



Human Rights Council**Fifty-fourth session**

11 September–13 October 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 12 October 2023****54/22. Promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights within
the context of addressing inequalities***The Human Rights Council,**Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,**Recalling* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and all other relevant international human rights treaties,*Recalling also* the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Declaration on the Right to Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, as well as the political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly,*Reaffirming* that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and recognizing that all human rights derive from the dignity and worth inherent in the human person,*Reaffirming also* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,*Recalling* its resolution 49/19 of 1 April 2022, and welcoming the three-day workshop on promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities in the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, convened by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 6 to 8 February 2023,*Taking note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on his vision of the Office for reinforcing its work in promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities in the recovery from

the COVID-19 pandemic, submitted to the Human Rights Council pursuant to its resolution 49/19,¹

Recognizing that the full, equal and effective enjoyment and realization of economic, social and cultural rights, exercised without discrimination of any kind, contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 10, on reducing inequalities within and among countries, and ensuring that no one is left behind,

Recognizing also that inequalities and discrimination affect the enjoyment and realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, and are inconsistent with the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,

Recognizing further that the 2030 Agenda covers a wide range of issues relating to economic, social and cultural rights and contains the commitment to leaving no one behind and that its implementation contributes to the further realization of economic, social and cultural rights, and welcoming international, regional and national initiatives to this end,

Deeply concerned about the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a wide range of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and the rights of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, safe drinking water and sanitation, social security, education and work, which has shone a light on the structural consequences of decades of underfunded or dismantled public services and policies related to economic, social and cultural rights,

Noting with concern the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on States' implementation of their human rights obligations, as well as of their voluntary pledges and commitments in some areas, in particular those related to economic, social and cultural rights, which could affect progress on addressing inequalities, including gender inequality, systemic discrimination and the needs of persons in vulnerable situations, including persons affected by armed conflict,

Recalling the obligations and commitments of States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of their available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights without discrimination of any kind, by all appropriate means, in particular the adoption of legislative measures,

Reaffirming that the existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full, equal and effective enjoyment of human rights, that its immediate alleviation and eventual eradication must remain a high priority for the international community and that efforts towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1 should be strengthened, including urgent and immediate measures on addressing homelessness,

Recognizing that the establishment of nationally defined social protection floors is a key path to facilitating the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and that social protection floors, when used as a baseline, have the potential to reduce poverty and inequality, including gender inequality, by promoting basic income security, decent work, equal pay for work of equal value and universal access to health care and basic services,

Recognizing also the contribution of human rights education and training to the promotion of inclusive and tolerant societies, where everyone learns tolerance and respect for the dignity of others and diversity of culture and religion or belief, thereby favouring the realization of economic, social and cultural rights,

Recalling that urgent action is needed to ensure respect for and the protection and fulfilment of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, and to deliver the goals of the 2030 Agenda to build a better future for all, in particular the provision of

¹ A/HRC/54/35.

technical assistance and capacity-building to developing and least developed States, at their request,

Recognizing that the primary responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling all human rights rests with States, and that international cooperation for development and for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights requires the active commitment of all, including Governments, international organizations, civil society and academia,

Stressing that a reformed international financial architecture could help to advance the rights and vital interests of people by supporting the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, in particular target 6 of Sustainable Development Goal 10 to ensure enhanced representation of and a voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions,

Emphasizing the important role and contribution of national stakeholders, including national human rights institutions, national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, and civil society for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities,

Acknowledging the active contribution of international human rights mechanisms, including the universal periodic review, the Human Rights Council, the Office of the High Commissioner and relevant treaty bodies and special procedures of the Council, in accordance with their respective mandates, in mobilizing international solidarity and assistance to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights, and address inequalities,

Recalling that the Office of the High Commissioner is mandated, inter alia, to promote and protect the effective enjoyment by all of economic, social and cultural rights, and to provide advisory services and technical and financial assistance, at the request of the State concerned and, where appropriate, regional human rights organizations, with a view to supporting actions and programmes in the field of human rights,

