

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 52nd REGULAR SESSION

Organizational Meeting

13 February 2023

The meeting was chaired by H.E. Václav Bálek, President of the Human Rights Council.

The representation of **Myanmar** in the HRC remains unchanged. The 2 IDs on Myanmar will move ahead as scheduled, without the participation of the country concerned.

This year, for the first time, the March session will need more than five weeks to be concluded, from **27 February to 4 April 2023**. This is due to the lunch time meeting restrictions and the creation of new mandates by the Council such as IDs and panel discussions.

During its 52nd session, the Council will hold 9 panel debates (all times CET):

- **Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**, under the theme “A reflection on five years of the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030): mapping a blueprint for the next steps”. 27 February 2023, 4 to 6 p.m. The high-level panel will be opened by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth.
- **Biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty**, under the theme “Human rights violations relating to the use of the death penalty, in particular with respect to limiting the death penalty to the most serious crimes”. 28 February 2023, 9 to 11 a.m. Introduced by Belgium on behalf of the main sponsors.
- **High-level meeting commemorating the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development**. 28 February 2023, 4 - 6 p.m. and 1 March 2023, 10 a.m. - noon. Introduced by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- **High-level panel discussion on UPR Voluntary Funds: achievements, good practices and lessons learned over the past 15 years and optimized support to States in the implementation of recommendations emanating from the fourth cycle** [accessible panel]. 1 March 2023, 4 – 6 p.m. Introduced by Argentina on behalf of the main sponsors.
- **Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child**, under the theme “Rights of the child and the digital environment”. 10 March 2022, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 5 p.m. Introduced by Uruguay on behalf of the EU and GRULAC.
- **Annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities**, under the theme “Support systems to ensure community inclusion of persons with disabilities, including as a means of building forward better after the COVID-19 pandemic”. 13 March 2023, 4 to 6 p.m. Introduced by New Zealand on behalf of New Zealand and Mexico.
- **Debate in commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**, under the theme “The urgency of combating racism and racial discrimination 75 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. Introduced by Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the African Group.

Overview of the Programme of Work

The 52nd session will be **opened** by the President of the Human Rights Council, President of the General Assembly, Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland as host country, followed by the High-Level Segment (HLS). 121 dignitaries have inscribed to date to participate in the HLS. Speaking time is 7min. During the session, the Council will hold 9 panel discussions, 27 Interactive Dialogues with Special Procedures mandate holders and investigative mechanisms, 9 Interactive Dialogues with the High Commissioner, 3 Enhanced Interactive Dialogues,

Deadlines:

- **States:** the online system for inscription in the list of speakers for all General Debates, Interactive Dialogues and Panel Discussions will open on **Monday, 20 February at 4 pm** and will close **24 hours before the meeting**. Inscription and withdrawal after the deadline are possible by email: OHCHR-hrclistofspeakers@un.org
- The list of speakers will close approximately 15 minutes after the beginning of each debate.
- Inscription for the list of speakers for the Adoption of UPR Outcomes will open on **Monday, 13 March at 9 am** and will close on **Thursday, 16 March at 6 pm**. No inscription will be possible after this deadline.
- The deadline for the submission of draft proposals is

and one High-level dialogue. The Council will also adopt outcomes of the UPR.

Ten Special Procedures mandate holders and Expert Mechanisms are to be appointed by the Council.

Thursday, 23 March at 1 pm.

- **NGOs and NHRIS:** the list of speakers for all debates will open online on **Tuesday, 21 February at 2 pm.**
- List of speakers for Panel Discussions: states will be asked to rank panels in the order of their priorities when inscribing on the list of speakers. Slots will be allocated by the system taking into account those priorities.

