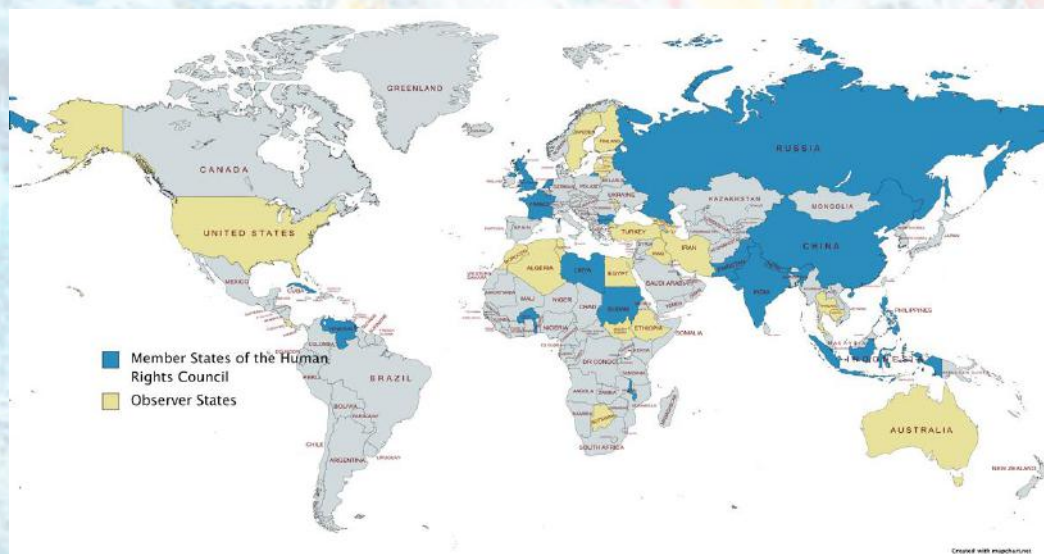




HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 46th SESSION

General debate on Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building

(22-23 March 2021)



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Reports Discussed During the Session

Reports by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Oral Presentation of the High Commissioner under Item 10

Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, and technical assistance achievements in the field of human rights – Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [\(A/HRC/46/69\)](#)¹

- The report contains a description of the situation of human rights in Afghanistan from 1 January to 30 November 2020, and provides an **overview of the work, including technical assistance**, conducted by the **Human Rights Service of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)** in cooperation with **OHCHR**.
- It focuses on the **five principal areas of work of the Human Rights Service**: 1) the protection of civilians in armed conflict 2) **children and armed conflict** 3) the **elimination of violence against women** and the promotion of **women's rights** 4) the **prevention of torture and respect for procedural safeguards** 5) **civic space** and the integration of human rights into peace and reconciliation processes.
- **Violence against civilians has critically increased** as the conflict in this country remains the **deadliest in the world**. From 1 of January to the 13 of November 2020, 7850 civilian casualties, were recorded.
- The impact of the violence has been affecting **mostly afghan women and children**. More women were killed in 2020 than any year on record. **Deliberate killings of human rights defenders and journalists** also increased.
- **Civil society** has an important role to play in the **peaceful resolution of the conflict** as the voice and opinions of it needs to be heard. In this sense, the government needs to assure a conducive environment for civil society to operate specifically **increasing women's participation**.
- A sustainable peace process should be **inclusive of all people** living in Afghanistan.

Country concerned (Afghanistan):²

- Conflict in Afghanistan continues to **affect the country's social and economic progress**. COVID-19 has further aggravated these challenges.
- In order to protect civilians from attacks, a **National Policy on Civilian Casualties** has been developed and the country is committed to ensuring its full implementation. There has been a positive impact of the policy in the ground despite the efforts of the **Taliban and terrorist groups' continued violence** towards religious leaders, civil society activists, healthcare personnel, and journalists. The country is committed to strengthening independent mechanisms to monitor civilian casualties.
- The conflict has mostly affected children, so the country has **developed a policy to prevent child recruitment and sexual violence** against children.
- Achieving a **sustainable and inclusive peace** is a **national priority** as the country has entered into peace talks with the Taliban. Human rights should be at the centre of the negotiations including the **rights of women and minorities**. Hence, the country is ready to **seize this historic opportunity for peace**.

¹ Presented by Mr. Mahamane Cissé-Gouro, Officer in Charge of the FOTCD, OHCHR (on behalf of the High Commissioner)