Gravely concerned that the Office of the High Commissioner faces significant gaps in terms of capacity and resources for its operations at the country and regional levels, and at headquarters, in order to support States to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights,

Recognizing that the Office of the High Commissioner, including its field offices, needs more financial and human resources provided by the regular budget to bridge the substantial resource gap so as to carry out its mandated activities to promote and protect the effective enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and to address inequalities,

Recalling that the High Commissioner shall be guided by the recognition that all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that, while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

1. *Stresses* the importance of respecting, protecting and fulfilling economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities, including within and among States, as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals;

2. *Emphasizes* that States, in fulfilling economic, social and cultural rights, should provide adequate investments, in accordance with the national legislation of each State and its international human rights obligations, in public health systems, education, social protection, decent work, housing, food, water and sanitation systems, including to respond effectively to global challenges;

3. *Also emphasizes* that States need to enhance their ongoing efforts in order to create conditions conducive to the enjoyment and realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including by mobilizing resources towards the full, equal and effective enjoyment of these rights by persons in marginalized or vulnerable situations;

4. *Encourages* States that have not yet signed, ratified or acceded to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to consider doing so, and encourages all States to implement relevant Human Rights Council resolutions on economic, social and cultural rights;

5. *Encourages* the identification of the root causes of discrimination, in particular in the context of multiple and aggravated forms of discrimination, and the adoption of measures necessary to combat discrimination and inequalities, inter alia, poverty alleviation, homelessness elimination, human rights education and social protection;

6. *Stresses* that it is essential to scale up international cooperation to support developing and least developed countries and persons in marginalized and vulnerable situations, who are disproportionately bearing the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic, to ensure that the global response and recovery efforts are based on unity, solidarity, multilateral cooperation and the principle of leaving no one behind;

7. *Encourages* international financial institutions to continue to support States, in particular developing countries, and, when doing so, to take into consideration the prioritization of social spending and the enhancement of States' fiscal space, while engaging collaboratively in terms of international assistance and cooperation, all of which contribute to the realization of economic, social and cultural rights;

8. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, the United Nations development system, international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to take into consideration the needs of States, especially in developing and least developed countries, to fulfil their responsibilities to better promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights, address inequalities and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

9. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner, in accordance with its mandate, to continue to guide its work and set its priorities on economic, social and cultural rights, taking into consideration relevant resolutions and decisions of the Human Rights Council, with due regard to achieving international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights;

10. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to enhance its work, within its mandate, in the field of economic, social and cultural rights, in order to effectively assist all countries in promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights and addressing inequalities;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to scale up the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner through additional regular budget-funded posts to enhance the work of the Office at headquarters, with due regard to gender balance and equitable geographical representation, in accordance with its mandate in the field of the economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

12. *Decides* to convene a panel discussion, with gender balance and equitable geographical representation, on the reinforcement of the work to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities, including the work of the Office of the High Commissioner and other international human rights mechanisms in this regard, at the fifty-seventh session of the Human Rights Council, and to invite Member States, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international and regional organizations, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders to share achievements, challenges and best practices and to identify ways in which the Office can best contribute to the efforts of States to respect, promote and fulfil economic, social and cultural rights, in accordance with its mandate, including the possibility of enhancing the capacity of the Office at the regional level to better provide advisory services and technical and financial assistance;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the panel discussion with all the resources necessary for services and facilities;

14. *Requests* the High Commissioner to prepare a summary report on the panel discussion and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its sixtieth session, followed by an interactive dialogue;

15. *Also requests* the High Commissioner to establish a knowledge hub at headquarters, to be dedicated to technical assistance and capacity-building, to consolidate best practices and know-how in promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights within the context of addressing inequalities, with the support of the Office of High Commissioner in the process of enhancing its capacity in the field of economic, social and cultural rights, and make the knowledge hub available to Member States and relevant stakeholders in a user-friendly manner;

16. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter and to consider taking further action in order to implement the present resolution.

*48th meeting
12 October 2023*

[Adopted without a vote.]
