



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

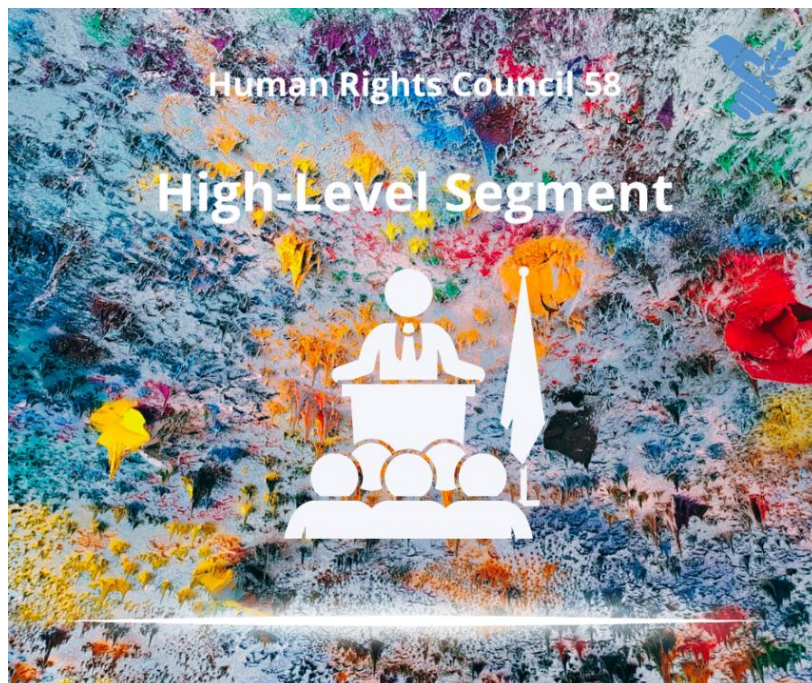
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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ADDRESSES DELIVERED BY HIGH-RANKING DIGNITARIES

- Constitutional President of **Bolivia**
- Prime Minister and Head of Government of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**
- Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of **Kenya**



H.E. Mr. Luis Alberto ARCE CATACORA, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of BOLIVIA

The Plurinational State of Bolivia is now a member of the Human Rights Council for the fourth time since the Council was established in March 2006. This unequivocally reflects Bolivia's steadfast commitment to promoting and protecting human rights. Since Bolivia held its first mandate in 2008, its tangible action has shown that defence of human rights, particularly those of the historically marginalised peoples, is the country's priority. As an active member of the Council, Bolivia cooperates constructively with various mechanisms and undertook various roles. It assumed the Vice-Presidency of the Council; facilitated discussions on efficiency and streamlining; acted as the focal point for gender issues; and underwent the country's fourth Universal Periodic Review.



Climate crisis as part of the multidimensional crisis of the capitalist system

Today's complex world is affected by the consequences of a multidimensional crisis of the capitalist system. Food insecurity, poverty, inequality, forced displacement and the harmful effects of the climate crisis, which are compounded by irrational production systems and imperialist, neo-colonialist wars to take control of natural resources. There is a failure to respect people's self-determination by imposing economic blockades and unilateral coercive measures against the sovereign peoples in the region.

A firm commitment to the universality, interdependence and indivisibility of individual and collective human rights

Against this backdrop, states must strengthen dialogue, cooperation and solidarity to can tackle shared problems, on a path marked by a commitment to strengthening effective multilateralism. Bolivia recognises the fundamental role played by the Human Rights Council as a platform which, sheltered from all politicisation and double standards, should promote the universality, independence and indivisibility of individual and collective human rights. Bolivia's human rights policy makes fair treatment and balanced treatment of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights a priority. In particular, individual rights cannot be separated from collective rights and vice versa.

Bolivia's engagement for the rights of vulnerable groups and of Mother Earth

Bolivia has worked on promoting rights development and by ensuring a life free of violence for women and children and the full inclusion of older persons and persons with disabilities. It also made the rights of indigenous peoples and peasant communities and persons of African descent a priority, as well as those of Mother Earth. She is considered to be a rightsholder in our national legal framework. Bolivia is a state which promotes a culture of peace and firmly rejects any forms of aggression and domination.

