

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 52nd SESSION

Item 2¹: General debate on the oral update by the High Commissioner for Human Rights

7-8 March 2023

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This is a Summary Records report of the General Debate under Item 2 that took place on 7-8 March 2023 at the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council. The statements provided by the speakers are not exhaustive.
Please also refer to the Geneva Centre's other summary reports considered under Item 2.

¹ Item 2: Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Oral update by the High Commissioner, reports on OHCHR activities in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Cyprus

Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, presented the reports of the OHCHR activities in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Cyprus. In each case, he urged all stakeholders to implement the specific recommendations made in the respective reports, and he remarked the OHCHR is ready to assist in such endeavors. Regarding **Colombia**, he commended the country's efforts to resume its talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) in November 2022 and its commitment to "total peace". The HC encouraged the Government to adopt a human rights approach to talk with armed actors and to ensure meaningful participation by victims. The HC remarked that violations of human rights continue, against human rights defenders, mainly by non-state armed groups and criminal organizations. He urged all armed actors to respect human rights and call for the dismantling of criminal groups. He suggested steps to address structural inequalities and root causes of conflict, through rural reform, the ratification of the Escazú Agreement and the adoption of a new Emergency Plan to protect human rights defenders and former FARC-EP combatants. He commended major advances in transitional justice and urged to advance accountability violations committed by security forces during protests. Regarding **Guatemala**, he expressed the country continues to face challenges related to discrimination; inequalities; accountability; access to justice; and civic freedoms. He welcomed advances in justice and accountability in some transitional justice cases, but expressed concern about the number of justice officials, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, human rights organizations, media and journalists subjected to harassment and intimidation. The HC urged the country to ensure the independence of the judiciary; to devise an effective policy for the protection of human rights defenders and media freedoms; and to prevent violence against women. Regarding **Honduras**, the HC remarked that challenges persist across the country, including deep-rooted poverty and inequalities; persistent land conflicts; widespread violence, including gender-based violence; impunity; and an extremely dangerous context for human rights defenders and journalists. He commended the country's progress in fostering justice independence and transparency and environmental issues. He regretted no progress has been made in investigations of human rights violations committed in the 1980s; the 2009 coup d'état; and the violent crisis in 2017. He expressed concern about the persistence of conflicts linked to land and natural resources, the violation of rights against indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, generalized poverty, and violence against women and LGBTI people. He regretted the government's commitment to demilitarizing public security functions has not yet materialized. Regarding **Cyprus**, the HC expressed concern about the respect to the right to life; missing persons; non-discrimination; the freedom of movement and the right to seek asylum; the freedoms of opinion, expression, and religion or belief; property rights; the right to education; and the right to participate in cultural life. He commended the engagement of civil society members in the northern part of Cyprus in human rights monitoring and reporting. The HC expressed that equal and meaningful participation by women in the settlement process is essential as well as to advance education reform.

Colombia (Country concerned) commended the OHCHR for its valuable contributions to the improvement of the human rights situation in the country. The country is committed to fully implementing the peace agreement with the FARC; resuming talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla group, other non-state armed groups and armed criminal organizations; and guaranteeing the participation of vulnerable social sectors in the design and implementation of the "total peace policy". The country continued making efforts in preventing more enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions and torture as well as combating the high level of social exclusion. The country highlighted its efforts on: the ratification of instruments (Escazú Agreement); the draft legislative act recognizing peasants as political subjects of rights and special constitutional protection; strengthening the administrative processes of the Restitution Unit of the Truth Commission to ensure adequate representation of victims; and progress in the transitional justice process. The government is committed to ensuring

compliance with legislation that prohibits military criminal jurisdiction from exercising jurisdiction over crimes of human rights violations as well as combatting drug trafficking by moving away from criminalizing producers and consumers.

Guatemala (Country concerned) considered that a greater appreciation of the State's efforts to address key human rights challenges is necessary. Guatemala is working on facilitating participatory dialogue in which the rights and development of indigenous peoples are promoted as well as implementing actions to guarantee judicial independence, combat corruption, impunity and strengthen the security and justice system. The government is committed to continue fighting corruption and strengthening its investigation and criminal prosecution by creating Specific Prosecutor's Offices: for Human Rights; for crimes against journalists; for crimes against justice operators and trade unionists; and the Special Prosecutor's Office against Impunity (FECI). Guatemala reiterated that technical assistance and cooperation must be in line with the priorities determined by the state.

Honduras (Country concerned) reaffirmed its commitment to the respect and protection of human rights, including dismantling a system of dispossession that deepens social inequalities and generates high levels of poverty and exclusion. Honduras considers it is necessary to discuss the responsibility of transnational capital and its activities in its territory, with particular emphasis on the negative impact of these business activities on indigenous, Afro-descendant and peasant populations. The country expresses its will to eradicate the structural causes that threaten human rights defenders. The country continues making progress on: the protection of populations in situations of vulnerability; social development from a solidarity-based approach; fighting against corruption and impunity; policies that are consistent with national identity and respectful of diversity; the reduction of poverty and extreme poverty; the reduction of tax exemptions to achieve a more equitable tax system; guaranteeing energy as a public good; putting in place measures of reparation and attention to the victims of the coup d'état; gender justice, equal rights and opportunities for women; investigations and the administration of justice for cases of LGBTI victims of violence; measures to assist irregular migrants and persons with disabilities.

