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Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Implementation and enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Summary

Against the backdrop of one of the biggest global crises the world has seen since the founding of the United Nations, the General Assembly, in its resolution 75/1 in which it adopted the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, requested the Secretary-General to report back to it with recommendations to advance Member States' common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges. The present report contains an overview of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in implementing and enhancing international cooperation in the field of human rights, in view of the Secretary-General's profound reflection process on the future of more networked, inclusive and effective multilateralism. Building towards a more equitable and resilient recovery and in the spirit of the Secretary-General's vision, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights calls for revitalized, inclusive, networked and effective multilateral responses guided by international solidarity, human rights and gender equality, environmental sustainability and accountability to transform the promise of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into real-world change on the ground. Realization of the pledge to leave no one behind must be grounded in the fulfilment of human rights obligations, which provide pathways to lasting peace and sustainable development.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 44/18 of 17 July 2020, the Human Rights Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the implementation and enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights, and to propose possible ways to face the challenges to the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development.

II. COVID-19, the United Nations at 75 and building forward together¹

2. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic proves yet again that humanity is interdependent and global challenges are interconnected, thus making international cooperation both urgent and imperative, especially in the field of human rights. As the Secretary-General has recalled, “more than ever before, we need solidarity, hope and the political will and cooperation to see this crisis through together”.² Under his stewardship, the United Nations has issued several policy briefs guiding the response, including on COVID-19 and its socioeconomic impact, a framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19,³ debt,⁴ a comprehensive response to COVID-19,⁵ and universal health coverage.⁶ As emphasized in the United Nations report “COVID-19 and human rights: we are all in this together”, human rights are key to shaping the response to the pandemic and its aftermath, as they put people at the centre, resulting in better outcomes.⁷ By focusing on who is suffering most, why and how to respond, human rights entail key elements for a recovery with resilience and prevention strategies for the future, including our responsibilities to future generations.

3. In his Nelson Mandela Lecture, in July 2020, and in his address to the World Economic Forum at Davos in January 2021, the Secretary-General highlighted the generational opportunity created by the pandemic to embark on a new social contract and a new global deal – that is, a new model for global governance – in responding to COVID-19 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which all address the failures exposed, exploited and exacerbated by the pandemic.⁸ Against the backdrop of increased global demands for greater equality, justice and inclusion, the Secretary-General’s vision calls for a renewal of the fundamental bond of trust between people and institutions, which underpins the social contract. Reinstating trust in global institutions will require greater global solidarity and more inclusive, effective and networked multilateral approaches that contribute to more responsive global governance structures.

¹ Section II builds on A/HRC/44/28, sections III (international cooperation and the normative framework of human rights) and IV (policy frameworks and new and emerging opportunities).

² United Nations, “Shared responsibility, global solidarity: responding to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19”, March 2020. Available at www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_report_socio-economic_impact_of_covid19.pdf.

³ See <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-toCOVID-19.pdf>.

⁴ See www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief_on_debt_relief_and_covid_april_2020.pdf and www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_liquidity_and_debt_solutions_march_2021.pdf.

⁵ See www.un.org/pga/75/wp-content/uploads/sites/100/2020/10/un_comprehensive_response_to_covid.pdf.

⁶ See https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/SG-Policy-Brief-on-Universal-Health-Coverage_English.pdf.

⁷ See www.un.org/ruleoflaw/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/UN-SG-Policy-Brief-Human-Rights-and-COVID-23-April-2020.pdf.

⁸ See www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_remarks_on_covid_and_inequality.pdf and www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2021-01-25/special-address-davos-agenda.

4. In their declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, Member States renewed their commitment to leave no one behind, protect the planet, promote peace and prevent conflicts, abide by international law and ensure justice, place women and girls at the centre, build trust, improve digital cooperation, upgrade the United Nations, ensure sustainable financing, boost partnerships, listen to and work with youth, and be prepared.⁹

5. In the declaration, Member States noted that while no one had been left untouched by the pandemic, people in vulnerable situations and the most vulnerable countries had been the hardest hit. Member States further noted that they were only as strong as their weakest link, and that only by working together and in solidarity could they end the pandemic and effectively tackle its consequences and build resilience against future pandemics and other global challenges. Recognizing that strengthening international cooperation was in the interest of both nations and peoples, they requested the Secretary-General to report back to the General Assembly with recommendations to advance their common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges, and committed to take the declaration to their citizens in the true spirit of “We the peoples”. The report on the common agenda will be presented prior to the conclusion of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly in September 2021.

6. The Secretary-General has noted that humanity has reached a moment of truth.¹⁰ In moving from fragility to resilience as the world heals from the pandemic, it is vital to work together to overcome obstacles to progress, through dialogue, collaboration and a reinvigorated, inclusive, effective and networked multilateralism. Demonstrations for racial justice, in which people worldwide are claiming their rights and standing up for future generations, illustrate a new movement of solidarity that rejects inequality and division and unites young people, civil society, the private sector, cities, regions and others behind policies for peace, the planet, justice and human rights for all.¹¹

7. In “The highest aspiration: a call to action for human rights”, the Secretary-General emphasized the centrality of human rights to collective action to respond effectively to the multiple crises facing humanity, and identified seven specific areas for action: rights at the core of sustainable development; rights in times of crisis; gender equality and equal rights for women; public participation and civic space; rights of future generations, especially climate justice; rights at the heart of collective action; and new frontiers of human rights, on ensuring a safe digital world. In building forward together, the enduring challenge is to transform the promise of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into real-world change on the ground.¹²

8. In its 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, the General Assembly noted the importance of the contribution of the United Nations development system with the aim of supporting government efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, leaving no one behind, based on full respect for human rights, including the right to development, and stressed that all human rights were universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.¹³ It called upon the entities of the system, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, to achieve and work towards building back better and a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery which was people-centred and gender-sensitive, respected human rights, had a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind, protected the planet and achieved prosperity and universal health coverage by 2030.¹⁴ It also called upon them to assist Governments in their efforts to respect and fulfil their human rights obligations and

⁹ General Assembly resolution 75/1.