Information Sharing on Initiatives

- **Fiji:** side event on the ratification and implementation of the UN **Convention Against Torture by SIDS**, together with the Convention Against Torture Initiative and its co-sponsor states Chile, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia, Morocco and Fiji (28 February, 14-15 pm, Room XXII).
- **Mexico:**
 - *(on behalf of Türkiye, Mexico):* draft resolution on **birth registration** and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law;
 - draft resolution to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of **migrants**;
 - a side event on **disappeared migrants** (28 March);
 - traditional joint statement with Finland on **International Women’s Day** (8 March).
- **Maldives:**
 - *(on behalf of the Core Group on human rights and the environment¹):* draft resolution on the human right to a **clean, healthy and sustainable environment**. Informal consultations are scheduled for 9 and 16 March.
 - a high-level side event **“Bridging the gap: outcomes of multilateral environmental protection measures in 2022 and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”** (27 February, 5 pm).
- **United Kingdom:**
 - *(on behalf Germany, France, Italy, Jordan, the Netherlands, Qatar, Türkiye, United States, United Kingdom):* draft resolution on the human rights situation in **Syria**, reflecting recent developments in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake, renewal of mandate of the **Commission of Inquiry of Syria**;
 - *(on behalf of the Core Group on South Sudan²):* draft resolution to extend the mandate of the **Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan**. The Core Group regretted it was not possible for the Council to agree on a single resolution in recent years, but remains committed to working with the African Group, its coordinator and with South Sudan to explore how and if a consensus text could be reached at this session.
- **Switzerland:**
 - *(on behalf of Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Greece, Guatemala, Mexico, Portugal, Paraguay, Uruguay, Switzerland):* resolution on the respect for human rights in **drug policies**. A high-level hybrid side event **“Human rights based approach to drug policy”**, together with the Global Commission on Drug Policy and the High Commissioner (1 March, 13:30-14:30 pm);
 - side event addressing the **communications procedures** in the area of human rights, with the Permanent Mission of Paraguay and UNESCO (23 March, 13:00-14:00 pm);
 - multicultural event, all delegations are encouraged to wear their traditional clothing or something symbolizing their culture when they participate in the Council’s meetings that day, in the evening a multicultural party where the delegates will share their traditional cuisine (10 March, from 18:30 pm, Serpentine bar).
- **Georgia:** annual resolution on cooperation with **Georgia**, to be considered under agenda item 10.
- **Belgium** *(on behalf of Armenia, Mexico, Senegal, Thailand, Belgium):* a three-year resolution on **regional**

¹ Costa Rica, Slovenia, Switzerland, Maldives

² Albania, Norway, USA, United Kingdom

arrangements. Two side events as part of the HLS, together with cosponsors: 1) on the protection of returnees as human right defenders: **“Lawyers at their own risk”**, (27 February, 12-13 pm); 2) on the **role lawyers play in death penalty cases** (28 February, 13-14 pm).