Cyprus (Country concerned) urged for the full restoration of all human rights to the population of Cyprus, in particular to the refugees. The country expresses the violations are the direct consequence of Turkey's military invasion in 1974 and the continuous occupation of its territory since then. The country considers the report fails once again to address the human rights violations of all Cypriots and the core reasons behind them. Cyprus denounces there still has not been adequate accountability.

Main Points Raised (thematic issues, country and/or territorial concerns)	
Member States: Joint Statements	
Qatar (on behalf of the Arab Group)	Believed that the HC and his office have an important role in alleviating the state of polarization and politicization of the Council. Urged the Council to deal with human rights issues in all countries on an equal footing, pay sufficient attention to economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, and to strengthen technical support and capacity-building programmes. Stressed the importance of respecting the different cultural and religious backgrounds of countries and peoples. Condemned the burning of the Holy Qur'an and calls upon the HC to take the necessary measures to denounce any actions that fuel feelings of hatred.

Sweden (on behalf of the European Union)	The EU condemned Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine . Human rights violations include sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against children. Called upon Russia to stop its ongoing aggression and fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty. Expressed serious concern about the deterioration of the rule of law in Guatemala and firmly supported Colombia's efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace. Called upon Venezuela to cooperate fully with all relevant international human rights mechanisms and reiterates its concern about the human rights violations in the country. Expressed concern about the use of criminal procedures against opposition politicians to silence political dissent in Cambodia and urges the country to ensure the conditions conducive to inclusive and credible elections. Welcomes the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (PCoHA), signed by the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) . Extremely alarmed about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Eastern provinces of the DRC , caused among others by the M23 offensive in North Kivu . Expressed concern about human rights violations in Yemen ; new arbitrary arrests and the extensive use of pre-trial detention in Egypt ; disruption to freedom of movement in Nagorno Karabakh ; and violations against human rights defenders in Bahrain . Urged credible investigation into the explosion in Lebanon and called upon Vietnam to ensure space for civil society to participate freely in all aspects of development. The EU remained committed to supporting Sri Lanka in its process of economic recovery.
Zimbabwe (on behalf of the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara²)	The HC remained silent about systematic human rights violations in the Western Sahara by Morocco . Expressed concern about the repression of the Saharawi civilian population and called upon the HC to ensure that prisoners are released promptly. Condemned the illegal use of drones by Morocco , targeting Saharawi and foreign civilians and the illegal opening of consulates in occupied Western Sahara by a number of countries. Urged the HC to dispatch a fact-finding mission to the region.
Côte d'Ivoire (on behalf of the African Group)	Cooperation should take place at the request of the countries concerned. The African Group expressed its concern at the consequences of climate change, armed conflicts, terrorism and the COVID-19 pandemic . Urged the international community to pay more attention to the fight against racism and to racial equality , as well as to the promotion of the right to development . There is a need to strengthen international cooperation and solidarity , through constructive dialogue.
Sierra Leone (on behalf of the Group of support of the Territorial Integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco)³	Welcomed the opening, by many countries, of General Consulates in the cities of Dakhla and Laâyoune . Supported the efforts of Mr. Staffan De Mistura , Personal Envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations. Remarked that the Security Council commends the role played by the National and Regional Human Rights Commissions in Dakhla and Laayoune .
Australia (on behalf of a group of countries)⁴	Expressed concern about Lebanon's investigation into the cause of the explosion which has not yet concluded. Called upon Lebanese authorities to uphold the right of the victims to effective remedy and to adequate, effective, and prompt reparation for harm suffered. Emphasised that the right of the people in Lebanon to peacefully express their call for justice

²Algeria, Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Cuba, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, Timor-Leste

³ Sierra-Leone, on behalf of: Burkina Faso, Bahrain, Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Eswatini, Gabon, Guatemala, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Jordan, Liberia, Kuwait, Morocco, Maldives, Oman, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Togo, United Arab Emirates, Dominican Republic, Zambia, and Yemen.

