

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 57th SESSION

### Overview of Week 5 (07 - 11 October 2024)

*During the fifth and last week of the UN Human Rights Council, the Council will analyze issues under **Agenda Item 10**<sup>1</sup>. In particular, it will discuss the **human rights situations in Cambodia, Somalia, the Central African Republic, Honduras, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, and Haiti**. A general debate will be followed. **The Council will conclude the week and the 57th regular session by adopting Resolutions, electing Advisory Committee members, and appointing special procedure mandate holders.***



### Agenda Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building



**07 October:** Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, **Vitit Muntarbhorn**.

**A/HRC/57/78:** The report outlined the role and achievements of the OHCHR in **Cambodia**. The report also highlighted restrictions to, among other rights, the right to participate in public affairs and freedom of expression, including in the 2023 national elections.

The Secretary-General welcomed the Government's positive engagement with OHCHR. It highlighted the crucial role of OHCHR in assisting the Government and the people of Cambodia in advancing human rights for all without distinction of any kind. The Secretary-General remained **concerned by the restrictions imposed on civic space and human rights**, including the right to participate in public affairs in the context of the national elections, the right to peaceful assembly, and the right to freedom of expression and association.

The SG called upon the Government to allocate the maximum of its available resources in the social sector for the **progressive realization of economic and social rights for all**, to ensure that the national budget is elaborated and implemented in a transparent and participatory manner, particularly by ensuring the availability of disaggregated data on allocations and the actual expenditure of the government budget by ministry, program, and economic and functional classifications; and to ensure that **social protection schemes, frameworks, policies, and laws are established in accordance with international human rights and labor standards**, including with regard to the principles of affordability, adequacy, universality, transparency, and non-discrimination in the administration process, and are gender-responsive in order to provide universal social protection for all.

**A/HRC/57/82:** The report covered the human rights situation in the country during the period from June 2023 until June 2024, including the elections held during that period. The report is presented under the theme **"Electoral rights and women's rights"**. While the country has made progress on some aspects of economic, social, and cultural rights, a major challenge concerns the issue of civil and political rights, especially the constrained civic and political space, which affects both the electoral landscape and the entire range of women's rights. Intrinsicly, the realization of human rights is closely interwoven with the aspirations of democracy, peace, and sustainable development. The report contained a general update on the situation of human rights in the country; a section focused on the three elections held during the reporting period: national, senatorial and capital, provincial and municipal/district/town/council (khan) levels; a section on women's rights; and the conclusions and recommendations of the mandate holder.

In conclusion, **the SR submitted recommendations to the Government, the UN, and the international community, as well as to civil society and other stakeholders**. These recommendations concerned the election and related space and women's rights.

<sup>1</sup> Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building

07 October: Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in **Somalia on their report, Isha Dyfan.**

[A/HRC/57/80](#): In the report, the Independent Expert provided updates on the progress achieved by the Federal Government of Somalia in the implementation of the **seven benchmarks** set out in her preceding reports in the light of political, security, and human rights developments and the humanitarian situation in the country. The Independent Expert expressed her regret that, despite the efforts made by the Government and stakeholders to address **sexual and gender-based violence** at the federal level, the bill on the offenses of rape and indecency could not be passed, and the Government has not developed an action plan to implement the activities of the joint communiqué on the prevention of sexual violence. She also reported that persistent **violations of the rights of journalists and media workers** continue to hinder free expression, encourage self-censorship and misinformation and limit public education. While recognizing the challenges faced by persons with disabilities, minorities and marginalized groups, limited progress has been made in addressing them. The Independent Expert acknowledges the enormous challenges that the Government faces in progressively **improving access to health care, water, sanitation, hygiene, and an adequate standard of living**. In conclusion, the Independent Expert welcomed the **developments made in addressing the benchmarks**. While some of the indicators have been addressed in preparation for implementation, others have not been addressed at all, and still others have been only partially addressed, with work ongoing. While some progress has been made, more remains to be accomplished.

[A/HRC/57/80/Add.1](#): **Comments by the State, following the country visits.**

07 October: Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the **Central African Republic on their report, Yao Agbetse.**

[A/HRC/57/79](#): The present report covered the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and focused on developments in the implementation of peace instruments, efforts to end impunity, and the political, economic, social, and humanitarian responses implemented as part of the transition process. It also analyses changes in the situation and makes recommendations to the Government of the Central African Republic and technical partners on technical assistance services to the country.

**Security sector reforms** should focus on providing the country with sufficient numbers of trained defense and security forces, which should be deployed throughout the national territory, provided with adequate military and civilian equipment, coordinated by a responsible command, and made subject to effective accountability mechanisms in the event of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. **Justice sector reforms** require continued multifaceted support in the fight against corruption, the strengthening of accountability mechanisms for justice and security officials, efforts to make the justice system more accessible to the people, including through a duly funded legal aid system, and the construction and rehabilitation of police, judicial and prison infrastructure. Among other recommendations, the Independent Expert recommended that the Government hold free and transparent local elections, ensuring the participation of women, young people, refugees, and internally displaced persons; and ensure that civil society organizations have space to operate, including by adopting the bill on human rights defenders.