- **India:**
 - *(on behalf of South Africa, India):* a joint statement on the **thoughts and ideas of Mahatma Gandhi in the UDHR**;
 - *(on behalf of EU, India):* a joint statement at the Annual high-level panel on human rights mainstreaming, **“A reflection on five years of UN Youth 2030: mapping a blueprint for next steps.”**
- **Ukraine:**
 - *(together with co-sponsors):* a draft resolution on further deterioration of the human rights **situation in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression**, extension of the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine;
 - side event together with the Human Rights Council Foundation on **accountability for war crimes and serious human rights violations in Ukraine**, with the aim of providing an update of the human rights situation, to assess the next steps in achieving accountability including the establishment of a Special Tribunal (22 March);
 - side event on **disinformation**, co-organized with a Core Group of countries.
- **Brazil:** side event **“New perspectives on human rights challenges including the importance of sustaining multilateralism, democracy and international cooperation”** (1 March, 13-14 pm).
- **Chile:**
 - *(on behalf of Azerbaijan, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Fiji, Luxembourg, Portugal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Uruguay, Chile):* draft resolution on the promotion and protection of human rights and the **implementation of the 2030 Agenda** for sustainable development;
 - side event commemorating the **50th Anniversary of the coup d’état in Chile** and the creation of UN mechanisms that provided support to victims of the Pinochet dictatorship, in collaboration with the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (28 February, 3 pm).
- **Pakistan** *(on behalf of OIC):*
 - traditional resolution on combatting intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons **based on religion or belief**;
 - draft resolution on the human rights situation in the **OPT**, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice, which will be considered under agenda item 2;
 - resolution on the right of **Palestinian people to self-determination**;
 - resolution on **Israeli settlements** in the OPT, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan;
 - resolution on human rights in the **occupied Syrian Golan**;
 - the OIC will continue to point out issues and incidents **of particular concern to OIC countries**, including the recent desecration of the Holy Quran.
- **Malta** *(on behalf of Belgium, Luxembourg, Uruguay, Malta):* side event as a photo exhibition **“From despair to hope: Children beyond armed conflict”**, in cooperation with the Office of the UN Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict (opening at 13:15 pm, from 15 March until 24 March).
- **Azerbaijan:**
 - *(in its capacity of the chair of the NAM):* draft resolution on the negative impact of **unilateral coercive measures** on the enjoyment of human rights;
 - *(together with Ecuador, Georgia, Kenya, Malaysia, Thailand, Türkiye):* draft resolution on promoting human rights and **Sustainable Development Goals** through transparent, accountable, and efficient public services delivery;
 - during the session will keep under close attention the issue of the **right of return of Western Azerbaijanis** who were expelled from present day Armenia to their homes.
- **European Union:**
 - resolution on the situation of human rights in **Belarus**, renewal the mandate of the High

Commissioner to continue with the examination of the presidential election-related human rights violations;

- resolution on **DPRK**, renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;
- resolution on **Myanmar**, renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;
- resolution on **freedom of religion or belief**, renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;
- *(together with GRULAC)*: resolution on **sale and sexual exploitation of children**;
- *(together with India)*: joint statement on **Youth** during the mainstreaming panel.
- **Finland** *(on behalf of Brazil, Germany, Namibia, Finland)*: resolution on **adequate housing** as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.
- **Romania** *(on behalf of Morocco, Norway, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Tunisia, Romania)*: resolution on **human rights, democracy and the rule of law**, topic of the Fifth session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law to be **“Democracy and climate change: focusing on solutions”**.
- **Portugal**: resolution on the question of the realization in all countries of **economic, social and cultural rights**. *(Together with Brazil)*: resolution on **mental health** and human rights.
- **Israel**: hybrid side event on the **role of assisted technology in the promotion of inclusive education**, together with the Permanent Mission of Austria (24 March, 13 pm).
- **Poland**: side event on freedom of religion and belief **“Hard to believe: trends in restriction on religious conversion”**, together with Hungary (8 March, 13:15-14:15 pm, Premises of the Polish mission), Poland invites interested delegations to co-sponsor the event. Side event on **disinformation**, together with a group of countries including Lithuania and Ukraine (16 March, 14 pm).
- **Republic of Korea**: a high-level side event commemorating the 10th anniversary of the creation of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the **DPRK**, together with the Permanent delegation of the EU (21 March).
- **Qatar**: on the occasion of the second part of the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs taking place in Qatar (5 to 9 March), a joint statement will be delivered during the High-level meeting on the **right to development**. Qatar looks forward to the maximum co-sponsorship by member states.
- **Morocco**: a high-level event on the margins of the HLS entitled **“The way forward to establish a network among national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up”**, together with the Permanent Missions of Portugal and Paraguay (28 February, 13-14 pm).
- **Norway**: resolution to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of **human rights defenders**.
- **Colombia**: *(together with Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Greece, Guatemala, Mexico, Portugal, Paraguay, Uruguay and Switzerland)* resolution of the respect for human rights in **drug policies**. Side event on respect for human rights in **drug policies** (1 March). Side event **“Nutrition and peace: exchange of know-how and experiences from a rural perspective”**, together with civil society organizations (9 March).
- **Canada**: *(on behalf of the Netherlands, Canada)* resolution on the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to **freedom of opinion and expression**. Side event on the **rights-based accountability for women and girls in humanitarian settings**, co-hosted with other partners (7 March).
- **Uruguay** *(on behalf of GRULAC and EU)*: draft resolution on renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the **sale and sexual exploitation of children**.
- **Malaysia**: *(together with Ecuador, Georgia, Kenya, Thailand, Türkiye, Malaysia)* draft resolution on promoting human rights and **Sustainable Development Goals** through transparent, accountable, and efficient public services delivery. Welcomes all delegations to participate in informal consultations. Online side event **“Harnessing technology for gender equality and online conversation”**, together with Australia and University for Peace (second week of March).
- **Iceland** *(on behalf of Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, United Kingdom, Iceland)*: resolution on the situation of human rights in the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.
- **Zimbabwe**: hybrid conference in the margins of the HLS **“Implementation of Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social**

