

Peace and Security (PS)

Preventing violations and strengthening protection of human rights, including in situations of conflict and insecurity.



CONFLICT PREVENTION, EARLY WARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Emergency deployments

24 staff deployed

(in 12 countries with deteriorating human rights situations)



Investigations

13 Investigative and accountability mandates supported

(including 4 new mandates operationalized for Ethiopia, Iran, Nicaragua and Ukraine through the identification of experts, deployment of a start-up team and recruitment of Secretariat staff)



Emergency Response Teams (ERTs)

1 team established (to work on risk analysis, early warning and response coordination in the Pacific region. New Teams in East Africa and Central Asia to be established)



More than **125** staff recruited for investigative bodies

PEACE OPERATIONS



Role of human rights components

12 UN peace operations mandate renewals

(Member States supported in integrating human rights)



Guidance and technical support

Human rights integrated into

33 DPPA-DPO-DOS policy and guidance documents for UN peace operations



Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP)

implementation supported in **14** UN peace operations



Partnership

with the African Union (AU) and European Union (EU) on AU peace support operations

(to ensure compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law)

Ukraine: Behind the numbers

“It is hard to remember the exact date of my concussion. Under shelling, you get into this endless process, which has no dates,” said a man who had just fled Kharkiv in the east of Ukraine.

Nataliia* sits on the floor in the sports complex in Uzhhorod, in Ukraine’s west, listening to the man’s story. Nataliia is a Human Rights Officer (HRO) working with the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU).

One of her jobs is to gather first-hand information on allegations of abuses and violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law resulting from the armed attack of the Russian Federation on Ukraine. She listens to people’s stories, documents what has happened to them or their loved ones and looks for information that can help verify civilian casualty incidents.



A sports complex hosting internally displaced persons from affected areas by Russian Federation attacks in Uzhhorod, Ukraine.

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USING DATA TO “CLARIFY WHAT HAPPENED”

Monitoring these violations requires HROs to consult a broad range of sources. Collecting accounts of victims and witnesses is a vital element of this work. In addition, the Mission relies on an extensive network of trusted contacts and partners. Data are often gathered through publicly available sources, such as reports by local authorities, police and emergency services. It also monitors photos, stories and video footage posted on traditional or social media platforms.

All of these data are carefully corroborated, said Olga*, another HRO. “I am looking into different kinds of data on each and every civilian casualty case to clarify what, when and with whom it happened,” she said. “Then, I can request our field teams to verify this information on the ground with available sources,” Olga added.

Once these checks are complete and show that a civilian casualty happened, the HROs will consider the case to be verified.

MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

Since the beginning of the armed attack on Ukraine, the Mission has been publishing civilian casualty updates on a daily basis. As of 15 February 2023, 8,006 people had died and 13,287 were injured. For the HROs, these updates are more than just numbers.

“We try to get the information about individual incidents in which a [person] was killed or injured...,” said Uladzimir

Shcherbau, Head of an HRMMU Unit. “We collect information on the cases that have been reported in previous days. [U]ltimately, we have a full picture of what happened to civilians.”

The HRMMU is recognized as a trusted source of verified information for governments, the media and international agencies reporting on or monitoring the war. “The civilian casualty information it provides is critical to advocating for change, ensuring justice for victims of human rights violations and holding perpetrators to account,” said Matilda Bogner, Head of the HRMMU.

“We need to ensure that we support victims and follow the do-no-harm principle. In the end, we [can] communicate...where there have been violations and how to take steps to remedy the situation and prevent further violations.”



OHCHR Human Rights Officer visits an improvised collective grave containing the bodies of civilians in Bucha, Kyiv region, Ukraine.
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* Some monitoring staff in Ukraine are not fully identified for security reasons.

Highlights of pillar results

Peace and Security (PS)

Maintaining international peace and security is one of the fundamental purposes of the UN Charter. Situations of conflict and insecurity invariably result in violations of human rights, which are often among the root causes of conflict and insecurity. UN Human Rights has a global mandate to promote and protect human rights and a specific responsibility

to mainstream human rights throughout the work of the UN. When violence and conflict occur, the promotion and protection of human rights is not only essential for the protection of rights holders, especially civilians, it also holds the key to rebuilding peace under the rule of law and preventing reoccurrence. Human rights are a powerful tool for conflict

prevention. They provide a sound basis for addressing issues of concern, which, if left unaddressed, can lead to conflict. As a result, international human rights mechanisms can support early warning and accountability and inform UN peace and security efforts.