In 2022, at the General Assembly, Bolivia raised the idea of declaring a decade of eradicating patriarchy. The aim of this is to pursue policies to eradicate violence against women, ensure their fair participation in decision-making, by challenging the patriarchal structures which still restricts their full enjoyment of rights. As a member of the UNICEF Executive Board and Vice-President for the GRULAC region, Bolivia stepped up its commitment to childhood and adolescence free from violence, exploitation and discrimination.

Action on the rights of peasants and other rural workers

At the Human Rights Council, Bolivia has been promoting the rights of peasants and other rural workers. This is another cornerstone of Bolivia's international action. In 2023, Bolivia joined Cuba, Gambia, Luxembourg, South Africa, Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia in promoting the adoption of a resolution for establishing a Working Group on the rights of peasants and other rural workers. This is a further step towards the effective



implementation of the Declaration adopted in 2018. This effort is an attempt to honour historic debt to those who, despite producing the food to feed our societies, have been systematically excluded from power structures and international protection. The Declaration on the rights of peasants and other persons who work in rural areas is a very modern, sophisticated document recognising rights and reflecting priorities such as access to basic services, the right to food, housing, a healthy environment, and combating discrimination, amongst other relevant issues for the whole world.

A firm stance in defence of IHL, migration and multilateralism

In order to close the gaps between cities and rural areas and making progress towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Bolivia rejects and denounces the harm inflicted to human beings by armed violence in different parts of the world. The genocide against the Palestinian people in the **Gaza** Strip, which is ongoing, is a brutal reminder of how urgent it is to defend international humanitarian law and to curb impunity for those who commit war crimes and crimes against humanity. Similarly, it would be remiss not to mention Bolivia's rejection of all actions and discourse that violates the rights of migrants. By rejecting any attempt to criminalise migration, Bolivia reiterates that there is a valuable contribution made by migrants to the economic, social and cultural developments of societies throughout the world. Bolivia believes in inclusive, supportive and transformative multilateralism. It invests in dialogue on equal footing and the effective closure of equality gaps and building fairer societies.

Elevating human dignity and the voice of the oppressed

This year Bolivia commemorates its bicentenary - 200 years of resistance, combating and self-determination against the structures of colonialism, neocolonialism and exclusion, which still exist in many forms. The commemoration of this milestone is the perfect occasion to reiterate Bolivia's fully commitment to a world in which human dignity prevails over inequality and oppression. Bolivia will continue to raise its voice to defend oppressed peoples, Mother Earth and a truly fair world order in which human rights are a reality and can be enjoyed by one and all.

H.E. Ms. Judith SUMINWA TULUKA, Prime Minister and Head of Government of the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

I must reflect the very grave situation to you today on behalf of H.E. Mr. Félix Tshisekedi, President of the Republic and the Congolese people.

A prompt reaction and strong support by the international community

I would like to express the DRC's gratitude to the Human Rights Council for having swiftly accepted our call for a special session and having unanimously adopted on 7 February a resolution which will allow for the establishment of a fact-finding mechanism and a commission of inquiry. This raises hope for millions of Congolese people who are still victims of the repeated aggression of Rwanda. The DRC's Government is committed to implementing the resolution



which was adopted on 7 February 2025. In particular, we will facilitate the work of the independent commission of enquiry which will be set up to document human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law in the provinces of North and South Kivu.

In the same spirit, the DRC pays tribute to the unanimous adoption of the Security Council resolution of 21 February 2025, which clearly calls upon Rwanda to leave Congolese territory and to withdraw all support to the M23 movement. The same can be said of the 13 February resolution adopted by the European Parliament which highlights the illegal exploitation of mineral resources by Rwanda. The DRC also pays homage to the resolution taken by the Commission of Peace and Security of the African Union which led to a number of recommendations being implemented to promote peace.

A human tragedy still unfolding

As there continue to be many atrocities being committed on its territory, the DRC calls for dissuasive sanctions to be imposed in order to protect millions of people living in Goma and Bukavu, which are currently under occupation. ‘We shall continue to bury our dead. We have not been able to count or identify them.’ Many of them were homeless, but their camps were destroyed by the occupying forces. The humanitarian situation in the east of our country has reached an alarming scale.

