

THE INSIDE TRACK



CONCISE INFORMATION ON THE UPCOMING SESSION
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The Inside Track HRC45:
the 45th regular session of the Human Rights Council

Monday 14th September to Tuesday 6th October 2020
(3-4 week session), Assembly Hall, Palais des Nations



High Commissioner and Council President discussing with members of the Secretariat

IN BRIEF

- On **14 September**, H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, will open HRC45 with an oral update on the human rights situation around the world, followed by oral updates on the situation of human rights in Nicaragua and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). This will provide the basis for an interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner on **14 September** and **15 September**.
- The Council will also hold an enhanced interactive dialogue on the human rights dimensions of **COVID-19** on 14 September.
- At the request of the EU, and as decided on 14 September, the Council will hold an **Urgent Debate** on the situation of human rights in Belarus on 18 September. This will be the sixth urgent debate in the Council's history.
- During the session, the Council will consider **country-specific reports** by the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General covering human rights issues in, *inter alia*: Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Myanmar and Yemen. Additionally, the High Commissioner will also deliver an **oral update** on Nicaragua, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Ukraine.
- It will also consider High Commissioner and Secretary General reports on a number of **thematic issues**, including *inter alia*:
 - activities of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) in terms of accrediting national institutions;
 - cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights;
 - the human rights of migrants;
 - geographical composition of the staff of OHCHR;
 - International Decade for People of African Descent;
 - national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights;
 - preventable maternal mortality and morbidity;
 - the question of the death penalty;
 - the rights of indigenous peoples;
 - the right to development;
 - terrorism and human rights; and
 - World Programme for Human Rights Education.

■ The Council will consider reports from, and hold interactive dialogues with, 18 **Special Procedures** (five country-specific and 13 thematic), including those dealing with: water and sanitation; slavery; right to development; enforced disappearances; mercenaries; arbitrary detention; older persons; hazardous wastes; international order; unilateral coercive measures; truth, justice and reparation; indigenous people; African Descent; Cambodia; Central African Republic; Myanmar; Somalia; and Sudan.

■ In addition, the Council will also hold interactive dialogues with the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, the Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, the Commission on human rights in South Sudan, the Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela, the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Group of Experts on Yemen and the Fact-Finding Mission on Libya. In accordance with [HRC/PRST/OS/13/1](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/PRST/OS/13/1) all the interactive dialogues will be individual.

■ The Council is expected to act on around 35 draft resolutions and other texts. The deadline for submitting draft resolutions has been set to **1 PM on 25 September**. Additionally, it is expected to appoint nine new mandate-holders including the Independent Expert on Sudan, the Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea, two members of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (one from African States and one from Latin American and Caribbean States), one member of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (from Latin American and Caribbean States), one member of the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances (from African States), and one member of the Working Group on Mercenaries (from Asia-Pacific States). More information on the appointment process and the candidates can be found [here](#)¹.

For the full draft programme of work for the 45th session, please click [here](#)².

1 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/HRC45.aspx>

2 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session45/Pages/45RegularSession.aspx>

IMPACT OF THE SPECIAL MEASURES TO COMBAT COVID-19 DURING THE HRC

In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, similar extraordinary modalities to those utilised during HRC44 will continue, in full respect of the IB package and in compliance with the health assessment and announcements made by the Swiss Federal Council related to the prevention of the further spread of SARS-CoV-2.

These include:

- All participants to the 45th session are **requested to be accredited via INDICO³**, even if they have a permanent accreditation to UNOG, for the purpose of contact tracing. Participants should bring along proof of INDICO registration (QR code) on their mobile device or on paper.
- **All plenary meetings** of the Council, except for those meetings designated on the programme of work for “Decisions and conclusions”, will take place in the Assembly Hall. To ensure compliance with physical distancing guidelines of at least 1,5 m, the number of people allowed inside the Assembly Hall and the other conference rooms will need to be limited to **one person per delegation**.
- Room XII will serve as an **overflow room**, with webcast provided for in English. During action on “Decisions and conclusions”, Room XVIII will serve as an overflow room with webcast provided in all six official languages of the UN (subject to approval by UN HQ).

