



# The Inside Track

**Concise information and political  
insight on the upcoming session  
of the Human Rights Council**

**HRC33: the 33<sup>rd</sup> regular session of  
the Human Rights Council**

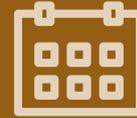
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016  
(3 week session), Room XX, Palais des Nations

## In brief

- A number of high-level dignitaries are expected to attend HRC33, including Mr Evo Morales, President of Bolivia, Mr José Serrano, the Minister of Interior of Ecuador, and Mr Illia Darchiashvili, the First Deputy Minister of Georgia.
- HRC33 will see a total of 4 panel discussions, including on the 5th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, on violence against indigenous women and girls, on youth and human rights, and the annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective.
- On 13 September, Mr Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the High Commissioner for Human Rights (High Commissioner) will present his regular update on the human rights situation around the world.
- During the session, the Council will consider country-specific reports by the High Commissioner or Secretary-General covering issues in: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Yemen and Cambodia. The High Commissioner will furthermore deliver oral updates on the situations in Ukraine and Libya.
- It will also consider High Commissioner/Secretary-General reports on a number of thematic issues, including *inter alia*: human rights and indigenous peoples, the composition of staff of the OHCHR, the question of the death penalty, human rights of migrants, the right to development, and National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- The Council will consider regular reports (including, in some cases, country mission reports) from, and hold interactive dialogues with, 16 Special Procedures mandate-holders (4 country-specific and 12 thematic), including those dealing with: Cambodia, Sudan, CAR, Somalia, unilateral coercive measures, arbitrary detention, the rights of older persons, enforced disappearances, and the right to water and sanitation.
- The 33<sup>rd</sup> session is expected to see the adoption of 14 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) outcome reports, including of: Suriname, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Greece, Sudan, Hungary, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Antigua and Barbuda, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago, Thailand and Ireland.
- At the end of the session, Council members will move to take action on around 40 draft resolutions and other texts; and to appoint new mandate-holders for the positions of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, the Special Rapporteur on torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, a new member of the Working Group on arbitrary detention, and appoint a mandate-holder for the newly established Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

-  **13.09** Opening of session and update by the High Commissioner
-  **14.09** Panel discussion on the 5th anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training
-  **19.09** Interactive Dialogue with the COI on the Syrian Arab Republic
-  **20.09** Panel discussion on violence against indigenous women and girls
-  **21.09** Adoption of the UPR reports of Suriname, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Greece, Sudan and Hungary
-  **22.09** Adoption of the UPR reports of Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Antigua and Barbuda, Swaziland, and Trinidad and Tobago
-  **23.09** Adoption of the UPR reports of Thailand and Ireland
-  **26.09** Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective
-  **27.09** High Commissioner oral updates and/or reports on: Ukraine, Libya and DRG. Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Burundi
-  **29.09 - 30.09** Action on draft resolutions and decisions, and appointment of new mandate-holders

## For your diary<sup>3</sup>



For the full draft programme of work of the 33<sup>rd</sup> session, [please click here](#).

## Global human rights situation

On the first day of HRC33<sup>4</sup> (13 September), the High Commissioner will present his regular update on the human rights situation around the world. His statement will provide the basis for a general debate under item 2 (14 September).



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4. Dates liable to change.

## Panel debates

**The 33<sup>rd</sup> session is scheduled to hold four panel debates on the following subjects:**

- High-level panel discussion on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training: good practices and challenges
- Annual half-day discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples - the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, including those with disabilities
- Panel discussion on youth and human rights
- Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective throughout the work of the Human Rights Council and that of its mechanisms

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

## ‘L number’– draft resolutions and other texts at HRC33<sup>5</sup>

Based on announcements made during the HRC33 organisational meeting, on the voluntary calendar of regular initiatives, and on recurring initiatives from one year previously (HRC30), a number of important draft resolutions and other texts are expected to be tabled during HRC33. Before adoption, these texts would be subject to at least one round of open informal consultations with interested delegations.

### Country-specific resolutions



Initiative formally announced during HRC33 organisational meeting

**Focus of resolution**                      **Lead sponsor(s)<sup>6</sup>**                      **Expected agenda item**                      **Vote history<sup>7</sup>**

Technical assistance and capacity-building for Yemen in the field of human rights	Qatar	10	Consensus
The human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic	United Kingdom and cross-regional group	10	Adopted by vote (27-6-14)
Technical assistance and capacity-building to improve human rights in the Sudan	South Africa (African Group)	10	Consensus
Technical assistance and capacity-building for human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	African Group	10	Consensus
Technical assistance and capacity building in the field of human rights in the Central African Republic	African Group	10	Consensus
Assistance to Somalia in the field of human rights	Australia, Italy, Somalia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America	10	Consensus

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

6. Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

7. Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council.