According to the Ministry of Health, since January of this year, over 7,000 people have died in the conflict. 2,500 bodies were buried without being identified and 1,500 bodies are still being held in morgues. There are several hundred cases of cholera and mpox, but they have not been cared for, so this could lead to their spreading. A number of camps have been attacked. They were housing internally displaced peoples and also hospitals have been attacked. According to the United Nations, many do not have shelter and food. Humanitarian needs are high and there are 2.8 million people who have been internally displaced in the country, particularly in the east of the country.

As a member of this Council, the DRC reiterates its commitment to pursue its efforts to promote human rights. Following the DRC’s recent fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and its appearance before the CEDAW Committee, the DRC has made a commitment to draw up a plan to implement the recommendations coming from the UPR and treaty bodies. The DRC counts on support from OHCHR for that purpose and for exchanging good practises.

During the 52nd session, the DRC reiterated its commitment to transitional justice, improving the situation of women and children, and prison conditions. These continue to be the priorities for the Government. With regard to the right to a healthy environment, the DRC has made commitments in this area. Rich in strategic minerals, forests and biodiversity, the DRC is playing its role to preserve an environmental balance.

History will severely judge our failure to put an end to armed conflicts across the globe

The distress of millions of victims of this conflict, forced conscription of children, and women being raped, cannot be described. Furthermore, journalists, human rights offenders and artists have witnessed the drama in the east of the country, but they have got a right to speak about it. As enhanced and coordinated international support is needed, the DRC calls upon the international community to strengthen its humanitarian support in order to provide more



resources so that proper care can be provided to the millions of injured and internally displaced. International humanitarian law must be respected, because this is absolutely vital in order to save lives and to alleviate the suffering of the Congolese people.

The situation of armed conflict across the world leads to human rights violations. This prevents millions of people from accessing basic rights such as access to food, water and electricity. It is not just the situation in the DRC, but also in Sudan, Haiti and Ukraine. In order to address this, the DRC is supporting the call for combating the causes of conflict and to impose peace around the world through transitional justice mechanisms and combating impunity. History will not be merciful to all of us if we fail to put an end to conflicts in the DRC and other parts of the world.

H.E. Mr. Musalia MUDAVADI, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of KENYA

At a trying moment in international relations, emerging security challenges and geopolitical flags are uniquely impacting on the phenomenon of protection of human rights globally. Notably, the incidences of war and conflict persist, leading to grave violations of human rights, as reflected in the rising cases of crimes against humanity, war crimes and even genocide. The implication is that the Council's crucial role in addressing abuses, preventing conflict, and its emphasis on the need for peace has become more important.

Blatant disregard for civilians' lives and basic rights in today's armed conflicts

Today, we are witnessing violent conflicts characterised by indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, including schools, hospitals, use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war, a rise in violent extremism, dissemination of economic livelihoods and forced displacements. In its Global Appeal 2025, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees projects that over 139 million people globally will be forcefully displaced or become stateless by the end of 2025 due to conflict. Most of these are vulnerable people from developing countries. Recent reports by UNICEF indicate nearly 47 million children are displaced due to conflict, with the numbers expected to continue increasing. The Global Organisation for the Children International reports that 1 in 11 children are being denied of their basic rights to live, learn, be protected and prosper due to violent conflict, adverse climate change and global economic instability. Today in Africa, over 2.8 million children are out of school.

The wars in Sudan, the DRC, Libya, Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine, Haiti, Myanmar are some of the notable examples of crisis, including Africa's forgotten conflicts. Kenya continues its active engagement in peace initiatives, both regional and internationally, including in the DRC, Sudan, Somalia and Haiti, among others, given the fact that sustainable peace is linked to the protection and promotion of human rights. As such, there is a compelling need to fully incorporate human rights considerations in the peace missions and general conflict resolution mechanisms.

A vocal advocate for the rights of marginalized groups and multilateralism

Kenya believes the Council's work is more vital than ever before, serving as a critical platform for addressing human rights abuses, which are often both a cause and a consequence of conflict. Kenya believes that despite significant challenges, multilateralism remains our most viable option in addressing global issues and promoting human rights. Therefore, in order to maintain its credibility and effectiveness, politicisation and selective application of standards must be



avoided. The Council should serve as a platform for constructive dialogue, impartial assessment, and collaborative action, fostering genuine progress in the global human rights landscape.

