

THE INSIDE TRACK

CONCISE INFORMATION ON THE UPCOMING SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The Inside Track HRC61: the 61st regular session
of the Human Rights Council

Monday 23 February to Tuesday 31 March 2026 (5-week session),
Assembly Hall, Palais des Nations, Geneva

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
UNITED NATIONS | GENEVA



UNIVERSAL RIGHTS GROUP



António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, and Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at the opening of the Human Rights Council 55th Session, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland - 26 Feb 2024.

UN Photo / Elma Okic

IN BRIEF

- **100** high-level dignitaries and officials are expected to deliver statements during the four-day High-Level Segment of HRC61, which will take place in a hybrid manner. So far, a total of eleven heads or deputy heads of government, and 83 ministers or vice-ministers are scheduled to address the Council. Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Mr António Guterres, the President of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Ms. Annalena Baerbock (Germany), Human Rights Council President H.E. Mr. Sidharto Reza Suryodipuro (Indonesia), and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk will also be delivering an address at the start of the High-Level Segment.
- On **27 February**, H.E. Mr. Volker Türk will open HRC61 with an **oral global 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 **2 March**.
- 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*: **Guatemala**; Honduras; Colombia; Sudan; the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice; the occupied Syrian Golan; Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.
- Additionally, the High Commissioner will deliver oral updates on the human rights situations (items 2 and 4) concerning **Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar**; **Venezuela** (Bolivarian Republic of); and the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**. The Secretary-General will deliver an oral update on the establishment of the independent investigative mechanism on international crimes and the most serious of violations of international law committed in **Afghanistan (item 2)**.
- Concerning technical assistance and capacity building (item 10), the Council will consider one **report by the High Commissioner** on the situation of human rights in Haiti), and will hear **four oral updates/ presentations by the High Commissioner** (on **Democratic Republic of the Congo**; on cooperation with and assistance to **Ukraine** in the field of human rights; the annual presentation on technical cooperation; and on cooperation with **Georgia**).
- It will also consider the High Commissioner's and Secretary-General's reports on a number of thematic issues, including *inter alia*:
 - United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (**SG's report**)
 - Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (**SG's report**)

- Human rights of migrants (SG's report)
 - Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities ([HC's report](#))
 - Workshop on regional human rights organizations ([HC's report](#))
 - Global analytical study on the implementation of a human rights-based approach into the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ([HC's report](#))
 - Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief ([HC's report](#))
 - Summary of the expert workshop to review the methods used to disseminate disinformation and to promote tools and approaches to counter these challenges while protecting and reinforcing human rights standards ([HC's report](#))
- During the session, the Council will hold:
- **20 Interactive Dialogues** with Special Procedures and Independent Experts mandate-holders, including **14 with thematic mandate holders** dealing with torture, freedom of religion or belief, human rights defenders, cultural rights, housing, foreign debt, food, albinism, disabilities, environment, sale of children, counter-terrorism, privacy, minorities, as well as **6 with country-specific mandate holders** on **Afghanistan; Myanmar; Democratic People's Republic of Korea**; on Islamic Republic of **Iran**; **Occupied Palestinian Territories**; and **Mali**;
 - **Two Interactive Dialogues** with the UN Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on violence against children and for children and armed conflict.
 - **Eight Interactive Dialogues with Human Rights Council-mandated Investigative Bodies**, including the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the **Sudan**; the Commission on Human Rights in **South Sudan**; Independent International Commission of Inquiry on **Ukraine**; Group of Independent Experts on the Human Rights Situation in **Belarus**; Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of **Venezuela**; Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the **Syrian Arab Republic**; Group of Human Rights Experts on **Nicaragua**; and Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of **Iran**.
- Based on the initiatives formally announced at the HRC61 organisational meeting, the Council is expected to act on around **35 draft resolutions**. The deadline for submitting draft resolutions has been set at **1 PM on Wednesday, 18 March 2026**.
- The Council will also adopt the UPR outcome reports of 13 States: [Belarus](#), [Liberia](#), [Malawi](#), [Mongolia](#), [Panama](#), [Maldives](#), Andorra, [Bulgaria](#), [Honduras](#), [Marshall Islands](#), Croatia, Jamaica, and Libya.