PILLAR RESULTS / SHIFTS / SDGs

PS1 – PROTECTION of CIVILIANS, CONFLICT and PEACE

Parties to conflict and actors involved in peace operations increasingly comply with international human rights law and international humanitarian law and provide greater protection to civilians.



RESULTS / SPOTLIGHTS

Spotlights: Disabilities Women Youth People of African descent

The Human Rights and Protection Group (HRPG) of the United Nations Assistance Mission in **Somalia** (UNSO) continued to **build the capacities of the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force (SPF) to investigate and respond to alleged human rights violations**. In February and March, the HRPG facilitated sessions on the Human Right Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces during four virtual induction trainings for 118 elements of the United Nations Guard Unit, including 24 women. The sessions aimed to raise awareness about the Policy and compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law. From 6 to 7 June, in Puntland, the HRPG delivered human rights training sessions for 300 officers of the Puntland Police Force, including 13 women. The training covered several human rights issues, such as international human rights law, arrest and detention, standards on the treatment of prisoners and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

From 15 to 16 December, the United Nations Assistance Mission for **Iraq** (UNAMI) and UNOCT held a policy dialogue with senior government officials, with a view to developing a **road map towards enhanced adherence to international human rights standards** as part of efforts to counter terrorism.

PS2 – Counter-TERRORISM and preventing VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism comply with international law.



The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in **Mali** (MINUSMA) Human Rights and Protection Division (HRPD) implemented two seven-month projects for the **empowerment of youth** in the Goundam and Mopti regions of Mali to prevent their radicalization and recruitment by extremist groups. The projects included vocational trainings and awareness-raising sessions on human rights, democracy and citizenship and were made available to 62 youths, including two women with disabilities. The beneficiaries acquired new skills in carpentry, sewing, floor tiling, solar energy and motorcycle or small engine repair. According to consultations with community leaders, youth councils and communal authorities, these trades were in demand and well paid in their localities. Participants were trained on the basics of financial literacy and enterprise management and sensitized on human rights principles. Beneficiaries also received a lump sum and toolkits for their settlement in their respective regions and were mentored by master craftsmen and community leaders on their return. A total of 72.5 per cent of the beneficiaries are now making a living from acquired skills.

In **East Africa**, as part of a joint project with the AU and the World Bank to strengthen the early warning and conflict prevention systems of the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs), a virtual expert roundtable was held, in June, on **integrating gender into early warning, conflict prevention and response mechanisms**, bringing together early warning analysts and gender experts from the AU, RECs and the European Union (EU). The objective of the roundtable was to share knowledge and experiences and explore innovative ways to integrate gender and apply gender-sensitive approaches to early warning frameworks and tools. Further, OHCHR provided financial and technical support for the development of a Guidance Note for the African Union on integrating gender-sensitive approaches into early warning systems. The next phase will be the roll-out of the Guidance Note and support for the establishment of a community of practice among early warning and gender experts.

PS3 – HUMAN RIGHTS protection in PREVENTION/RESPONSE

Strategies to prevent and respond to conflict consistently integrate human rights protection.



The United Nations endorsed the **“Policy on integrating a human rights-based approach to United Nations efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.”** OHCHR led the development and finalization of the Policy, which formally recognizes the linkages between sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and human rights and provides guidance on the application of a human rights-based, victim-centred approach to prevent and respond to SEA. OHCHR worked closely with UNCTs and other UN entities on its implementation. It also coordinated with members of the SEA Working Group on the development of additional policies and tools to support the implementation of a victim-centred and human rights-based approach to prevent and respond to SEA across the UN system. Moreover, OHCHR worked closely with the Office of the Victims Rights Advocate (OVRA), IOM and the Chief Executives Board (CEB) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment to develop a **training module on the rights and dignity of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment** for UN staff. OHCHR will remain engaged in the process of rolling out the training.

OHCHR promoted the **integration of human rights into United Nations strategies to prevent and respond to conflict and strengthened human rights language in Security Council resolutions renewing peace operations**. OHCHR engaged with Security Council members and ensured the incorporation of human rights, including with regard to SGBV and transitional justice, in Afghanistan, Haiti, Libya and Mali. OHCHR provided inputs to 33 UN policy documents, including on gender-related issues, the protection of civilians, child protection and the screening of security forces. OHCHR contributed to centralizing human rights and accountability in Libya’s political and reconciliation process to prevent further conflict and help achieve sustainable peace.

