

The promise of human rights



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A devastating worldwide pandemic, a pressing global development agenda, an uprising of protests in response to abhorrent racial violence: today's compelling challenges to human dignity, justice, social progress and better standards of life are answered by the promise of human rights.

Yet respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights is more than a promise. From the United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations human rights system and its mechanisms, to Member State obligations and commitments and civil society advocacy: a global movement and architecture works every day to improve people's lives. It confronts global challenges, with a view to advancing the human condition. It confronts injustice, in order to preserve individual freedom and human dignity.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights guides and supports these efforts. Her voice, expertise and global engagement are dedicated to promoting and protecting the effective enjoyment by all of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

The High Commissioner carries out her mandate, under the direction and authority of the Secretary-General, within the framework of the overall competence, authority and decisions of the General Assembly. The High Commissioner contributes to the Secretary-General's Strategic Framework, in particular through Programme 20, Human Rights. In addition, the High Commissioner's Office (OHCHR/UN Human Rights) details her priorities, expected results and strategies in the UN Human Rights Management Plan.

The High Commissioner's Management Plan for 2022 and 2023 aligns an ambitious vision for promoting and protecting human rights with a proven results-based programming framework. It extends and updates the priorities, results and strategies that have guided UN Human Rights over the previous four years. In so doing, it sustains the six thematic *pillars* that undergird OHCHR's global efforts to advance the enjoyment by all of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

PILLARS

1. Advance sustainable development through human rights.
2. Enhance equality and counter discrimination.
3. Enhance participation and protect civic space.
4. Increase implementation of the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms.
5. Prevent violations and strengthen protection of human rights, including in situations of conflict and insecurity.
6. Strengthen the rule of law and accountability for human rights violations.

Building on the foundation of these thematic *pillars*, the extended Management Plan defines six *shifts*, which are thematic focuses that respond to our changing world. Each *shift* is mainstreamed through every *pillar*, thereby supporting coherence across OHCHR's work. One of the *shifts* is composed of diverse *frontier issues*. *Frontier issues* are developing themes that OHCHR will further explore, to better understand their impacts on human rights.

SHIFTS

1. Inequality
2. Frontier issues: climate change; corruption; digital space and emerging technologies; people on the move
3. Global constituency for human rights
4. Leveraging data for human rights
5. Protect and expand civic space
6. Prevention of conflict, violence and insecurity

While OHCHR maintains its unequivocal commitment to combating all forms of discrimination, it also shines a *spotlight* on certain populations. It engages with specific groups who are constructive agents of change and seek to fulfil their potential. Thereby, OHCHR reinforces its contribution to the guiding principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), to Leave No One Behind.