¹⁰ See www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2021-01-25/special-address-davos-agenda.

¹¹ See www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_remarks_on_covid_and_inequality.pdf.

¹² See www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-02-24/secretary-generals-general-assembly-briefing-the-call-action-for-human-rights-bilingual-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english-version.

¹³ General Assembly resolution 75/233, para. 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 27 (a).

commitments under international law, as a critical tool to operationalize the pledge to leave no one behind.¹⁵

III. Implementation and enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights

A. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

9. At the global level, the High Commissioner amplified her voice following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic on the need to strengthen international cooperation to safeguard human rights.¹⁶ For example, in April 2020, she emphasized that COVID-19 had clarified the need to increase efforts to ensure that all people, including the most vulnerable, benefited from development.¹⁷ She called urgently for debt relief and financial and technical international support, and for the easing of sanctions to enable medical systems to fight the pandemic and limit global contagion.¹⁸ In May 2020, she supported the solidarity call to action of the World Health Organization (WHO), for equitable access to COVID-19 health technologies through the pooling of knowledge, intellectual property and data.¹⁹ WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and OHCHR also issued a joint appeal for open science, the sharing of scientific knowledge.²⁰ The High Commissioner stressed the need for equitable access to COVID-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines and called upon creditors of African countries to freeze, restructure or relieve debt.²¹ In a webinar with the President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in June 2020, she emphasized that the unequal impact of COVID-19 called for structural social change and collaborative and coordinated action with a key role for multilateral institutions. Echoing the Secretary-General's call for a new social contract, she highlighted the need for universal social protection floors and basic social security to ensure access to health, education and basic income, and the need to transition to a more resource-efficient, green and circular economy to address the climate crisis.

10. OHCHR enhanced its cooperation with Member States, United Nations agencies, resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, national human rights institutions and civil society to provide advice on human rights-based responses to COVID-19. It produced guidance on several related human rights issues, including key messages on access to vaccines.²² In its guidance package on economic, social and cultural rights, OHCHR recommended, *inter alia*, that States allocate adequate resources, including through international cooperation, to meet minimum core obligations; cooperate for the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines within and between countries; and increase budget allocations for emergency measures to ensure education for all without discrimination. In her forthcoming report on the impact of COVID-19 on economic, social and cultural rights, the High Commissioner will note that the pandemic has highlighted the importance of international cooperation in the health sector and that States should use their maximum available resources, including through international cooperation, to progressively achieve a universal social protection system.

11. Through its Surge Initiative supported by a team of macroeconomists, OHCHR analysed international and national economic policies and measures, particularly in relation to those furthest behind, in collaboration with national human rights institutions, grass-roots actors and disadvantaged groups. The Surge Initiative team engaged with all OHCHR field presences and substantively supported the Development Coordination Office by organizing

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 28.

¹⁶ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx.

¹⁷ See www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=25785.

¹⁸ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25833 and www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25744.

¹⁹ See www.who.int/initiatives/covid-19-technology-access-pool/solidarity-call-to-action.

²⁰ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/Open-Science-Appeal.aspx.

²¹ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25898.

²² See www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/COVID-19_AccessVaccines_Guidance.pdf.

a workshop for resident coordinators and country teams on good practices in advancing human rights and leaving no one behind. In support of the Development Coordination Office and the country teams, OHCHR played a key role in reviewing the integration of human rights into socioeconomic response plans for 109 countries. It cooperated with civil society organizations on an evidence-based analysis on persons and groups in vulnerable situations in several countries, such as Serbia, which enabled the collection of information in 702 informal settlements.

12. Inspired by Hernán Santa Cruz, one of the architects of the United Nations human rights system who advanced socioeconomic rights in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, OHCHR launched a new dialogue series in October 2020 with an event in the Sudan, followed by another in April 2021 in Ukraine, both on the theme of social protection, and in collaboration with partners. Aimed at enabling forward-looking dialogue on economic, social and cultural rights, the right to development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development around current challenges in local settings, the dialogue series provides a platform to engage people worldwide, amplify their voices and empower them to become agents of change.²³

13. In response to COVID-19, OHCHR stepped up efforts to mainstream the right to development, including through inter-agency collaboration and support for field presences, contributions to policy guidance and engagement in global and regional dialogues with multiple stakeholders. It organized the first Human Rights Council biennial panel discussion on the right to development, in September 2020, on the theme “COVID-19 and the right to development: we are all in this together”;²⁴ the 2020 Social Forum, in October 2020, which recommended bold action in the fight against poverty and inequality, including through macroeconomic policies embedded in human rights at all levels and coordinated global action;²⁵ and the first meeting of the Human Rights Council on mutually beneficial cooperation, in March 2021, on the theme of the role of poverty alleviation in promoting and protecting human rights.²⁶ Jointly with partners, OHCHR delivered training on operationalizing the right to development to 214 participants from 83 countries, taking the total number trained to 520 participants from 135 countries. It also launched an interactive platform on building better policies and sharing good practices on the right to development. OHCHR completed thematic studies on equitable access to renewable energy and on transfer of environmentally sustainable technology, in the context of realizing the right to development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in a climate-constrained world.

