanisms, such as the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab Human Rights Committee, to encourage their input for the summary of stakeholder reports for the 28th, 29th and 30th sessions of the UPR Working Group. Furthermore, the engagement of all stakeholders was supported through a revamped UPR webpage that provides updated background information, including an infographic presentation of the timelines, on the UPR review process, roles of various stakeholders, modalities of the UPR process, relevant documentation, opportunities for implementation and follow-up and links to human rights indicators, SDGs and other developments. In the context of the third cycle of the UPR, new web-cast snapshots of the adoption of the UPR outcome reports are being produced and widely shared.

Rights-holders and other stakeholders continued to access special procedures through various channels. The number of submissions received by the special procedures in 2017 reached approximately 16,500, including by using an OHCHR online submission form.

- *Advances in the progressive development of international and regional human rights law in areas relevant to the thematic priorities (EA 8)*

OHCHR provided substantive support to the HRC Advisory Committee in the following areas: unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents and human rights; elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members; negative impact of the non-repatriation of funds of illicit origin to the countries of origin on the enjoyment of human rights; regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights; national policies and human rights; negative effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of all human rights; activities of vulture funds and their impact on human rights; and local governments and human rights. In so doing, it facilitated the development of standards by the Committee in the aforementioned areas, thereby contributing to the progressive development of international human rights standards.

A number of mandate-holders contributed to the development of international human rights law and good practices. In 2017, the 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 completed a four-year global study on national legislation in 60 countries across all regions. The study highlighted the need for stronger regulation of private military and security companies, both nationally and internationally, and significantly contributed to the discussions of the intergovernmental working group to consider



Workshop on the implementation of recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review in El Fasher, North Darfur.  
© UNAMID/ Mohamad Almahady



an international regulatory framework to regulate these organizations. The Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons presented a report on the impact, potential and challenges of the use of assistive and robotics technology, artificial intelligence and automation on the human rights of older persons, including from the perspective of the existing international and regional human rights standards. The Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy continued his work on a draft legal instrument (i.e., a new international treaty) aimed at regulating surveillance in cyberspace at the global level. Finally, the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children presented a thematic report to the HRC on the sale of children and illegal adoptions, contributing to the development of child rights and relevant protection standards. Also, the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity finalized a draft declaration on the right to international solidarity and submitted it to the HRC.

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

The role of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures has been further consolidated as the main interlocutor of the special procedures system, including through an increased recognition and participation of the Coordination Committee in the work of the Human Rights Council and the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

Mandate-holders also undertook several joint actions. For example, in October, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children and the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography presented their joint thematic report (A/72/16) to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. The report addresses the vulnerabilities of children to sale, trafficking and other forms of exploitation in situations of conflict and humanitarian crisis and provides recommendations aimed at reducing the vulnerabilities of those children and enhancing their protection.

Cooperation of the special procedures with the other human rights mechanisms continued to be strengthened. For instance, to raise the awareness of UN human rights experts on the rights of persons with disabilities, some treaty bodies consulted the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities in the drafting of general comments (i.e., the Human Rights Committee's General Comment on article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights). The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance enhanced his coordination with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, including by issuing a number of joint

press releases and providing inputs to a decision that was adopted by the Committee under its early warning and urgent action procedures.

There was also enhanced synergy with regional human rights mechanisms. For instance, in May, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights issued a landmark judgement in favour of the Ogiek peoples in Kenya, making multiple references to the communications and country visit report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples. Partnership with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights was enhanced with dedicated joint activities.

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

The HRC addressed emerging or ongoing human rights crises in a number of situations. For example, the Council took action on and continued to monitor the human rights situation in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, among other countries. The Council established an independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, in March, held a special session, in December, on the situation of human rights of the minority Rohingya Muslim population and other minorities in Rakhine State of Myanmar and extended the mandates of the commissions of inquiry on Burundi and the Syrian Arab Republic. Furthermore, the Council requested that OHCHR dispatch a team of experts to engage with Burundian authorities to collect information, establish the truth and ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable by the national judicial authorities. A team of international experts was also sent to collect and preserve information concerning the events in the Kasai regions and was requested to forward their conclusions to the judicial authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The HRC further requested that the High Commissioner establish a group of eminent international and regional experts for Yemen.