⁴ Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Ukraine

	and accountability must be respected. A swift, independent, impartial, credible, and transparent investigation into the explosion must be carried out.
Azerbaijan (on behalf of the NAM)	NAM was concerned about rising levels of discrimination in several regions. Upheld the principles of universality and impartiality. The Council must bear in mind the existing challenges of each state and provide technical assistance with the previous consent of each state. The Council must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country as well as treat all human rights in an equal manner. The values, principles and culture of each country should be respected.
Pakistan (on behalf of the OIC)	Expressed concern about widening global inequalities, erosion of development gains, dwindling ODA, rise of right-wing ideologies , alarming trends of racism and continuous denial of fundamental rights in UN recognized disputed territories. Reiterates its condemnation of recent Islamophobic acts including the burning of the Quran. It was gravely concerned about the human rights violations in the OPT including East Jerusalem and occupied Jammu and Kashmir . Reiterated its solidarity with the Rohingya people and called for assistance to Bangladesh . Condemned the damage and loss of properties inflicted by Armenia including cultural heritage and religious sites in the territories of Azerbaijan liberated from the occupation. The OIC reaffirmed its full support to the Government and people of Azerbaijan in their efforts to rehabilitate and rebuild the liberated territories. It was concerned about the human rights situation in Afghanistan and called upon the international community to support the country.
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Sri Lanka Core Group⁵)	Welcomed the recent commitments with respect to the protection of human rights in Sri Lanka , including those of persons from all religious and ethnic groups. Remained concerned over heavy-handed responses to peaceful protests in Sri Lanka. Stressed the crucial importance of upholding the rule of law and safeguarding representative democracy in Sri Lanka. Urged the Sri Lankan authorities to address long-standing impunity and corruption.
Uruguay (on behalf of Gof SOC)⁶	The group continued its efforts in supporting the implementation of resolution 50/10 of 2022 which shows significant progress in the recognition of intersectional manifestations of gender identity and sexual orientation . Recognized the negative repercussions of legislation and policies that discriminates in the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.
Pakistan (on behalf of a group of countries)	Condemned the public burning of the Quran in three countries. Deplored Islamophobic Acts and called upon all States to prevent and counter such actions.
Member States: Statements made in national capacity	
1. Qatar	Highlighted the work of the Fifth United Nations Conference for the Least Developed Countries and remarked that the " United Nations House " was opened in Doha. Expressed its deep dissatisfaction of the burnings of the Qur'an in some Western countries , as well as the increase of hate speech and acts of intolerance. Called upon the international community to continue to assist and protect the Syrians , and to ensure that those responsible for the violations and crimes committed against them are held accountable. Strongly condemned the grave violations committed by the Israeli forces and extremist Israeli settlers against the Palestinian people.

⁵ Canada, Malawi, Montenegro , United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland , United States of America , North Macedonia

⁶ Albania, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland , United States of America , Uruguay

2. Czech Republic	Commended the OHCHR's activities in Ukraine, Sudan and the Latin American region . Sustainable financing of the UN human rights pillar must be ensured. Condemned Russia unjustified aggression against Ukraine . Called upon Nicaragua to release all individuals arbitrarily detained for expressing their political views. Deplored the worsening of the human rights crisis in Afghanistan and encourages the authorities in Sudan to ensure the right to peaceful assembly and protest. Condemns severe repressions of the population in Eritrea .
3. Finland	Condemned Russia's unlawful aggression against Ukraine . Deplored human rights violations against the Uyghur and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang . Payed special attention to human rights violations in Yemen and food insecurity in South Sudan . Deeply concerned over the decision of Nicaragua to strip released, former prisoners of their Nicaraguan citizenship and of their civil and political rights. Commended Niger and Mongolia for adopting laws for the protection of human rights defenders.
4. United States of America	The US was deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Xinjiang , executed against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups by the PRC . Expressed concern about the use of excessive force by security forces in Turkmenistan , the violence committed by transnational criminal organizations against the people of El Salvador and the resulting arbitrary detentions and excessive use of force carried out by the Salvadorian authorities . Called upon the Lao government to address severe restrictions on fundamental freedoms. Urged Saudi Arabia and Egypt to release prisoners of conscience.
5. China	The world faces multiple challenges including excessive discrimination, inequality and the politicization of human rights . All human rights should be treated equally. The Council cannot be used as tool to interfere in another country's internal affairs . Xingjiang and the Tibet enjoy economic growth and peaceful coexistence of all religions. Welcomed all those who are unbiased to visit China and opposed false accusations against the country.
6. Lithuania	Condemned Russia's unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine and the deterioration of human rights situation in Russia and Belarus . Lithuania was alarmed by the grave human rights violations in Iran and deplored the involvement of Iran in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Remained concerned about the human rights situation in China and Afghanistan .
7. Luxembourg	Highlighted the importance of confronting racism, misogyny and all other forms of discrimination and exclusion . Called upon China not to oppose a discussion of the report of the High Commissioner on the human rights situation in Xinjiang . Rejected the invocation of the counter-terrorism imperative to justify repressive policies, internal or external, in the many conflicts in Syria, in Ethiopia, in Yemen, in South Sudan , and in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.
8. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine . It was concerned about China's human rights violations in Xingjian and urged the Chinese government to engage seriously and constructively with the recommendations of the HC's report. Expressed concern about Haiti, South Sudan, Yemen and calls upon Israel and Palestine to end settler violence.
9. Belgium	Welcomed Colombia's President proposal for total peace. Expressed concern about human rights violations in Haiti , the massive displacements in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo , and the pressure exerted on civic space, including on certain NGOs active in Burundi . Was also concerned about the conflict in Yemen and the dissolution of the political opposition in Bahrain .
10. United Arab Emirates	Called upon the council to work to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen . Referred to the COP 28 Climate Summit , which will be hosted by the country and will provide an important opportunity to highlight the importance of human rights values in the context of climate change. The United Arab Emirates worked to enhance international collective action to