14. OHCHR collaborated with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, proposing input to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on possible ways to overcome the challenges to the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development, through the enhancement of international cooperation. The Secretary-General and the High Commissioner drew attention to the statement by the Group of Least Developed Countries calling for a global stimulus package to address the burgeoning challenges of COVID-19.²⁷ Using human rights indicators and data, OHCHR delivered a workshop and retreat for the Office of the High Representative to improve human rights analysis in reporting in these countries.

15. In July and September 2020, OHCHR convened regional consultations with development finance institutions and their accountability mechanisms from the Asian, European and African regions in relation to its project on accessing remedy in development finance. The project will feed into the accountability review processes of development finance institutions. It also contributed to the processes of revising the safeguard and reprisals policies of the IDB Group, the International Finance Corporation and the Asian Infrastructure

²³ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26397&LangID=E.

²⁴ Mandated in Human Rights Council resolution 42/23.

²⁵ See A/HRC/46/59.

²⁶ Mandated in Human Rights Council resolution 43/21.

²⁷ See [A/HRC/45/21](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26397&LangID=E) and [A/74/843](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26397&LangID=E).

Investment Bank, and to the review of the African Development Bank's Independent Review Mechanism.

16. OHCHR facilitated international cooperation on issues relating to climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental harm through collaboration with multiple entities, contributing to and organizing events such as a series of three nexus dialogues on human rights and the environment. It contributed to the formation of an issue management group on human rights and to work on phase II of the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030. OHCHR actively participated in the second meeting of the open-ended working group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and contributed to a report of the United Nations Environment Management Group entitled “Supporting the global biodiversity agenda: a United Nations system commitment for action to assist Member States delivering on the post-2020 global diversity framework”. Jointly with the United Nations Environment Programme, OHCHR established a community of practice aimed at integrating human rights into United Nations processes. It contributed to operationalizing the Secretary-General's call to action for human rights, which highlights the importance of increasing United Nations support to Member States for laws and policies that regulate and promote the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

17. The adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration marked a key step forward in human rights-based cooperation on international migration. It reflects and reinforces States' commitment to ensure effective respect for and protection and fulfilment of the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, across all stages of the migration cycle. As a member of the United Nations Network on Migration, OHCHR remains committed to providing effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in their implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact.

18. OHCHR finalized a four-year project to develop resources on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals to facilitate understanding of a human rights-based approach to disability among policymakers, through consultations with experts, United Nations agencies, development partners and civil society. After collecting evidence of the human rights impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities and analysing States' good practices, OHCHR, jointly with United Nations agencies, is reviewing the project's output and developing a checklist to help States ensure that recovery policies are rooted in human rights and inclusivity.

19. OHCHR organized workshops and webinars with faith-based actors, civil servants, academic institutions and human rights mechanisms, piloting the #Faith4Rights toolkit and emphasizing the importance of the elimination of religious intolerance as a means of enhancing international cooperation on human rights. The toolkit, which covers dealing with violence against minorities in the COVID-19 context, proposed 12 cases to debate. A crash course entitled “Stomping out hate speech” was conducted in October 2020, with 150 undergraduate and postgraduate university students, and media and other professionals from 55 countries. In May 2020, the High Commissioner, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations convened a virtual consultation, resulting in the Global Pledge for Action by Religious Actors and Faith-Based Organizations to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Collaboration with the United Nations. The collaboration continued through an online peer-to-peer learning programme on topics including hate speech and interfaith dialogues.

20. In partnership with the Council of Europe, OHCHR delivered a training-of-trainers course on human rights education. OHCHR also supported a course on young human rights educators in Cambodia, Fiji, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan and Tunisia, aimed at building competences to develop human rights education activities at the national and local levels. OHCHR collaborated with UNESCO on events such as the Art Lab for Human Rights and Dialogue, and organized the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development in May 2020.

21. OHCHR collaborated with partners to develop a checklist for a human rights-based approach to socioeconomic impact assessments and country responses to COVID-19. In

collaboration with United Nations entities, OHCHR developed a framework of indicators for monitoring the human rights implications of COVID-19, which was followed by global and national efforts to implement the framework. OHCHR partnered with the international statistics community, offices and systems worldwide to ensure the availability of high-quality data to decision makers during COVID-19. It also contributed to a report entitled *How COVID-19 is Changing the World: A Statistical Perspective*, which was compiled jointly by 36 international organizations under the aegis of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities.

22. OHCHR continued efforts to advance peace and security, development and human rights in its work in Africa by strengthening collaboration, advocacy and capacity-building of civil society, national human rights institutions and human rights defenders. OHCHR supported efforts pursuant to the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security during crises and electoral violence in Côte d'Ivoire, the Niger and Uganda, and political violence in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. To mainstream human rights in relation to areas such as climate change, digital technologies, inequalities and migration, OHCHR supported regional human rights organizations, including the African Union, in formulating policies. OHCHR supported the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and was the co-lead on justice and conflict prevention in implementing the United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework.