SPOTLIGHT POPULATIONS

1. Persons with disabilities
2. Women
3. Young people
4. People of African descent

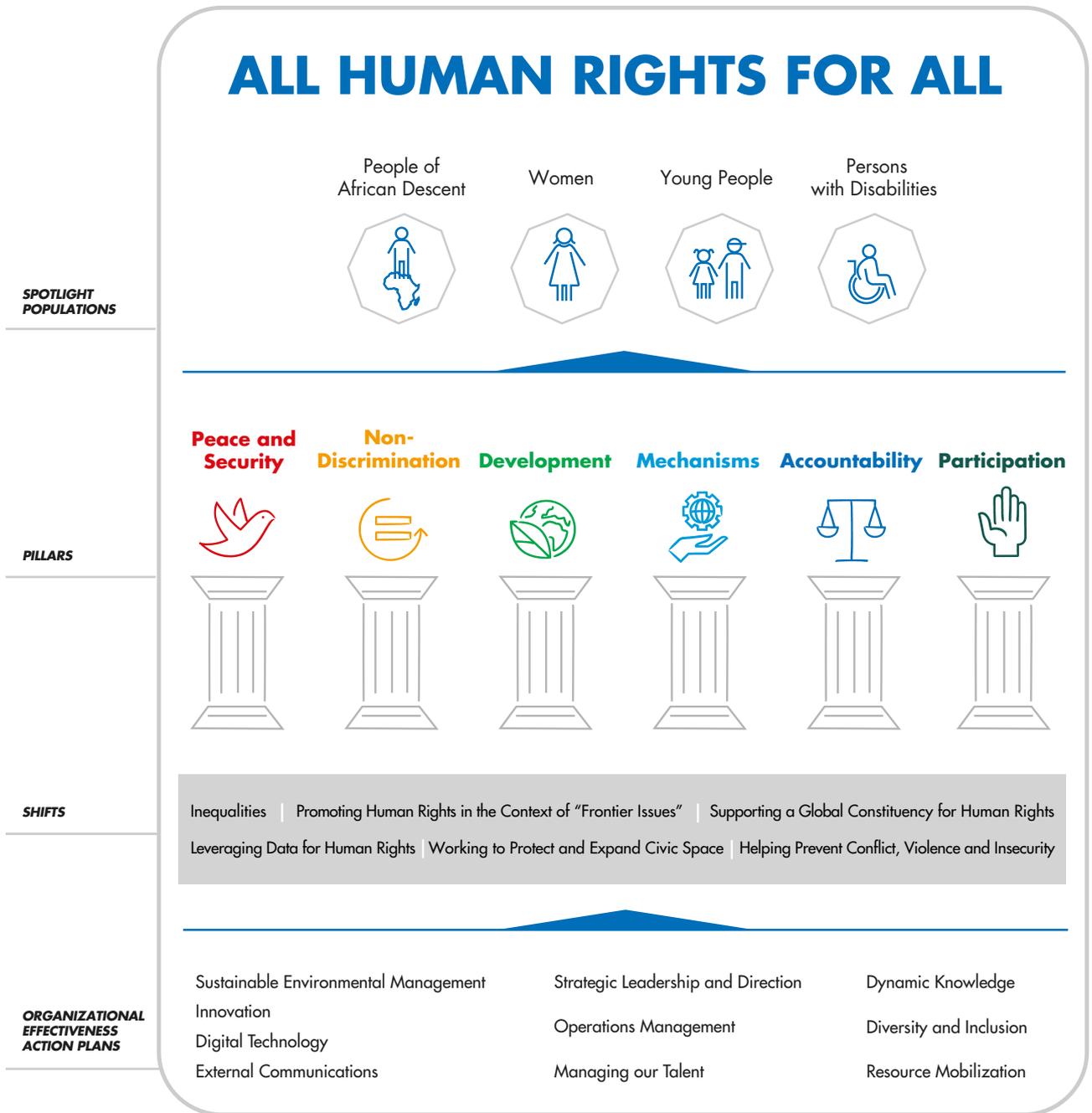
The extended Management Plan for 2022 and 2023 reaffirms a commitment to continuous internal improvement for better programme delivery through its *Organizational Effectiveness Action Plans (OEAPs)*. *OEAPs* enable OHCHR to operate more effectively and efficiently and, as a result, achieve more positive human rights outcomes. Ten areas are prioritized for this two-year period.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ACTIONS PLANS

1. Digital technology
2. Dynamic knowledge
3. External communications
4. Diversity and inclusion
5. Innovation
6. Managing talent
7. Operations management
8. Resource mobilization
9. Strategic leadership and direction
10. Sustainable environmental management

This comprehensive framework guides OHCHR in its collaboration with Member States, civil society, other partners and the United Nations System to promote and protect human rights worldwide. While the previous four-year period put exceptional strains on human rights, the extension of this framework through 2022 and 2023 reflects its adaptability to the myriad challenges confronting humanity. Moreover, the UN Human Rights Management Plan for 2022 and 2023 does not merely extend this framework; it also recalibrates, renews and introduces work areas to sharpen OHCHR's engagement with immediate opportunities and challenges.