## Thematic resolutions

Focus of resolutions	Lead sponsor(s) <sup>8</sup>	Expected agenda item	Periodicity <sup>9</sup>	Vote history <sup>10</sup>
Arbitrary detention	France	3	Biennial	Consensus
Conscientious objection to military service	Costa Rica, Croatia, Poland	3	Biennial	Consensus
Contemporary forms of slavery	United Kingdom	3	Triennial	Consensus
Democratic and equitable international order	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (31-14-2)
Enforced disappearances	France, Morocco, Argentina, Japan	3	Annual	Consensus
Equal participation in political and public affairs	Botswana, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Netherlands, Peru	3	Annual	Consensus
Local government and human rights	Chile, Egypt, Republic of Korea, Romania	3	Biennial	Consensus
Older persons	Argentina, Brazil	3	Triennial	Consensus
Private military and security companies	African Group, Cuba, Venezuela	3	Annual	Vote (32-13-2)
Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal	Brazil, Congo, Cyprus, Greece, Japan, Lebanon, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation	3	Annual	Consensus
Right to development	Islamic Republic of Iran (NAM)	3	Annual	Vote (34-13-0)
Forensic genetics	Argentina	3	Biennial	Consensus
Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity	Burkina Faso, Colombia, New Zealand	3	Annual	Consensus
Regional arrangements	Armenia, Belgium, Mexico, Senegal, Thailand	3	Biennial	Consensus
Right to truth	Argentina, Austria, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Maldives, Morocco, Peru, Switzerland, Uruguay	3	Biennial	Consensus
Safety of journalists	Austria, Brazil, France, Greece, Morocco, Qatar and Tunisia	3	Biennial	Consensus
The human right to safe drinking water and sanitation	Germany, Spain	3	Biennial	Consensus

8. Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

9. Based on the voluntary calendar of thematic resolutions.

10. Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council.

## Thematic resolutions

Focus of resolutions	Lead sponsor(s) <sup>8</sup>	Expected agenda item	Periodicity <sup>9</sup>	Vote history <sup>10</sup>
The question of the death penalty	Belgium, Benin, Costa Rica, France, Mexico, Mongolia, Moldova, Switzerland	3	Annual	Vote (26-13-8)
The role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights	Hungary, Maldives, Morocco, Poland, Ukraine, Uruguay	3	Triennial	Consensus
Transitional justice	Switzerland, Argentina, Morocco	3	Biennial	Consensus
Traditional values	Russian Federation	3	Biennial	Vote (25-15-7)
Unilateral coercive measures	NAM	3	Annual	Vote (33-14-0)
Unaccompanied migrant children	El Salvador, Nicaragua	3	Annual	Consensus
World Programme for Human Rights Education	Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Slovenia, Senegal, Switzerland, Philippines	3	Annual	Consensus
Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism	Mexico	3	Annual	Consensus
The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health	Brazil	3	Annual	Consensus
Cultural rights in the protection of cultural heritage	Cyprus, Ethiopia, Greece, Iraq, Mali, Poland, Serbia, Switzerland	3		Consensus
The use of mercenaries	Cuba	3	Annual	Vote (32-14-1)
Human rights and indigenous people	Guatemala, Mexico	3	Annual	Consensus
Human rights and indigenous peoples: mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples	Guatemala, Mexico	3	Triennial	Consensus
Review of the mandate of the expert mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples	Guatemala, Mexico	5	Biennial	Consensus

8. Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

9. Based on the voluntary calendar of thematic resolutions.

10. Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council.

## Thematic resolutions

Focus of resolutions	Lead sponsor(s) <sup>8</sup>	Expected agenda item	Periodicity <sup>9</sup>	Vote history <sup>10</sup>
Human rights issues related to terrorist hostage-taking	African Group	5	Annual	Consensus
Right to peace	Cuba	5	Annual	Vote (34-9-4)
National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights	Australia	8	Biennial	Consensus
Elaboration of international complementary standards to the ICERD	African Group	9	Annual	Consensus
From rhetoric to reality – a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance	African Group	9	Annual	Vote (32-12-3)
People of African descent	African Group	9	Annual	Vote (32-12-3)
National policies	Algeria, Ecuador, Italy, Peru, Romania, Thailand	10	Annual	Consensus
Regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region	Thailand	10	Biennial	Consensus
Enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights	Brazil, Honduras, Indonesia, Morocco, Norway, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey	10	Annual	Consensus
Enhancing cooperation between the Government of Georgia, the OHCHR, and its office in Georgia, regarding the monitoring of the human rights situation on the ground	Georgia	10	New resolution	N/A

8. Based on main sponsors of previous resolutions.

9. Based on the voluntary calendar of thematic resolutions.

10. Vote results from the last time the resolution was adopted by the Council.

HRC33 will see the consideration and (likely) adoption of a number of important thematic resolutions, including on the right to development (sponsored by NAM), on the role of prevention (sponsored by Hungary, Morocco, Poland, Uruguay and others), and on the enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building (Brazil, Norway, Thailand and others).