² Presented by Mr. Nasir Ahmad Andisha

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The country is committed to upholding the right to freedom of expression, association and defending journalists. It has developed a human rights defenders protection mechanism and plan to protect and respond to their complaints. - In order to prevent torture, the country ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture in January 2020 and also undertook prison reforms and programs with rehabilitative approaches to incarceration. These also aimed at reducing prison overcrowding. After due diligence 10,000 prisoners have been released. - The country submitted over 6 initial and Periodic reports on the implementation of core human rights conventions, some overdue since Afghanistan first acceded to them decades ago. - The country has put efforts in strengthening its preventive role, introduced initiatives on addressing human rights of victims of terrorism and actively promoting casualty recording as human rights tool. - It also believes on the HRC's mandate of carrying independent and impartial investigations. It will study and give consideration to the recommendations of the OHCHR's report and calls for the support of the international community to help the country address the remaining challenges.
<p>Oral presentation of the High Commissioner on the overview of and successes, best practices and challenges in technical assistance and capacity-building efforts, particularly those provided by OHCHR and relevant United Nations agencies³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidence in technical assistance has expanded the establishment of offices in Niger, Sudan, and Burkina Faso. This assistance has been successfully deployed in 45 countries. - Thematic expertise has spread to early warning systems and data analysis in Central and South America and Africa. - In 2020, 400 technical advisers were dispatched to all regions. - Results have been achieved in curbing inequalities, discrimination and exclusion. Guaranteeing UPR recommendations' implementation is key in the realization of SDGs and "leaving no one behind". <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sudan took steps reforming its legal framework to eradicate harmful traditional practices against women and girls and eliminate death penalty against children. o Maldives along with the UPR supporting efforts showed its commitment to leave no one behind. o In Palestine technical advice was provided to the ministries of justice and interior on human rights standards and SDGs targets to guarantee peoples' access to economic, social and cultural rights. o In Uruguay support was provided to strengthen civil society's capacity and uphold the right to adequate housing. o In La Guajira, Colombia, new protocols were developed on the culturally- appropriate management of bodies of indigenous people who died of COVID-19. The country was able to develop a national protocol in line with international human right standards. - Young people should be at the center of technical assistance policies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In Northern Africa capacities were enhanced on the right to inclusive, quality and accessible education. - Capacity building has focused on building knowledge of human rights and data collections for evidence-based policies to guarantee equality and non-discrimination in different countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The support to Cambodia's sustainable development agenda has allowed indigenous communities' agreement of communal land and 500 hectares of land have been returned to them as a result. - Civic space and free and active participation in it are key to address inequalities in countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Serbia developed an inclusive consultative process with people with disabilities, established national mechanisms and an action plan pursuant to the standards of UN Convention of Persons with Disabilities.

³ Presented by Mr. Mahamane Cissé-Gouro, Officer in Charge of the FOTCD, OHCHR (on behalf of the High Commissioner)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical assistance is key in preventing crisis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In Cote D'Ivoire, a human rights prevention assessment supporting the government's engagement in an inclusive programme on social cohesion was developed. - Assistance was also provided regarding violence against women and girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In Liberia a preventive law was developed addressing more than 800 women involved in domestic violence acts. o South Africa developed judicial capacity to be sensitive towards gender inclusion and sexual and reproductive rights. - National Human Rights Institutions have played a critical protection role in the context of the pandemic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In Spain the release of individuals detained for migration-related purposes, the closure of immigration detention centers in mainland as well as health security measures were guaranteed while pressing situations remain in several of the autonomous communities. <p>Advisory services and technical assistance were provided to establish national human rights institutions: in Cote D'Ivoire and Estonia these acquired an accredited a status, and in Mauritania and Slovenia these were upgraded.</p>
<p>Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights (A/HRC/46/70)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report presents a comprehensive report on the Board's work on an annual basis, starting from the twentieth session of the Council. It provides an update on the work of the Board of Trustees of the Fund since the previous report of the Chair of the Board (A/HRC/43/68). The Board fully supports the OHCHR work and the financial support for technical cooperation and implementation of human rights standards at the national level following the UPR recommendations. - New challenges arise regarding the development of plans of implementation in the context of the pandemic. <p>Focus should be put on efforts to address inequalities, exposed and amplified by the pandemic as well as including a social perspective in the interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is Important to seize the moment in the recovery efforts generating more integration in human rights policies, improving access to basic services and social protection for vulnerable communities. Also, empowering those that are discriminated by creating stronger accountability systems. - Therefore, it is key that the OHCHR delivers collective responses to national needs by strategic engagement with human rights obligations of the different States. - OHCHR's technical advice is being well recognized and highly appreciated which has allowed technical experts to actively engage with actors on the ground and establish trust to gather the evidence-based information they need. Human rights advisors and coordinators have been effectively established in Argentina Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Moldova, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. It is important to address the pandemic's impact on human rights of those living in urban settlements in accessing services, adequate housing, and the prevalence of gender-based violence. - Pleased to note OHCHR's positive impact on research initiatives providing economic expertise with human rights perspective and the fostering of partnerships. Supporting of OHCHR's offices around the world is key and the efforts made by the OHCHR despite some instances of regular budget shortages are valuable. - Thematic experts regarding climate change, digital space relationship with fundamental freedoms, business and human rights have strengthened countries' capacities and allowed for new partnerships to arise. - It's important to keep an eye on COVID-19 global crisis including access for the vaccines and voluntary country contributions to the fund. - A call for a sustained effort to continue strengthening financial support to the OHCHR and greater attention to the increase of the regular budget.