Results Architecture



TODAY'S COMPELLING CHALLENGES

The global pandemic brings new immediacy to the promise of human rights. If its rapid and pervasive reshaping of our daily lives portends profound long-term changes for our world, Covid-19 already presents clear and urgent human rights challenges.

The extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic may in certain situations necessitate emergency measures. Where such measures lack sunset clauses or restrict freedom of movement, they raise questions regarding respect for other human rights. In some cases, such measures appear to be used repressively, for example to limit peaceful assembly or freedom of expression. In many instances, discrimination, hate speech, xenophobia and targeting of certain groups ensue from the fear and tension generated by Covid-19. These circumstances require ongoing, rigorous scrutiny of states of emergency and related measures and their impacts.

A revitalized appreciation of the right to health is indispensable. Prior to the global pandemic, over half of the world population could not access essential health services. A generation of underinvestment in health systems has been compounded by the stress of Covid-19, creating an unparalleled public health crisis. The crisis is reflected in inadequate staffing and lack of equipment and other resources to treat Covid-19, as well as severe reductions in services and treatments for a wide range of critical health concerns. We need bold action to rectify an alarming inequality in access to Covid-19 vaccines, a vigorous focus on the social determinants of health, and an explicit commitment to establishing public health systems that give priority to fulfilling the right to health for all.

One salient effect of the global pandemic is to cruelly expose the negative human rights impacts of inequality: rising poverty rates but falling attention to the right to development, notably Sustainable Development Goal 10; lack of access to social protection, livelihoods, employment, housing, water and sanitation, justice, education, as well as information, knowledge and skills. High levels of inequality correlate with underfunding of public services, systemic discrimination and low access to essential social services. These and other adverse impacts are

most evident in situations of economic instability, corruption, crime, and poor physical and mental health and wellbeing. Accumulated disadvantages and deprivation steadily deepen the marginalization of vulnerable groups.

The UN Secretary-General made clear in *Our Common Agenda* and his *Call to Action for Human Rights* that building back better and Leave No One Behind can overcome the inequality challenge, in particular when pandemic responses and development policies and programmes are anchored in a comprehensive approach to human rights. Beyond delivering universal access to the right to health, the top priorities are to accelerate the fulfilment of economic and social rights, facilitate broad and inclusive participation, and confront patterns of discrimination.

People of African descent have long borne the harmful effects of combined discrimination and violence, which have been shaped by historical legacies and reinforced by cycles of structural inequality. Systemic racism is manifested where poverty is concentrated, unemployment rates are disproportionate, wages are depressed and people have less access to adequate housing; where people live in segregated, disadvantaged and hazardous neighbourhoods, lack proportionate access to quality education, healthcare and land, and fair public participation and representation. All these deprivations are worsened by systemic racism in law enforcement and criminal justice and a lack of accountability and redress for victims.

At the same time, people of African descent have been pivotal in pressing for systemic reform to achieve the full realization of human rights. These reforms are embraced by a worldwide movement calling for racial justice and equality. Transformative change begins with ending denial and impunity, building trust, ensuring that the voices of people of African descent and those standing up against racism are heard and acted on, and confronting legacies of the past, in particular by delivering reparatory justice, equity and equality. With strong political will and leadership, systemic racism and structural inequalities can be dismantled.

A forceful call to produce and apply data and statistics to support decision- and policy-making,

analysis, assessment and advocacy can be heard in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda*, the Prevention Agenda, the Data Strategy, and the System-wide Roadmap for Innovating United Nations Data and Statistics. This vision sees the United Nations as a data-driven organization, in which data are at the centre of all strategies, lead to innovation, are integrated across United Nations ecosystems, and deliver optimal value for the Organization, people and the planet.

