

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 51st SESSION

Presentation of High Commissioner and Secretary-General country reports and oral updates of Yemen, Cambodia and Georgia (A/HRC/51/62, A/HRC/51/63, A/HRC/51/64)

05 - 06 July 2022

Francesco Motta, Chief of the Asia Pacific Section at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, starting with the **report on Cambodia**, welcomed the growing cooperation with Government Ministries and the Cambodian Human Rights Committee among other bodies, which would continue to offer technical support. He looked forward to the renewal of the agreement on the Country Office. He noted the Government's progress in advancing significant laws aimed at improving human rights in the country. He encouraged authorities to ensure these laws were implemented without delay. However, Mr. Motta regretted that a number of housing and land issues had not been resolved, and the use of violence against protesters trying to improve these situations. He expressed concern about the current restrictions on civic space, and attacks on human rights defenders, including risk of harassment, threats, arbitrary arrests, detentions and physical attacks.

Mr. Motta presented the **report on cooperation with Georgia**, containing key information on developments and concerns in a number of key human rights issues. He welcomed progress made by the Government in creating the necessary conditions to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. He also welcomed other improvements made in the country. He called on Georgia to complete the investigation of the events that resulted in injuries to dozens of journalists. In addition, the events prevented members of the LGBTQI community from exercising their rights of peaceful assembly. He expressed concern about the lack of access by the OHCHR to Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions, where allegations of human rights violations and ethnic discrimination are reported. Mr. Motta called on relevant actors to investigate all allegations of the violation of the right to life, torture and ill-treatment, and intensify efforts to establish accountability, provide redress and prevent the occurrence of similar acts.

In regard to the **report on the implementation of technical and capacity building assistance to the Yemeni National Commission of Inquiry**, Mr. Motta regretted that accountability and meaningful reparations for the victims of the conflict remained non-existent, apart from the efforts of the National Commission of Inquiry to Investigate Alleged Violations of Human Rights. All parties to the conflict and all Member States must do everything possible to prevent a return to hostilities. They must also expand the scope of the truce for longer than two months so as to preserve lives and livelihoods and restore hope for the Yemeni people. He affirmed that Yemen remains one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises, with 23.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. Urgent funding is needed to mitigate the devastations of summer floods and the impact of the global rise in fuel and food prices. Despite the multiple obstacles faced by the National Commission, including limited access to some areas, restrictions to freedom of movement, the fear of many witnesses and sources, as well as threats and attempts at intimidation, it continues to document abuses and violations. He informed the Council on recommendations to improve the work and impact of the Commission. He urged all parties to the conflict responsible for alleged human rights violations and abuses to fully cooperate with the Commission. He encouraged the Government to increase its financial support to the National Commission and to ensure accountability.

Cambodia (Country concerned), despite the positive engagement and cooperation with the Office and other UN bodies, rejected some factual errors included in the report. Cambodia's communal elections were a renewed testimony to multi-party democracy and pluralism, and national and international observers described the voting process as free, fair and transparent. The Appeals System is non-discriminatory. Therefore, the documentation in the report required genuine dialogue and careful consideration of the viewpoints of all parties, including the authorities concerned. This step is necessary in order to achieve an objective and credible report. The Office, in reporting alleged human

rights violations, should avoid anecdotal or incidental evidence. Cambodia informed the Council that the Government put into place a cash-transfer programme for households during high inflation, and that it has no policy of forced evictions. It also reported progress in the registration of indigenous community lands.

Georgia (Country concerned) stated that its population is continuing to suffer from illegal militarization, installation of artificial barriers and human rights violations by the current Russian's illegal occupation. This includes arbitrary detentions, kidnappings, torture and ill-treatment, deprivation of life and right to property, and violation of the right to health, restriction of education in native language and ethnic discrimination. These violations and abuses are impacting vulnerable groups, women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities specifically. It also reported increased cases of conflict-related gender-based violence inflicted on women and girls. Recalled the decision of the European Court of Human Rights which, among other things, held Russia responsible for violations of international and human rights law. Despite the repeated calls by the Council, Russia continued to prevent the OHCHR and other international human rights monitoring mechanisms from entering the Russian-occupied regions of the country. It is vital that the international community reminds the Russian Federation to comply with the European Union mediated 2008 Ceasefire Agreement; withdraw its military forces from the territory of Georgia; allow international security and human rights mechanisms on the ground; and cease grave human rights violations.

Yemen (Country concerned), taking into account considerations listed in the report, praises the positive role of the National Commission of Inquiry, as an independent mechanism aimed at administering truth and justice. It reported that Yemeni political parties, youth, civil society and women participated in consultations on the different aspects of concern. Human rights and policies which had instrumentalised the suffering of the Yemeni people would be examined, particularly those which led to violations of the rights of the people. The Presidential Leadership Council had taken the first steps to reform the Judicial Council. To respond to the international and regional efforts, the Government is implementing more provisions, including an all-out ceasefire. Terrorist groups refuse to implement the truce and claim the attacks that result in deaths and injuries to women and children are aimed at medical teams. An extended truce was rejected by the militias, another sign that the Special Envoy's policy was ineffective in addressing their breaches. Yemen affirmed that it is time to move away from just seeing the Yemeni people through the lens of the conflict: it is time for the Yemeni people to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms fully in a peace and security environment. The international community and the HRC should bring those responsible to trial and restore constitutional legitimacy in Yemen.

To watch full meeting refer to UN Web TV ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#))