

THE INSIDE TRACK

CONCISE INFORMATION ON THE UPCOMING SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The Inside Track HRC54: the 54th regular session
of the Human Rights Council

Monday, 11 September to Friday, 13 October 2023
(5-week session), Room XX, Palais des Nations.



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
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UNIVERSAL RIGHTS GROUP



Volker Türk, United Nations, High Commissioner for Human Rights during High Level meeting commemorating the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration the Right to Development. 28 february 2023.

UN Photo Jean Marc Ferré

IN BRIEF

- HRC54 will last five weeks, which means that it will be the longest September session in the Council's history. This is due to the absence of scheduled lunchtime sessions, but also due to the increased number of initiatives, such as interactive dialogues and panel debates.
- On **11th September**, Mr. Volker Türk, High Commissioner for Human Rights, will open HRC54 with an **oral update on the human rights situation around the world**. This oral update together with other country specific oral updates given by the High Commissioner will provide the basis for the general debate under Item 2 on 12th and 13th September.
- During the session, the Council will consider **country-specific reports** submitted by the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General covering human rights issues in, inter alia: **Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Myanmar, Nicaragua, and Yemen**. Additionally, the High Commissioner will also deliver an **oral update** on **Belarus, Ukraine, and Sudan**.
- The Council will also consider the High Commissioner's and Secretary General's reports on **thematic issues**, including *inter alia*:
 - Good practices and challenges in the application of a human rights-based approach to the elimination of preventable **maternal mortality and morbidity**
 - The **rights of the child** and inclusive social protection
 - Rights of **Indigenous Peoples**
- Regional seminars on the **contribution of development to the enjoyment of all human rights**
- Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of **Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force** and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers through transformative change for racial justice and equality
- Question of the **death penalty**
- **Right to development**
- **Cooperation with the United Nations**, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights
- Human rights of **migrants**
- The Council will hold the following interactive dialogues. In accordance with [HRC/PRST/OS/13/1 all the Interactive Dialogues will be individual.](#)
 - **20 interactive dialogues with Special Procedures mandate holders** (14 thematic and six country-specific) including those dealing with: arbitrary detention; enforced disappearances; hazardous substances and wastes; international order; mercenaries; older persons; people of African Descent (two interactive dialogues); right to development; rights of Indigenous Peoples; slavery; truth, justice and reparation; unilateral coercive measures; water and sanitation; Afghanistan; Burundi; Cambodia; Central African Republic; Russian Federation; and Somalia.

- **Five interactive dialogues with investigative mechanisms**, including the team of international experts on the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**; the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on **Ethiopia**; the Independent Investigative Mechanism for **Myanmar**; the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the **Syrian Arab Republic**; and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**.
 - **Ten interactive dialogues with the High Commissioner or his Office** on human rights in **Belarus**; **economic, social and cultural rights** and COVID-19 recovery; technical assistance and capacity-building to improve the human rights situation in **Haiti**; the situation of human rights in **Myanmar**; promotion and protection of human rights in **Nicaragua**; **religious hatred**; technical assistance and capacity-building for **South Sudan**; promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in **Sri Lanka**; situation of human rights in the **Sudan**; and cooperation with and assistance to **Ukraine** in the field of human rights.
 - **Two enhanced interactive dialogues** with the High Commissioner and the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance **Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement**, and on the report of the High Commissioner and experts on the **Democratic Republic of Congo**.
 - **One interactive dialogue** with the **Advisory Committee**.
 - **One interactive dialogue** with the **Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights**.
- The Council is expected to act on around **30 draft resolutions**. The deadline for submitting draft resolutions has been set at **1 PM on 4th October 2023**.
 - Additionally, the Council is expected to appoint **twelve new mandate-holders to Special Procedures**, including the Special Rapporteurs on **minority issues**, the human rights of **migrants**, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while **countering terrorism**, the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by **leprosy**, the rights of persons with **disabilities**, human rights and **international solidarity**, protection against violence and discrimination based on **sexual orientation and gender identity**, three members of the Working Group on **discrimination against women and girls** (one from the African Group, one from the Asia-Pacific Group, one from the Eastern European Group, and one from the Western European and other States Group), and a member of the Working Group on the use of **mercenaries** (from the Eastern European Group). More information on the appointment process and the candidates can be found [here](#).
 - The Council will elect **seven members of the Advisory Committee** at the 54th session (two from the African States, two from the Asia-Pacific States, one from the Eastern European States, one from the Latin American and Caribbean States, and one from the Western European and other States).