- Additionally, it is expected to appoint 17 vacancies of mandate-holders: four members to the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development (one from Africa, one from Asia-Pacific, one from Eastern Europe, and one from Western Europe); two members to the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (one from Asia, and one from the Arctic); one member to the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (from Asia-Pacific); the IE on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; the SR on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; the SR on contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons; the SR on extreme poverty and human rights; the SR on the negative impact of unilateral

coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; the SR on the right to food; the SR on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children; the SR on the situation of human rights defenders; the SR on the situation of human rights in Cambodia; and the SR on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. More information on the appointment process and the candidates can be found [here](#).

- Due to a UN holiday on Friday, 20 March, no meetings will be organised nor technical support will be offered during that day.

For the full draft programme of work for HRC61, please click [here](#).



H.E. Sidhartha Reza Suryodipuro, President of the 20th cycle of the UN Human Rights Council at the organisational meeting of the 61st session of the Human Rights Council.

9 February 2026, UN Web TV

MODALITIES FOR HRC61

- The 61st session of the Human Rights Council will take place in the Assembly Hall of the Palais des Nations (Building A).
- As of 22 January 2024, the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) introduced restrictions relating to the management of official UN meetings and conferences, including restrictions on lunchtime meetings and the use of remote participation and hybrid modalities. Virtual live participation in meetings (e.g. on Zoom, Webex, Interprefy etc.) are not allowed, but pre-recorded video statements are still accepted, of course alongside in-person participation. UN Web TV will also continue to livestream the Council's meetings. This follows the request from the Council to the General Assembly, through its April 2024 decision 55/116, to authorise the Council to continue using remote participation modalities.
- Following on from the previous Council session, informal negotiations, side events and other informal meetings taking place on the sidelines of HRC61 would be able to benefit from audio-visual services as well as the use of WebEx on a cost-recovery basis.
- In light of the current financial situation, cash conservation measures applied in 2025 will continue to be enforced without any change or exception from January to March 2026. This entails, *inter alia*, a minimum of 10 per cent reduction of meeting time, meaning that the Council session will conclude on 31 March instead of 2 April as originally planned.
- A set of extraordinary modalities applicable to only the 61st session of the Council was adopted. Namely, the speaking time for general debates will be capped at 1 minute and 30 seconds for all, and the duration of interactive dialogues (including enhanced interactive dialogues) will be capped at 1 hour and 30 minutes, with 15 minutes allocated to mandate-holders, 1 hour to States, and 15 minutes to NGOs. Accessibility services for the Council cannot be provided until further notice.
- The online registration platform for the 61st session, 'Events,' can be found at: <https://events.ohchr.org>.
 - For **States**, inscription to the list of speakers via the 'Events' platform for all interactive dialogues and panel discussions will open on Monday, 16 February at 2 PM and will close 24 hours before the 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 list of speakers will close approximately 15 minutes after the beginning of each debate. For the adoption of UPR outcomes, States' registration for the list of speakers will open on Monday, 9 March at 9 AM and will close on Thursday, 12 March at 6 PM. No inscriptions will be possible after this deadline.

- **For national human rights institutions and non-governmental organisations:**
 - › **The list of speakers for oral statements** during the session will open on Tuesday, 17 February at 2 PM and close at 6 PM. On the working day before the debate is scheduled to. NHRIs with 'A' status and NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status will have the possibility to deliver their statements in person or via pre-recorded video-statements for all debates (i.e., interactive dialogues, panel discussions, and UPR adoptions). Registration, indication of method of participation, and uploading of video statements will be through the 'Events' platform and the uploading of transcripts is mandatory irrespective of the method of participation. The deadline for all participants (whether in person or via video statement) to upload the transcripts and video statements with transcripts (as applicable) is 6 PM on the working day before the debate is scheduled to start, and will constitute confirmation of participation.
 - › The schedule of opening and closing dates for the online submission of **NGO Written Statements** at the 61st session of the Council will be as follows:
 - ◆ Registration of NGO Written Statements for **General Debates under all agenda items** of the 61st session will open from Monday, 19 January 2026, at 12:00 PM CEST and close on Monday, 26 January 2026, at 12:00 PM.
 - ◆ Registration of NGO Written Statements for the other debates under **agenda items 1, 2, 3 and 4 (excluding General Debates)** of the 61st session will open from Monday 26 January 2026, at 12:00 PM and close Monday, 2 February 2026, at 12:00 PM.
 - ◆ Registration of NGO Written Statements for the other debates under agenda **items 6, 7, 9 and 10 (excluding General Debates)** will open from Monday, 2 February 2026, at 12:00 PM and close Monday, 9 February 2026, at 12:00 PM.
- As in the previous sessions, the Secretariat has implemented a feature that allows NGOs to co-sponsor other NGOs' statements directly through the online registration system. The previous method, i.e. sending the co-sponsorship form via email, will no longer be accepted.
- The 61st session during Ramadan will be adjusted in the same manner as at the 58th session in March 2025. Namely, the meetings will be held from 9:30 to 12:30 PM and from 14:30 PM to 17:30 PM.