Main Points Raised (thematic issues or country / territorial concerns – *non-exhaustive*)

Joint Statements made by States

Finland (on behalf of Nordic Baltic countries)	Expressed their full Support to the UNAMA . <u>Country situations:</u> Afghanistan: There has to be a victims' centred justice; inclusive participation is key for the peace negotiations to be successful; concerned over the prevailing numbers of civilian victims , specially of women and children , and the numerous terrorist attacks; call to strengthen the country's accountability system . Measures have to be developed to eliminate violence against women and girls , to prevent torture and to create a moratorium on the death penalty .
Portugal (on behalf of the European Union (EU)) ⁴	Congratulated States that fully cooperate with the OHCHR. <u>Country situations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afghanistan: Regrets that civilian deaths have not decreased; Calls for inclusive efforts to prevent deaths and harassment against civil society members; GBV needs to be addressed; the EU will continue supporting Afghanistan. - Georgia: Concerns over the occupied territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by the Russian Federation. EU called on the Russian Federation to ensure education in these territories and grant human rights mechanisms' access to them. - Haiti: Concerned by the political situation; Free legislative presidential elections should be guaranteed. - Ukraine: EU remains committed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and does not recognize the illegal occupation by the Russian Federation of Crimea and Sevastopol. - The EU will follow closely the human rights developments in Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and the Central African Republic.
Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC))	Highlighted that technical assistance is key to advance on the human right's agenda. Technical assistance should be provided with the consent of the States , through the principles of objectivity and impartiality . Technical cooperation shouldn't be leverage for advancing political agendas and interfering in sovereign States . Countries are currently been coerced to accept technical cooperation . COVID-19 pandemic has exposed great challenges, this is why countries should address inequalities . This public health crisis should re-orient technical cooperation support, specially towards developing countries to help them promote human rights and counter devastations by future pandemic and shocks.
Cameroon (on behalf of African States)	Important that the OHCHR's programs are adapted to the specific realities of States ; Each program should have an evaluation mechanism to adjust measures. COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance to guarantee the right to health and the interdependence of all human rights. Technical and financial support should be directed towards developing countries not only to enhance the right to development but also the right to health . Only a comprehensive approach will allow countries to achieve Agenda 2030 .
Mauritius (groups of 6)	Commended the work of the voluntary trust fund as well as its adaptability in the middle of COVID-19 organizing several online seminars. Key challenges should be addressed in the upcoming 10th year anniversary of the voluntary fund .

⁴ Georgia aligns with this statement.

	The council should better favour delegations with limited capacity as more mechanisms should be developed for their effective participation in it.
Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM))	Technical cooperation is a great opportunity for States to share concrete experiences on the assistance needed for the implementation of human rights commitments ; it is essential to enhance international cooperation to increase States' capacities; Both the HRC and the OHCHR should increase their efforts in providing advisor services and technical assistance to States according to their needs and national priorities . Technical cooperation should have an equal focus on civil and political rights .
Brunei Darussalam (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations)	Technical assistance and cooperation can only be achieved with full consent of the States concerned . Efforts by ASEAN member States have been directed towards the formulation on the implementation of article 22 of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration on freedom of religion discussing a multi-stakeholder cooperation to combat intolerance , negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief. The countries are committed to working with other countries in capacity building .
Libya (on behalf of the Group of Arab States)	Continue their support for technical programs for the larger possible number of States ; A number of Arab States contribute to the fund ; It's important to strengthen partnerships and exchange good practices; Other mandate holders have a lot to offer in the field of technical cooperation ; Technical cooperation and capacity building efforts should be based on the consent of the States addressing their specific needs.
Bahrain (on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC))	The promotion and protection of human rights is a priority for GCC countries ; Constructive dialogue on cooperation is the best means to achieve these goals; it is important to continue programmes of capacity building which benefit Arab States taking into account the needs of these countries; Technical cooperation can be done under strong partnerships in consensus ; Call for an expansion of contributions to the fund by countries .
Pakistan (on behalf of Like-Minded Countries)	Technical cooperation and capacity building assistance should complement countries' human rights efforts and be done with the consent of the States ; All basic human rights are equal , but unfortunately these practices are being set aside as some countries have established a hierarchy for human rights and interfering in matters of sovereign States ; Some countries are being pushed to accept technical assistance and this must be reversed. COVID-19 crisis has contracted economies and social protection systems . This is why technical advice should pay special attention to developing countries which are being disproportionately affected by the pandemic; Technical assistance should support developing countries and promote efforts in "building back better" against future shocks to ensure no one is left behind . Continue to call for timely, affordable and equitable access to vaccines and other health products .
Angola (on behalf of Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)) ⁵	Unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic ; Urge States, international bodies and civil society organizations to join efforts and capacities so that the most vulnerable groups and the sectors most affected can count on the necessary support for their recovery and strengthening; Concerns over the impact of the pandemic on culture and cultural manifestations .

⁵ Angola, Brazil, Cape verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste.