For the full draft programme of work for HRC54, please click [here](#).



High-level segment of the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, February 25th, 2020.

UN Photo/Antoine Tardy

MODALITIES FOR THE 54TH SESSION

- The 54th session of the Human Rights Council will take place in Room XX.
- On July 18 2023, the Bureau discussed the organisation of the 53rd session, including extraordinary modalities. Recalling the UN Secretary-General's agreement to maintain hybrid modalities also for the 54th session, the Bureau agreed that the 54th session of the Council should apply hybrid modalities in a similar manner as was done for its 53rd session.
- Throughout the 54th session, state delegations would have the possibility to deliver their statements in person, via pre-recorded video statements, or the Zoom platform.
- Delegations participating remotely would be able to raise a point of order through the "raise hand feature" in the Zoom platform.
- Special procedures mandate holders, members of investigative mechanisms, and panellists who are unable to travel to Geneva would be able to send pre-recorded video messages for their initial presentations and participate in the interactive dialogue or panel discussion via Zoom.
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with ECOSOC consultative status and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) with "A" status would have the possibility to deliver their statements in person or via pre-recorded video statements. In order to balance inclusivity and feasibility (in terms of time and resources), the list of speakers for NGOs for each of the General Debates would be set in line with the average number of NGOs that participated in each of the General Debates in the previous three September sessions (i.e., the 51st, 48th and 45th sessions of the Council)
- The [online system](#) for inscription by **States** on the list of speakers for all general debates, interactive dialogues and panel discussions will open at **4PM on Tuesday, 5th September 2023** and will close 24 hours before the meeting in which each debate is scheduled to start. After the online inscription has closed, delegations may still inscribe or withdraw by sending an email to the address OHCHR-hrclistofspeakers@un.org.
- The [online system](#) for the list of speakers for the adoptions of the UPR outcomes will open at **9AM on Monday, 18th September** and will close at **6PM** on Thursday, 21st September 2023. No registration will be possible after this deadline.
- For **NHRIs** and **NGOs**, the list of speakers for all debates for this session will be open online at **2PM** on Tuesday, 5th September 2023.
- During this session, **the list of speakers for each panel discussion will be system-generated based on the priority indicated by the delegation and the time of inscription.**
- In accordance with the Institution Building (IB) package, at least one informal open-ended consultation needs to be held on each draft resolution and/or decision before it is considered for action by the Council.

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.

The use of the online tool, E-Delegate, will allow delegates to circulate, table, and co-sponsor resolutions, amongst others. It is accessible through the following [link](#).

Delegates will be able to continue using the Sched app to personalise their agendas and synchronize with their calendars. 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. The links for virtual participation will be circulated separately by the Secretariat (plenary sessions) or Core Groups (informal consultations for resolutions).

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

HRC54 is scheduled to hold **five** panel discussions on the following subjects:

1. Biennial panel discussion on **unilateral coercive measures** and human rights, on the theme 'the impact of unilateral coercive measures and overcompliance on the right to development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals' (14th September 2023 – [concept note](#)).
2. Annual discussion on the integration of a **gender perspective** throughout the work of the Human Rights Council and that of its mechanisms, on the theme 'revisiting gender parity and its contributions to the integration of gender into the work of international human rights bodies, including the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms' (25th September 2023 – [concept note](#)).
3. Biennial panel discussion on **youth** and human rights, on the theme 'young people's engagement with climate change and global environmental decision-making processes' (26th September 2023 – [concept note](#)).
4. Panel discussion on **cyberbullying** against children (27th September 2023 – [concept note](#)).
5. Annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of **Indigenous Peoples**, on the theme 'the impact of certain development projects on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular the impact on Indigenous women' (27th September 2023 – [concept note](#)).

