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Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights



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Note

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Chapter I

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [48/141](#) and contains an overview of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva and New York and in the field from 1 January to 30 June 2020.¹ It highlights activities undertaken under the thematic priorities reflected in the OHCHR management plan for 2018–2021.²
2. As at 30 June 2020, OHCHR had 87 human rights field presences worldwide. During the reporting period, the High Commissioner undertook missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Finland and Bern, Switzerland, and visited the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Austria. Following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, high-level missions were suspended.
3. The reporting period was dominated by the COVID-19 outbreak, which prompted OHCHR to adapt its activities to contribute to the global response to the pandemic and ensure that human rights remain at its centre.
4. In early 2020, Nada Al-Nashif and Ilze Brands Kehris assumed their new functions as Deputy High Commissioner and Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, respectively.
5. On 24 February, at the Human Rights Council, the Secretary-General launched a call to action for human rights³ to transform the ambitions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into real-world change on the ground, and requested OHCHR and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to co-lead its implementation. OHCHR is fully committed to ensuring the call's transformative vision by translating it into concrete action for real impact on the ground, as exemplified by bringing the United Nations system together around the Secretary-General's policy brief entitled, "COVID-19 and Human Rights: We are all in this together".

¹ The present report should be read in conjunction with the report presented by the High Commissioner to the Human Rights Council at its forty-third session ([A/HRC/43/3](#)).

² Available at www2.ohchr.org/english/OHCHRRReport2018_2021/OHCHRManagementPlan2018-2021.pdf.

³ Available at www.un.org/sg/sites/www.un.org.sg/files/atoms/files/The_Highest_Aspiration_A_Call_To_Action_For_Human_Right_English.pdf.

Chapter II

Activities of the Office of the High Commissioner

A. International human rights mechanisms

1. Treaty bodies

6. OHCHR provided substantive support to the 10 treaty bodies in fulfilling their respective mandates. It facilitated the review of State party reports, inquiries and visits, the adoption of decisions and the granting of interim measures, and provided advice on COVID-19 responses. OHCHR supported treaty bodies in adjusting their methods of work by holding online sessions to implement their mandates.

7. From 2 to 6 March 2020, OHCHR supported the eighty-fourth extraordinary session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which was held in Samoa. It was the first time a human rights treaty body convened at the regional level.

8. OHCHR supported States with regard to preparing their reports for treaty bodies, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malaysia, Namibia, the Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Thailand and Zambia. OHCHR also assisted national human rights institutions and civil society organizations in engaging with treaty bodies, including in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guinea, Mali, the Niger and Thailand.

9. OHCHR supported Member States and other relevant stakeholders in holding consultations on the 2020 review of the treaty body system following the publication of the report of Secretary-General on the status of the human rights treaty body system ([A/74/643](#)).

2. Human Rights Council

10. The forty-third session of the Human Rights Council, which was suspended on 13 March 2020, resumed on 15 June and concluded with the adoption of resolutions, ensuring the continuity of existing mandates.⁴ On 17 June, the Council held an urgent debate on current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality and violence against peaceful protests, and adopted resolution [43/1](#) on the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officials.

11. During the suspension of meetings, OHCHR supported the President and the Bureau of the Human Rights Council in organizing informal virtual discussions with the High Commissioner and special procedure mandate holders, as well as informal consultations on the President's statement on the human rights implications of COVID-19, subsequently adopted by silence procedure.

12. Contributions from States to the OHCHR-administered voluntary technical assistance trust fund to support the participation of least developed countries and small island developing States in the work of the Human Rights Council facilitated the participation of 10 delegates, including 7 women. Contributions to the trust fund also facilitated the organization of virtual induction courses for five delegates selected to participate in the forty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council.

13. OHCHR continued to support the independent commissions of inquiry on Burundi and the Syrian Arab Republic; the team of independent experts on the Kasai region, Democratic Republic of the Congo; the Commission on Human Rights in

⁴ OHCHR submitted 104 reports to the Human Rights Council at its forty-third session.

South Sudan; the independent international fact-finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; and the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen. In June 2020, OHCHR initiated steps to establish a fact-finding mission on Libya, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/39.

3. Universal periodic review

14. OHCHR continued to facilitate the review of Member States by the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. The voluntary trust fund for participation in the universal periodic review, administered by OHCHR, facilitated the participation of 10 of the 14 Member States reviewed during the reporting period.

15. As part of the third cycle of the universal periodic review, OHCHR continued to develop and roll out tools in support of Member States and other stakeholders to facilitate the follow-up to and implementation of the recommendations of the review. They included letters from the High Commissioner to foreign ministers offering support; matrices of thematically clustered recommendations linked to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals; and infographics.

16. Worldwide, OHCHR supported Governments, civil society organizations and United Nations country teams in the preparation of their State reviews and the implementation of recommendations in more than 20 countries.

