

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 56th SESSION

Overview of Week 4 (08 – 12 July 2024)

*During the fourth and last week of the UN Human Rights Council will continue the adoption of the UPR Outcomes of **Monaco, Belize, Chad, Jordan, Malaysia, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Mauritius, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and China** (under **Agenda Item 6¹**). It will continue with interactive dialogues on **Agenda Item 10²** and **Agenda Item 9³**. In particular, discussions will concern the contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, as well as the human rights situations in Libya, the Central African Republic, Ukraine and Crimea, and Colombia. The High Commissioner will address the Council about enhancing technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights. Additionally, the Council will hold the annual thematic panel discussion **on technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights in order to enhance the implementation of recommendations emanating from the universal periodic review**. The Council will conclude the week and the 56th regular session by adopting 26 Resolutions.*



Panel discussions



09 July: Annual thematic panel discussion on technical cooperation and capacity-building.

A/HRC/56/72⁴: The report served as a basis for the discussion to be held during the annual thematic panel discussion on technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights. It focused on **technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights in order to enhance the implementation of recommendations emanating from the universal periodic review**. In the report, the High Commissioner underscored the critical role that technical cooperation in the field of human rights plays in renewing efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, preventing crises, building more resilient societies and sustaining peace. The guidance, findings and recommendations of human rights mechanisms provide a solid foundation for shaping technical cooperation in the field of human rights. Technical cooperation and capacity-building to implement recommendations from the universal periodic review present an opportunity for Member States to support and promote a holistic approach to technical cooperation and to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders.

Agenda Item 9: Presentation of Reports and Interactive Dialogues



08 July: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur **on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Ashwini K.P.**, on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

¹ Item 6: Universal Periodic Review.

² Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building.

³ Item 9: Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

⁴ As of 07 July, only the English Advanced Word version is available.

Combating the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

[A/HRC/56/67](#): In the report, the Special Rapporteur summarized the submissions of States regarding the **actions that they have taken to combat** the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. In particular, **Albania, Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Lithuania, Maldives, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Zambia** submitted their best practices. The report outlined relevant information submitted by other stakeholders. Additionally, she called upon Member States to demonstrate the strong commitment needed to address the rise in hate crime and incitement to violence against ethnic, racial and religious minorities and groups around the world. Among the recommendations made by the SR, **Member States** should adopt comprehensive measures to combat racist hate speech and xenophobic political discourse, while upholding freedom of expression; ensure comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation; and ensure effective access to remedy, including the guarantee of non-repetition of violation, to all victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. **Other stakeholders and civil society organizations** should continue to facilitate enhanced collaboration among representatives of different racial, ethnic and religious communities to combat all forms of intolerance and discrimination; collect and disseminate disaggregated data on hate crime and hate speech that promotes racist and neo-Nazi ideologies; and provide support to victims of hate crimes and racist and xenophobic hate speech.

Contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

[A/HRC/56/68](#): The report examined **four cross-cutting ways in which artificial intelligence can contribute to manifestations of racial discrimination**: data problems, algorithm design issues, the intentionally discriminatory use of artificial intelligence, and accountability issues. Recent developments in generative artificial intelligence and the burgeoning application of artificial intelligence continue to raise serious human rights issues, including concerns about racial discrimination. Generative artificial intelligence is changing the world and has the potential to drive increasingly seismic societal shifts in the future. The rapid spread of the application of artificial intelligence across various fields is of deep concern. The SR then provided examples of the application of artificial intelligence across various societal domains and its racially discriminatory impacts. In conclusion, the SR presented **recommendations on how States should approach the management and regulation of artificial intelligence technologies to prevent and address racial discrimination**. Among others, states should address the challenge of regulating artificial intelligence with a greater sense of urgency, bearing in mind the speed with which these technologies are being developed and the multitude of ways in which they are already perpetuating racial discrimination across societal domains; and develop artificial intelligence regulatory frameworks that are based on a comprehensive understanding of systemic racism and are grounded in international human rights law, including the prohibition of racial discrimination. The Special Rapporteur made recommendations also to **businesses, the UN and its independent human rights mechanisms**.

[A/HRC/56/68/Add.1](#): **Visit to the United States of America, from 31 October to 14 November 2023**. The scope of the visit was to assess manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, as well as the measures in place to address these phenomena. The report emphasized that the United States sits at a critical juncture in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. The SR witnessed, with profound concern, a climate characterized by deep political polarization and volatility, economic uncertainty, extreme income and wealth inequality, and severe damage to the fabric of American society. These trends are creating fertile ground for hatred, including the othering, stereotyping and scapegoating of those from racially marginalized groups. It is vital that the Government of the United States, including both federal and state authorities, urgently address racial hate speech and hate crime and stay the course to eliminate systemic racism and racial discrimination. In particular, the Government of the US should ratify all the core human rights treaties to which the United States is not a State party; strengthen efforts to collect and coordinate the collection of data, fully disaggregated by race and ethnicity, across all areas of government activity to monitor the situation of racially marginalized individuals and groups; and ensure access to remedy to all victims of racial discrimination, among others.