- The entrance to Assembly Hall will be via Door 14 (at the back side of the Assembly Hall). Delegates can directly access Door 14 from Pregny gate, and a drop-off zone will be indicated in front of Door 14.
- For purposes of **contact tracing**, UNOG Security officers will also register each participant who enters the Assembly Hall by scanning his or her badge. Organisers of informal meetings in the Palais des Nations are also required to keep a **record of attendees at informal consultations and group meetings**.
- Based on the risk assessment and the latest guidance from the UN Medical Directors, UNOG will require all persons inside and in proximity of meetings rooms to wear a **face covering mask**.
- Delegations not wishing or unable to participate in plenary debates in person will have the possibility of **delivering their statements by prerecorded video-messages**. Videos should be uploaded at least 6 hours before the debate for which it is submitted. Representatives using a video statement are strongly encouraged to add captioning whenever possible and must provide a transcript of their video statements along with the videos. Video messages should be uploaded directly through the online registration system for the list of speakers (spreg.ohchr.org). More information on the procedure to do so can be found [here](#).

- All representatives are requested to upload their oral statements through the online system for inscription on the lists of speakers before the opening of the debate or dialogue in question or one hour before the estimated time of their delivery.
- Representatives wishing to **exercise their right of reply remotely** may do so by sending a request to hrclistofspeakers@ohchr.org. They will receive an invitation to a video call five minutes prior to the moment that the right of reply would be exercised. The Secretariat will test the connection, ensuring that sound and video are working. The representative will be able to follow what happens in the Assembly Hall via the platform and will hear when s/he is given the floor. At that point, the representative can begin the intervention.
- **Special Procedures mandate holders** and members of investigative mechanisms unable to travel to Geneva will be able to participate in the interactive dialogues and panels by video teleconferencing.
- Arrangements will be made to hold all **panel debates** virtually on an online-platform designated by UNOG.
- When **registering for panel debates**, States will be asked to rank the panels in the order of their priorities, with speaking slots allocated by the system taking these priorities into account. Should the number of States indicating the highest priority for a particular panel exceed the maximum number of speaking slots available, the slots shall be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Informal consultations and group meetings** will be able to take place at the Palais des Nations in room XVIII and XX. In accordance with the IB package, at least one informal open-ended consultation will need to be held on each draft resolution and/or decision before it is considered for action by the Council.
- As the HRC Bureau has reiterated, the main sponsors of draft resolutions are encouraged to organize informal meetings virtually or conduct rounds of consultations in writing. Delegations can write to the Videoconference Support team at UNOG (videoconferences@un.org) for assistance to set up virtual participation in the informal rooms via the platform WebEx. If informal consultations are organized virtually, Core Groups should notify the HRC Secretariat in order for the meeting to be included in the online application “Sched”.
- All 47 Members of the Council will be able to designate two representatives to be present in Room XX during the **voting process**. Member States not wishing to participate in the voting procedure in person may opt for voting by designating a proxy representative. Observer States introducing draft proposals or concerned countries will also be able to designate two representatives to be present in the room at the time of action on relevant resolutions.
- **Side-events** cannot take place inside of the Palais des Nations during HRC45. Side-events organised virtually or outside of the Palais des Nations will not be included in the online application “Sched” as official HRC side events.



Human Rights Council in session in the Assembly Hall

MEASURES TO ASSIST SMALL DELEGATIONS DURING THE HRC

The HRC Helpdesk for SIDS and LDCs is meant to virtually facilitate the understanding of issues raised at the HRC and enhance small State delegates' participation in the session. The Help Desk can be reached before during and after the session by email (HRCdesksmallPM@ohchr.org) or phone/WhatsApp +41 (0)79 500 00 32. The Secretariat of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund is also available for virtual consultations upon request.

The use of the online tool, E-Delegates, will continue in order to facilitate delegates' work during the HRC. The tool will allow delegates to circulate, table and cosponsor resolutions, amongst others. It is accessible through the following [link](#)⁴.