4. Special procedures

17. OHCHR continued to support the work of 56 country-specific and thematic special procedures mandates. The annual report on the special procedures ([A/HRC/43/64](#), [A/HRC/40/64/Add.1](#) and [A/HRC/40/64/Add.1/Corr.1](#)) contains an overview of the activities and achievements of mandate holders. OHCHR assisted in the engagement of the special procedures system with other parts of the United Nations system with regard to supporting the implementation of the Secretary-General's priority focus on prevention, as well as the new system of resident coordinators and the peacebuilding architecture, through joint activities and workplans. The Office supported the initiatives of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures to improve the system of special procedures.

18. OHCHR supported the active engagement of special procedure mandate holders in advocating for a human rights-based approach when addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. All initiatives, including press releases, guidance, videos and reports, are available on a dedicated webpage.⁵ OHCHR also assisted mandate holders in their efforts to adapt their working methods in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Follow-up to the work of human rights mechanisms

19. OHCHR provided support to strengthen the capacities of States, United Nations country teams and civil society to implement the recommendations of human rights mechanisms, including through the treaty body capacity-building programme and its technical cooperation programme. It upgraded the Universal Human Rights Index and rolled out a national recommendations tracking database. Given the inability to hold in-person meetings due to COVID-19, OHCHR conducted several online training sessions for States, including in Botswana, Malaysia, Thailand and Uzbekistan.

20. Through the OHCHR-administered voluntary fund for financial and technical assistance in the implementation of the universal periodic review, OHCHR provided technical and follow-up assistance to States on good practices in the universal

⁵ See www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/COVID-19-and-Special-Procedures.aspx.

periodic review process, as well as follow-up tools to encourage synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

21. In 2019, the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment supported 13 prevention projects submitted by seven national preventive mechanisms and six civil society organizations in order to implement recommendations of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture in 12 States parties in Africa, the Americas and in European regions.

6. Humanitarian funds

22. The United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, both administered by OHCHR, awarded grants to 37 projects in 33 countries to support rehabilitation for victims of contemporary forms of slavery, and 171 grants to assist victims of torture in 78 States, respectively. The Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture also issued emergency grants to respond to cases occurring during human rights and humanitarian crises.

B. Development

1. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

23. To promote a rights-based implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, OHCHR supported Member States, United Nations resident coordinators and country teams and civil society in more than 30 countries worldwide. This included assistance to countries preparing to present their voluntary national reviews during the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

24. OHCHR remained actively engaged in the reform of the United Nations development system and its implementation, including through its role as co-chair of an inter-agency task team on leaving no one behind, human rights and the normative agenda under the auspices of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. In parallel, the Office strengthened its field engagement under a surge initiative to integrate human rights and economic analysis into United Nations programming, with a specific focus on inequality.

25. OHCHR developed a framework of human rights indicators for the COVID-19 crisis as part of a United Nations framework for an immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19.⁶ These indicators have been used in several countries. In addition, OHCHR contributed to integrating economic, social and cultural rights into the framework and developed tools and indicator guidance to support national counterparts, including in the following countries and areas: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Jamaica, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan and State of Palestine, as well as Kosovo.⁷ In Bangladesh, OHCHR was instrumental in the development of a United Nations programme to strengthen social protection, decent work and non-discrimination for female agricultural workers. In the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Haiti and Uganda, the Office worked with vulnerable

⁶ Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf>.

⁷ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

communities to provide them with adequate information about the pandemic to prevent and address stigmatization associated with COVID-19.

26. OHCHR continued to promote a human rights-based approach to data in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the global data compilation for the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals under its custodianship. OHCHR contributions to the international guidance on governance statistics, elaborated under the auspices of the Statistical Commission, resulted in the inclusion of a conceptual framework for human rights indicators.

2. Right to development

27. OHCHR continued its efforts to mainstream the right to development and provided support to the Working Group on the Right to Development in the elaboration of a draft legally binding instrument on the right to development.

28. The report of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner on the right to development ([A/HRC/45/21](#)) analyses the implementation of this right in least developed countries and makes recommendations related to the role of the right to development in the context of the upcoming Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. In response to COVID-19, the High Commissioner called for human rights-centred international cooperation and solidarity, including in her report on international cooperation ([A/HRC/44/28](#)).

29. With regard to operationalizing the right to development, OHCHR strengthened its partnerships through inter-agency collaboration and field presences and developed a pilot project in Guinea. Through its online module, with partners, OHCHR provided training to 101 participants from 65 countries on operationalizing the right to development when implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. OHCHR also launched an online platform for global action on the right to development.⁸

3. International financial institutions

30. The High Commissioner engaged with the leaders of several multilateral development banks to address the human rights risks of COVID-19 responses and share relevant information from the United Nations human rights system.

31. OHCHR contributed to the social and environmental policy review processes of the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and to the World Bank's draft strategy for violence, conflict and fragility. OHCHR supported the development of policies and procedures on reprisals against human rights defenders by international financial institutions. In partnership with the independent accountability mechanisms of several development finance institutions, OHCHR launched research and multi-stakeholder consultations in connection with its project on "accessing remedy in development finance".

4. Economic, social and cultural rights

32. OHCHR strengthened its partnerships with United Nations agencies and local stakeholders on the rights to education, food, health, housing, water and sanitation, decent work and land rights, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Kenya and Ukraine. OHCHR implemented seed projects to reinforce United Nations sectoral analysis and interventions on pandemic response and recovery, including in Argentina, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Kenya, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Paraguay, Peru, Serbia, Tunisia, Uganda and Uruguay, as well as in Southern and West Africa. OHCHR also contributed to the work of the United Nations

⁸ See www.facebook.com/OperationalizingRtD/.

Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, participating in joint inter-agency missions to Nigeria and the Philippines.

33. OHCHR and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in the context of their memorandum of understanding, organized a series of webinars to share experiences on the measures to address COVID-19, focusing on the social dimensions of leaving no one behind.⁹ OHCHR and the International Organization for Migration contributed to a trust-building initiative which, for the first time in over 20 years, brought together academic communities from Belgrade and Pristina to develop the first standard online Albanian-Serbian/Serbian-Albanian dictionary and online language courses. OHCHR also actively contributed to the tenth session of the World Urban Forum and supported the United Nations Human Settlements Programme with further integrating human rights into its strategic plans and priorities on inclusive cities and urbanization, paying attention to gender and the inclusion of persons with disabilities and older persons.

34. OHCHR contributed to the negotiations on voluntary guidelines on food systems and nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security.

35. OHCHR supported the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation by preparing materials for the campaign to celebrate the tenth anniversary of General Assembly resolution [64/292](#).

5. Business and human rights

36. In May 2020, OHCHR completed phase III of its accountability and remedy project and issued its final report on improving accountability and access to remedy for victims of business-related human rights abuse through non-State-based grievance mechanisms ([A/HRC/44/32](#) and [A/HRC/44/32/Add.1](#)).¹⁰

37. OHCHR continued to implement its global project on business and human rights in technology to advance the embedding of respect for human rights in business practices relating to the development and application of digital technology. It adapted its project to address the human rights concerns related to the responses of Governments and the technology industry to COVID-19.

38. OHCHR further expanded its technical assistance and advocacy with regard to business and human rights, including in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Thailand and Uganda. OHCHR also addressed human rights concerns in the context of mining by supporting mediation in Mexico and Papua New Guinea, and engaging with mining companies in Guinea and Madagascar to discuss the findings of its study on the impact of mining activities on human rights. The Office also launched a project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to address the marginalization of women in mining activities and promote their active participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

39. OHCHR provided support to the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights and convened two multi-stakeholder consultations in May and June 2020 in the lead-up to its sixth session, scheduled to take place in October 2020.

⁹ See <https://en.unesco.org/events/webinar-art-lab-human-rights-and-dialogue-special-edition>.

¹⁰ See also www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/ARP_III.aspx.

6. Environment, climate change and human rights

40. OHCHR continued to prioritize engagement on environment and climate change, including in the context of the response to the pandemic.

41. OHCHR participated in the negotiations of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. OHCHR also contributed to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change processes, spearheading a submission to the Convention on the Action for Climate Empowerment agenda that called for a rights-based approach to participation, education, capacity-building and international cooperation for climate action. OHCHR and civil society organizations jointly submitted recommendations to Mexico suggesting that it incorporate a human rights and gender approach in defining its efforts to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

42. OHCHR and the United Nations Environment Programme, in the context of their memorandum of understanding, developed joint strategic plans in Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Panama, Somalia, South Africa, Thailand and Uganda.

C. Peace and security

1. Support to peace missions

43. OHCHR supported the integration of human rights into United Nations peace operations, providing advice and operational support to the human rights components of those operations. OHCHR contributed to policy, guidance and training for United Nations peace operations, together with the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

44. The change in the operational settings of peace missions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted OHCHR to develop its work on remote human rights monitoring and investigations, including through the development of a methodological guidance, the absorption of new technology tools and the rolling out of a training programme for United Nations field presences and investigative mechanisms.

45. Together with the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, OHCHR developed *The Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*.¹¹

46. OHCHR continued to support the integration of human rights into the implementation of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative.¹²

2. Human rights due diligence and compliance frameworks

47. OHCHR contributed to strengthening the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, including in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Jordan, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka and the Sudan. It conducted technical missions to the Central African Republic, Mali, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

¹¹ Available at www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020.08-UN-CRSV-Handbook.pdf.

¹² See www.peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p-declaration-en.pdf.

48. OHCHR, together with an inter-agency review group on the human rights due diligence policy, began a study on expanding the United Nations policy on human rights due diligence beyond support to security forces. In this context, OHCHR provided technical advice to United Nations country teams on developing human rights due diligence approaches in other areas, including in relation to procurement and recruitment.

49. In accordance with Security Council resolution [2391 \(2017\)](#), OHCHR continued to support the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in the implementation of the human rights and international humanitarian law compliance framework to decrease the risk of civilian harm in the context of military and counter-terrorism operations. It assisted the Joint Force in improving standards for the selection of personnel and trained staff in international human rights law and humanitarian law. OHCHR also supported the African Union in operationalizing human rights, international humanitarian law and a conduct and discipline compliance framework for African Union peace support operations.

3. Prevention, early warning and emergency response

50. OHCHR continued to strengthen its information management and data analysis capacity to enhance its early warning, prevention, monitoring and responses. OHCHR contributed to the United Nations prevention platform, ensuring that the Organization assesses human rights risks and provides human rights-based responses.