In 2017, efforts have been made to enhance the early warning capacity of special procedures, including by participating in various reflections and meetings on the role of human rights and human rights bodies in the early warning and prevention role of the UN and by ensuring that this role is recognized in various key documents. In relation to specific cases, the special procedures took early action on the Central African Republic, Libya, Myanmar, the Philippines, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen, including through communications, reports to States, statements and press releases. The special procedures raised the alarm about worrying developments on thematic issues, such as climate change and migration, urging States and other stakeholders to take early action on these matters.



### Enhancing equality and countering discrimination

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

In 2017, the Task Force of the Human Rights Council on accessibility for persons with disabilities finalized and adopted the accessibility plan, under the overall coordination of OHCHR. The plan prioritizes four areas of work to increase accessibility in the work of the UN in Geneva. It will be implemented by OHCHR in coordination with the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Office focused on ensuring that the work of the Council is increasingly accessible to persons with disabilities by, inter alia, taking steps to make the Council's Internet and extranet webpages and their content accessible, including statements, draft resolutions and voting results. As a result of advocacy efforts with delegations sponsoring resolutions, four resolutions that were adopted in 2017 include specific language that will ensure that panels are made fully accessible to persons with disabilities. The Office further supported the Advisory Committee for the preparation of a report on the implementation of the principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members (A/HRC/35/38). The report contains practical suggestions for wider dissemination and more effective implementation of the principles and guidelines to eliminate discrimination and the stigma associated with leprosy. Welcoming the report, the HRC adopted resolution A/HRC/35/9, which called for the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.

Special procedures engaged in advocacy and other actions aimed at ensuring that legislation, policies and practices increasingly comply with anti-discrimination and equality standards. For example, following his visit to Saudi Arabia, in January, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights made recommendations to the Government of Saudi Arabia to lift restrictions that have a negative impact on women's abilities to work, travel and fully engage as productive members of society. His visit and recommendations have provided an impetus for gradual changes in the discriminatory measures against women. In April, King Salman issued an order to review and amend all existing regulations and procedures that require a male guardian's consent for women to access public services. In September 2017, the Government made an historic decision to lift the driving ban for women.

Throughout the year, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women put forward a number of legal and policy recommendations for eliminating violence against women, including through press statements and active participation in the elabora-

tion of CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 35 on violence against women. Additionally, the Special Rapporteur issued policy and legal recommendations on shelters and protection orders for women victims of violence in her report to the Human Rights Council, which was presented in June (report A/HRC/35/30). In its June report to the HRC (A/HRC/35/29), the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice proposed an analysis on good practices for the elimination of discrimination against women in law and in practice and for women's empowerment with the objective of establishing a conceptual framework. In her October report to the General Assembly A/72/287, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance made policy and legal recommendations on combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the context of countering terrorism. Throughout the year, the Special Rapporteur also made various legal and policy recommendations, including through statements, country visit reports (Argentina, Australia and Fiji), and participation in events, such as a debate on racial profiling and incitement to hatred in the context of migration. The work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights has had a significant impact on understanding the human dimension of cultural heritage and the importance of recognizing the right to access and enjoy cultural heritage as a human right. The Special Rapporteur was requested to act as an expert for the International Criminal Court and provided a report on the impact of the intentional destruction of cultural heritage in Mali that was included in this landmark case. This is the first standalone case on the destruction of cultural heritage that has been prosecuted by an international body.

### 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, into their development, finance, trade and investment policies (EA 10)*

The Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights began the process of developing Guiding Principles for assessing the impact on human rights of structural adjustment and austerity measures. A mapping of existing tools used by States and international financial institutions was undertaken to identify existing practices and gaps. In November, an expert meeting was held to propose a framework for the Guiding Principles. In 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples presented a thematic report on bilateral and regional trade agreements to the HRC, which helped to increase public

## The Forum on Minority Issues

The tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues was held from 30 November to 1 December 2017, and was dedicated to the topic, “Minority youth: Towards diverse and inclusive societies.” Many young women and men from minority communities participated for the first time in the Forum, while a number of young delegates represented their governments. A total of 12 young minority activists from different parts of the world presented the four main panel discussions on education, participation in public life, digital media and peace and stability.