	address the challenges of sustainability in all its human, economic, social and cultural dimensions, and to support multilateral action.
11. India	There has been progress in enhancing political processes in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir . Regretted the High Commissioner's inaccurate portrayal of the human rights situation in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. India has attached a high priority to providing good governance and realizing sustainable and inclusive development . Will continue supporting fellow developing countries .
12. France	Firmly condemned the war of aggression by Russia against Ukraine , the Russian exactions and those of their Wagner supporters in Ukraine, Mali and elsewhere, the repression of the population by the Iranian political system and the systematic violations of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan . Called upon Haiti to restore security in the country by bringing criminals to justice. As regards Venezuela , the only way to resolve the deep crisis is to hold free and democratic presidential elections under international observation in 2024. Was committed to the democratic aspirations of the Sudanese people . Called upon Lebanon to conduct an impartial, independent, credible and transparent investigation of the explosion. Expressed concern about the human rights situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the blocking of the Lachine corridor.
13. Viet Nam	Stressed the urgency to address inequalities , protect people in vulnerable situations, ensure equal access to healthcare, education, technology, job opportunities, and to make sure that globalization and the 4th Industrial Revolution leave no one behind. It is important to tackle the global challenge of climate change threatening the effective enjoyment of human rights including those to life, water and sanitation, food, health, housing, and development.
14. Cameroon	Cameroon was working to strengthen the foundations of democracy where fundamental freedoms, including freedom of the press, are guaranteed. The existence of an independent judiciary is a solid guarantee that protects all citizens, including journalists and human rights defenders .
15. Morocco	Morocco gave priority to the right to a healthy environment and was committed to the promotion of economic and social rights . Celebrated the many achievements for the promotion of women's rights in the country , including the launch of the first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, the ratification of the two Optional Protocols to the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
16. Mexico	Expressed concern about conflict, structural inequalities, extreme poverty, food insecurity, environmental degradation, and the effects of climate change. Mexico was committed to addressing the human rights challenges in the country such as enforced disappearances, gender-based violence, and violence against human rights defenders and journalists .
17. Malaysia	Expressed that the prioritization and overemphasis of a set of rights over others risks amplifying divisions and inequalities in societies. Urged the OHCHR to pay fair attention and respond to all human rights situations. Expressed concern about the rise of Islamophobia, hate speech as well as any forms of intolerance and discrimination , based on religion and belief. Strongly condemns the burning of the Quran.
18. Maldives	The Maldives has undertaken several important legislative measures to strengthen democracy at the national level, secure the right to free association and further advance women's development . Was concerned about the growing incidence of xenophobia, Islamophobia, and religious intolerance . Condemned the recent desecration of the Holy Quran. Expressed its support for the long-standing One-China policy .

19. Bangladesh	Bangladesh firmly believed that the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights is necessary for upholding civil and political rights . Expressed disappointment about the HC's remarks on Bangladesh. Highlighted that Bangladesh has been hosting displaced Rohingyas . Urged the OHCHR together with the international community to redouble its pressure on Myanmar to create conducive environment in Rakhine and commence repatriation of the Rohingyas at the earliest. Highlighted climate change as one of the greatest threats to the human rights of present and future generations.
20. Kazakhstan	The Sustainable Development Goals are hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, food security crisis and conflicts around the world. Kazakhstan was working on building new political and legal foundations by initiating large-scale reforms, aimed at re-shaping public administration and building a "New and Just Kazakhstan". Reaffirmed its strong commitment to ensuring the rights of the child and strengthening national mechanisms for the legal protection of children .
21. Georgia	Condemned the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia . Urged Russia to stop the occupation and violating human rights in South Ossetia and Abkhazia . Violations include illegal militarization, arbitrary detentions, restriction of freedom of movement and right to health, and ethnic discrimination, particularly against vulnerable communities .
22. Nepal	Highlighted human rights challenges such as the climate crisis, conflicts, economic recession , among others. Developing countries mostly the LDCs are the most affected by these crises. Nepal was committed to promoting and protecting the human rights of women, child, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable communities . Reaffirmed its commitment to end all forms of discrimination and violence against women and protect their human rights.
23. Algeria	The Algerian government continued political and economic reforms to consolidate the democratic and flexible nature of the new Algeria, aimed at strengthening the rule of law, the independence of justice, combating corruption unabated, modernizing public administration, and activating a free and responsible civil society. Expressed its deep concern about the blockage of the political process and the resumption of armed conflict in Western Sahara , between the two parties to the conflict, Morocco and the Polisario Front . Highlighted the right of the Sahrawi people to exercise their right to self-determination and to end the occupation . Called upon the OHCHR to dispatch a human rights monitoring mission, to resume technical missions to occupied Western Sahara
24. Chile	Reaffirmed its support for all activities of the OHCHR in Latin America. Expressed concern about the human rights situation in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua . Emphasized the importance of economic, social, cultural rights and gender equality .
25. Ukraine	Harshly condemned Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine . Despite all the efforts undertaken by the international community, including by this Council, the human cost of aggression continues to rise daily. Deplored the scale of civilian casualties, the significant damage and destruction to civilian objects, deliberate cruelty and violence by Russian forces. Denounced Russia's execution of an unarmed prisoner of war . Urged the HC, special procedures and the independent international commission of inquiry in Ukraine to provide a proper response to this war crime.
26. South Africa	Shared the concerns regarding the continued violations of human rights in all corners of the world, perpetrated by both states and non-state actors, including transnational corporations and other business enterprises and private military and security companies . Firmly believed there should be no hierarchical treatment of human rights in the Council and UN system, in general. The importance of ensuring economic, social and cultural rights can never be underestimated, as the neglect thereof is most often the cause of unrest within and among states. Remained steadfast in combating racism and all forms of discrimination . Remained concerned about the continued occupation of Palestine and Western Sahara .