23. Pursuant to a technical cooperation project between OHCHR and the Human Rights Commission of Saudi Arabia, OHCHR jointly organized 17 activities in the country throughout 2020, with 1,235 participants including government officials, the national human rights institution, the judiciary and others, and a virtual workshop on human rights standards in labour courts.

1. Country and regional presences

24. The OHCHR West Africa Regional Office collaborated with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to launch a series of rapid assessments on the impact of the pandemic in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and others. OHCHR provided guidance to the United Nations country teams of West and Central Africa to ensure that their work with national authorities included the gender dimensions of the pandemic's challenges. In June 2020, OHCHR collaborated with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to organize webinars on human rights and monitoring. It participated in the virtual launch of the UNESCO *Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and Education – All Means All*, attended by more than 250 participants across Africa.

25. OHCHR continued to support the institutional framework of the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel. In Chad, Mauritania and the Niger, OHCHR collaborated with the European Union in efforts to strengthen the capacity of civil society and human rights institutions. It provided technical assistance to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in developing rules and regulations that are compliant with international human rights and humanitarian law and in coordinating training-of-trainers for army officers. In November 2020, it began engagement in a multi-country project targeting internal security forces that carry out operations outside the framework of the Joint Force, national human rights actors, including civil society and national human rights institutions, and the judiciary. OHCHR commenced several capacity-building activities in December 2020, and has held workshops for national human rights commissions, journalists, community leaders, the media and civil society actors in collaboration with the International Organization of la Francophonie.

26. In Guinea, OHCHR promoted South-South cooperation through the production and dissemination of resource materials comprising regional and national norms on the right to development, which led to the inclusion of the right to development among government priorities in COVID-19 recovery plans. In the context of implementation of the recommendations from the universal periodic review and the treaty bodies, OHCHR held a workshop in January 2021 for United Nations country team programme officers on the right to development and the human rights-based approach to development programming, the

Secretary-General's call to action for human rights, human rights indicators and the four strategic axes for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 recovery.

27. In order to spotlight marginalized groups in the pandemic, the OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa launched nine advocacy campaigns to raise awareness of the human rights implications of COVID-19. With a view to ensuring a human rights-based approach to the COVID-19 response, OHCHR supported numerous stakeholders, including Governments, resident coordinators, United Nations country teams and civil society partners.

28. The OHCHR Regional Office for South-East Asia supported the United Nations on the preparation of an operational guide to assist country teams and States to implement their commitments in relation to minorities in order to leave no one behind. OHCHR continued monitoring the situation of ethnic minorities, especially those affected by large-scale development projects, and worked to ensure meaningful participation of local communities in development programmes. It issued guidance material on COVID-19 and minorities and called on States to ensure that responses were centred on human rights, and continued to support minority participation through the OHCHR Minorities Fellowship Programme.

29. The OHCHR Regional Office for Central America and the Dominican Republic participated in the preparation and promotion of common country analyses under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and socioeconomic response plans in the context of COVID-19 in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Panama, providing input for human rights-based responses and recovery strategies and for programming that is focused on vulnerable and socially excluded populations. OHCHR also maintained exchanges with cooperation agencies to promote the implementation of recommendations from United Nations human rights protection mechanisms. OHCHR contributed to the inclusion of a human rights-based approach in the Comprehensive Development Plan for Central America, led by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, to tackle the root causes of migration and internal displacement in El Salvador, and proposed that human rights violations and the protection needs of migrants be addressed in accordance with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. OHCHR also maintained a dialogue with regional stakeholders on the situation of people on the move in Central America.

30. OHCHR continued its evolving cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The High Commissioner addressed the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions with a keynote speech on multilateralism and cooperation. In June 2020, the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights participated in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's online dialogue on stability and social cohesion in COVID-19.

31. The human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine conducted joint activities with OSCE. In April 2020, OHCHR coordinated a joint submission, with the United Nations country team, on the impact of COVID-19 on human rights, a joint submission on COVID-19 and the increase in domestic violence against women and an updated joint submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. OHCHR supported the national human rights strategy in Ukraine, and cooperated with UN-Women to promote the prosecution and prevention of conflict-related sexual violence and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). OHCHR cooperated with UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the delegation of the European Union, the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the European Court of Human Rights to support the mainstreaming of human rights.

2. Integrating human rights into national policies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

32. OHCHR organized virtual workshops for national human rights institutions, national statistical offices and other State agencies in Cabo Verde, El Salvador, Peru, the Philippines and Tajikistan. For the compilation of data for indicator 10.3.1/16.b.1 of the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, on discrimination, it collaborated with

national statistical offices worldwide to develop survey questions, issued in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNODC under the Goal 16 household survey initiative. It helped strengthen institutional linkages between national human rights institutions and national statistical offices, resulting in more States establishing collaborative platforms to operationalize the human rights-based approach to data, including: Albania, Cabo Verde, Kenya, Kosovo, Liberia, Mexico, Moldova, Pakistan, Philippines, Tajikistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan and State of Palestine.

33. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo contributed to aligning United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework indicators and targets with recommendations of the human rights mechanisms and the Sustainable Development Goals. It supported the Government in developing tools to track the implementation of such recommendations, including those from the universal periodic review, and ensuring that projects are human rights-based. It partnered with the International Organization for Migration, UNDP, UN-Women and UNESCO in the Kasais, Tanganyika and South Kivu to contribute to Goals 5, 8 and 16.