Agenda Item 5: Presentation of Reports and Interactive Dialogues

08 July: Presentation of the report of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, twelfth session of the Forum on Business and Human Rights, under the theme “*Towards effective change in implementing obligations, responsibilities, and remedies.*”

[A/HRC/56/66](#): The report underlined key messages and takeaways from the discussion. Despite the significant strides made over the past 12 years in recognizing corporate responsibilities to respect human rights, persistent challenges demand ongoing efforts to drive further improvements. While both States and large businesses increasingly acknowledge their respective roles to protect and respect human rights, sustained commitment is necessary to overcome remaining obstacles. While States have initiated measures to incentivize businesses to uphold human rights through a smart combination of measures, demonstrating effective State action and leadership remain formidable tasks. Bridging this gap will require fostering dialogue with stakeholders. Indigenous communities face ongoing challenges from business operations, including violations of their collective rights and repression of human rights defenders. States and businesses are called upon to recognize Indigenous Peoples’ rights, to repeal laws that may lead to the abuse of those rights, and to ensure full implementation of free, prior informed consent.

08 July: Presentation of the High Commissioner’s reports on Operations of the Voluntary Fund for Participation in the Universal Periodic Review and the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance in the Implementation of the Universal Periodic Review.

Agenda Item 10: Presentation of Reports and Interactive Dialogues

08 July: Interactive dialogue on the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the **situation of human rights in Libya**, focusing on enhancing technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights.

[A/HRC/56/70](#): The report, covering the period between April 2023 and March 2024, outlined the technical assistance and capacity-building support provided by the OHCHR to the Libyan authorities. The support aimed at **promoting transitional justice and reconciliation in Libya, as well as key entry points for human rights in such a process**. These efforts all contributed to promoting dialogue and cooperation among diverse stakeholders whose contributions are essential to laying the groundwork for sustainable reforms and a rights-based and people-centered reconciliation and transitional justice process in Libya. However, to achieve lasting impact, they must be built upon thorough sustained engagement and follow-up with stakeholders. The reconciliation process currently faces several roadblocks, resulting in persistent setbacks in adopting a reconciliation law and road map. The report listed **several recommendations to the Libyan authorities, and the international community** in order to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of technical assistance and capacity-building support and improve the situation of human rights in Libya.

09 July: Interactive dialogue on the Independent Expert, **Yao Agbetse's** oral update on the technical assistance and capacity-building in the field of **human rights in the Central African Republic**.

09 July: Interactive dialogue on the oral presentation of the High Commissioner and the interim report of the Secretary-General on the situation of **human rights in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol**.

A/HRC/56/69⁵: The report highlighted **violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law** perpetrated by the Russian Federation in **Crimea**. The end of February 2024 marked ten years of illegal occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and two years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, in violation of the UN Charter and international law. These violations have occurred in an atmosphere of general impunity. The High Commissioner called upon the Russian Federation to fully uphold its obligations under international laws, including throughout the territories of **Ukraine**. In particular, the Russian authorities should comply fully with the absolute prohibition of torture, or other forms of ill-treatment, and ensure the independent, impartial and effective investigation of all allegations of torture, ill-treatment, sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention, or other serious violations. **Individuals should be able to exercise their right to freedom of movement and should not be subjected to any arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy and family. The Russian Federation should ensure the rights of peaceful assembly and freedoms of expression and opinion, association, thought, conscience and religion** can be freely exercised by all individuals and groups in the temporarily occupied territories, without discrimination on any grounds or unjustified interference. In conclusion, he appealed to the Russian Federation, to prevent, investigate and prosecute all alleged cases of violations committed by their respective forces, including conflict-related sexual violence, hold perpetrators to account, and ensure due reparations for victims. Member States should support human rights defenders who work for the protection of human rights and to support the UN and the international human rights and humanitarian laws principles.

10 July: Interactive dialogue on the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, focusing on the enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of **human rights in Colombia** to implement the recommendations of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition.

[A/HRC/56/71](#): The report contained a description of the technical assistance and capacity-building provided to national and local authorities and other relevant actors. It focused on the technical support provided for the implementation of the recommendations made by the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition on the investigation of human rights violations and corruption, security sector reform, protection of social leaders and human rights defenders, and definition and development of a public policy for a culture of peace. The High Commissioner recommended that the Government promote the comprehensive and coordinated implementation of policies to dismantle criminal, drug-related and security-related organizations in the regions, as these policies are essential for achieving the necessary territorial transformation and, through the comprehensive and effective presence of the State, for overcoming the structural causes of violence by consolidating the rule of law to guarantee the population's full exercise and enjoyment of human rights; and that the Government propose a new bill to bring criminal organizations to justice and that it guarantee the rights of victims and non-repetition, including by uncovering criminal networks.

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

⁵ As of 07 July, only the English Advanced Word version is available.