During the first panel discussion, participants formulated recommendations with regard to access to education, accommodation of minority culture and language in education programmes and facilities and the role of informal education in increasing youth awareness about religious, cultural and linguistic diversity. During the second panel discussion, participants raised the issue of the political en-

gagement of minority youth, discussed the importance of the representation of minority youth in public institutions and reflected on how to increase the positive visibility of young minorities in society. During the panel discussion on digital media, participants called for greater efforts to ensure access to digital media for all, including marginalized minority communities, shared initiatives on responding to hate speech and bullying on the Internet and discussed the role of minority-led media initiatives to empower young minorities and change the mainstream narrative regarding possible biases or stereotypes affecting minorities. During the fourth panel discussion, participants considered the role of minority youth as agents of change for peace and stability and put forward recommendations regarding the need for greater consultation and participation of minority youth in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts.

awareness about how such agreements and the use of investor-State dispute settlements impact indigenous peoples. The 2017 thematic report focused on climate change and climate funds and their impact on indigenous peoples.

The special procedures also made several contributions to the issue of the SDGs. For example, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities advocated for the collection of data disaggregated by disability for the SDGs, resulting in an increasing number of States supporting this approach and collecting relevant data. The Special Rapporteur on the right to food provided advice on the incorporation of the human right to food in all relevant aspects of Goal 2 on Zero Hunger through her two reports on the right to food and pesticides and in high-level meetings of the Committee on World Food Security.

### Widening the democratic space

- *Effective protection mechanisms and measures for civil society actors, including at-risk human rights defenders and media actors established and strengthened (EA 3)*

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders cooperated closely with State actors and civil society representatives on the elaboration and implementation of national instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders. In 2017, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted a decree to implement the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Defenders, the first of its kind on the African continent. Other countries on the continent are in various stages of

elaboration of similar draft legislation aimed at the recognition and protection of human rights defenders. The Special Rapporteur cooperated with the International Service for Human Rights during the elaboration of a model law on human rights defenders, which has served as a reference for the legislation being implemented in Côte d'Ivoire.

The timely intervention of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, via a public statement, provided environmental human rights defenders in Kenya with effective protection. For example, various environmental activists and their families were the victims of rapidly escalating threats and intimidation. After the Special Rapporteur's statement, which was reported in local newspapers and shared widely via social media, the human rights defenders were provided with increased protection from international organizations and the Government.

- *Increased interventions of the international community to promote and protect civil society actors, including against reprisals (EA 10)*

OHCHR devoted increased attention to the issue of protecting civil society actors against reprisals and ensured that cases of reprisals against human rights defenders, who have interacted with international human rights mechanisms, were appropriately raised and handled, in particular by the President of the Human Rights Council and the human rights treaty bodies. During the last four years, the President of the Human Rights Council and the High Commissioner have intervened in a number of cases of reprisals against civil society members who had engaged with the HRC or provided information to the UPR mechanism.

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

- *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 year 2017 witnessed a dramatic deterioration of the situation in Myanmar affecting the Rohingya minority in the northern Rakhine region with an exponential increase in the number of refugees fleeing persecution to neighbouring countries. Through one of its communications, the Special Rapporteur on minority issues underlined the serious humanitarian crisis in the region while recalling the need for the Myanmar authorities to protect the existence and identity of minorities. Furthermore, the Forum on Minority Issues addressed critical issues ranging from violence against minorities to minorities in the criminal justice system. The Forum acted as a catalyst for effective communication among members of minority groups, Member States and other organizations.

### Global Management Outputs

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

- OHCHR organized meetings with the main sponsors of the HRC panel discussions in order to ensure a gender and geographical balance in their composition. In addition, gender-related statistics were prepared and shared with the President of the Council and members of the Consultative Group to sensitize them about the gender and geographic distribution of current mandate-holders during the selection and appointment process of new mandate-holders. In 2017, the Consultative Group was tasked with filling 20 vacancies, which provided them with an opportunity to improve the gender distribution of mandate-holders. As of the end of 2017, 44 per cent of mandate-holders are women, compared to 41 per cent in 2016.
- The number of women delegates participating in sessions of the Council, supported by the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council, increased from 13 in 2016 to 18 in 2017.
- Although the importance of providing gender-disaggregated data is always highlighted in the context of the UPR briefings facilitated by the Office, references to women's rights and gender in national reports remain uneven. This fact contributed to an increasing number of gender-related recommendations that were put forward during the Working Group's review and the interactive dialogue.