The vision is highly pertinent to human rights. There is vast potential to leverage data to improve analysis and decision-making across the full spectrum of human rights. Supporting national statistical systems to produce fit-for-purpose data and statistics is one focus, especially with respect to identifying marginalized groups and the need to Leave No One Behind. Another is to improve understanding of the human rights dimensions of inequality, particularly characteristics such as age, ethnicity, income, disability, geographic location, migration status, race, gender and sex, and so reinforce advocacy and programming to deliver the 2030 Agenda. Targeted and disaggregated data bolster accountability by confirming trends in human rights and the conduct of duty bearers.

Recognizing the power of data and its application to human rights challenges is an important first step towards leveraging information to promote and protect human rights.

The extended UN Human Rights Management Plan for 2022 and 2023 sharpens the focus on three compelling challenges: *inequality*, the situation of *people of African descent*, and *leveraging data for human rights*. It does so in an overall framework of priorities, expected results and strategies that promote and protect all human rights everywhere.

FROM GLOBAL MANDATE TO INDIVIDUAL HUMAN DIGNITY: THEORY OF CHANGE

OHCHR's theory of change concerns the intermediate results to which the Office contributes as it pursues its long-term goal – all human rights for all. It articulates the rationale for selecting those results and describes the Office's overarching strategy to achieve them, including specific interventions and the means those interventions employ. It is grounded in a UN human rights-based approach, meaning it is based on human rights norms and standards as well as the work of the international human rights mechanisms. It pursues changes related to duty bearers and rights holders and includes results related to the human rights principles of non-discrimination, participation and accountability.

The General Assembly mandated the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *inter alia*, to promote and protect the effective enjoyment by all of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The General Assembly specified that the High Commissioner should provide advisory services and technical and financial assistance, engage in dialogue, enhance international cooperation and coordinate activities throughout the UN System – all with a view to removing obstacles and meeting challenges to full realization of all human rights.

The High Commissioner's vision for fulfilment of this mandate gives priority to addressing the most pressing human rights violations; focuses attention on those who are most at risk; gives equal attention to the realization of all human rights – including the right to development; and measures impact through the substantive benefits that individuals perceive and experience.

In pursuit of this vision, OHCHR contributes to ten results, which it defines based on recurrent gaps identified in the course of its own work and the work of the international human rights mechanisms. The ten results describe intended institutional, legislative or behavioural changes in three distinct areas: national human rights protection systems; the international human rights protection system; and the engagement of international actors in promoting and protecting human rights. The programmatic assumption is

that, if these results are achieved, duty bearers will uphold their human rights obligations and rights holders will claim their rights, thereby improving the enjoyment of all rights by all.

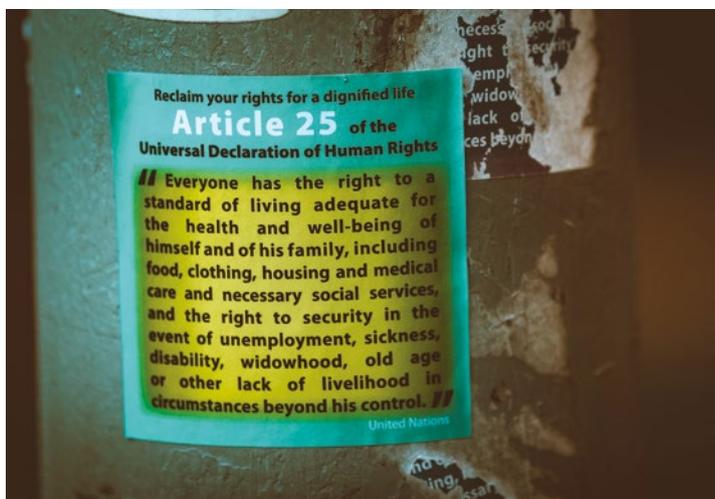
At the international level, UN Human Rights seeks to ensure that duty bearers: uphold their human rights obligations by supporting Member States to engage with the international human rights mechanisms and bodies; develop international and regional human rights laws and institutions; and enhance the coherence of the international human rights mechanisms. OHCHR supports the involvement of the international community in promoting and protecting human rights, in particular by delivering information, analysis and advocacy to encourage increased responsiveness to critical human rights situations. In order to enable rights holders to claim their rights, OHCHR promotes and facilitates their engagement with the international human rights mechanisms. In addition, UN Human Rights works across the UN System to ensure that human rights are integrated in UN policies and programmes worldwide.