In **Colombia**, at the request of the Government, OHCHR participated in the formulation of the **National Police Reform Bill** and played a key role in training for disciplinary judges on international human rights standards for their application in cases of alleged human rights violations.

PS4 – Transitional JUSTICE and ACCOUNTABILITY

Justice mechanisms, including for transitional justice, provide increased accountability for conflict-related violations.



On transitional justice, the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Mission in **South Sudan** (UNMISS) supported public consultations on the **establishment of the Commission on Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) and the implementation of Chapter V of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)**. Chapter V calls for the establishment of the CTRH, a Hybrid Court for South Sudan and a Compensation and Reparation Authority to address the impacts of the protracted conflict and massive violations that hinder progress towards reconciliation and nationhood. The Division provided technical assistance and capacity-building support to the Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG) to enable it to streamline its activities and identify priorities for advocacy and engagement on Chapter V. In March, the Division assisted the TJWG to review its Transitional Justice Strategic Plan. Following the review, the 2023-2026 plan was adopted. Further, the Division assisted the TJWG to conduct the Transitional Justice Monthly Forum, in Juba, under the theme “To accelerate the implementation of the transitional justice mechanism for a peaceful South Sudan.”

OHCHR supported the Executive Office of the Secretary General (EOSG) and the drafting and consultation process on the revision of the **Secretary-General’s Guidance Note on Transitional Justice**, providing guidance and coordination for future UN support in relation to transitional justice.

OHCHR supported the Government of Ethiopia, in cooperation with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), in the context of the recommendations issued following joint investigations that were undertaken through transitional justice consultations with victims and affected communities. Key findings and good practices on transitional justice were documented in an OHCHR-EHRC Joint Advisory Note that was developed and shared to inform conversations on policy options and the development of a **comprehensive transitional justice policy for Ethiopia**, in line with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

PS5 – INFORMATION and EARLY WARNING

Human rights information and analyses are integrated into early warning and analysis systems and influence international and national policymaking, strategies and operations to prevent, mitigate or respond to emerging crises, including humanitarian crises and conflict.



OHCHR issued an **assessment of human rights concerns in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region** on 31 August, following allegations of serious violations (against Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim communities brought to the attention of OHCHR), particularly in the context of the Chinese Government’s policies and measures to combat terrorism and “extremism.” Acting under its early warning and urgent action procedure, on 24 November, the **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) called on China to immediately investigate all allegations of human rights violations in Xinjiang**, including those of torture, ill-treatment, sexual violence, forced labour, enforced disappearances and deaths in custody.

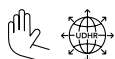
OHCHR coordinated the **integration of human rights risk analysis into global UN prevention processes**, including RMRs, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on Early Warning, Early Action and Readiness Report and the work of UNOCC. OHCHR submitted 1,366 inputs to UNOCC, 80 per cent of which were included in its daily reports. OHCHR prepared risk analyses for 25 RMR meetings and 10 regional scans and submitted 38 inputs to the IASC.

OHCHR established its **seventh Emergency Response Team (ERT)** in its Regional Office for the Pacific in Fiji (following Bangkok, Dakar, Panama City, Pretoria, Santiago de Chile and Yaoundé) to develop regional capacities in relation to early warning and information management and to support RCs/ UNCTs on human rights risk analysis in development and humanitarian settings.

OHCHR deployed **13 surge teams** to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, the Gambia, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan, Peru, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tunisia and Ukraine to scale up the collection, analysis and reporting of human rights issues and inform timely action.

PS6 – HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE POLICY

United Nations' support to national and regional security forces, law enforcement agencies and non-State actors integrate human rights and comply with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy.



In **Somalia**, the UNSOM HRPG coordinated the **development of risk assessments for the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) on weapons ammunition management and United Nations support to the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA)**. In July, the HRPG communicated NISA's mitigation measures to the Federal Government and the implementation of the measures was initiated. In addition, the HRPG provided support to the drafting of risk assessments for the Somali Custodial Corps and an addendum to the General Preliminary Risk Assessment for the SPF on the Darwish. The HRPG developed a methodological tool and drafted three Guidance Notes to strengthen the HRDDP Task Force information-sharing system. The methodological tool documents concrete actions undertaken by entities that provide support and links the actions to mitigation measures. The Guidance Notes focus on training as a mitigation measure, background checks and monitoring of the implementation of the HRDDP.