27. Pakistan	Expressed concern about the disputed territory of Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir . Pakistan condemned human rights violations against Kashmiri men, women, and children which are subjected to extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, torture, restrictions on public assembly, curbs on press and freedom of speech, detention of journalists and human rights defenders, and prolonged incarceration of political leaders. Further denounced systematic evictions, land grabbing, and demolitions of residents in four districts, including Srinagar, Budgam, Anantnag, and Baramulla , in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Urged the international community to speak for occupied Kashmiris' rights. Condemned Islamophobic incidents of burning of the Holy Quran.
28. Cuba	The OHCHR has much to do in the fight against political manipulation , double standards and selectivity in the treatment of human rights. Condemned the imposition of unilateral coercive measures , the promotion of fourth-generation wars, disinformation, the promotion and protection of mercenaries, which are part of the interventionist policies of the North. Denounced the blockade policy by the United States government denies Cubans' right to life, right to development, health, and food. Reiterated its opposition to the use of item 2 of the Agenda to promote politically motivated actions against countries of the South . Reiterated that the developing world needs technology transfer, capacity building, special and differential treatment, external financing under advantageous conditions and Official Development Assistance .
29. Côte d'Ivoire	Condemned serious human rights violations, in particular those against the most vulnerable populations, such as women, children, refugees and migrants . This has been exacerbated by the harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflicts, climate change, terrorism and the energy crisis . Called upon States and all other stakeholders to strengthen international solidarity and cooperation . Reaffirmed its commitment to human rights, with particular emphasis on the right to development . Called upon the Council to avoid the politicization of debates, including those relating to the human rights situation in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet .
30. Germany	Germany will work in advancing both economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights. Condemned Russia's violations of civil and political rights perpetrated by its invasion of Ukraine and the destabilization of Moldova through targeted disinformation. Expressed concern about the human rights situation in Algeria, Cambodia, Tunisia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Mali, Sri Lanka, Haiti, Sudan and Turkmenistan . Underscored the importance of women's rights .
31. Eritrea	Eritrea condemned unfounded accusations against the country and supports China in the one China- Principle.
Statements made by the Observer States	
1. Norway	Urged all states to issue standing invitations to all special procedures and facilitate cooperation with the relevant mandates of the Council. Was alarmed by Mali's decision to expel the Director of MINUSMA's Human Rights Division and Representative of the UN High Commissioner in the country. Acknowledged the positive development of the cooperation between the government and the OHCHR in countries like Colombia . Called upon Israel to grant access to the Occupied Palestinian Territory for all OHCHR staff. Called upon China to cooperate with the OHCHR regarding the report on Xinjiang .
2. Tunisia	Clarified that all arrests and legal proceedings in the country were carried out on the background of serious information affecting state security and not because of the political, trade union or media activity of the persons concerned. The country guaranteed freedom of expression and the right to demonstrates and rejected any accusation related to racism . Tunisia continued to fight against human trafficking .

3. Ecuador	Highlighted the visit of the HC to Ecuador and the creation of the Ministry of Women and Human Rights. Reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, protection and promotion of human rights. Reiterated the importance of strengthening the multilateral system and international cooperation , as well as democratic institutions with a focus on respect for the human rights of all.
4. Russian Federation	Called upon the OHCHR to objectively respond to massive violations of human rights in Europe, the United States and other Western countries . Condemned Russo-phobia in Europe and media restrictions in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Poland, other EU countries, Moldova and Ukraine . Denounced Ukrainian crimes in the Donbas and banning the activities of the opposition and human rights activists. Condemned the numerous shelling of civilians in the Donbass and the rest of Russia and the supply of lethal weapons to Ukraine by Western countries .
5. Burkina Faso	Remained firmly committed to strengthening the legal, institutional and operational mechanism for the fight against terrorism . Reaffirmed that allegations of human rights violations committed by national armed forces and internal security forces are systematically investigated. Reiterated the commitment of the transitional authorities to ensure the exercise of civil and democratic rights and freedoms by all , in accordance with its international commitments.
6. Switzerland	Switzerland was concerned about the growing restrictions on freedom of expression in Eswatini and Cameroon . In Georgia , Switzerland was concerned about the draft law on transparency of foreign influence . Called upon the authorities in Tunisia to end the use of military courts to try civilians and to release all those arbitrarily detained. Condemned acts of harassment and reprisals suffered by justice professionals and those working to end impunity and corruption in Guatemala . In Peru , Switzerland welcomed the investigations into the excessive use of force.
7. Ireland	Deeply concerned about the shrinking of civil space and the attacks against human rights defenders . Was concerned about the human rights situation in Belarus, Cambodia, Mali, and Egypt . Urged Ethiopia to ensure accountabilities for all violations committed during the transition justice process.
8. Portugal	Urged to end racial discrimination and promote the equality of all rights. Called upon States to modernize their social security systems to ensure no one is left behind.
9. Republic of Korea	Was worried about the shrinking of civic space in Myanmar and Nicaragua . Urged Sudan to guarantee the inclusive participation of all stakeholders in its democratic transition.
10. Bahrain	Highlighted the need to strengthen the principle of international solidarity , in support of facing challenges such as poverty and food shortages, the negative effects of climate change, wars, hate speech, Islamophobia, and many discriminatory and racist practices.
11. Japan	Japan emphasized the importance of dialogue and cooperation . Japan supported countries that are making voluntary efforts to promote and protect human rights and democratization through bilateral dialogue and cooperation. Japan attached great importance to respect for human rights in the supply chain . Will continue striving for the protection and promotion of human rights based on the principles of “human security,” “dialogue and cooperation,” and “leaving no one behind.”
12. Democratic People's Republic of Korea	The DPRK expressed that all people in the country enjoy political freedom and rights such as the right to work and rest, and the right to free education and medical services . The DPRK continued efforts in guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights. Denounced the abuse of the human rights issue for political purposes and opposes accusations against China as regards Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet . Urged the HRC to stop targeting specific countries and put an end to the practice of selectivity and double-standard. Emphasized the importance of maintaining the UPR.