Regarding the former, this year, the 'Declaration on the Right to Development' (R2D) enjoys its 30th anniversary. The Declaration's founding premise: that each and every individual has the right 'to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development' (article 1), is something that every State should be able to support. Likewise, the basic constituent elements of the right to development are difficult to fault: people-centred development; universality of human rights; participation; equity; non-discrimination; and self-determination. Yet over the past 30 years, R2D has often become bogged down in division and UN politics. States are generally divided between, on the one side, proponents of the right, who assert its relevance (or even primacy) and, on the other, sceptics (and rejectionists), who relegate the right to secondary importance, or deny its existence entirely.

In 2016, following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (which explicitly recognise the right to development) and the new Paris Agreement on climate change, a new opportunity exists to consign three decades of division over the right to development to history, and replace it with a common understanding among States as to what the right to development is, what it means, why it is important, and how it should be realised. Indeed, the development of such a consensual understanding is vital to realising the SDGs, including SDG16 (which, like the right to development, emphasises procedural and participatory rights, access to information, equality and non-discrimination).

Negotiations on R2D at HRC33 will therefore provide an important litmus test for whether States can rise above their differences on this important issue, and in so doing making a useful contribution to the realisation of the SDGs.

## Resolution in focus



## Trust fund to support the participation of LDCs and SIDS

The Trust Fund for the participation of LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Council, which was set up in 2012 and became operational in 2014, will help fund the participation at HRC33 of two government officials from the Maldives and Palau.

During HRC33, States will consider around 90 reports from the High Commissioner, the Secretary-General and/or the Special Procedures mandate-holders. These UN reports, which were commissioned by the Council through earlier resolutions, cover, *inter alia*, the following subjects:

**Thematic reports:** the question of the death penalty; human rights of migrants; the right to development; National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights; composition of staff of the OHCHR; implementation of the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age; human rights and indigenous peoples; the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; best practices and lessons learned on how protecting and promoting human rights contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism; promotion and protection of the human rights of migrants in the context of large movements.

**Country-specific reports:** final report of the mission of independent experts to Burundi; report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic; technical assistance and capacity-building for Yemen in the field of human rights; human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; technical assistance and capacity-building for Yemen in the field of human rights; role and achievements of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the Government and people of Cambodia in the promotion and protection of human rights; the situation of human rights in the Sudan; the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic.

**Summary reports of previous panel debates/working groups:** the promotion and protection of the right to development; the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Human Rights Council; human rights and preventing and countering violent extremism; violence against indigenous women and girls and its root causes; and a summary report on an expert workshop on the implementation of the right to participate in public affairs.

These and other reports, when published, will be made available [here](#).

## What's in print?

## Special Procedures

Over the course of the 33<sup>rd</sup> session, 12 thematic Special Procedures (e.g. Special Rapporteurs) will present reports exploring issues and questions related to their mandate. Many of these thematic Special Rapporteurs will also present country mission reports (in addendum to their main reports). In addition, 4 country-specific Special Procedures will present reports on the human rights situation in the countries covered by their mandates and their engagement with the concerned State(s).

## The Council's mechanisms

### Country-specific mandates

Mandate	Presentation of report and interactive dialogue <sup>11</sup>
Special Rapporteur on Cambodia	28 September
Independent Expert on Sudan	28 September
Independent Expert on Central African Republic	28 September
Independent Expert on Somalia	28 September

11. Dates liable to change.

## Thematic mandates

Mandate	Presentation of report and interactive dialogue <sup>12</sup>	Country mission reports
Independent Expert on democratic and equitable international order	13 September	
Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures	13 September	Sudan
Special Rapporteur on truth, justice, reparation and non-recurrence	13 September	United Kingdom
Working Group on arbitrary detention	13 September	Malta
Independent Expert on the rights of older persons	14 September	Costa Rica
Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation	14 September	El Salvador, Tajikistan, Botswana
Working Group on enforced disappearances	15 September	Turkey, Sri Lanka, Peru
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery	15 September	El Salvador
Working Group on the use of mercenaries	15 September	Tunisia, Belgium, Ukraine, EU region
Special Rapporteur on hazardous wastes	15 September	Republic of Korea, Germany
Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples	20 September	Brazil, Honduras, Sapmi region
Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent	26 September	Italy, United States of America

## Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The Council will consider the UPR outcome reports of 14 countries for adoption during its 33<sup>rd</sup> session. On 21 September, the Council will consider and move to adopt the reports of Suriname, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Greece, Sudan, and Hungary. On 22 September, it will consider and take action on the outcome reports of Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Antigua and Barbuda, Swaziland, and Trinidad and Tobago. Finally, it will consider and take action on the outcome reports of Thailand and Ireland on 23 September.

<sup>12</sup>. All dates are subject to change



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