

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 55th SESSION

### Overview of Week 1 (26 February – 1 March 2024)

*During its first week of work, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) will host its annual High-Level Segment (HLS), during which more than 120 Dignitaries<sup>1</sup> will address the Council. In the remaining days, the human rights situation in five countries and regions will be addressed under **Agenda Item 2<sup>2</sup>**, including **Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Eritrea, and Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel**. Additionally, the Council will hold a panel discussion on Annual High-Level Mainstreaming.*



**Opening of the session:** 26 February 2024, 9 am (CET): The session will be opened by the President of the Human Rights Council, the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland as host country.

### High-Level Segment

List of dignitaries (Presidents, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs...) by Regional Group:

**African Group:** Lesotho, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Algeria, Morocco, Cameroon, Gambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tunisia, Egypt, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire, Angola, Sudan, Burundi.

**Asia and the Pacific Group:** Jordan, Viet Nam, Maldives, Iran, Indonesia, China, Saudi Arabia, State of Palestine, Bahrain, India, Honduras, Syrian Arab Republic, Qatar, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Kuwait, New Zealand, Australia, Mauritius, Malaysia, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Japan, Thailand, Cyprus.

**Eastern European Group:** Kazakhstan, Serbia, Slovenia, Georgia, Albania, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Croatia, Republic of Moldova, Bulgaria, Estonia, Armenia, Romania, Montenegro, Türkiye, Latvia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Poland, Belarus, Hungary, Slovakia, Czechia.

**Latin American and Caribbean States Group:** Colombia, H.E. Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of Colombia; Paraguay, Venezuela, Cuba, Brazil, Guatemala, Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Argentina, El Salvador, Dominican Republic.

**Western European and Others Group:** Luxemburg, Finland, Sweden, Spain, Germany, Austria, Malta, France, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Andorra, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Monaco, Liechtenstein, Canada, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sovereign Order of Malta, Greece.

**Also taking the floor during the HLS:** ICRC; European Union; African Union; CPLP; UNDP; Commonwealth; Council of Europe; International Development Law Organization; Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf; Inter-American Commission of Human Rights.

**The High-level segment will be followed by the General segment.**

<sup>1</sup> As inscribed in the List of dignitaries of 15 February 2024

<sup>2</sup> 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.



**26 February** (4 to 6 pm): Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming. Theme: *Harnessing multilateral efforts to embed, amplify, and realize the rights of persons with disabilities, with a focus on full and effective participation and inclusion in society.*

## Agenda Item 2: Presentation of Reports and Interactive Dialogues



**28 February:** Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the situation of human rights in **Eritrea**.

**29 February:** Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem**, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice.

A/HRC/55/28<sup>3</sup>: The report provided an overview of the implementation of the resolution and developments relevant to the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice. **The OHCHR concluded that the shocking attacks by Palestinian armed groups on 7-8 October 2023 and the ensuing massive military response by Israel causing unprecedented destruction and suffering of civilians in Gaza have led to an appalling humanitarian crisis.** The means and methods of warfare chosen by Israel have led to massive suffering of Palestinians, including through the killing of civilians on a broad scale, extensive repeated displacement, destruction of homes, and the denial of sufficient food and other essentials of life. Clear violations of international humanitarian law, including possible war crimes, have been committed by all parties. Further investigations would be needed to establish whether other crimes under international law have been committed. There must be accountability – on all sides. The **HC called on all parties to the conflict** to implement a ceasefire on human rights and humanitarian grounds, to ensure full respect for international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, and to ensure accountability for violations and abuses. Besides the calls on **all duty bearers, the international organizations and the Palestinian armed groups in Gaza; the HC further called on Israel** to immediately end all practices of collective punishment, including lifting its blockade and closures - and the “complete siege”- of Gaza, and urgently ensure immediate access to humanitarian and commercial goods throughout Gaza, commensurate with the immense humanitarian needs, among others.

**29 February:** Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the **Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua**.

**29 February:** Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the Special Rapporteur, **Richard Bennett**, on strengthening the promotion and protection of **human rights in Afghanistan**.

**1 March:** Interactive Dialogue on the oral updated by the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in **Myanmar**.

**1 March:** Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the **Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan**.

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<sup>3</sup> As of 23 February, only the advanced unedited version (english) was available.

*1 March:* Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the **situation of human rights in the Sudan**.

A/HRC/55/29<sup>4</sup>: The report covering the period from 15 April to 15 December 2023, presented **the situation of human rights in the Sudan and violations and abuses committed by all parties in the country**. It noted the key human rights challenges faced by the Sudan. Both parties to the conflict have reportedly committed **gross violations and abuses of international human rights law as well as serious violations of international humanitarian law, some of which may amount to war crimes and possibly other serious crimes under international law**. The intensity of hostilities between the Sudanese Armed Forces and Rapid Support Forces and the significant lack of adherence to international humanitarian law and international human rights law standards are concerning. The HC recommended that Sudanese authorities ensure the declarations and implementation of states of emergency comply with international human rights law; conduct prompt, thorough, effective, transparent, independent, and impartial investigations into alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law; among others.

*The Geneva Centre's summaries of selected meetings are [available here](#).*

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<sup>4</sup> As of 23 February, only the advanced unedited version (english) was available.