UN Geneva staff meeting at the Assembly Hall, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. 15 July 2025.

UN Photo / Elma Okic

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 in-person meetings or virtual consultations upon request.

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

[The Sched app](#) 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 in real time. Delegates will be able to continue using the Sched app to personalise their agendas and synchronise with their calendars.

PANEL DEBATES

HRC61 is scheduled to hold **six panel discussions** on the following subjects:

- **Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**, on the theme "Role of new and emerging digital technologies in preventing and eliminating female genital mutilation" (23 February, [concept note](#)).
- **High-level panel discussion on the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action** (24 February, [concept note](#)).
- **Panel discussion on human rights and a culture of peace** (4 March, [concept note](#)).
- **Panel discussion on promising practices and measures to mobilize public resources to finance sustainable development in a manner consistent with States' economic, social and cultural rights obligations** (5 March, [concept note](#)).
- **Annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities**, on the theme "Disability-inclusive infrastructure, including transport and housing" (6 March, [concept note](#)).
- **Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child**, on the theme "Rights of the child and violations of the human rights of children in armed conflicts" (9 March, [concept note](#)).

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

WHAT'S IN PRINT?

During HRC61, States will consider **84 reports** commissioned by the Council through earlier resolutions. These reports, when published, will be made available [here](#).

'L NUMBER' – DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER TEXTS AT HRC61¹

Based on announcements made during the HRC61 organisational meeting (9th February), the following **35 draft resolutions** are expected to be tabled during HRC61. Before adoption, these texts would be subject to at least one round of open informal consultations with interested delegations.



The 43rd session of the Human Rights Council takes place in the Assembly Hall. 11 March 2020.

UN Photo / Jean Marc Ferré

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S) ²	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	VOTE HISTORY ³
1	Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice	Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	2	Vote (27-4-16)
2	Advancing human rights in South Sudan	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Albania, Ireland, Norway	2	Vote (24-6-17)
3	Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, Germany, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Qatar, Turkiye	4	Consensus
4	Situation of human rights in Belarus	European Union	4	Vote (25-5-17)
5	Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	European Union	4	Consensus

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	VOTE HISTORY
6	<u>Situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression</u>	Ukraine	4	Vote (25-4-18)
7	<u>Situation of human rights in Myanmar</u>	European Union	4	Consensus
8	<u>Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination</u>	Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	7	Vote (43-2-2)
9	<u>Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and in the occupied Syrian Golan</u>	Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	7	Vote (34-3-10)
10	<u>Human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan</u>	Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	7	Vote (27-6-14)
11	<u>Technical assistance and capacity-building for Mali in the field of human rights</u>	Kenya (on behalf of the African Group)	10	Consensus

THEMATIC RESOLUTIONS

(* =Initiative formally announced during HRC61 organisational meeting)

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S) ⁴	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY ⁵	VOTE HISTORY ⁶
1	<u>Adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and the right to non-discrimination in this context</u>	Germany, Brazil, Finland, Namibia	3	Biennial	Consensus
2	<u>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</u>	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (<u>29-6-12</u>)
3	<u>The right to food</u>	Cuba	3	Biennial	Consensus
4	<u>Promotion of the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for cultural diversity</u>	Cuba	3	Annual	Consensus
5	The human rights of persons in street situations	Brazil, Cabo Verde, the Dominican Republic	3	New initiative	N/A