Statements made by Member States

1. France	<p>Technical assistance provided by the OHCHR makes it possible for States to implement their obligations on human rights; Concerned over the financial difficulties of the OHCHR, but this should not threaten cooperation; Call for more budgetary means to be made available to the OHCHR; Call for the OHCHR to enhance the linguistic skills of its personnel if it wants to continue cooperating with all countries through technical assistance.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns over civilian deaths Afghanistan. The country should eradicate all violence and authorities should combat impunity of perpetrators of human rights violations. - In Ukraine, France does not recognize Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. The OHCHR should be able to access these territories. - Supports the OHCHR's cooperation with Mali and Georgia, and the DRC continuing efforts of cooperation.
2. Venezuela	<p><i>Aligns with the declarations of the delegations of Azerbaijan and Pakistan</i></p> <p>International cooperation contributes to reducing social inequalities and the empowerment of those excluded. Technical cooperation is only possible through solidarity and international cooperation, abiding by the universal principles of sovereignty non-interference. Technical assistance should always be provided in consultation and with the consent of the with States concerned.</p> <p><u>Thematic issues:</u> Unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) are a serious violation of international law and an interventionist practice which affects the enjoyment of human rights, specifically the rights of people from the South. Urges the Council to stop UCMs.</p>
3. Libya	<p>Importance of providing technical cooperation based on the request of concerned countries and their definition of priorities.</p> <p>The country is fully ready to cooperate with human rights mechanism and the office of the OHCHR; Expresses its hope that the FFM on Libya will begin soon; Calls the UN and international community to support the functions of the Council to do its work with full neutrality and on non-selectivity principles through the UPR mechanism; Technical cooperation must include a mechanism for capacity building aligned with the 2030 Agenda objectives.</p>
4. Indonesia	<p>The Council can work together to provide technical assistance to the countries that need it only with their consent. Existing cash flows deficiencies need to be resolved and the country will continue contributing to the mechanism.</p> <p><u>Thematic issues:</u> Vaccines were made possible because the international community worked together. It's essential to ensure access to other medical products to guarantee the right to life and right to health.</p>
5. Philippines	<p><i>Aligns with the statement made by Brunei Darussalam</i></p> <p>The country provided the biggest amount in voluntary contribution to the OHCHR to support countries' UPR recommendations' implementation. Call for the Council to facilitate positive cooperation and adhere to depoliticization of outcomes. The OHCHR must reimagine and invest in a new toolbox for cooperation amidst liquidity pressures, especially when inefficient expenditures are made on travels and country visits by some mandates.</p> <p><u>Thematic issues:</u> Hostile unilateral actions continue to be a problem.</p>
6. Russian Federation	<p>The issue of technical assistance should remain a central pillar in the work of the HRC. The High Commissioner should provide technical assistance upon the request of the countries. Developing countries' needs continue to be unanswered while other countries are forced to accept this technical assistance by blackmail. Against the politicization on the question of technical assistance.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ukraine and Georgia have abused the question of technical assistance and led the Council to discuss matters that do not have to do with the HRC.
7. Togo	Effective technical cooperation must be inclusive, involve all players' concerns and be adapted to national development objectives to guarantee its sustainability . HC should pursue a systemic approach in order to promote responsibility on follow ups to national plans and implementing the recommendations of the Council. Cooperation must be based on the less fortunate countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda .
8. Netherlands	<u>Country situations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing violence of the Taliban in Afghanistan is unacceptable. Call on all parties to uphold a comprehensive ceasefire. All victims should be involved in the peace process. Killing of human rights defenders is unacceptable. The country must protect civil society, end impunity and develop an accountability system.
9. Burkina Faso	Technical cooperation should follow countries' priorities . The country benefits from this cooperation and on two occasions from the trust fund which allows for the impact of training programs to be positive. The Council must convene a meeting for the 10th year anniversary of the Trust Fund and calls on all delegations to support the fund . The country expresses its commitment to the signature of an agreement to open up an HC office in the country which will take place very soon.
10. Pakistan	Countries should contribute to the trust fund , which serves as a practical tool to extend assistance to countries If utilized with principles of dialogue. Politicization of the mandate is a worrying tend . The Council should prioritize economic and social development and focus on supporting countries' national efforts to guarantee the right to life, health, food, and development . Need to pay special attention to "leaving no one behind" and continue the advocacy to make COVID-19 technologies a global public good which allows all countries to access the vaccines .
11. India	Any other purposes for technical assistance should be avoided as it should always be upon request of states and their consent. The priority should be addressing the countries' accepted UPR recommendations . Regarding the financial constraints it is important to explore options for sustainable funding .
12. Bahrain	Commend technical cooperation in boosting national capacities to improve situation of human rights. Expressed its pride for the cooperation of Bahrain with the human rights mechanism to improve capacity building in the country. Called upon the Council to continue constructive efforts to reinforce the mechanism's capacity with the consent of countries, aligned with their priorities and without the imposition of policies . <u>Country situations:</u> call the Council to take action on the human rights situations on some Arab countries and provide technical support for their national institutions.
13. Nepal	This mechanism is essential in the implementation of UPR recommendations . The Voluntary Trust Fund has being helpful in ensuring global participation. Cooperation is instrumental for countries to achieve Agenda 2030/ Enhanced contribution to the voluntary fund is critical to meet the needs of technical cooperation. <u>Thematic issues:</u> inequitable access to medicines and vaccines in the least develop countries . Need to ensure inclusiveness in technical innovation of health-related issues. Importance of establishing a UN human rights learning management system . COVID-19 has undermined the socioeconomic progress of States.
14. China	The mechanism should focus its work on human rights technical assistance by taking concrete actions . Assistance should be guided by principals of the UN charter, respecting sovereignty, and refraining from interfering in the countries' internal affairs to avoid politicisation. There should be a balance of human rights emphasizing economic, social and cultural rights, and the right to development . Technical assistance should focus on the negative impact of COVID-19 to help countries better recover .