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples briefs journalists in New York on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, January 2017. © UN Photo/Mark Garten

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

- In 2017, OHCHR assisted the Human Rights Council to hold three regular sessions and one special session. Following efforts to decrease the number of meetings, which consisted of reduced speaking times for interactive dialogues and general debates, a total of 140 fully serviced meetings were organized, prepared and followed-up on by OHCHR. Furthermore, OHCHR serviced 50 interactive dialogues, 19 panel discussions, two inter-sessional panels and one inter-sessional seminar on a wide array of topics.
- OHCHR made progress in enhancing the visibility of the Council through various online tools and information technologies. A total of 36,793 media articles focused on the Human Rights Council during 2017, with heightened activities being monitored during the regular and special sessions of the Council and its subsidiary bodies. The social media accounts of the Human Rights Council have yielded a considerable increase in followers, likes and engagements, which contributed to increased awareness and visibility. Moreover, a booklet on the HRC was produced in English, French and Spanish, which was met with considerable success on the Council's social media channels. Photographic and graphical design elements, including pictures from the field, contributed to a substantive increase in the visibility of the Council.
- With the financial support of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Participation in the Universal Periodic Review, the participation of representatives from 15 States was facilitated in UPR Working Group sessions and HRC plenaries for the adoption of the respective UPR outcomes.
- All of the documentation prior to and following UPR sessions was provided in a timely manner, despite the increasing workload in the context of greater

engagement of States in the UPR process. OHCHR also provided substantive support to the UPR Working Group during the two 2-week sessions that were held in 2017.

- ▶ OHCHR issued a number of publications and materials to promote the work of the UPR mechanism, including a flyer on the UPR Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance and a presentation document distributed to all delegates who participated during the briefing session for States prior to the twenty-eighth session of the UPR.
- ▶ Efforts have been made to ensure that the special procedures mandate-holders were well aware of the importance of submitting reports on time, including by addressing this issue during the induction session and at the Annual Meeting of the Special Procedures.
- ▶ OHCHR supported the mandate-holders in issuing 387 public statements in order to raise awareness and express their concerns over a wide array of human rights issues related to their mandates.
- ▶ OHCHR convened the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures in three annual meetings, including one in New York and two in Geneva. At the meetings, the Committee met with several UN entities, Member States and civil society organizations to find ways to improve cooperation.
- ▶ In 2017, OHCHR provided substantive and logistical support in relation to the 87 country visits that were undertaken by mandate-holders to 67 States and territories. The Office also assisted in the drafting and submission of 534 communications to States and 131 reports to the HRC and 39 reports to the General Assembly. Moreover, the Office organized

two major annual fora in 2017, namely, the tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues and the sixth Forum on Business and Human Rights.

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

- ▶ In 2017, the implementation of UPR recommendations was enhanced through the activities of the UPR Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance. The Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund provided strategic guidance and advice to OHCHR aimed at extending the Fund's reach and the impact of its support to State efforts for the implementation of the recommendations issued by the UPR and other human rights mechanisms. These discussions focused on strengthening the Fund's support to national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up; comprehensive national human rights action and implementation plans related to recommendations; the integration of UPR outcomes into UN planning documents at the national level; and key thematic human rights issues identified in recommendations.
- ▶ In 2017, a total of 87 country visits were undertaken by special procedures mandate-holders, many of which took place with the logistical and substantive support of OHCHR field presences.
- ▶ Recommendations from the special procedures, especially following country visits, were used by OHCHR field presences. OHCHR's planning week, in July, which included the presence of Heads of OHCHR field offices, included a dedicated discussion on this issue and explored ideas with field colleagues on how to further enhance this integration.