13. United Republic of Tanzania	Was striving to attain the SDGs and welcomed the technical assistance and capacity building provided by the OHCHR which has been key in the development of the country's human rights regime. Called upon the international community for support to fulfil the right to development .
14. Zambia	Was concerned over phenomena like climate change, the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria , the war in Ukraine which has resulted in food insecurity , food shortages and drastic rise in prices of essential commodities. Highlighted positive achievements of the country such as the abolition of the death penalty . Emphasized the importance of fighting against impunity through international cooperation .
15. Venezuela	The work of this Council must be carried out prioritizing genuine dialogue and cooperation , in an objective, impartial, non-selective manner, and without politicization . Opposed accusations against China regarding the human rights situation in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong . Condemned illegal unilateral coercive measures. Venezuela continued strengthening its human rights model.
16. Slovakia	Expressed concern about the human rights situation in Russia regarding the limitations on the rights of freedom of expression and media freedom . Condemned the violations against women's and girls' rights in Afghanistan and restrictions on media communications imposed by the Iranian authorities. Deplored violations of human rights in Myanmar .
17. Latvia	Latvia was increasingly concerned about the shrinking space for civil society and the curtailing of free, independent and fact-based journalism, especially in authoritarian States like Russia and Belarus . Condemned attacks against human rights defenders, especially women and indigenous human rights defenders .
18. Armenia	Condemned the blockade of the Lachin corridor in Nagorno-Karabakh by Azerbaijan ; Azerbaijan continues military provocations. Highlighted the need to stand up for the human rights of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh .
19. Egypt	Egypt rejected the false information contained in the High Commissioner's briefing against the country and refused comments on the rulings of the Egyptian judiciary . Regretted that the HC does not condemn the burnings of the Quran . Egypt looked forward to constructive cooperation with the High Commissioner.
20. Iraq	Iraq continued to make progress in reducing the number of displaced people and in the promotion of women's rights with the creation of the position of adviser to the Prime Minister for women's affairs.
21. Canada	Was concerned by the arbitrary detentions around the world and in particular of Muslim groups in Xinjiang . Was deeply concerned about restrictions of freedoms in Eritrea and Sudan , and gender-based violence in Haiti . Condemned any kind of religious discrimination, in particular the rise of antisemitism and antimuslim hatred .
22. Slovenia	Emphasized the importance of empowering women and girls to participate in the environmental decision-making processes fully, equally and meaningfully; women's and girls' right to education is still far from a reality. Was concerned about the impact of rapid technological break-throughs on the enjoyment of human rights, including the bias issues within artificial intelligence .
23. Republic of Moldova	Was worried about systemic discrimination and violence against minority communities , political repression, and the curbing of freedom of expression. Was concerned about gender-based violence in Iran and Afghanistan . Called upon the Council for a reassessment and reconfiguration of the international security and normative architecture to strengthen human rights protection and ensure greater accountability .
24. Netherlands	Commended the ambition of the Government of Colombia to achieve comprehensive peace. Condemned the deprivation of civil and political rights of Nicaraguan dissidents and the increasing attacks against human rights defenders, in particular