15. United Kingdom	<p>Welcomed States engagement with the Council and encouraged States to continue cooperating with the UN.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commended Georgia's cooperation - Deeply concerned of the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the human rights violations in these territories, particularly regarding freedom of movement and ethnic discrimination. - In Mali it is essential to bring to justice those responsible for human rights abuses and to respond to the allegations presented by the UN peace-making mission.
16. Sudan	<p>Technical assistance should be provided only to the States that are in need with accordance to their priorities. Urges to increase the UN's resources.</p> <p><u>National efforts:</u> The country has effectively cooperated with the OHCHR's office in Sudan in 2020. The country enabled the Office to undertake its work in cooperation with the State's organs which enhanced the steps that have been taken to review and adjust the necessary legislations and integrate the human rights perspective in all legislation. The country reiterated its commitment to continue cooperating with the HRC and the regional office in Sudan to achieve the objectives.</p>
17. Malawi	<p><i>Aligns with the statement made by the African Group</i></p> <p>The country supports the initiative by OHCHR to increase funds of which Malawi is a beneficiary as a least developed country.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u> Afghanistan: Civilians continue to bear the consequences of armed conflict, especially women and children. Urged the Afghan government to respect human rights, remove clauses that allow child marriage, guarantee the right to freedom of speech and association.</p>
18. Cuba	<p>Regrettable that the discussion of this issue is used to single-out countries, especially developing countries, and to put forward political agendas. Most of the existing mechanisms are directed exclusively towards countries of the South. These programs should not be connected to the political agenda of donors. Full consent of concerned countries is essential. Each State should be able to end cooperation in its territory when it finds it necessary. Appeal to go back to the essence of the Agenda Item 10.</p>
19. Bulgaria	<p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afghanistan took noticeable steps, but concerns remain regarding the increase in targeted killings of civilians, human rights defenders and journalists. Ending violence is required as a step forward to reach lasting peace, national reconciliation and socioeconomic development. GVB and lack of access to justice should be addressed. Women's empowerment is key as well as their inclusion in peace negotiations. Women should have more places in decision making roles as advisors and experts. A follow-up mechanism should be implemented to monitor Afghanistan's commitment in activities relating to security, humanitarian relief and gender equality.
Statements Made by the Observer States	
20. Finland	<p><i>Finland aligns with the statement made by the European Union.</i></p> <p>Called for the cooperation of States with the OHCHR.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finland supports the territorial integrity of Georgia and its concerned about the prolonged restriction of freedom of movement and the rights to education of the population in the occupied territories. - The human rights situation in Cambodia continues to deteriorate. Urges the country to cooperate with the OHCHR to ensure the promotion of all human rights in the country.