51. OHCHR emergency response teams in the Regional Offices for Southern Africa, West Africa and South-East Asia provided assistance to United Nations country teams, Governments and civil society. In the context of COVID-19, OHCHR established a mechanism to monitor human rights concerns associated with the response of the Government of the Sudan.

52. OHCHR continued to support the rapporteurs appointed by the Human Rights Council to implement resolution [38/18](#) on the contribution of the Council to the prevention of human rights violations with regard to preparing and submitting their report ([A/HRC/43/37](#)). The rapporteurs recommended ways to strengthen system-wide coherence and cross-pillar approaches.

53. OHCHR continued to support the integration of human rights into the African Union early warning system through a project funded by the World Bank. OHCHR also initiated a partnership with the early warning system of the Economic Community of West African States.

4. Peacebuilding

54. OHCHR continued its efforts to integrate human rights into the work of the United Nations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace through the implementation of a joint workplan with the Peacebuilding Support Office for 2019–2020. With the support of the Peacebuilding Fund, of which OHCHR is the ninth recipient, it implemented peacebuilding projects in more than 10 countries. OHCHR also actively engaged in the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture, including through a series of papers on human rights and peacebuilding.¹³

5. Sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking and related exploitation

55. OHCHR continued to provide support to States, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in addressing sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking and

¹³ Available at www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/ohchr-thematic-papers.

related exploitation. For instance, under the Spotlight Initiative, OHCHR and its partners developed a COVID-19 response action plan in Mexico to strengthen support for victims of gender-based violence.

56. OHCHR continued to support prevention and accountability efforts and the protection of victims, and documented conflict-related sexual violence, including in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan (Darfur).

57. As cases of sexual and gender-based violence increased during the COVID-19 crisis, OHCHR remained actively engaged in preventing and addressing them. For instance, in May 2020, OHCHR hosted a webinar on the impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking in the Arab region.

58. OHCHR continued to engage with the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse, the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and other United Nations entities to address situations of sexual exploitation and abuse. It contributed to the holding of online consultations on legal aid for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, the mapping of services available for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse developed by the Office of the Victim's Rights Advocate, the implementation of the United Nations protocol on the provision of assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and the finalization of a United Nations policy on a human rights approach to sexual exploitation and abuse.

6. Humanitarian action

59. OHCHR engaged in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Global Protection Cluster and the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration. OHCHR participated in the results groups of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in order to promote a human rights-based approach in the areas of the humanitarian and development nexus, protection and humanitarian financing. It contributed to Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidance related to COVID-19, including on issues related to persons deprived of liberty, persons with disabilities, gender, social and public health measures in low-resource settings, and mental health.

60. OHCHR contributed to integrating human rights into humanitarian action, including in relation to COVID-19, in the Pacific region and in the following countries: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and State of Palestine. It also provided technical advice to humanitarian leadership in the Syrian Arab Republic. OHCHR conducted a mission to the Bahamas in the context of Hurricane Dorian and strengthened the capacity of national human rights institutions in South and South-East Asia when engaging in humanitarian crises.

D. Non-discrimination

1. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

61. As part of a strategy to address hate speech, OHCHR developed a programme with Global Pulse to equip United Nations field presences with experts to monitor hate speech online. OHCHR monitored instances of racial discrimination and stigmatization in the context of COVID-19, and continued its project entitled

“Overcoming hate speech in the media” in Ukraine through monitoring and building the capacities of students, journalists and human rights defenders.

62. In the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent, OHCHR organized four capacity-building webinars for 64 female leaders of African descent from 13 European countries.

63. OHCHR supported the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and 47 special procedure mandate holders in issuing a statement calling for global action and solidarity against historical and contemporary racial injustice in relation to the killing of George Floyd.¹⁴

2. Migrants

64. OHCHR contributed to efforts of the United Nations Network on Migration to support Member States in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

65. OHCHR introduced its guidance note on building human rights-based narratives on migrants and migration at the twelfth Global Forum on Migration and Development in Quito.¹⁵

66. OHCHR continued to strengthen its work to promote and protect the rights of migrants worldwide. OHCHR helped establish coordination mechanisms on migration and mainstreaming human rights in national action plans, such as those in Guinea-Bissau and the Niger.

67. In the context of COVID-19, OHCHR engaged with the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to support migrants seeking to voluntarily return to their country of origin. OHCHR advocated for the release of migrants from immigration detention and their access to health care with Member States, including Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, and with States in South-East Asia.

3. Discrimination on the basis of indigenous or minority status

68. OHCHR provided technical advice to Governments and parliaments on the integration of indigenous peoples’ rights into legislation and policies, including in Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. OHCHR promoted the inclusion of indigenous peoples in public health and humanitarian action in relation to COVID-19 in Cambodia, Guatemala and Panama, and contributed to the development of a guidance note on indigenous peoples and COVID-19 from the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous People’s Issues.¹⁶

69. OHCHR supported the establishment of a steering group on indigenous peoples in Africa to foster collaboration between the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and United Nations country teams.

70. OHCHR continued to support the work of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular through its new country engagement mandate.