With respect to national protection systems, OHCHR seeks to ensure that duty bearers uphold their human rights obligations by supporting efforts to ensure that national legislation, policies, programmes and institutions comply with international human rights standards; that States ratify international human rights treaties

and review reservations; that State institutions but also non-State actors and the private sector promote, protect and respect human rights; and that protection systems and accountability mechanisms monitor, investigate and redress human rights violations effectively. OHCHR also assists rights holders - especially women and groups subject to discrimination - to claim their rights by raising their awareness, using national protection systems, and participating in public processes.

Human rights impacts at international, regional and national level also depend on the extent to which interventions are adapted to specific contexts, sequenced to meet needs, and delivered through a combination of global, regional and national engagement. With this in mind, UN Human Rights' programmes provide expert advice; facilitate learning and knowledge transfer; deliver human rights education; monitor and report publicly; communicate and advocate for human rights; protect at-risk individuals; facilitate dialogue between diverse stakeholders on human rights issues; build networks and alliances to extend human rights promotion and protection; and support the work of the international human rights mechanisms.

The High Commissioner's Management Plan brings together this global mandate, ambitious vision, targeted interventions around a proven results framework. At its heart are the core results that guide the UN Human Rights Office as it supports duty bearers to fulfil their human rights obligations and empowers rights holders to claim their rights. The ten core results express the High Commissioner's mandate in programmatic terms. Broad in scope, without time limits, and applicable to many thematic work areas, they are organized, expressed and pursued through OHCHR's framework of *pillars*, *shifts* and *spotlight populations*. In the end, UN Human Rights' ability to make progress toward its goals relies on delivery of its Organizational Effectiveness Action Plans, which make continuous organizational improvements to deliver human rights impact.



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Theory of change

ALL HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

DUTY-BEARERS COMPLY WITH THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

RIGHTS-HOLDERS CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS

- State laws and policies protect and promote human rights
- State institutions, non-state actors and the private sector promote, protect and respect human rights
- State accountability mechanisms monitor, investigate and provide redress for human rights violations

NATIONAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

- International and regional human rights mechanisms and bodies promote and protect human rights effectively
- The international community responds effectively to critical human rights situations and issues
- International human rights law and standards progress
- Human rights are effectively integrated in UN policies and programmes

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

- Public participation in policy-making processes grows, particularly by women and members of groups facing discrimination
- Public support grows for protection of human rights
- Member States and other actors engage with United Nations human rights mechanisms

INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER ACTORS

Standard Setting

Monitoring and Reporting

Technical Cooperation and Advisory Services

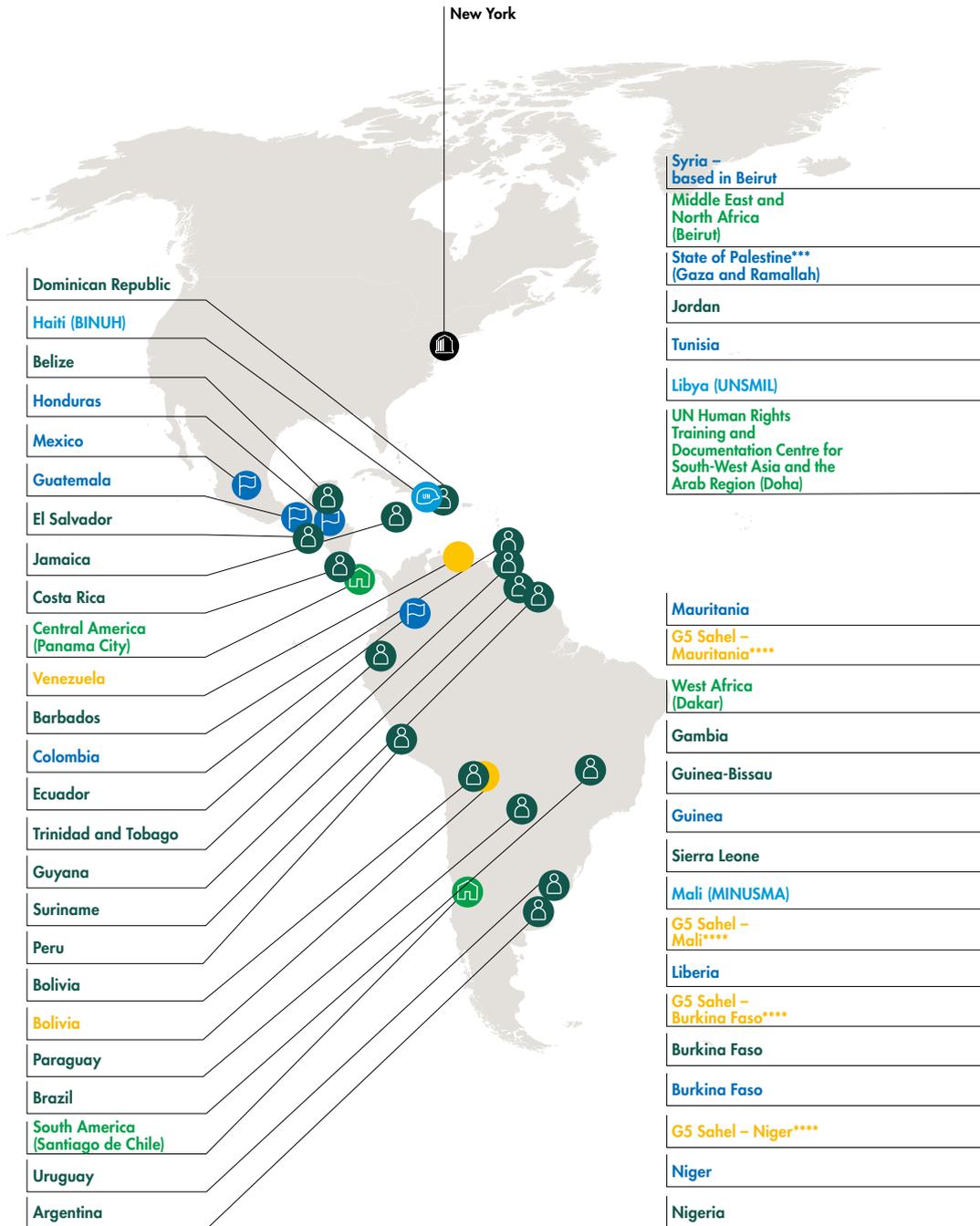
Advocacy and Awareness-raising

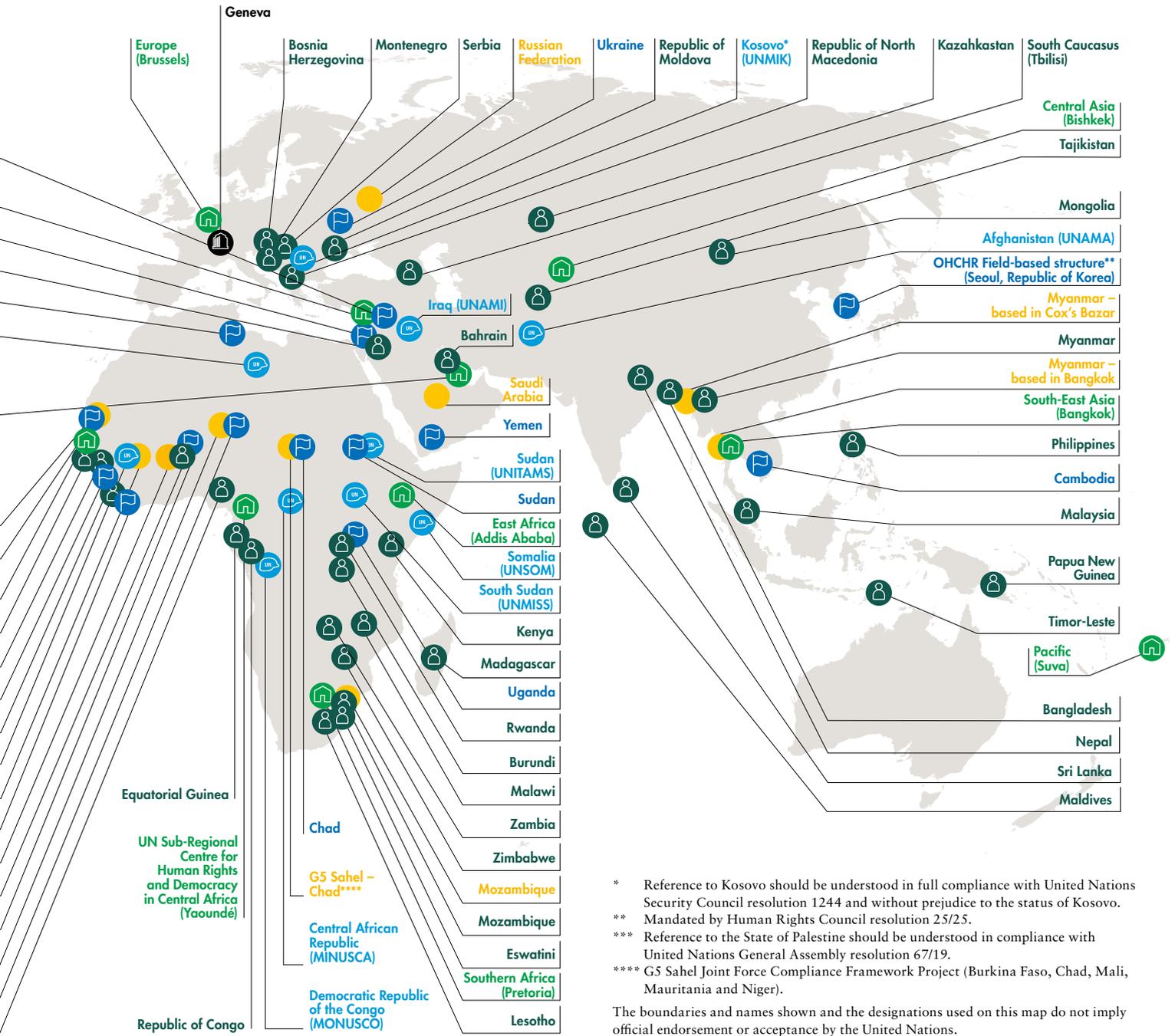
Building Partnerships

UN Human Rights around the world in 2021

2 + **102**
 HQ locations field presences

-  **2** Headquarters
-  **19** Country/Stand-alone Offices/ Human Rights Missions
-  **12** Regional Offices/Centres
-  **11** Human rights components of UN Peace/Political Missions
-  **53** Human Rights Advisers deployed under the framework of the UNSDG
-  **7** Other types of field presences





Agenda 2030

Our Common Agenda calls for accelerated actions to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is therefore a central thrust of the High Commissioner’s extended Management Plan for 2022-2023. This is reflected in the results-based planning framework and the interventions that follow from UN Human Rights’ theory of change.

The Management Plan presents OHCHR’s new and updated country and sub-regional programmes. These programmes reflect OHCHR’s contributions to United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF), where such frameworks have been put in place. Aligning country and sub-regional programmes to UNSDCFs increases impact through United Nations Country Teams, contributes to potential joint reporting by the UN System, and further demonstrates that respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights obligations is essential to the 2030 Agenda.