21. Qatar	<p>Praised the efforts of the HC to extend technical assistance. Qatar is interested in supporting the Office's needs. Underlines the importance of negotiations to achieve reconciliation and the state of law.</p> <p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Called upon the international community to extend the necessary assistance that would meet the needs of the Afghan government to face the COVID-19 pandemic.
22. Estonia	<p><u>Country situations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Georgia: The Russian federation has violated the European Convention; Estonia urges the Russian Federation to fulfill its obligations under it. Calls on the authorities over the occupied regions of Georgia to release those illegally detained.
23. Iraq	<p>It is Importance to keep Item 10 away from any politicization. Urged all countries to support the mechanism. Extension of technical assistance should follow the principles of objectivity and non-selectivity. Called on all partners to extend technical assistance while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States concerned.</p>
24. Australia	<p>Consultation and consent of States is key for this assistance to be impactful on the ground. Importance of the principles of equality and non-discrimination. UN Members States should secure adequate funding. Australia remains committed in supporting the OHCHR in contributions of the Voluntary Trust Fund.</p>
25. Sweden	<p>Contributing to the work of the OHCHR is of utmost importance. Active cooperation, dialogue and the participation of regional organizations is indispensable to promote human rights around the world. Adequate and consistent funding is of essence. Sweden increased its support to the OHCHR and others should too.</p>
26. Iran	<p>Iran welcomes positive and constructive engagement of Afghanistan to work with OHCHR and initiatives developed by the Government of Afghanistan to promote and protect human rights in the country in particular protecting the rights of women and girls and progress achived in this regard. Technical assistance should be provided at the request of Member States. In this sense, any approaches to coerce countries to accept technical assistance and capacity-building undermine the founding principle of dialogue and cooperation at the Council and should be avoided.</p>
27. Lithuania	<p><i>Lithuania aligns itself with the EU statement</i></p> <p><u>Country situations:</u> Commends Georgia's cooperation with the Office. However, the country is concerned about the dire security and humanitarian situation in the occupied Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia. The Russian Federation should follow the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights which concluded that the country is responsible for human rights violations in these territories.</p>
28. Egypt	<p>Stresses the importance of adhering to the technical nature of that aid and focusing on providing programs that are consistent with the needs and priorities of the countries concerned, away from any attempts to impose specific trends or interfere in the internal affairs of States with the aim of exerting political pressure on them. Concern about the efforts of some countries to include provisions related to technical assistance in draft decisions under other items without the consent of the concerned States making the Council vulnerable to politicization and selectivity.</p>
29. Thailand	<p>Pleased to share its best practices and challenges with interested partners in the spirit of collaboration and solidarity. The discussion under agenda item 10 is a practical and effective platform to enhance technical cooperation. Technical cooperation and capacity-building must be demand-driven and support States to fulfill their international human rights obligations.</p>
30. Algeria	<p>Important to reach out for the populations of the 17 territories on the list of the United Nations Decolonization Committee which have been excluded and marginalized/ Technical cooperation and "in situ" visits should be provided to these territories/ Companies should become aware, by the advisory services, that they are knowingly participating in the plundering of the resources of local populations in these territories.</p>

31. Azerbaijan	Cooperation with international partners , especially mandate holders , as well as other relevant organizations plays a significant role. The country is committed to an enhanced cooperation with the OHCHR and appreciate its technical assistance work, this is why the Government decided to provide a great contribution to the fund .
32. Costa Rica	<u>Thematic issues</u> : Amidst the COVID-19 crisis there has been an increase in inequality and violence ; need to generate an international community framework based on solidarity that allows equal access to vaccines without any discrimination . Cooperation is key to combat the climate crisis and protecting biodiversity . There has to be a paradigm shift, strengthening solidarity to leave no one behind, and to guarantee the equitable distribution of resources .
33. Latvia	<i>Latvia aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union</i> <u>Country situations</u> : Concerned about the persisting human rights violations in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia , currently being outside of the effective control of the Georgian government. Call on the authorities in control of both regions to grant immediate, unconditional and unimpeded access to both regions . The country supports the territorial sovereignty of Georgia .
34. Botswana	Technical cooperation should reflect national development objectives , to ensure the highest levels of ownership and sustainability. Botswana is pleased to note the increase in contributions to the Voluntary Technical Fund . The country effectively benefits from this technical assistance and its currently developing a National Recommendation Tracking Database , emanating from OHCHR for Human Rights Treaty Body Capacity Building Programme.
35. Georgia	<u>Country situations</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns over Russia's armed aggression against its sovereign neighbour and consequent attempted annexation of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol. Freedom of opinion, expression and association, freedom of thought, conscience and religion and freedom of the media is continuously curtailed. - Call for the international human rights monitoring mechanisms to be granted access to the temporarily Russia-occupied territories of Ukraine and call for full, unimpeded and immediate access of the OHCHR and other international human rights monitoring mechanisms to the occupied territories of Ukraine. - Welcome the initiative of Ukraine to establish the consultation and coordination format – "the Crimean Platform", which will provide a strategic vision to the process of de-occupation of Crimea - Strongly condemn Russia's illegal activities and reiterate Georgia's unconditional support to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.
36. Timor-Leste	<i>Aligns itself with the declaration made on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries</i> The pandemic has been a heavy burden for all nations, especially for the least developed as it has exacerbated inequalities . Call for international solidarity and highlight the essential role of technical cooperation and training in creating resilience for future adversities . <u>Country situations</u> : Need to give due attention to the Western Sahara region , which continues to be left behind.
37. Cambodia	Cambodia renewed the field presence of the OHCHR's country office , where today becomes the oldest one in the world. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic , intensified technical cooperation is key. It must always be demand-driven with full consent of the States and be aligned with the national priorities along with efforts to implement the accepted UPR recommendations .
38. Vanuatu	Vanuatu faces unique challenges to provide services to its people, meet national priorities and achieve SDGs with limited resources , this is why continued support to LDCs and SIDs should be maintained/ Vital importance of technical cooperation to build infrastructure , improve housing, strengthen disaster preparedness and response, as well as support the resilience of people.