	environmental defenders in Honduras . The human rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people must be safeguarded through a robust and independent justice system. Denounced the criminalization of judges, prosecutors, journalists and human rights defenders in Guatemala . Urged South Sudan to speed up implementation of Chapter 5 of the peace agreement and take action to ensure the enjoyment of human rights by all.
25. South Sudan	Denounced that the methodology used in the Report of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan submitted to the Council at this Session is anonymous and unverifiable. Rejected the extension of the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan under Item 2 but welcomed the renewal of Resolution A/HRC/RES/49/35 under Item 10. Supported China's implementation of "one country, two systems" in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Recognized Eritrea's efforts in combatting human rights violations. Called upon the international community to give the country time to conduct dialogue with all groups on how to achieve a comprehensive peace.
26. Iceland	Iceland continued to monitor the UN Joint Programme on human rights in the Philippines and called upon the Government to implement the Programme to the letter and address accountability failings . In Ethiopia , Iceland commended the Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front for steps taken in implementing the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. In Egypt , human rights defenders, journalists, and activists continue to face reprisals and unlawful restrictions. In Yemen , Iceland urged all parties to uphold international humanitarian law and human rights law.
27. Uganda	Was imperative that greater focus is given to social and economic rights . The country did not condone the promotion of sexual orientation of any kind - heterosexual or homosexual alike.
28. Greece	Condemned Russia's invasion and the subsequent war of aggression against Ukraine . Drew attention to the human rights situations in Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Belarus, Yemen . Was concerned about the obstruction of the Lachin corridor and the violation of human rights in Nagorno Karabakh . Considered that the report on Cyprus does not take into account the human rights of all citizens of the country.
29. Sweden	Regretted the shrinking democratic space , the revocation of citizenships of recently deported Nicaraguan citizens and the disproportionate sentences after the July protests in Cuba . Was concerned about the shrinking space for civil society in Vietnam and Thailand . Urged Mali to ensure a swift return to constitutional order through democratic elections and called upon Sudan to urgently return to a civilian-led democratic transition. Recalled the importance of upholding freedom of expression, assembly and association in Egypt and the protection of civilians in Yemen . Called upon the Lebanese government to ensure an independent and credible investigation of the explosion in Beirut.
30. Malta	Offered its deepest condolences and solidarity to the people of Türkiye and Syria following the earthquakes. Was concerned about the human rights situation in Afghanistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem , and the Russian war against Ukraine .
31. Ethiopia	Informed about its concrete measures to address conflict-related issues through its transition justice policy . Created an inter-ministerial task force to implement all the Council's recommendations. Was committed to guaranteeing accountability and the redress of all victims .
32. Afghanistan	Women and girls are experiencing a gender apartheid since they have been erased from every aspect of public life. Urged the Council to establish an independent investigative mechanism to collect, analyse, and preserve evidence of grave and systematic violations taking place across the country. Reiterated its call for support for the establishment of an inclusive and representative government .

33. Australia	Emphasized the importance of accountability and sexual reproductive health . Condemned the Taliban's violations of women's rights in Afghanistan and the political repression in Myanmar . Australia was deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Xinjiang and Hong Kong .
34. Türkiye	Recalled that from 1963 to 1974, the Greek Cypriots conducted ethnic cleansing against the Turkish Cypriots . The report on Cyprus ignores the isolation imposed upon the Turkish Cypriots for more than 50 years; and the constructive proposals by the Turkish Cypriot side. Condemned recent attacks against the Quran . Supported Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including Crimea . Drew attention to the rights of Uyghurs Turks in China .
35. Syrian Arab Republic	The Council must respect Syria's sovereignty , unity, and territorial integrity. UCMs should be stopped. Urged the Council to support the efforts of the Syrian government in the humanitarian and development fields, to combat terrorist groups and help end the illegal presence of the US forces on the Syrian territories. Renewed its support for the One – China principle, and reaffirmed that issues related to Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet are China's internal affairs.
36. Namibia	Emphasized people's inalienable right to self-determination and urged ending the colonial and foreign occupation in Western Sahara and Palestine .
37. Belarus	Denounced the manipulation of information about human rights in Belarus, Russia, Iran, Syria, Venezuela and a number of other states. It was worried about the rise of xenophobia, racism, violence and intolerance, and social insecurity in the West. Deplored the Western sanctions policy .
38. Lesotho	Remained committed to the principles contained in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights . Lesotho welcomed the delegation from the Expert Mechanism on the Right to development in January this year.
39. Yemen	Emphasized the position of the Yemeni government calling for peace, ending the coup and war in Yemen, and rejecting the terrorist acts by the Houthi militia . Demanded pressure on the Houthi militia to accept the peace path, released prisoners and abductees, lifted the siege on Yemeni cities, and allowed humanitarian aid to reach those who are in need.
40. Botswana	Emphasized the global commitment towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG on gender equality and women and girl's empowerment , is a key imperative. Urged States to commit the necessary political will and resources to empower and protect women. Botswana continued to collaborate with different stakeholders and partners, including the United Nations and civil society to promote gender equality .
41. Nigeria	Nigeria was committed to the non-politicization of human rights issues and ending double standards . Pursued to ensure non-polarization within the country as well as peaceful coexistence.
42. Azerbaijan	Denounced the occupation and the proliferation of landmines by Armenia . Was committed to guaranteeing a safe return of Azerbaijan's displaced. Condemned acts of Islamophobia including the burning of the Quran in France, Sweden and Greece .
43. Lao People's Democratic Republic	Lao was committed to implementing the plan of action of the UPR. Emphasized the importance of dialogue, cooperation, non-selectivity and non-politicization within the Council. Supported China and called upon States not to intervene in China's internal affairs.
44. Hungary	Denounced the overpoliticization of the Council when singling out Israel . Emphasized the importance of the protection of the rights of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities . Condemned the brutal war in Ukraine and urged the international community to support peace talks and an immediate ceasefire.