71. Through the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, OHCHR supported the participation of three indigenous representatives from the Cook Islands

¹⁴ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25927&LangID=E.

¹⁵ Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/SevenKeyElements.pdf.

¹⁶ Available at www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/04/Indigenous-peoples-and-COVID_IASG_23.04.2020-EN.pdf.

and Tuvalu at the eighty-fourth extraordinary session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, held in Samoa.

4. Gender equality and women's rights

72. OHCHR continued supporting the work of women human rights defenders, including in the context of COVID-19. OHCHR was selected as one of the global leaders of the action coalition on feminist movements and leadership of the Generation Equality Forum.

73. OHCHR provided support to Member States and other stakeholders to address the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, including in Colombia, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico and Uganda, and in East Africa, the Middle East, North Africa and West Africa at the regional level. OHCHR and the African Union published an information sheet entitled "7 possible actions: women's rights and COVID-19".¹⁷

74. OHCHR continued to address gender stereotyping by the judiciary. In South Africa, OHCHR and the South African Judicial Education Institute organized a seminar for judges from Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania focusing on gender stereotypes and sexual and reproductive health and rights. In Uruguay, the Office partnered with the Centre for Judicial Studies in launching two guides on judicial gender stereotyping, which were referred to by an internal resolution of the Supreme Court.

75. In June 2020, OHCHR released an updated information series on sexual and reproductive health and rights.¹⁸

76. OHCHR launched the 2020 edition of the #IStandWithHer campaign, with a focus on harmful gender stereotypes. In addition, OHCHR rolled out its "Gender Accreditation Programme" to build the capacity of staff on gender equality and diversity in two country offices.

5. Persons with disabilities

77. In March, OHCHR organized the Human Rights Council's annual debate on the rights of persons with disabilities, focusing on the topic of awareness-raising, as set out in article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

78. OHCHR continued advocating for and providing advice to Governments, parliaments and civil society organizations on protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Montenegro. Following OHCHR advocacy, Saint Lucia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

79. In the context of COVID-19, OHCHR provided advice on the protection of persons with disabilities, encouraging their access to health care and relevant information in appropriate forms, in Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, the Republic of Moldova and the United Republic of Tanzania, among other countries.

6. Sexual orientation and gender identity

80. OHCHR continued to raise awareness of the human rights concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. It led the United Nations

¹⁷ Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/COVID-19_and_Women_Rights_7_Possible_Actions.pdf.

¹⁸ Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/Information-Series-Sexual-Reproductive-Health-Rights.aspx.

Free and Equal Campaign and raised awareness of global equality standards for LGBTI persons in the business community.

81. OHCHR continued to engage with Governments and other actors to prevent and address discrimination, hate speech and attacks against LGBTI persons, including in the context of COVID-19 in Colombia, Panama and Peru.

7. Children and youth

82. At the forty-third session of the Human Rights Council, OHCHR organized the annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming, emphasizing children's rights in the United Nations system.

83. OHCHR coordinated with other agencies on the development of a technical note on COVID-19 and children deprived of their liberty¹⁹ as well as of an agenda for action on protecting the rights of children during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁰ OHCHR partnered with the International Labour Organization and the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth to conduct a global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on the human rights of youth, with a focus on employment and education.

84. OHCHR supported the strengthening of child protection systems in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, the Niger and Senegal.

8. Older persons

85. OHCHR increased its field-based monitoring of older persons in the context of COVID-19, including in Belgium, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. In Serbia, OHCHR engaged with the State Ombudsman and the Minister for Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs to advocate for increased protection for older persons and other groups at risk.

9. Persons with albinism

86. OHCHR contributed to the development of a draft bill on the protection of persons with albinism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and has since been advocating for its adoption. In Malawi, in collaboration with its national human rights institution and other United Nations entities, OHCHR continued to monitor the situation of persons with albinism and to promote continued attention to their needs, including in the context of COVID-19.

E. Accountability

1. Transitional justice

87. On 13 February 2020, the High Commissioner gave a briefing to the Security Council during its first open debate on transitional justice, focusing on the link between transitional justice and sustaining peace.

88. OHCHR provide support in a wide range of contexts with regard to the design and implementation of inclusive, context-specific and victim-centred transitional justice processes, including in the countries and areas of Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, the Gambia, Guatemala, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, South Sudan, Sri

¹⁹ Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Detention/ChildrenDeprivedofLibertyandCOVID.pdf.

²⁰ Available at violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/2020/agenda_for_action/agenda_iawg_on_vac_27_april_ready_for_launch.pdf.

Lanka, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and the Western Balkans, as well as Kosovo.

89. In the Gambia, OHCHR facilitated the work of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, which conducted 12 public hearings and received more than 1,000 statements. The Office assisted the National Commission for the Search of Disappeared Persons during the armed conflict in El Salvador, and in Mexico it provided assistance for the creation of an extraordinary mechanism for forensic identification. In Sri Lanka, OHCHR supported the Office on Missing Persons. OHCHR provided technical support for the creation of a transitional justice commission and a new national human rights commission in the Sudan, and conducted capacity-building activities for judges of the Specialized Criminal Chambers and advocated for the dissemination of the report of the Truth and Dignity Commission in Tunisia.