07 October: Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on penitentiary system, security, and justice: enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building to protect human rights in **Honduras.**

[A/HRC/57/75](#)<sup>2</sup>: The report provided an overview of the **main challenges in the areas of penitentiary, security and justice**, and describes the technical assistance and capacity-building that OHCHR has been providing to the State in these three areas. The Office recognized Honduras' willingness to advance in the promotion and protection of human rights. However, **structural challenges persist, especially in terms of technical capacity, sufficient and adequate resources and inter-institutional coordination, which affect the State's capacity in**

<sup>2</sup> As of 05 October, only the Spanish Advanced Edited Version is available.

matters of penitentiary, security and justice, negatively impacting the exercise or enjoyment of human rights by people in Honduras. **OHCHR recommended the Government** develop and implement a plan for the gradual transfer of prison administration to the National Penitentiary Institute; and implement a penitentiary policy that strengthens the security and protection of the human rights of persons deprived of liberty, their rehabilitation and social reintegration, with a differentiated approach for women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, older adults, persons with disabilities and persons with chronic and/or terminal illnesses; and revoke the state of emergency; among others.

*08 October:* Interactive dialogue following an oral update on the findings in the report of OHCHR on the situation of human rights in **Ukraine**.

*08 October:* Enhanced interactive dialogue on a comprehensive report of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**.

A/HRC/57/76<sup>3</sup>: In the report, the High Commissioner highlighted **key human rights developments**. The overview is based on information gathered and cases of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. **The human rights and security situation** in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains highly concerning. Attacks and reprisals by armed groups in densely populated areas continue to pose serious risks for the protection of civilians. Documented incidents and the number of **human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law** by armed groups in conflict-affected provinces highlight the challenges the Government faces in fulfilling its obligation to protect civilians within its territory. The lifting of the de facto moratorium on the **death penalty** is a worrying response to address those challenges and increases legal uncertainty due to the broad and vaguely defined circumstances that could lead to the application of the death penalty. Despite the progress made in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the fight against conflict-related sexual violence and other sexual and gender-based violence, the number of documented victims of conflict-related sexual violence increased during the reporting period. **In conclusion, the HC recommended the Government and the international partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo** to open democratic space and guarantee the protection of the rights and freedoms of all persons, including political opponents, human rights defenders and other civil society actors, and ensure that the use of force by State agents, including during law enforcement operations, is in strict conformity with human rights law; and ensure that the freedoms of opinion, expression and peaceful assembly, as well as freedom from arbitrary detention, ill-treatment and torture, are fully protected; among others.

[A/HRC/57/81](#): The report of the team of international experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo noted that the **security and humanitarian situation in the country has deteriorated significantly**. The team of international experts regrets the limited progress, and even slowdown, in the fight against impunity and the development of a comprehensive national transitional justice process focused on the needs of victims, due to differing political agendas, particularly regarding the electoral context and the installation of the new Government. The international experts invited the Government to strengthen its support for the **judicial response to serious violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law**, particularly conflict-related sexual violence. It reiterated the need for the Government to strengthen the **coordination of and support the national transitional justice process**. The team urged the Government to ensure the **active, effective, and secure participation of victims in the transitional justice process**, including ongoing national consultations on the matter. It called on the Government to continue its efforts to provide appropriate initial and in-service **training** for judges, to build the capacity of professionals in the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute international crimes, and to assign judges trained in this field to the areas concerned. The team urged the Government to **tackle the humanitarian and protection crises** and the resulting gross violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law by taking all measures to end armed conflict.

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<sup>3</sup> As of 05 October, only the English Advanced Edited Version is available.

08 October: Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on the technical assistance and capacity-building to improve the human rights situation in **Haiti**, in connection with a request from the authorities of Haiti for coordinated and targeted international action.

A/HRC/57/41<sup>4</sup>: The report of the High Commissioner provided an update on the situation of human rights in Haiti. The High Commissioner also analyzed progress made in the implementation of recommendations. Violence has spread beyond the capital to other regions of Haiti, fuelled by the trafficking of weapons and ammunition into the country and compounded by the State's lack of means and resources to stem such violence. Human rights violations and abuses have persisted at alarmingly high levels. The brutal forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, have reached new heights, leading to irreversible harm for victims and survivors and destroying various generations. Sporadic activities will not be sufficient to tackle this destructive phenomenon, which should be addressed through the establishment of a sustainable integrated protection system. Incidents documented by OHCHR have included targeted executions and random shootings, mass kidnappings, collective rape, the forced recruitment, exploitation and trafficking of children by gangs and the burning and looting of homes and businesses. Attacks against hospitals, banks, police stations, the main seaport in the capital and schools have disrupted the provision of basic services and increased the vulnerabilities of the affected population, with dire humanitarian consequences. **In the context of an alarming level of violence, Haitians continue to be severely deprived of their enjoyment of human rights, including the core content of economic, social and cultural rights.**

**The HC recommended the Haitian authorities** strengthen the Haitian National Police; to investigate and prosecute, in accordance with the rights to a fair trial and due process, crimes involving allegations of human rights violations and abuses in a timely manner, as well as establishing, as a priority, specialized judicial units for crimes related to sexual violence; and to address urgently the humanitarian crisis, including humanitarian access, and to ensure, with the support of the international community, the provision of basic services, especially in marginalized areas, aiming, as a first step, at ensuring the fulfilment of the core obligation in relation to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights; among others.

09 October: Presentation of High Commissioner and Secretary-General's country reports and oral updates (**Cambodia, Yemen**) and OHCHR report on the implementation of res. 51/33.

A/HRC/57/74<sup>5</sup>: Implementation of technical assistance provided to the National Commission of Inquiry to investigate allegations of violations and abuses committed by all parties to the conflict in Yemen.

[A/HRC/57/73](#): Implementation of resolution 51/33 on promoting international cooperation to support national mechanisms for implementation, reporting, and follow-up. The report provided a summary of the exchanges that took place during the one-day intersessional seminar held on 23 June 2023 in Geneva, as well as, recommendations and conclusions.

## General Debate

09 October: *General Debate under Agenda Item 10.*

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

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<sup>4</sup> As of 05 October, only the English Advanced Edited Version is available.

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