	Pleased to announce its involvement in the core group of the High-Level Panel discussion on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of the LDCs and SDIs to be held in 2022.
39. South Sudan	<i>Aligns itself with the statement delivered by the African Group</i> Expresses its full commitment to the implementation of the Peace Agreement , support of the rule of law, and guaranteed protection and promotion of human rights in the country. Calls upon the HRC to understand that the technical assistance is provided in item 10 not item 4 . Hence, the HRC should shift its mandate in South Sudan from item 4 to item 10 , so that the people of South Sudan will benefit from technical assistance and capacity building to promote and protect the human rights in the country.
40. Tunisia	Reaffirms the importance of cooperation in the field of human rights based on respect for the principles of objectivity, impartiality, and the foundations of constructive dialogue and true partnership . Need to continue working on improving the work of the HRC and rationalizing the UN mechanisms by evaluating their effectiveness and avoiding overlapping and duplication of activities . Need to further strengthen the voluntary fund for financial and technical assistance.
41. Turkey	<u>Country situations:</u> Commends the steps taken by the Government of Afghanistan in the field of human rights, in particular the efforts to increase the representation of women in the policymaking through the establishment of the High Council for Women . Highlight the importance of the beginning of the intra-Afghan negotiations last September . Call on the parties to continue the negotiations in good faith with a view of reaching a fair and lasting peace .
42. Morocco	The constant contribution of Morocco in the implementation of the very relevant project entitled “Data driven action: Covid-19 human rights tracking system” , led by OHCHR, should be noted. <u>Thematic issues:</u> climate change and artificial intelligence/ concerns over the increasing number of resolutions in the HRC at the same time that the budget shrinks .
43. United States of America	Encourages governments to cooperate with the OHCHR which they support financially . <u>Country situations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported Georgia territorial sovereignty. - Supported Mali’s government efforts in preventing human rights abuses. - Welcomed Ukraine’s cooperation and called on Russia to allow the OHCHR into Crimea as the Russian occupation in the territory continues to violate human rights. - Commended Libya on its progress and urged the country to facilitate access of the FFM to all the Libyan territory and ensure accountability - Commended Afghanistan’s progress and urged the country to continue implementing its human rights commitments in the country, especially guaranteeing the right to free press.
44. Republic of Moldova	<u>Country situations:</u> Ukraine: Pleased to observe civilian casualties have decreased. Reiterated the country’s support for Ukraine’s efforts to establish an accountability system, draft laws on amendments and ensuring a human rights-based approach to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 . Deplores the violation resulted from armed hostility in Eastern Ukraine and the curtail of fundamental freedoms violations in Crimea . Called for unimpeded access of international monitoring missions to the entirety of these territories.

Statements Made on Behalf of the United Nations Organizations

United Nations Development Coordination Office (UNDCO)	UN in the Maldives has accomplished much thanks to strong partnerships with the government, civil society and the international community . Developed a UN Sustainable Cooperation Network 2022-2026 supporting the Maldives towards the achievement of the 2030 agenda in line with the country's international human rights commitments. The Government has recently expanded its national protection systems and promoted gender equality and women's empowerment in its path to reach the SDGs . The UN has provided expertise to support national efforts for aligning policies and laws with international normative frameworks . There has been ongoing efforts to transform the justice system , an important contribution to the transformative development that the country is going through. Technical support from the OHCHR has been key in the coordinated efforts to solidify the gains achieved for inclusive substantiable development in the country.
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Statements Made on Behalf of NHRIs

NHRI-Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission	Continued targeted killings of human rights defenders, journalists, media workers, activists, prosecutors and judges in Afghanistan and its impact of civic space and potentially the peace process ; if this deadly trends against civil society continues it will be even harder to protect human rights gains during and after the peace process; for the peace process to seem credible by all Afghans there has to be a ceasefire and the effective protection of civic space .
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Statements Made on Behalf of Civil Society Organizations

1. ABC Tamil Oli	Sri Lankan military forces made a genocidal war against Tamils by killing more than 146,000 peoples in a short period of 6 months.
2. Action of Human Movement	Promoting accountability for Tamils in Sri Lanka .
3. American Association of Jurists⁶	Illegal military occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco .
4. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development	Technical assistance to the Philippines has proven to be utterly insufficient to address the systematic human rights violations and persistent impunity documented in the High Commissioner's report; extrajudicial killings continue; Attacks and killings of human rights defenders ; importance of setting up an accountability system .
5. Association culturelle des Tamouls en France	Sinhala chauvinist regimes in Sri Lanka will never implement any HRC's recommendation that would help the Tamils get justice .
6. Association des étudiants tamouls de France	Recognition of the genocide against Tamils by the State of Sri Lanka .
7. Center for Africa Development and Progress	Tamil refugees and failed asylum seekers in transit countries continue to live in fear of the newly elected Sri Lankan Government . The policies of the successive Sri Lankan Government still continue to be discriminatory and the root cause of problems for Sri Lankan Tamils have still not been politically addressed .
8. Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims	Lift the flight ban (since 2016) to and from Sanaa International Airport which serves serves more than 20 million Yemenis living in Yemen and other millions of Yemenis residing abroad, and bring the coalition countries to international trial, these are: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with US, British, Israeli and Western support .