## Human Rights Council – Outcomes of sessions held in 2017

### 34th session (27 February to 24 March)

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

- ▶ The promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for cultural diversity; the mandate of the Independent Expert on 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; the question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; the right to privacy in the digital age; effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of all human rights; adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to non-discrimination in this context; the freedom of religion or belief; 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; the right to food; human rights and unilateral coercive measures; the right to work; birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law; rights of the child: protection of the rights of the child in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights; freedom of opinion and expression: mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: mandate of the Special Rapporteur; human rights and the environment; the human rights of migrants: mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization of and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; and human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
- ▶ Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka; the situation of human rights in Haiti; technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in Libya; technical assistance and capacity-building for Mali in the field of human rights; the situation of human rights in Myanmar; the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; the situation of human rights in South Sudan; the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan; ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and in the occupied Syrian Golan; and cooperation with Georgia.
- ▶ The elaboration of complementary standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the establishment of a forum on people of African descent; the mandate of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; and promoting the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the Work of the Human Rights Council.
- ▶ Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review in relation to Haiti, Iceland, Lithuania, the Republic of Moldova, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uganda, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe.

### 35th session (6 – 23 June)

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

- ▶ The right to education: follow-up to Human Rights Council resolution 8/4; human rights and international solidarity; promotion of the right to peace; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; business and human rights: mandate of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights; the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members; accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; independence and impartiality of the judiciary, jurors and assessors and the independence of lawyers; protection of the family: role of the family in supporting the protection and promotion of human rights of older persons; youth and human rights; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; child, early and forced marriage in humanitarian settings; protection of the human rights of migrants: the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration; the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; extreme poverty and human rights; human rights and climate change; the contribution of development to the enjoyment of all human rights; realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl; the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; human rights in cities and other human settlements; the negative impact of corruption on the enjoyment of human rights; national policies and human rights; the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; and consideration of the elaboration of a draft declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of people of African descent. »

- ▶ The human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; the situation of human rights in Belarus; cooperation with and assistance to Ukraine in the field of human rights; the situation of human rights in Eritrea; the situation of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire; and technical assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and accountability concerning the events in the Kasai regions.
- ▶ The seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; the Social Forum; the panel discussion on the human rights of internally displaced persons in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; and the contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review.

### 36th session (11 – 29 September)

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

- ▶ The use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination; the composition of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the mandate of the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents and human rights; enforced or involuntary disappearances; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence; the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls and the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the right to development; human rights and unilateral coercive measures; the World Programme for Human Rights Education; mental health and human rights; human rights and indigenous peoples; the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes; human rights in the administration of justice, including juvenile justice; the question of the death penalty; conscientious objection to military service; cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights; the promotion and protection of the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; the mandate of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; from rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights; and promoting international cooperation to support national human rights follow-up systems, processes and related mechanisms and their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ▶ Mission by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to improve the human rights situation and accountability in Burundi; the renewal of the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi; the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic; technical assistance and capacity-building in the field of human rights in the Central African Republic; technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in the Sudan; assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights; technical assistance and capacity-building in the field of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; human rights, technical assistance and capacity-building in Yemen; advisory services and technical assistance for Cambodia; and the extension of the mandate of the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar.
- ▶ The mandate of the open-ended intergovernmental working group to elaborate the content of an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies; and the reports of the Advisory Committee.
- ▶ Outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review in relation to Algeria, Bahrain, Brazil, Ecuador, Finland, India, Indonesia, Morocco, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Tunisia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

### 27th special session (5 December)

- ▶ The Council adopted a resolution on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar.