Delegates will be able to continue using the [HRC45 Sched](#) app to personalize their agendas and synchronize with their calendars. HRC45 Sched provides details on plenary meetings as well as other meetings scheduled in parallel to the HRC session at the Palais des Nations. Please note that meeting details may be subject to change and will be updated daily.

PANEL DEBATES

The 45th session is scheduled to hold three panel debates on the following subjects:

- Biennial panel on the right to development – COVID-19 and the right to development: we are all in this together (17th September)
- Annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples – Protection of indigenous human rights defenders (23rd September)
- Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective throughout the work of the HRC and that of its mechanisms – Gender and diversity: strengthening the intersectional perspective in the work of the HRC (28th September)

Concept notes on these panel discussions will be made available [here](#)⁵.

WHAT'S IN PRINT?

During HRC45, States will consider 84 reports from the Secretary-General, High Commissioner, Working Groups and/or the Special Procedures mandate-holders.

These UN reports, which were commissioned by the Council through earlier resolutions, when published, will be made available [here](#)⁶.

5 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session45/Pages/45RegularSession.aspx>
6 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session45/Pages/ListReports.aspx>

‘L NUMBER’ – DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER TEXTS AT HRC45⁷

Based on announcements made during the HRC45 organisational meeting, the voluntary calendar of regular initiatives, and on recurring initiatives from one year previously (HRC42), the following draft resolutions and other texts are expected to be tabled during HRC45.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS

(* = Initiative formally announced during HRC45 organisational meeting)

Focus of resolution	Lead sponsor(s) ⁸	Expected agenda item	Vote history ⁹
Human rights situation in Yemen*	Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands	2	Vote (22-12-11)
Promotion and protection of human rights in the Philippines	Iceland	2	Vote (18-14-15)
Strengthening cooperation and technical assistance in the field of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	Iran (Islamic Republic of), Russian Federation	2	Vote (18-6-23)

7 When tabled before the Council, draft resolutions (and other texts) are given an ‘L number.’

8 Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

9 Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council. Vote results are represented as (YES – NO – ABSTAIN)

Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru	4	Vote (19-7-21)
Situation of human rights in Burundi*	Germany (EU)	4	Vote (23-11-13)
The human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic*	France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey, United Kingdom	4	Vote (27-6-13)
Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights*	Somalia, United Kingdom	10	Consensus
Technical assistance and capacity-building for Yemen in the field of human rights*	Group of Arab States	10	Consensus
Technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in Sudan*	Burkina Faso (African Group)	10	Consensus

THEMATIC RESOLUTIONS

Focus of resolution	Lead sponsor(s) ¹⁰	Expected agenda item	Periodicity ¹¹	Vote history ¹²
Enforced or involuntary disappearances*	Argentina, France, Japan, Morocco	3	Triennial	Consensus
Human rights and indigenous people*	Guatemala, Mexico	3	Annual	Consensus
Local government and human rights*	Chile, Egypt, Republic of Korea, Romania	3	Biennial	Consensus

10

Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

11

Based on the voluntary calendar of thematic resolutions.

12

Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council. Vote results are represented as (YES – NO – ABSTAIN)

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*	Burkina Faso (African Group)	3	Triennial	Consensus
Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes*	Burkina Faso (African Group)	3	Triennial	Consensus
Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights	Burkina Faso, Colombia, Estonia, New Zealand	3	Biennial	Consensus
Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (25-14-8)
Right to development*	Azerbaijan (NAM)	3	Annual	Vote (27-13-7)
Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence*	Argentina, Austria, Colombia, France, the Maldives, Morocco, Peru, Switzerland, Uruguay	3	Triennial	Consensus