⁶ Joint Statement with 275 organizations

9. Franciscans International ⁷	Impunity remains the norm for human rights violations and abuses in the Philippines .
10. Global Institute for Water, Environment and Health	Residents of countries devastated by armed conflicts remained unable to access adequate medical treatment ; it remains crucial that the vaccine manufactures share their technical know-how to increase the global supply ; Governments of rich countries and vaccine manufactures should adhere to their moral responsibility in sharing knowledge and providing enough vaccines to poor and conflict-ridden countries .
11. Human Rights Watch	Urge the Council to renew the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan , request a concrete implementation plan with benchmarks, and resist any change in the mandate until such benchmarks are met.
12. International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights	Urges the Council to help pave the way towards credible and fair accountability for the Yemeni people by renewing and strengthening international investigations into war crimes . Call on States to stop arms exports to Saudi Arabia and the UAE , and to work together to extricate Yemen from its humanitarian and economic crisis and rebuild what was destroyed .
13. International Lesbian and Gay Association	Progressive measures have been taken to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons in New Zealand, Angola, Malaysia, Australia, Netherlands, USA (California), and India .
14. Iran Autism Association	Iran is under the United States illegal unilateral coercive measures that violate people's human rights , especially the right to health and access to medicine and medical care for all people including those suffering from autism.
15. Iranian Thalassemia Society	Negative impact of sanctions on the right to life and the right to health among other human rights, for all people in sanctioned countries especially the Thalassemia patients .
16. Le Pont	Patterns of Genocide against Eelam Tamils by the Sri Lankan unitary State .
17. Make Mothers Matter	Including the right to education and employment for women and girls at the negotiating table in Doha as the Taliban are insisting that their interpretation of Islam must prevail in any future agreement .
18. Organisation internationale pour les pays les moins avancés (OIPMA)	Challenges remain , especially in these difficult times all around the world and in particular in each and every one of the least developed countries . Need to continue to provide technical assistance to States , on their demand, to ensure the respect of their international obligations regarding human rights law.
19. Organization for Defending Victims of Violence ⁸	Negative impact of economic sanctions , on all human rights in all targeted countries including the Iranians' right to health , access to medicine, the Government's response to COVID-19 living standards, banking transactions and humanitarian operations. Call on the UN member States to adopt a resolution to immediately lift all sanctions and mandate the Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Mechanism of the HRC to offer sanctioned States with technical assistance and advisory services to prevent, minimize and redress the adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights.
20. Synergie Feminine Pour La Paix Et Le Developpement Durable	Yemenis are subjected to grave human rights violations by the Houthi militia , which on September 21, 2014 overthrew the legitimate authority , disrupted the law and the judiciary, and committed all kinds of human rights violations .

⁷ Joint Statement with the International Federation of Human Rights, Dominicans for Justice and Peace with support of the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund, Task Forced Detainees of the Philippines, Association of the Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, Franciscans Solidarity Movement for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation and Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates.

⁸ Joint Statement

21. The Next Century Foundation	Encourages regional powers, most especially the Islamic Republic of Pakistan , that have historically played a role in Afghanistan, to further support the country while negotiations in Doha continue. Urges India and Pakistan to find common ground in Afghanistan and work jointly, setting aside their differences to ensure a better future for the Afghan people .
22. Zéro Pauvre A	Human rights situation deterioration in Yemen since the Houthi coup ; Urge the monitoring and documenting of regional and ethnic racial discrimination , violations of the rights of women and children , and arrests and enforced disappearances .
23. Elizka Relief Foundation	Somalia has made progress in the right to development, rights of women and girls, and education . Despite this progress challenges remain in the right to access clean water, access to improve sanitation, and vaccinations for children . COVID-19 has exacerbated these challenges and increased poverty . It is Imperative that the international community supports the Somalian government in line with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda .
24. Geo Expertise Association	Escalations of violations of human rights in the MENA region ; it is vital to ensure technical assistance to countries in this region.
25. International Council of Russian Compatriots	Crimea currently enjoys a peaceful situation where almost all people are satisfied with the reunification with Russia in 2014 . However, in the two self-proclaimed Republics of Lugansk and Donetsk war continues and a whole generation of children experience the trauma of war . There has been a recent escalation of the situation by the Ukrainian government , as civilians of both sides are suffering under this 7 years' war. Urge the HC to advocate to the Ukrainian Government to enter in direct talks with the governments of the two self-proclaimed Republics .

Rights of Reply

- **Russian Federation** (In reply to statements made by Ukraine, Georgia and other States regarding the allegations of human rights violations in Crimea and South Ossetia)
- **Cambodia** (In reply to the statements made by Finland regarding the politicized lens the country has of the human rights situation in Cambodia)
- **Ukraine** (In reply to the statements made by the Russian Federation regarding the human rights violations in Crimea and Sevastopol)
- **Philippines** (In reply to the statements by several civil society organizations that "politicize the mandate")
- **Georgia** (In reply to statements made by the Russian Federation regarding the human rights violations of this country over Georgian population and its occupied territories)

Full recording of the General Debate on Item 10 is available on the UN WebTV:

[Part 1](#) (22 March 2021, 1:43:46), [Part 2](#) (23 March 2021, 1:28:30).