## Special Procedures Mandate-Holders 2017

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 the <b>Central African Republic</b>	2013	Ms. <b>Marie-Therese Keita Bocoum</b> (Côte d'Ivoire) since January 2014
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the <b>Democratic People's Republic of Korea</b>	2004	Mr. <b>Tomás Ojea Quintana</b> (Argentina) since August 2016
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>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>	2011	Ms. <b>Asma Jahangir</b> (Pakistan) since October 2016 (Ms. Jahangir passed away on February 2018 and her replacement will be appointed during the 38th session of the HRC)
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>Michael Lynk</b> (Canada) since June 2016
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>Somalia</b>	1993	Mr. <b>Bahame Tom Mukirya Nyanduga</b> (United Republic of Tanzania) since June 2014
Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in <b>the 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>Michał Balcerzak</b> (Poland) since December 2014 Mr. <b>Ricardo III Sunga</b> (the Philippines) since December 2014 Ms. <b>Marie-Evelyn Petrus</b> (France) since May 2017 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 June 2014 Mr. <b>Seong-Phil Hong</b> (Republic of Korea) since August 2014 Ms. <b>Elina Steinerte</b> (Latvia) since December 2016 Ms. <b>Leigh Toomey</b> (Australia) since August 2015 Mr. <b>José Guevara</b> (Mexico) since June 2014
Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other <b>business enterprises</b>	2011	Mr. <b>Surya Deva</b> (India) since April 2016 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>Anita Ramasastry</b> (USA) since November 2016
Special Rapporteur in the field of <b>cultural rights</b>	2009	Ms. <b>Karima Bennoune</b> (USA) since November 2015
Special Rapporteur on the right to <b>development</b>	2016	Mr. <b>Saad Alfarargi</b> (Egypt) since March 2017
Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with <b>disabilities</b>	2014	Ms. <b>Catalina Devandas Aguilar</b> (Costa Rica) since December 2014
Special Rapporteur on the elimination of <b>discrimination against persons affected by leprosy</b> and their family members	2017	Ms. <b>Alice Cruz</b> (Portugal) since November 2017

Mandate	Established	Mandate-holder
Working Group on the issue of <b>discrimination against women in law and in practice</b>	2010	Ms. <b>Melissa Upreti</b> (Nepal) since November 2017 Ms. <b>Meskerem Techane</b> (Ethiopia) since November 2017 Ms. <b>Alda Facio</b> (Costa Rica) since June 2014 Ms. <b>Elizabeth Broderick</b> (Australia) since November 2017 Ms. <b>Ivana Radacic</b> (Croatia) since November 2017
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>Luciano Hazan</b> (Argentina) since May 2017 Mr. <b>Henrikas Mickevičius</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	Ms. <b>Boly Barry Koumbou</b> (Burkina Faso) since August 2016
Special Rapporteur 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	Ms. <b>Agnes Callamard</b> (France) since August 2016
Special Rapporteur on the right to <b>food</b>	2000	Ms. <b>Hilal Elver</b> (Turkey) since June 2014
Independent Expert on the effects of <b>foreign debt</b> and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all 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	Mandate-holder to be appointed at HRC 37th session
Special Rapporteur on <b>freedom of religion or belief</b>	1986	Mr. <b>Ahmed Shaheed</b> (Maldives) since November 2016
Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of <b>hazardous substances and wastes</b>	1995	Mr. <b>Baskut Tuncak</b> (Turkey) since June 2014
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	Mr. <b>Diego García-Sayán</b> (Peru) since December 2016
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of <b>indigenous peoples</b>	2001	Ms. <b>Victoria Lucia Tauli-Corpuz</b> (Philippines) since June 2014
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of <b>internally displaced persons</b>	2004	Ms. <b>Cecilia Jimenez-Damary</b> (Philippines) since November 2016
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>Obiora C. Okafor</b> (Nigeria) since August 2017
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 Farrel Katz</b> (South Africa) 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



Mandate	Established	Mandate-holder
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of <b>migrants</b>	1999	Mr. <b>Felipe González Morales</b> (Chile) since August 2017
Special Rapporteur on <b>minority issues</b>	2005	Mr. <b>Fernand De Varennes</b> (Canada) since August 2017
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 July 2015
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of <b>racism</b> , racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance	1993	Ms. <b>E. Tendayi Achiume</b> (Zambia) since November 2017
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
Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on <b>sexual orientation and gender identity</b>	2016	Mr. <b>Victor Madrigal-Borloz</b> (Costa Rica) since January 2018
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	Ms. <b>Fionnuala Ni Aoláin</b> (Ireland) since August 2017
Special Rapporteur on <b>torture</b> and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	1985	Mr. <b>Nils Melzer</b> (Switzerland) since November 2016
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 Šimonovic</b> (Croatia) since August 2015
Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking <b>water and sanitation</b>	2008	Mr. <b>Léo Heller</b> (Brazil) since December 2014