MINUSMA completed 25 HRDDP risk assessments in response to requests for support from the G5 Sahel Joint Force. After the withdrawal of **Mali** from the Joint Force, in May, no support requests were submitted by the Joint Force for the Malian battalions. As a result, the assessments conducted for the Joint Force decreased from nine to seven per quarter. Subsequently, 17 measures were determined to mitigate identified risks and enhance the human rights compliance and accountability of the Joint Force. These measures included: the provision of updated information by the Joint Force on progress achieved in internal investigations and judicial proceedings in relation to grave human rights violations on specific cases; facilitated the UN's access to any detainees held at battalion locations; the development of a standard operating procedure (SOP) on casualties incurred during operations; and measures adopted in accordance with the SOP on the capture, detention and transfer of detainees.

In **Libya**, from 26 to 30 June, OHCHR convened INGOs, NGOs and members of the international community in Tunis to discuss the elements that are required to advance the implementation of the HRDDP, including updating the country's risk assessment and identifying joint mitigation measures. A **draft incident report and a vetting sample were developed** and presented to partners for endorsement before being sent to the Government.

PS7 – NEW TECHNOLOGIES, WEAPONS, TACTICS and PRIVATE SECURITY

The use of private military and security companies and the development and deployment of new technologies, weapons and tactics are increasingly consistent with and respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law.



In coordination with OCHA and other stakeholders, OHCHR was instrumental in developing **a common UN position on explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA)**, including by providing legal advice and analysis, participating in meetings with key permanent missions in Geneva and providing information on the human rights impacts of EWIPA (based on OHCHR monitoring), for use in UN advocacy. This contributed to the adoption, in June, and subsequent endorsement by 60 States of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.

The people behind the numbers: Using data for human rights protection in the Syrian Arab Republic



Volunteers walk on the rubble of a building damaged by a devastating earthquake in rebel-held al-Maland village, in Idlib province, Syria.
© Reuters/Khalil Ashawi

In 2022, OHCHR reported to the HRC that an estimated 306,887 civilians had been killed during the 10 years of armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. That is an average of 84 civilians killed each day, every day, for a decade. This staggering number highlights the brutal impact of the conflict and indicates the commission of massive human rights and international law violations. Behind this number is an untold story of courageous individuals and organizations that have documented and reported deaths during active hostilities.

During the 10 years of the conflict, the OHCHR-Syria monitoring and reporting team and several CSOs have carried out the grueling work of collecting reliable data. Although these human rights defenders operate in difficult and dangerous environments, they remain committed to ensuring that individual

lives are counted and that their stories are told.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has carried out this work for more than 10 years. “On a daily basis, we have monitored many areas and residential neighborhoods that were stormed by the parties to the conflict or bombings and we faced enormous security challenges, having lost colleagues who were killed or arrested,” said Fadel Abdul Ghany, Founder and Executive Director of SNHR.

Recognizing the risks and obstacles of this work, Rami Abdurrahman, Founder and Director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), also underlines the importance of cooperation among those undertaking this work.

In addition, restricted access, including due to active hostilities or displacement of people, means that data are not always exhaustive. To address these limitations, OHCHR’s Methodology, Education and Training Section (METS) is leading a project that connects innovative statistical and data science techniques with human rights monitoring.

Through a partnership between statisticians from OHCHR and data experts and statisticians from the Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG), the project cross-references data from multiple documentation groups. Using cutting-edge data science and advanced statistical techniques, estimates were produced for different periods of the conflict that

demonstrated gaps in documentation. Of the estimated 306,887 civilians killed in Syria between 1 March 2011 and 31 March 2021, more than half of those deaths (163,537), were never documented.

“The conflict-related casualty figures in this report are not simply a set of abstract numbers. They represent individual human beings,” stressed Michelle Bachelet, former High Commissioner for Human Rights, when presenting the findings to the HRC. The Office was mandated to produce a report on the impacts of casualty recording on the promotion and protection of human rights in HRC resolution 50/11.

“These collaborative efforts can help advance human rights objectives, inform policymaking and decision-making and secure justice and accountability,” said Radwan Ziadeh, Executive Director of the Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies (DCHRS). Radwan adds, “We are very fortunate to have this cooperation with UN Human Rights and we hope to continue this engagement in the future.”



Survivors of CRSV take part in art therapy as part of a project supported by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which aims to empower survivors and provides them with medical and psychosocial services. © Medica Gjakova