WHAT'S IN PRINT?

During HRC54, States will consider **87** reports from the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, Special Procedures mandate-holders, and Subsidiary Bodies.

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

'L NUMBER' – DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER TEXTS AT HRC54¹

Based on announcements made during the HRC54 organisational meeting, the voluntary calendar of regular initiatives, and on recurring initiatives from one year previously (HRC51), the following draft resolutions and other texts are expected to be tabled during HRC54.



Václav Bálek, President of the Human Rights Council, 52nd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva.

UN Photo / Violaine Martin

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS

(* = Initiative formally announced during HRC54 organisational meeting).

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S) ²	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	VOTE HISTORY ³
1	<u>Mandate of Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan*</u>	The European Union	2	Vote (<u>29-3-15</u>)
2	<u>Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi*</u>	The European Union	4	Vote (<u>22-12-13</u>)
3	<u>Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation*</u>	Luxembourg, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden	4	Vote (<u>17-6-24</u>)

2 Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.
3 Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council. Vote results are represented as (YES – NO – ABSTAIN)

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	VOTE HISTORY
4	<u>The human rights impact of the ongoing conflict in the Sudan*</u>	Germany, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America	4	Vote (18-15-14)
5	<u>The human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic*</u>	United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Qatar, Turkiye, United States of America	4	Vote (24-04-18)
6	<u>Technical assistance and capacity-building for Yemen in the field of human rights*</u>	The Group of Arab States	10	Consensus
7	<u>Technical assistance and capacity-building in the field of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*</u>	The Group of African States	10	Consensus

THEMATIC RESOLUTIONS

(* = Initiative formally announced during HRC54 organisational meeting).

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S) ⁴	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY ⁵	VOTE HISTORY ⁶
1	<u>Human rights and Indigenous Peoples*</u>	Mexico, Guatemala	3	Annual	Consensus
2	<u>Human rights and unilateral coercive measures*</u>	Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries)	3	Triennial	Vote (27-15-5)
3	<u>Mandate of the Independent Expert on international order*</u>	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (29-14-4)
4	<u>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*</u>	The Group of African States	3	Triennial	Consensus
5	<u>Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes*</u>	The Group of African States	3	Biennial	Consensus

4 Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.
5 Based on the voluntary calendar of thematic resolutions
6 Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council.

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
6	<u>Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence*</u>	Argentina, Morocco, Switzerland	3	Triennial	Consensus
7	<u>Mandate of the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances*</u>	Argentina, France, Japan, Morocco	3	Biennial	Consensus
8	<u>Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights*</u>	Colombia, Estonia, New Zealand	3	Biennial	Consensus
9	Protection of human rights of persons deprived of liberty in the penitentiary system in Honduras*	Honduras	3	New initiative	N/A
10	<u>Question of the death penalty*</u>	Belgium, Costa Rica, France, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Switzerland	3	Biennial	Vote (29-12-5)
11	<u>Realization of the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl*</u>	United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom	3	Biennial	Consensus
12	<u>Right to privacy in the digital age*</u>	Austria, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico	3	Biennial	Consensus

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
13	The centrality of care activities and its importance from a human rights perspective*	Argentina, Mexico, Spain	3	New initiative	N/A
14	<u>The human rights of older persons*</u>	Argentina, Brazil, Slovenia	3	Annual	Consensus
15	<u>The right to development*</u>	Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries)	3	Annual	Vote (<u>29-13-5</u>)
16	<u>The use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination*</u>	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (<u>29-14-4</u>)
17	<u>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas*</u>	Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cuba, Ecuador, South Africa	3	N/A	Vote (<u>33-3-11</u>)
18	<u>World Programme for Human Rights Education*</u>	Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, Thailand	3	Triennial	Consensus
19	<u>Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights*</u>	Fiji, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Uruguay	5	Biannual	Consensus