2. Death penalty

90. OHCHR continued to advocate with States for the establishment or maintenance of moratoriums on the use of the death penalty, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [73/175](#), and for the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, including in: Bahrain, Egypt, Gambia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, United States of America and Yemen. In Chad, OHCHR advocacy contributed to the abolition of the death penalty under anti-terrorism legislation.

3. Counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism

91. OHCHR continued to provide technical support to Member States with regard to aligning their counter-terrorism legislation, policies and practices with international human rights law, taking into account pillar IV of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/288](#).

92. In May 2020, the High Commissioner addressed the Office of Counter-Terrorism's town hall meeting, expressing concern that heavy-handed responses from Member States to the COVID-19 crisis, including measures that fuel grievances, could potentially strengthen terrorist organizations.²¹

93. OHCHR contributed to the development and finalization of a global framework on the protection, repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of third country nationals in camps in the north-east area of the Syrian Arab Republic and in Iraq.

94. OHCHR participated in United Nations-led conferences on counter-terrorism, including the Joint Regional High-level Conference on "Foreign Terrorist Fighters – Addressing Current Challenges", convened by OSCE, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Switzerland in February 2020.

95. In January 2020, OHCHR and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq released a report on trials under the anti-terrorism laws and their implications for justice, accountability and social cohesion in the aftermath of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.²² In the context of the human rights compliance framework for the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, OHCHR supported the establishment of informal protection networks to improve the relations between the population and national defence and security forces.

²¹ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25915&LangID=E.

²² Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/IQ/UNAMI_Report_HRAAdministrationJustice_Iraq_28January2020.pdf.

4. Administration of justice and law enforcement

96. On 13 May 2020, the High Commissioner, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Executive Directors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime issued a joint policy statement on the impact of COVID-19 in prisons and other closed settings.²³ OHCHR collaborated with WHO to develop interim guidance on COVID-19 and detention, issued by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.²⁴

97. OHCHR monitored the impact of the application of emergency measures in response to COVID-19. It provided support, including guidance, training sessions and virtual briefings, to Member States and law enforcement institutions, including in: Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Fiji, Honduras, Kenya, Maldives, South Africa, Uganda, Uruguay, Timor-Leste and Zambia. In Angola, human rights guidance is being rolled out to 5,000 law enforcement and other security officials.

98. To limit the spread of COVID-19, OHCHR actively, and often successfully, engaged with more than 30 Member States as it sought for the release of certain categories of prisoners. OHCHR advocacy also led to the adoption of a federal amnesty law to reduce overcrowding in prisons in Mexico.

99. Through technical assistance, OHCHR supported accountable and human rights-based national law enforcement and criminal justice institutions worldwide. In Kenya, OHCHR supported the creation of a task force, comprising the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Independent Policing Oversight Authority and the National Police Service, to coordinate efforts to investigate and prosecute serious human rights violations.

5. Human rights and drug policy

100. At the sixty-third session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, OHCHR engaged with Member States and other stakeholders to advocate for the development and implementation of drug policies pursuant to the international guidelines on human rights and drug policy.

101. Together with 12 other United Nations agencies, OHCHR issued a joint a statement on compulsory drug detention and rehabilitation centres in Asia and the Pacific in the context of COVID-19, urging States to permanently close these centres, implement voluntary health and social services to curb the spread of COVID-19 and facilitate the reintegration of those in the centres into their families and communities.²⁵

F. Participation

1. Enhancing and protecting civic space and people's participation

102. OHCHR continued to advocate for the promotion and expansion of civic space and meaningful participation. This included support for the participation of civil society organizations in constitution drafting and revision processes, such as in the Gambia, Guinea and Samoa, and the establishment and strengthening of civil society

²³ See www.who.int/news-room/detail/13-05-2020-unodc-who-unaid-and-ohchr-joint-statement-on-covid-19-in-prisons-and-other-closed-settings.

²⁴ Available at interagencystandingcommittee.org/other/iase-interim-guidance-covid-19-focus-persons-deprived-their-liberty-developed-ohchr-and-who.

²⁵ See unaidsapnew.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/unjointstatement1june2020.pdf.

platforms in countries and areas, including in Chad, Chile, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Peru, the Republic of Moldova and the State of Palestine, as well as across Kosovo.

103. OHCHR supported Member States in ensuring civic participation in the development and implementation of responses to COVID-19, including in Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and the State of Palestine. It provided guidance to United Nations country teams in Botswana, Eswatini, Honduras, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe on legislation related to COVID-19 to prevent undue restrictions on freedom of expression and other rights. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, advice from OHCHR contributed to the removal of provisions that limited freedom of expression from its emergency decree.

104. OHCHR continued to address acts of intimidation and reprisals against those who cooperate with the United Nations on human rights, including through the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.²⁶ Efforts are under way to enhance capacities to prevent and address intimidation and reprisals in relation to the Security Council and its mechanisms.