34. OHCHR contributed to the 2020 *Arab Sustainable Development Report*, prepared by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. It supported country teams' analysis through monitoring of the enjoyment of human rights of individuals and groups in vulnerable situations, and incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into efforts to strengthen national human rights protection systems.

35. OHCHR contributed to ensuring a human rights-based approach as the lead on governance and the rule of law for the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in Tunisia. OHCHR helped integrate the Goals indicators into the work of the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up. In cooperation with resident coordinators and United Nations agencies, OHCHR conducted a study on the impact of government efforts on COVID-19 recovery, providing an advocacy tool and forming recommendations for the Government and the United Nations system.

36. In Chad, OHCHR ensured the integration of human rights into several common strategic and programme documents, including the 2020 common country analysis, the United Nations multisectoral strategy supporting the governmental response to the pandemic, and the COVID-19 socioeconomic impact report.

37. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/19, OHCHR organized the third intersessional meeting for dialogue and cooperation on human rights and the 2030 Agenda, in January 2021, on the theme "Building back better: integrating human rights in sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic".²⁸ The meeting was focused on the fact that discrimination has exacerbated inequalities in the context of COVID-19. Participants highlighted the importance of international cooperation in response to the pandemic and the need for Governments to mobilize domestic resources and coordinate global efforts to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines were affordable and accessible to all without discrimination.

38. Some participants noted that owing to the unjust international order and unpayable external debt, developing countries suffered the worst socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic. Recognizing the importance of bridging the inequality gap among States, several participants called for global cooperation, knowledge-sharing and complementarity in response to COVID-19 and urged States to support a multilateral response to the crisis based on the principles of human rights, gender equality, accountability, solidarity, and international cooperation. Those principles were key in ensuring that no individual, group, community or State was left behind in the COVID-19 recovery, including with respect to access to vaccines.

3. Enhancing the role of parliaments

39. As emphasized in the OHCHR report on the contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review,²⁹ parliaments, notably their

²⁸ See A/HRC/46/48.

²⁹ A/HRC/38/25.

human rights committees, have a critical role to play in promoting and protecting international human rights obligations. The draft principles annexed to that report provide guidance for dedicated engagement by parliamentary committees, especially with the universal periodic review. In partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Commonwealth, OHCHR convened virtual workshops for the human rights committees of African, European and Commonwealth parliaments to strengthen the capacity of parliamentarians to engage in the universal periodic review, and for parliamentarians of francophone countries already participating in its third cycle.

40. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, OHCHR continued outreach activities, including with the standing committee on human rights in the National Assembly. In November 2020, OHCHR donated equipment and documentation to the standing committee, which was used to improve the quality of parliamentary work on human rights.

41. In November 2020, OHCHR held a high-level consultation and advocacy with the Parliament of Gabon on international standards, notably the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and best practices on independent and effective national human rights institutions, to strengthen its National Human Rights Commission.

42. The OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa supported an initiative to develop a code of conduct for parliamentarians, encouraging them to sign up to a pledge to combat incitement to hatred and discrimination and to avoid using pejorative, discriminatory language.

4. Strengthening national and regional human rights institutions

43. OHCHR continued to provide advisory services and technical support to Governments to establish national human rights institutions, and to the institutions themselves to strengthen their capacity to perform their mandate in accordance with international standards (the Paris Principles). It continued to function as the secretariat of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. In June 2020, the tenth annual review meeting of the tripartite partnership between OHCHR, UNDP and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions was held remotely, to discuss the role of national human rights institutions in responding to COVID-19 and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

44. In Tunisia, jointly with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, OHCHR continued to support the national human rights commission to harmonize national legislation with international human rights by organizing three workshops in November 2020. In partnership with UNDP, OHCHR supported the national preventive mechanism to report on the deprivation of liberty in the context of COVID-19 and organize a colloquium on the work of such mechanisms during the pandemic.

45. In Chad, OHCHR contributed to strengthening national and regional human rights institutions through advocacy and advisory services, which resulted in the formation of the National Human Rights Commission in February 2020. In July 2020, OHCHR co-organized a virtual workshop to define strategies to support the effectiveness of national human rights institutions. In October 2020, it co-organized capacity-building sessions for the Commission of Chad, including training workshops in cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, the European Union and the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions. It also provided a virtual capacity-building workshop for the National Human Rights Commission of Gabon.

46. In cooperation with the Moroccan national human rights institution, OHCHR organized a webinar on the role of such institutions in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of COVID-19. Several institutions from the region provided discussion papers, including those from Jordan, Mauritania and the State of Palestine. The OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa collaborated on several occasions with the newly appointed members of the Lebanese national human rights institution and national preventive mechanism. The members of the Lebanese national commission on enforced disappearance were appointed in 2020, as advocated by OHCHR.

5. Establishing and strengthening national mechanisms for reporting on and follow-up to recommendations from international human rights mechanisms

47. Following OHCHR support, the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up in Eswatini was officially established in 2020 and was entrusted with the duty of reporting to international and regional human rights mechanisms, responding to individual communications submitted to those mechanisms and implementing their decisions and recommendations. In October 2020, members of the new mechanism received training on reporting to treaty bodies.