45. Iran	Denounced the politicization of the Council, the human rights situation in Palestine , and the desecration of the Quran .
46. Uruguay	Uruguay reiterated its support for multilateralism, dialogue, and cooperation . Was concerned about the budgetary situation that the Office is going through and the potential impact that financial restrictions have on its work.
47. Vanuatu	Emphasized the climate crisis and mentioned that the country is currently fighting against the negative impacts of climate change .
48. Burundi	Called upon the Council to show neutrality and objectivity to recognize positive trends in Burundi. Opposed the politicization of the Council. Supported China and considered Hong Kong's questions of China's internal affairs.
49. Mauritania	Highlighted the importance of empowering the HC to address challenging tasks . Expressed concern about discrimination based on religion, in particular against Muslims through the desecration of the Quran . Expressed concern about violations of the Palestinian people .
50. Lebanon	The Lebanese government was committed to bringing the investigation of the Beirut explosion to a conclusion and providing accountability . Emphasized the importance of fostering cooperation, constructive dialogue and non-selectivity within the Council.
51. El Salvador	Since June, El Salvador was implementing a justice and security policy and the territorial control plan , and all has been done under the constitutional framework; the country expressed its eradicated street violence of criminal groups successfully. Opposed USA's comments about the security policy, considering it the internal affairs of the country.
52. Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia was committed to implementing different reforms including fostering the rights of women, children, work and the environment . Called upon the HRC to improve the human rights situation in the spirit of constructive dialogue and objectivity where all rights are equal . Denounced racial discrimination in the USA and violence against certain groups.
53. Cambodia	Opposed the accusations against Cambodia in the HC's report: accusations are founded on fake news and journalism that has breached the laws of the country. Cambodia will hold general elections in a transparent manner.
54. Peru	Emphasized the political crisis in the country which has triggered social protests in the south of the country. The authorities are carrying out the corresponding investigations impartially, independently and without delay into the violations committed during the protests. Welcomed the High Commissioner's support for social dialogue in Peru.
55. Denmark	Condemned the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation , and its indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians and civilian infrastructure. Reiterated its serious concern about human rights violations in Xinjiang and the forced assimilation of Tibetan children by China . Denmark was deeply concerned about the deterioration of the human rights situation in Mali, Burkina Faso, Libya and Yemen .
56. Panama	Emphasized human rights issues such as the pandemic, the climate crisis, systemic racism, conflicts, gender inequality and the digital divide. It is also crucial to strengthen existing mechanisms and the role of human rights in the face of the challenges of the 21st century, including cybersecurity and the use of artificial intelligence in the military sphere.
57. Nicaragua	Respected the equal value of rights and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. Supported the one China-Principle and opposed accusations against the country. Emphasizes that the report on China is politicized. Called upon the Council to stop interfering in other countries internal affairs.

Statements Made on Behalf of the National Human Rights Institutions and Civil Society Organizations

Thematic Issues raised:

- **Attacks against human rights defenders**
- **Abuses against migrants as a result of border policies**
- **Systematic attacks against women's rights**

Country-specific situations:

- **Occupied Palestinian Territory:** Israel's colonial settlement enterprise
- **Guatemala and Honduras:** Attacks against human rights defenders, journalists and justice operators.
- **Peru:** attacks on protestors.
- **Humanitarian situation in Nagorno Karabakh:** the ongoing blockade of the Lachin corridor, the road connecting Nagorno Karabakh to Armenia.
- **East and Horn of Africa sub-region:** attacks against human rights defenders.
- **Colombia:** attacks against human rights defenders and the lack of implementation of the peace agreement.
- **Russia's unlawful aggression against Ukraine**
- **Situation in Xinjiang, China:** While some NGOs denounced human rights violations, others expressed these accusations were based on false information.
- Other country-specific situations mentioned: **Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, India, Myanmar, Yemen, and Iran.**

List of NGOs that took the floor (56):

NHRI Colombia (Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project, China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) (Joint Statement), Human Rights Watch, United Nations Association of China, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, Il Cenacolo, Amnesty International, China Foundation for Peace and Development, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, ODHACO - Bureau International des Droits Humains - Action Colombie, Mouvement National des Jeunes Patriotes du Mali, Franciscans International (Joint Statement), Chinese Association for International Understanding (Joint Statement), Justice for Iran, Ltd, Presse Embleme Campagne, Africa Culture International, World Evangelical Alliance (Joint Statement), World Jewish Congress, Iraqi Development Organization, Center for Global Nonkilling, Fundación Abba Colombia, Right Livelihood Award Foundation, Human Rights Information and Training Center, Colombian Commission of Jurists, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, American Association of Jurists (Joint Statement), Peace Track Initiative, iuventum, Organisation Internationale pour les Pays Les Moins Avancés (OIPMA), Friends World Committee for Consultation, International Service for Human Rights, International Service for Human Rights, OCAPROCE Internationale, Advocates for Human Rights, Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, World Muslim Congress, Society for Development and Community Empowerment, International Action for Peace & Sustainable Development, Promotion du Développement Économique et Social (PDES), International Commission of Jurists, Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man (Joint Statement), Peace Brigades International, Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI), CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Conectas Direitos Humanos, Women's Human Rights International Association, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (Joint Statement), Association des étudiants tamouls de France, Association Culturelle des Tamouls en France, Réseau Unité pour le Développement de Mauritanie, Comité International pour le Respect et l'Application de la Charte Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples (CIRAC), Maloca Internationale, Community Human Rights and Advocacy Centre (CHRAC), International Muslim Women's Union.

Full recording of the General Debate meetings on Item 2 is available on the UN WebTV:

[Part 1](#) (7 March 2022, 00:39:00), [Part 2](#) (7 March 2023, 03:08:58), [Part 3](#) (8 March 2023, 03:17:06), [Part 4](#) (8 March 2023, 00:32:43)