Kenya reaffirms its commitment to advocating for marginalised groups, particularly in the face of rising xenophobia, Afrophobia and racial discrimination. As the current Chair of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Durban Declaration, Kenya is dedicated to combating racism and related intolerance, welcoming the second international decade for people of African descent and its focus on reparatory justice and development. It is important to mention the 2025 AU theme of the year, Justice for Africans and the People of the African Descent Through Reparations, a clear demonstration of Africa's commitment to justice, accountability, and the recognition of historical injustices.

The urgency of tackling the climate crisis

Kenya commends the Council's crucial work in recognising the inextricable link between climate change and human rights. It acknowledges the urgent need to address environmental crisis as a recognition of the direct connection between environmental degradation and human rights abuses. Kenya will continue to champion this cause during its tenure on the Council. In this regard, it also emphasises the importance of respecting the principles enshrined in the Paris Agreement. Kenya believes that climate finance and the Loss and Damage Fund are critical and represent the bare minimum of what is necessary for a just transition and broader climate justice. We bear witness to the profound impact of climate change in worsening existing vulnerabilities, entrenching marginalisation, acting as a threat multiplier, and contributing to instability and conflict in already fragile regions. Mr. President, Kenya recognises the evolving landscape of human rights challenges in the digital age and is committed to addressing them proactively.

Access to technology as a fundamental human right

We are reviewing our 2014 National Policy and Action Plan on Human Rights to integrate emerging issues, particularly those related to technology, and bridging the digital divide. We believe the Council has a crucial role in promoting equitable access to emerging technologies, critical infrastructure, and skills necessary for full participation in the information society. We emphasise that bridging the digital divide is essential to prevent technology from worsening existing inequalities. To this end, during our tenure, Kenya aims to advocate for the recognition of access to technology as an essential component of the right to information, as enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Kenya welcomes all efforts towards ensuring that technology is accessible, affordable, and beneficial for all.

Furthermore, Kenya recognises the right to development as a crucial opportunity to foster an environment where every individual and every society can reach their full potential. Kenya will use its position in the Council to advocate for an equitable and democratic international order to serve all humanity. This includes addressing the critical issue of foreign debt and its impact on states' abilities to promote and protect human rights. The Council is uniquely positioned to provide a platform for discussing and advancing reforms in the global financial architecture to ensure greater equity.



Kenya's steadfast engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms

Kenya's strong adherence to human rights is evident by its membership in most of the key international human rights instruments. The Government remains dedicated to their full and effective implementation, which entails both regular reporting to treaty bodies and constructive engagement in dialogue with them. Additionally, Kenya is an active member of the regional human rights mechanisms, including the East Africa Community Court of Justice and Africa Charter on Human People's Rights.

Domestically, Kenya has implemented various legal, policy, judicial, and other mechanisms to safeguard the enjoyment of these rights by all citizens. In 2010, Kenya established one of the most progressive constitutions in history. Its Chapter 4 is dedicated to the Bill of Rights, which protects fundamental freedoms and rights. This Bill of Rights applies to all people and state organs without discrimination. Kenya is cognisant of the fact that corruption is a threat to human rights. Corruption often facilitates and aggravates human rights violations, particularly against vulnerable groups by hindering their access to rights and services such as legal representation and a fair trial, property rights, education, health, and social protection.

Kenya continues to strengthen institutions, legislation, regulations, and policies to fight corruption, including the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. Still, Kenya has upheld its commitment by maintaining a standing invitation for special procedures since 2015 and has consistently accepted requests and responded to recommendations subject to their respective functions. In recognition of the valuable contribution of civil society organisations, public and national human rights commissions, Kenya actively engages with them through various fora and incorporates their perspectives in its periodic reports. Kenya has extended the arc of human rights protection to vulnerable groups, including refugees, through legislation and policies such as the Shireka Plan, which is a premier refugee integration and management programme. Kenya has guaranteed the dignity and economic rights of these victims of forced displacement.

In conclusion, as a steadfast champion of the Council and its vital mechanisms, Kenya reaffirms that human rights remain the cornerstone of our shared humanity, guided by our Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the bedrock of international human rights standards. Kenya is committed to fostering a just society, both at home and globally. Kenya has set a high threshold in protecting and expanding freedom of expression, free press, upholding sanctity of life, countering all forms of violence, including gender-based violence and femicide, amongst others. Kenya's cardinal goal is to contribute to a more just, equitable, and a human rights-respecting world for all.