48. In November 2020, OHCHR convened a remote annual meeting of focal points of regional human rights mechanisms, enabling participants to share key human rights developments in their respective regions, good practices, upcoming activities, and possible areas of cooperation, including with regard to the COVID-19 response.

49. In October 2020, OHCHR organized a virtual round table on the future of Europe, focusing on international human rights in European law and policymaking. It engaged with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe to develop an online tool bringing together information from human rights databases from these organizations.

50. OHCHR collaborated with the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar to co-organize a training session on national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up.

6. Enabling public participation, civic space and a safe environment for civil society

51. In September 2020, a United Nations guidance note on the promotion and protection of civic space was launched, in which civic space is recognized as vital to the success of work across all three pillars of the United Nations.³⁰

52. In collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the International Labour Organization, OHCHR implemented a project on responsible business conduct in nine countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, supporting Governments to develop and implement national action plans on business and human rights. It supported the organization of regional forums on business and human rights and organized peer learning workshops on an intergovernmental community of practice on national action plans, to support the exchange of good practices in Latin America and the Caribbean.

53. In December 2020, the OHCHR Central Africa Regional Office held a virtual meeting to identify priority action to strengthen civic space in the Central African subregion and a workshop for media professionals to impart skills on relaying the impact of COVID-19.

54. The OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa organized a regional webinar on the right of youth to participate in public affairs, leading to recommendations for States on addressing obstacles to youth participation.

55. In November 2020, OHCHR and UNESCO supported Tunisia as it presented its annual report on the safety of journalists. With the Institut Maghrébin pour le Développement Durable, OHCHR contributed to a youth camp on human rights and citizenship, using the United Nations guiding principles on foreign debt and human rights to support youth advocacy.

56. Jointly with UNICEF and UNDP, OHCHR in Chad implemented a peacebuilding fund project to increase awareness on public advocacy and participation in local governance processes and decision-making, targeting community leaders and representatives of women and youth movements to support their participation in local governance and peacebuilding.

57. Humanitarian funds were awarded to 31 grants in 28 countries to aid victims of contemporary slavery and 180 grants in 79 countries to aid victims of torture. OHCHR

³⁰ See www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/CivicSpace/Pages/UNRoleCivicSpace.aspx.

provided technical cooperation to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in Honduras, Liberia, Mexico, Serbia, Tunisia, Ukraine and Uruguay and in West Africa.

58. OHCHR continued its advocacy and technical assistance to enhance civil society participation in decision-making in accordance with the guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs.³¹ Jointly with UNDP, OHCHR supported the Government and national human rights institution of the Gambia and local civil society organizations in strengthening participatory mechanisms and processes. OHCHR convened a meeting for national human rights institutions to exchange good practices and challenges in promoting public participation. At a high-level side event on “Participation, human rights and the governance challenge ahead”, organized by OHCHR during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General advocated increased protection of the right to participate, identifying participation as an underutilized tool for better policymaking.

7. Voluntary funds and technical cooperation

59. Through the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights, OHCHR continued to provide funds for technical cooperation to strengthen national and regional institutions and legal frameworks and infrastructure. In its most recent report,³² the Fund’s Board emphasized the importance of placing human rights at the centre of COVID-19 recovery efforts; welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 75/233, in which Member States stressed the importance of focusing on the recovery of those furthest behind, supported by United Nations country teams and resident coordinators’ offices under the operational leadership of OHCHR; and welcomed the excellent cooperation between OHCHR and the Development Coordination Office in expanding the deployment of human rights advisers in 2020 and 2021 under the inter-agency framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

60. The Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance in the Implementation of the Universal Periodic Review supports States in implementing review recommendations. In 2020, there was a 100-per-cent increase in requests to utilize the Fund, including for 17 human rights advisers, country team colleagues and national partners. The Fund supported 25 projects in 2020.

B. United Nations human rights system

1. Universal periodic review

61. The thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh sessions of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review took place in November 2020 and January 2021. The review process, which had reviewed 154 States in the third cycle as of January 2021, has helped human rights progress on multiple fronts, including increased ratification of human rights treaties and the establishment of independent national human rights institutions.

62. OHCHR supported Governments, national human rights institutions, civil society and United Nations country teams in the preparation and submission of reports. Recent positive developments focused on practical use of the universal periodic review and forward-looking impact in the field. Practical guidance was issued in September 2020 to aid heads of United Nations offices worldwide to maximize the use of the mechanism at the country level.³³ In consultation with IPU, UPR Info and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, OHCHR issued tips on engagement for members of parliament, civil society and national human rights institutions, providing specific guidance to ensure meaningful participation prior to, during and after State reviews.

³¹ A/HRC/39/28.

³² A/HRC/46/70.

³³ See www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/UPR_Practical_Guidance.pdf.

2. Treaty bodies

63. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made significant contributions to promoting the Sustainable Development Goals. It continued to strengthen State accountability, encouraging States to report on measures taken towards achieving relevant Goals, monitoring their progress through their written replies and strengthening its institutional cooperation with UN-Women, the Generation Equality Forum and civil society.