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
6	<u>Cooperation with regional human rights organizations</u>	Belgium, Armenia, Colombia, Senegal, Thailand	3	Triennial	Consensus
7	<u>Prevention of genocide</u>	Armenia	3	Biennial	Consensus
8	<u>Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: mandate of the Special Rapporteur</u>	Denmark	3	Triennial	Consensus
9	<u>Freedom of opinion and expression: mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression</u>	Canada, Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	3	Triennial	Consensus
10	<u>Promoting human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals through transparent, accountable and efficient public service delivery</u>	Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Georgia, Kenya, Malaysia, Thailand, Türkiye	3	Triennial	Consensus

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
11	<u>Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities</u>	Austria, Slovenia	3	Biennial	Consensus
12	<u>Mental health and human rights</u>	Portugal, Brazil	3	Triennial	Consensus
13	<u>Promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</u>	Luxembourg, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Fiji, Portugal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Uruguay	3	Triennial	Consensus
14	<u>Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders</u>	Norway	3	Triennial	Consensus
15	<u>The negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights</u>	Uganda (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement)	3	Annual	Vote (28-16-3)

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
16	Freedom of religion or belief	European Union	3	Annual	Consensus
17	Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material	European Union	3	Last tabled 6 years ago	Consensus
18	Rights of the child: children in armed conflict	Uruguay (on behalf of GRULAC), the European Union	3	Biennial	Consensus
19	The rights of persons with disabilities, digital technologies and inclusive disability infrastructure, including transport and housing	Mexico, New Zealand	3	Triennial	Consensus
20	Human rights of migrants: mandate of Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants	Mexico	3	Triennial	Consensus

	FOCUS OF RESOLUTION	LEAD SPONSOR (S)	EXPECTED AGENDA ITEM	PERIODICITY	VOTE HISTORY
21	<u>Birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law</u>	Mexico, Türkiye	3	Triennial	Consensus
22	<u>Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief</u>	Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	9	Annual	Consensus
23	<u>Mandate of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action</u>	Kenya (on behalf of the African Group)	9	Triennial	Vote (45-2-0)
24	<u>Mandate of Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance</u>	Kenya (on behalf of the African Group)	9	Triennial	Consensus

THE COUNCIL'S MECHANISMS

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

14 thematic mandate-holders (i.e., Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, and Working Groups) will present their reports (including country mission reports) during HRC61. In addition, **6 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).

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC MANDATES

MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT/ORAL UPDATES AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES
1 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan	26 February
2 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar	13 March
3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	13 March
4 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran	16 March
5 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967	23 March
6 Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali	25 March

THEMATIC MANDATES

	MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE	COUNTRY MISSION REPORTS
1	Special Rapporteur on torture	2 and 3 March	Senegal
2	Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief	3 March	Zambia
3	Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders	3 March	Bosnia and Herzegovina
4	Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights	3 and 4 March	Lao People's Democratic Republic Federated States of Micronesia
5	Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing	4 March	Guatemala
6	Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt	4 and 5 March	Kuwait
7	Special Rapporteur on the right to food	5 March	N/A

	MANDATE	PRESENTATION OF REPORT AND INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE	COUNTRY MISSION REPORTS
8	<u>Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism</u>	<u>5 March</u>	N/A
9	<u>Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities</u>	6 March	<u>Colombia</u>
10	<u>Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment</u>	<u>6 March</u>	<u>Singapore</u>
11	<u>Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children</u>	<u>9 March</u>	<u>Germany</u> <u>United Arab Emirates</u>
12	<u>Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights</u>	<u>10 March</u>	Côte d'Ivoire
13	<u>Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy</u>	<u>10 and 11 March</u>	Mongolia
14	<u>Special Rapporteur on minority issues</u>	<u>17 March</u>	Nepal

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 **five government officials** (two female and three male) to participate in HRC61. The delegates come from:

- Haiti
- Madagascar
- Mauritius*
- Mozambique
- Trinidad and Tobago

* Council Member

MOST COMMON THEMES OF HRC61*



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

ENDNOTES

1. When tabled before the Council, draft resolutions (and other texts) are given an 'L number.'
2. Based on the 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).
4. Based on the 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. Vote results are represented as (YES – NO – ABSTAIN).

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