Terrorism and human rights*	Egypt, Mexico	3	Annual	Consensus
The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation*	Germany, Spain	3	Biennial	Consensus
The safety of journalists*	Austria, Brazil, France, Greece, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia	3	Biennial	Consensus
Human rights and unilateral coercive measures*	Azerbaijan (NAM)	3	Triennial	Vote (32-14-0)
Human rights and the regulation of civilian acquisition, possession and use of firearms*	Peru, Ecuador	3	Biennial	Consensus
Elimination of discrimination against women and girls in sport*	South Africa	3	Annual	Consensus
Tackling inequalities within and among states for the realization of all human rights*	South Africa	3	New initiative	N/A
Rights of the child: realizing rights of the child through a healthy environment*	EU, GRULAC	3	Annual	Consensus
Accountability for ensuring women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights in humanitarian settings*	Canada, Fiji, Georgia, Uruguay, Sweden	3	New initiative	N/A

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the women, peace and security agenda*	Spain Argentina, Azerbaijan, Finland, Namibia, Tunisia	3	New initiative	N/A
Putting people first while protecting human rights	China	3	New initiative	N/A
The contribution of the Human Rights Council to the prevention of human rights violations*	Colombia, Norway, Sierra Leone, Switzerland	5	Biennial	Vote (28-9-8)
National human rights institutions*	Australia	8	Biennial	Consensus
From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance*	Burkina Faso (African Group)	9	Biennial	Consensus
Mandate of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent*	Burkina Faso (African Group)	9	Triennial	Consensus
Enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights*	Brazil, Honduras, Indonesia, Morocco, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey	10	Annual	Consensus

THE COUNCIL’S MECHANISMS

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

13 thematic Special Procedures (e.g. Special Rapporteurs, and Independent Experts) will present their reports (including country mission reports) during HRC45. In addition, five country-specific Special Procedures (e.g. Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts) will present reports/oral updates on the human rights situation in the countries covered by their mandates and their engagement with the concerned State(s).

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC MANDATES

Mandate	Presentation of report/oral updates and interactive dialogue ¹³
Special Rapporteur on Myanmar	22nd September
Special Rapporteur on Cambodia	1st October
Independent Expert on Somalia	1st October
Independent Expert on Sudan	1st October
Independent Expert on Central African Republic	2nd October

THEMATIC MANDATES

Mandate	Presentation of report and interactive dialogue	Country mission reports
Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation	15th September	Follow-up on visit to India Follow-up on visit to Mexico Follow-up on visit to Mongolia
Special Rapporteur on Slavery	15th – 16th September	Togo
Special Rapporteur on Right to Development	16th September	Switzerland
Special Rapporteur on Truth, Justice and Reparation	16th September	El Salvador The Gambia Sri Lanka
Working Group on Mercenaries	17th September	Switzerland
Working Group on Arbitrary Detention	18th September	Greece Qatar



Special Rapporteur on Hazardous Wastes	18th September	Brazil Canada
Independent Expert on Older Persons	18th & 21st September	China New Zealand
Independent Expert on International Order	21st September	
Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures	21st September	
Working Group on Enforced Disappearances	21st September	Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Follow-up on visit to Turkey
Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	24th September	Congo
Working Group on African Descent	30th September	Ecuador Peru



UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

THE UPR OUTCOME REPORTS OF 12 STATES¹⁴ WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR ADOPTION BY THE COUNCIL DURING HRC45 (28TH - 29TH SEPTEMBER).

ARMENIA*, GRENADA, GUINEA,
GUINEA-BISSAU, GUYANA, KENYA,
KIRIBATI, KYRGYZSTAN, LAO
PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC,
LESOTHO, SWEDEN, TURKEY

*Council Members

TRUST FUND TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF LDCS AND SIDS

In 2012, the Human Rights Council established the [Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund](#) to support the participation of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council. The Trust Fund runs on voluntary contributions from UN member States and has in the past years supported the participation of over a 150 delegates from 71 States.

In light of travel restrictions related to COVID-19, the following programmes administrated by the Secretariat of the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund, have been cancelled:

- Delegates' Programme (HRC45, 14 September – 6 October 2020)
- 2020 Fellowship programme (September – November 2020).

Additional information on opportunities for the 2021 programmes will be made available [here](#) as soon as possible and no later than November 2020.

MOST COMMON THEMES OF HRC45*



*based on all announced resolutions, side-events, interactive dialogues, panels, and reports



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
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