105. OHCHR advocated for the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of protests, including in Hong Kong, China; Lebanon; and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

106. OHCHR continued to advocate for the protection of human rights defenders across the world. In Burkina Faso, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and under the leadership of the national human rights institution, OHCHR facilitated the establishment of a protection network for human rights defenders, particularly those operating in the Sahel and other regions affected by the armed conflict. In Colombia, the Office promoted the exchange of experiences and good practices and created channels of communication between human rights defenders and State institutions. In Guatemala, OHCHR contributed to the elaboration of a public policy on human rights defenders.

107. In January 2020, OHCHR organized global online consultations with civil society organizations from around the world to further inform United Nations efforts to develop a system-wide strategy on civic space.

108. OHCHR continued to support relevant special procedure mandate holders in advocating for expanding civic space and protecting the fundamental freedoms of human rights defenders and civil society actors.

2. Electoral processes

109. OHCHR monitored human rights in electoral contexts, and conducted related advocacy for peaceful, inclusive and credible elections, including in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guyana, Malawi and Mali. OHCHR also supported national human rights institutions and civil society with human rights monitoring in the context of elections in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Mali.

3. Support to national human rights institutions and regional mechanisms

110. OHCHR continued to assist Member States in establishing or strengthening national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles, providing related legal advice to States and strengthening the capacity of national human rights

²⁶ The senior official designated to lead efforts within the United Nations system, the Assistant Secretary-General continued to engage with States, including by collecting information on good practices to address reprisals.

institutions, including in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Congo, Haiti, Guinea, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mongolia, Serbia and Tunisia.

111. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [34/17](#), OHCHR continued to host a fellowship programme for staff from regional human rights mechanisms to enhance their capacity and strengthen cooperation. As of the time of writing, OHCHR is hosting three fellows from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the East African Court of Justice and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

4. Human rights education

112. In the context of the fourth phase (2020–2024) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, OHCHR continued to develop and disseminate guidance on good practices. In Madagascar, OHCHR cooperated with the University of Antananarivo for the creation of a human rights master’s programme. In partnership with Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education, OHCHR published French editions of its *Manual on Human Rights Training Methodology and of Evaluating the Impact of Human Rights Training: Guidance on Developing Indicators*.

5. Digital space

113. OHCHR advocated with Member States, cities and technology companies for rights-based approaches to the development and deployment of digital surveillance tools and methodologies to respond to COVID-19. In Doha in February 2020, OHCHR co-organized, with the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, the European Parliament and the International Federation of Journalists, a conference on online civic space in order to reflect on more effective responses to Internet shutdowns, online threats, surveillance and other restrictions.

114. In May, OHCHR held an expert seminar to discuss how artificial intelligence without proper safeguards can affect the enjoyment of the right to privacy, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [42/15](#).

115. OHCHR co-led multi-stakeholder discussions on human rights and human agency in the follow-up to the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation entitled “The age of digital interdependence”. The outcomes of that report informed the formulation of the Secretary-General’s Road Map for Digital Cooperation, including a call to OHCHR to develop system-wide guidance on human rights due diligence and impact assessments.

116. OHCHR co-led the data protection and privacy work with regard to the development of the Secretary-General’s data strategy.

117. OHCHR conducted bilateral consultations with 15 technology companies to assess policies, practices and challenges related to the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in the technology sector.

Chapter III

Management and administration

118. Under the leadership of the Deputy High Commissioner, OHCHR established a COVID-19 programme coordination team in charge of developing OHCHR strategy, which integrates field response, thematic and mechanisms work and ensures effective engagement and advocacy across the United Nations system. OHCHR also co-led, with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the drafting of the Secretary-General's policy brief on COVID-19 and human rights, and contributed to several other policy briefs of the Secretary-General on COVID-19.

119. As part of the shift to remote human rights monitoring and investigations, the Office and its stakeholders have experienced an increase in cyberattacks. As a result, OHCHR has implemented a series of cybersecurity training workshops for human rights staff across its presences.

120. With a view to building back better from COVID-19, OHCHR renewed its commitment to environmental sustainability practices and is developing an organizational effectiveness action plan on sustainable environmental practices.

121. Building on its knowledge management work, OHCHR created new online communities of practice and discussion spaces and organized outreach activities, including webinars at the global, regional and country levels, to engage partners.

122. OHCHR initiated a corporate process to develop a risk management plan as a follow-up to the assessment of the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network and the independent results-based management evaluation commissioned by OHCHR.

Chapter IV

Conclusions

123. OHCHR, and the entire United Nations system, have had to face increasing and unexpected challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic unfolded and gathered pace globally, with countries struggling to cope with its consequences – whether politically or due to limited medical, social and economic capacity. The public health crisis fast became both an economic and social crisis and a protection and human rights crisis.²⁷ Therefore, any effective recovery efforts, in policy, law and action, must address the inequalities and protection gaps that have made societies so vulnerable and that violate human rights.

124. Particularly in the poorest countries in the world, the high toll of death and medical harms, the massive loss of jobs, especially in the informal economy, the disruptions to education, rising food prices and deepening poverty are likely to drive tens of millions of people into extreme poverty for years to come. A decade or more of development gains could be lost. Joint action and enhanced multilateralism that places human rights at the centre of the response and recovery will be critical in order to reverse course and build back better. The Secretary-General's call to action for human rights is a unique opportunity for the United Nations system, Member States and key partners such as civil society to advance human rights protection globally, and presents a framework for such a collaborative approach.²⁸ The Secretary-General's policy brief on COVID-19 and human rights exemplifies the strength and importance of partnership and collective ownership with regard to human rights among United Nations entities that the call embodies, while drawing on its diverse expertise and experience.