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
20	<u>A world of sports free from racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance*</u>	Brazil, Group of African States	9	N/A	Consensus
21	<u>From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance*</u>	The Group of African States	9	Annual	Vote (<u>32-9-6</u>)
22	<u>Mandate of Working Group of Experts on People of African descent*</u>	The Group of African States	9	Triennial	Consensus
23	<u>Enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights*</u>	Thailand, Brazil, Honduras, Indonesia, Morocco, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Türkiye	10	Annual	Consensus

THE COUNCIL’S MECHANISMS

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

Six country-specific Special Procedures (i.e., 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).

In addition, twenty-one thematic Special Procedures (i.e., Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, Working Groups) and subsidiary bodies (i.e., expert mechanisms, forums, open-ended intergovernmental working groups, the Advisory Committee) will present their reports (including country mission reports) during HRC54.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC MANDATES

MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT/ORAL UPDATES AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ⁷
Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan	11th September (oral update)
Special Rapporteur on Burundi	22nd September (report)
Special Rapporteur on Cambodia	10th October (report)
Independent Expert on the Central African Republic	10th October (report)
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation	21st September (report)
Independent Expert on Somalia	10th October (report)

7 Dates liable to change.

THEMATIC MANDATES

MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE	COUNTRY MISSION REPORTS
Special Rapporteur on truth, justice and reparation	13th and 14th September	Republic of Korea Serbia and Kosovo
Special Rapporteur on the rights to water and sanitation	14th September	Peru Tunisia
Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures	14th and 15th September	Syrian Arab Republic
Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons	15th September	Bangladesh Dominican Republic Nigeria
Working Group on Arbitrary Detention	18th September	Botswana Mongolia
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery	18th September	Costa Rica Mauritania
Independent Expert on international order	18th September	Georgia
Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances	19th September	Honduras Uruguay
Special Rapporteur on hazardous substances and wastes	19th September	Ghana International Maritime Organization Paraguay
Working Group on the use of mercenaries	19th September	Armenia Greece

MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE	COUNTRY MISSION REPORTS
<u>Expert Mechanism on the right to development</u>	<u>20th September</u>	
<u>Special Rapporteur on the right to development</u>	20th September	<u>Albania</u>
<u>Working Group on the right to development</u>	<u>20th September</u>	
<u>Open-ended intergovernmental working group on regulatory framework of activities of private military and security companies</u>	<u>20th September</u>	
<u>Expert Mechanism on the rights of Indigenous Peoples</u>	28th September	
<u>Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples</u>	<u>28th September</u>	<u>Canada</u> Denmark and Greenland
<u>Advisory Committee</u>	28th September	
<u>International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement</u>	5th October	
<u>Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent</u>	<u>5th October</u> and 6th October	Australia United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
<u>Permanent Forum on People of African Descent</u>	6th October	
<u>Ad Hoc Committee on the elaboration of complementary standards</u>	6th October	

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

The UPR outcome reports of 14 States will be considered for adoption by the Council during HRC54 (expected 2nd – 4th October).

- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Botswana
- Burundi
- France*
- Israel
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg*
- Mali
- Montenegro*
- Romania*
- Serbia
- Tonga
- United Arab Emirates*

*Council Members

TRUST FUND TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF LDCs AND SIDS

The Trust Fund to support the participation of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council, set up in 2012, will be supporting nine government officials (six female and three male) to participate in HRC54. They come from:

- Bangladesh*
- Burkina Faso
- Ethiopia
- Gambia*
- Jamaica
- Lesotho
- Marshall Islands
- Sierra Leone
- Vanuatu

* Council Members

MOST COMMON THEMES OF HRC54*

Syria

rights of older persons

hazardous substances and wastes

People of African Descent

Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Technical assistance, capacity-building and cooperation

right to development

environment

the use of mercenaries

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



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