64. In February and March 2020, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted concluding observations on the reports of States including Belgium, Benin, Guinea, Norway and Ukraine.³⁴ It recommended that Belgium increase its official development assistance (ODA); that Benin review concessions granted to investors; that Guinea allocate the budgetary resources required to implement economic, social and cultural rights by seeking, where necessary, international assistance and cooperation; that Norway review the investment of the Government Pension Fund Global in businesses entities involved in operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and that Ukraine ensure the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

65. In March 2020, the Committee adopted general comment No. 25 (2020), in which it highlighted that international cooperation should be enhanced as new technologies needed global regulations in order to be effectively managed. States must promote an enabling global environment for the advancement of science and share its benefits, particularly with developing countries and vulnerable groups. The availability of vaccines, medicines and health technologies is a key dimension of the rights to health and development and everyone is entitled to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress.

66. In April 2020, the Committee adopted a statement on COVID-19, urging global solidarity to alleviate the financial burden of developing countries through international financial institutions, protect jobs and secure food and medical supplies.³⁵ Unilateral economic sanctions should be lifted to avoid weakening health-care systems and obstructing medical supplies.

67. In November 2020, the Committee adopted a statement highlighting the need for States to guarantee universal and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, including in least developed countries.³⁶ States parties had a duty to prevent intellectual property and patent regimes from undermining economic, social and cultural rights, and competition among States was counterproductive in terms of a global health approach.

68. In March 2021, the Committee adopted a statement on universal affordable vaccination against COVID-19, international cooperation and intellectual property, reiterating States' obligation to take all necessary measures, to the maximum of their available resources, to guarantee all persons access to COVID-19 vaccines, without discrimination.³⁷ States had a duty of international cooperation and assistance to ensure access to vaccines wherever needed and share the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. It recommended that States support proposals for a temporary waiver on certain provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights for vaccines against and treatment for COVID-19, including by using their voting rights within the World Trade Organization (WTO).

3. Special procedures of the Human Rights Council

69. In 2020, the special procedures continued to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and all related reports are available on a dedicated web page.³⁸ Goals-

³⁴ E/C.12/BEL/CO/5, E/C.12/BEN/CO/3, E/C.12/GIN/CO/1, E/C.12/NOR/CO/6 and E/C.12/UKR/CO/7.

³⁵ E/C.12/2020/1.

³⁶ E/C.12/2020/2.

³⁷ E/C.12/2021/1.

³⁸ www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/CrosscuttingThematicIssues.aspx.

related thematic and country recommendations in 2020 are also contained in the Secretary-General's report on the special procedures.³⁹

70. Mandate holders repeatedly stressed the need for a human rights approach, international cooperation and solidarity to successfully fight the pandemic. They identified issues and trends and formulated advice; issued 133 press releases and sent 228 communications; produced guidelines, dispatches and other reference tools; issued open letters; and promoted social media campaigns. Fourteen mandate holders devoted their official reports to COVID-19. All relevant information is available on a dedicated web page.⁴⁰

71. The Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity called for international vaccine solidarity.⁴¹ In his report to the General Assembly, the Special Rapporteur on the right to development recommended that an intergovernmental United Nations tax commission be established and the rapid disbursement of budget support by international organizations be increased, and that States take into account extraterritorial obligations as a human rights principle central to implementing cross-border solutions in the context of the pandemic.⁴²

72. The Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, stressed that international cooperation was key to preventing a devastating impact on developing countries. She issued a press release in May 2020 urging an extension of the duration and country coverage of the Debt Service Suspension Initiative,⁴³ and a note in August 2020 on human rights-based debt relief options for developing countries during COVID-19.⁴⁴ In her report to the General Assembly,⁴⁵ she referred to concerns of an imminent debt crisis affecting millions of livelihoods and States' capacity to provide effective social protection and to meet their human rights obligations. She urged reform of the international debt architecture, notably on the role of credit rating agencies, including international cooperation and criteria incorporating human rights impact in debt crisis prevention and relief.⁴⁶

73. In her 2020 annual thematic report, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities examined the role of international cooperation in supporting disability inclusion, addressing good practices in international cooperation in terms of inclusivity and accessibility for persons with disabilities, and ways to overcome existing difficulties and to build back better.⁴⁷

74. In March 2020, the former Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, presented guidelines for the implementation of the right to adequate housing, in which she highlighted the importance of international cooperation in addressing the housing crisis.⁴⁸ In his thematic report to the General Assembly on COVID-19 and the right to adequate housing, the current Special Rapporteur recommended that Governments provide adequate financing to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals were not sacrificed at a time of shrinking budgets.⁴⁹

³⁹ A/HRC/46/24, paras. 7–16 and 82–83.

⁴⁰ www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/COVID-19-and-Special-Procedures.aspx.

⁴¹ See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26683&LangID=E.

⁴² A/75/167.

⁴³ www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25888&LangID=E.

⁴⁴ www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IEDebt/NotePMOnDebtCovid-19.pdf.

⁴⁵ A/75/164.

⁴⁶ A/HRC/46/29.

⁴⁷ A/75/186.

⁴⁸ A/HRC/43/43.

⁴⁹ A/75/148.

IV. Possible ways to face the challenges to the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development, and opportunities to overcome them

75. Global solidarity and shared responsibility are broadly recognized as key determinants of a successful socioeconomic response to COVID-19, recovery with resilience and the building of more fair, inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies where all human rights are enjoyed by all people.

76. Transforming the promise of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into real-world change on the ground requires reinvigorated, inclusive and networked multilateral responses guided by international solidarity, human rights and gender equality, environmental sustainability and accountability.