125. OHCHR has witnessed the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on specific groups. Disaggregated data indicates that members of racial and ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples are both more likely to die of COVID-19 and are hit the hardest by its socioeconomic consequences.²⁹ COVID-19 has also aggravated the exclusion and discrimination suffered by women and girls: their lack of social protection, which stems from their concentration in informal, low-status and low-paid jobs; their burden of care for children and the elderly; and their continued exclusion from decision-making. Older people are suffering the highest death tolls and worst medical harms, while persons with disabilities have been denied vital services.

126. As the COVID-19 crisis deepens – challenging societies, economies and institutions in every region – the work by human rights components to support peace operations in the delivery of their mandate, and to address root causes of conflict and instability, is becoming even more crucial.

127. During this period, OHCHR has responded by embedding civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in the responses of States, United Nations partners, civil society and the private sector. This included addressing the impact of COVID-19 on economic and social rights – including issues related to national debt burdens. From a resource perspective, OHCHR continues to make the best use of its limited resources from all funding sources, and the pandemic has shown that it is adept in this regard. There has been a remarkable synergy between the

²⁷ See www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief_on_human_rights_and_covid_23_april_2020.pdf, p. 2.

²⁸ See www.un.org/sg/sites/www.un.org.sg/files/atoms/files/The_Highest_Aspiration_A_Call_To_Action_For_Human_Rights_English.pdf.

²⁹ See www.ohchr.org/FR/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26015&LangID=F.

human rights concerns exposed by COVID-19 and the existing OHCHR work streams.

128. To facilitate effective norm-based responses to the pandemic, the Office has issued detailed guidance notes regarding emergency measures, preserving civic space, detention, indigenous peoples, migrants, minorities, women, racial discrimination, LGBTI persons, older people and persons with disabilities.³⁰ These guidance notes are being used as reference documents by States, United Nations partners, national human rights institutions and civil society actors.

129. OHCHR has also undertaken targeted advocacy on specific egregious human rights concerns in the context of the pandemic. This includes the impact of conditions in places of detention, emergency measures, media clampdowns, lockdowns and racial discrimination. On several occasions, the High Commissioner has called for the easing or suspension of sectoral sanctions in order to ensure that medical care and aid is accessible to all. The High Commissioner has also reaffirmed her strong support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire to enable effective action to combat the pandemic.

130. During the reporting period, the monitoring and reporting work of OHCHR field presences, including human rights components in peace operations, has encompassed an assessment of the effectiveness and enforcement of COVID-19 containment measures; the identification of the pandemic's impact on vulnerable groups – particularly internally displaced people, refugees and women; and an analysis of its impact on specific economic, social and cultural rights. The monitoring of increases in stigmatization, discrimination and hate speech related to the pandemic, as well as of conflict-related violations, has been essential to efforts to highlight, address and prevent further human rights violations.

131. Together with the United Nations system, the Office developed a framework of 10 human rights indicators – building on the data frameworks of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 – to enable clarity with regard to identifying especially hard-hit and vulnerable groups, and to assist the implementation of effective policies to avert these harms. These key indicators have been appended to the United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19.³¹

132. In addition, OHCHR, the Development Coordination Office of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and UNDP jointly developed a human rights-based approach checklist. Consistent with the Secretary-General's policy brief on COVID-19 and human rights, the objective of the checklist is to provide initial guidance to help the United Nations when examining whether socioeconomic impact assessments, responses and recovery plans apply a human rights-based approach and ensure that no one will be left behind.³²

133. OHCHR has also been collecting and sharing examples of good and mitigating human rights practices demonstrated by States when responding to the COVID-19 crisis, encouraging the replication of similar measures in other countries.

³⁰ All guidance notes are available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx.

³¹ See <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf>, annex 1.

³² Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/COVID-19/Checklist_HR-Based_Approach_Socio-Economic_Country_Responses_COVID-19.pdf.

134. The impacts of COVID-19 have been magnified by decades of underinvestment in public services, the rolling back of social protections and the deep inequalities that characterize societies. The COVID-19 crisis has shown the relevance and importance of the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development grounded in a human rights agenda.

135. If more progress had been made with regard to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals – for example by ensuring universal health care and social protection – then countries and societies would have been far more resilient to the impacts of this crisis, and many unnecessary deaths could have been averted, particularly for people of colour and other groups who have disproportionately suffered. This is a lesson that the world must take into account, as Governments and the United Nations shift into a recovery mode.

136. Countries should not take a short-term perspective, but must make sure that COVID-19 responses and recovery measures contribute to the longer-term objectives of the 2030 Agenda so that they build back better and make consistent progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including by prioritizing the Goals to reduce inequalities and increase public spending on health care and social protection for all, while also taking into account the emphasis of Goal 16 on governance, transparency and participation for more effective, inclusive and human rights-based responses.