and Cultural Rights”, with the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara (1 March, 14-15 pm).

- **Cuba:** resolutions on **foreign debt, right to food** and **cultural rights**.
- **Denmark:** draft resolution to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on **torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**.
- **Côte d’Ivoire** (*on behalf of the African Group*):
 - draft resolution on the negative impact of the non-repatriation of **funds of illicit origin** to the countries of origin on the enjoyment of human rights;
 - draft resolution on **South Sudan**, under agenda item 10;
 - draft resolution on technical assistance and capacity-building for **Mali** in the field of human rights.
- **Austria** (*on behalf of Slovenia, Mexico, Austria*): traditional resolution on people belonging to minorities; extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on **minority issues**.
- **Bolivia:** continues efforts to implement UN Declaration on **rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas** together with civil society organizations; **side event** on this issue, in particular on the **food crisis** focused on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons in rural settings (16 March).

Other matters:

Draft resolutions: at least one informal open-ended consultation should be held on each draft resolution or decision before the Council can take action on it. These consultations should be scheduled in a timely, transparent, and inclusive manner helping to contribute to a constructive working atmosphere based on transparency, dialogue and cooperation.

Modalities:

- The 52nd session will be held in Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva. State delegations can participate in person, via pre-recorded video statements, or via Zoom. Point of order can be raised via Zoom by using the raise hand function. The delegations can exercise their right of reply remotely in the same manner as during the 51st regular session, by sending an email to: OHCHR-hrclistofspeakers@un.org
- Special Procedures mandate holders, Investigative Mechanisms and Panelists unable to travel to Geneva are able to send pre-recorded video messages for their initial presentations and participate in interactive dialogues or panel discussions via Zoom.
- **NGOs with ECOSOC status and NHRIs with “A” status** have the possibility of delivering their statements in person or via pre-recorded video statements. The list of speakers for NGOs for each of the General Debates will be set in line with the average number of NGOs that participated in each of the General Debates in the previous three March sessions.
- All oral statements should be electronically submitted to the interpreters at least 1h00 prior the estimated time of delivery, to ensure the quality of the interpretation. Submission of transcript is mandatory for all video statements.

Accessibility: a Task Force on enhancing accessibility has been established, and the focal point for accessibility in the Secretariat can be contacted. Oral statements are to be uploaded in Word format on the online system for lists of speakers, and delegations are encouraged to ensure live captioning and sign interpretation during their panels.

Reprisals: a climate of trust and safety within the Council is essential, where states prevent and ensure adequate protection against any act of intimidation or reprisal. A constructive, safe, and respectful atmosphere is essential. Intimidation and reprisal can take many forms, and our common obligation is to ensure intimidation or reprisals will not happen in any circumstances.

Documentation: out of 85 reports for the 52nd session, 73 reports are already available in all UN languages, and 12 in some of the official languages.

Watch the full recording here: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1qpfqw1qr>