77. States and all stakeholders must work together to reverse the disruptive impact of the pandemic on economies and societies, redressing inequalities within countries and asymmetries between them. Among countries, the new global deal referred to by the Secretary-General envisions a global economy with universal respect for international law, and a multipolar world with strong multilateral institutions to redress global structural inequalities. This means a new model for global governance in which power, wealth and opportunities are shared more fairly, based on the full, inclusive and equal participation of developing countries in global institutions; an inclusive and equitable global recovery to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; and green recovery to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss.

78. Particular attention must be paid to vulnerable countries, especially African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries, middle-income countries facing serious challenges, and countries in conflict and post-conflict. Increased efforts and greater cooperation are required to help States to fulfil their human rights obligations to redress structural and systemic discrimination against the marginalized and vulnerable, including people living in poverty, women and girls, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, informal workers, peasants, racial, ethnic and religious minorities, people of African descent, indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees.

79. A resilient recovery will be driven by the availability and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccine nationalism must stop. Vaccines must be treated as global public goods available to everyone, everywhere, especially those most in need. Intellectual property regimes should be aligned with human rights obligations of States. To enable all humanity to benefit equitably from scientific progress, vaccine production capacity worldwide should be massively scaled up, technologies widely shared, licences made available and affordability ensured. States should cooperate to support initiatives to ensure universal and equitable distribution of vaccines between countries, such as the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and its COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility, and to make appropriate use of available policy space to secure non-discriminatory, affordable access within borders. States and stakeholders should adopt as a best practice, irrespective of crisis situations but especially during pandemics and health emergencies, the interpretation and implementation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in accordance with the right of WTO members to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all.

80. States and all stakeholders – including international financial institutions, multilateral development banks and transnational corporations – should collaborate to create an enabling international economic environment. Expansive fiscal and monetary support will require additional financial support both in the short and longer term. Renewed commitment is needed to meet the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for ODA and 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of gross national income for ODA to least developed countries. There should be a new allocation of special drawing rights for low- and middle-income countries in need of liquidity to avoid debt defaults. Global

solidarity will enable debt relief for all countries in need, through debt cancellation, restructuring or standstill from all stakeholders, including private creditors. Reform of the debt architecture, including a debt-restructuring mechanism, and access to affordable credit will allow fiscal space for countries to respond to their people's socioeconomic needs.

81. Quality education and digital technology are two key enablers of the new social contract called for by the Secretary-General. Cooperation is essential to redress the digital divide and advance information technology, including closing global gaps in online education. All stakeholders should collaborate to revitalizing the agenda on technology transfer and overcome obstacles such as the expansion of intellectual property rights for sustainable development. The Secretary-General's road map for digital cooperation emphasizes the need to secure an inclusive and sustainable digital future by connecting to the Internet, by 2030, the remaining 3.6 billion people without access.

82. COVID-19 presents an opportunity for greener rebuilding through transition to a zero-carbon economy. Scaling up international cooperation on sustainable production and consumption, including on renewable energy and environmentally sustainable technology, will enhance rights, including those of future generations.

83. The devastating loss of jobs and livelihoods during the pandemic reaffirmed the importance of universal social protection and universal health coverage. States require the fiscal and policy space to reverse chronic underinvestment in public services; more equitable payment of taxes by individuals and businesses; and affirmative action programmes and targeted policies to redress historic inequalities. Cooperation is vital to meeting those requirements, including new approaches to financing social protection such as the global fund for social protection proposed by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.

84. Huge gaps in governance structures, inclusion and equality were exposed by the pandemic. As a result, there have been resounding calls for important changes, including a multilateral economic, financial and trade system that is democratized, with a far stronger voice and expanded voting rights for developing countries; a more balanced trading system, enabling mobility up global value chains; improved regulations on finance, trade and investment; and enhanced productive capacities, economic diversification and structural transformation.

85. Stakeholders are encouraged to strengthen their engagement in the financing for development process, to advance a more equitable multilateral system. Cooperation is key to preventing illicit financial flows, money-laundering and tax evasion, ending tax havens, and integrating the principles of sustainable development into financial decision-making. Scaling up North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation and sharing knowledge, experiences and good practices will contribute to advancing human rights.

86. More global cooperation on disarmament could free up resources to realize rights. Likewise, the easing of sanctions will support medical systems in fighting the pandemic.

87. Civic space is vital for advancing human rights, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. It must be protected, including online, if inclusive, effective and well-grounded approaches to meeting goals are to be found. Civil society must be at the heart of decision-making, including in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national and international policies.

88. In their declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, Member States reaffirmed that strengthening international cooperation was in the interest of both nations and peoples, and that the three pillars of the United Nations – peace and security, development and human rights – were equally important, interrelated and interdependent. They recommitted to mobilizing resources, strengthening their efforts, showing political will and leadership, and working with partners to strengthen coordination and global governance for the common future of

present and future generations. Premised on international cooperation and solidarity, the right to development requires a just global order as envisioned in the new global deal referred to by the Secretary-General. Active, free, meaningful and effective participation, by all people locally and all countries globally, and fair distribution of the benefits of development and globalization will enable everyone, everywhere, to participate in, contribute to and enjoy the fruits of progress, leaving no person, group, community or country behind. Action to keep the promise to leave no one behind must be grounded in the fulfilment of human rights obligations, which provide pathways to lasting peace and sustainable development.
