

List of Special Procedures Mechanisms (cont'd)

THEMATIC MANDATES (cont'd)

▪ **Special Rapporteurs on:**

- torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- the adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights
- trafficking in persons, especially in women and children
- violence against women, its causes and consequences
- adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living
- the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- the right to education
- extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions
- the right to food
- the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression
- the right to freedom of religion or belief
- the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
- the situation of human rights defenders
- the independence of judges and lawyers
- the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples
- the situation of human rights of migrants
- contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
- the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism

COUNTRY MANDATES

▪ **Independent Experts on the situation of human rights:**

- In Burundi
- in Haiti
- in Somalia
- in Sudan

▪ **Special Rapporteurs on:**

- human rights in Cambodia
- the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- the situation of human rights in Myanmar
- the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967



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Further information

For additional information on the Special Procedures, please visit the website of the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/migration/rapporteur/>

CONTACT

**To register for the side event,
please contact:
Ms. Anne Charbord/Ann Syauta
Phone: +1 917 367 36 37/
+1 917 367 36 02**

**Email:
charbord@un.org/syauta@un.org**

HUMAN RIGHTS IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

**A contribution from
the
Special Procedures mechanisms**



**OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**

BACKGROUND

In humanitarian emergencies, human rights considerations are often neglected and their relevance questioned as an immediate priority in the planning and implementation of relief operations.

Nevertheless, with an increased recognition of the crucial role of human rights in ensuring long-term and durable solutions, measures to ensure the protection of the human rights of people affected by humanitarian emergencies are increasingly integrated in preparedness, relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts.

It is essential to address - from the very beginning of the emergency response - the specific needs of groups in vulnerable situations such as internally displaced persons, unaccompanied and separated children, persons with disabilities, the elderly as well as victims of transnational organized crime (human trafficking, sale of children) and contemporary forms of slavery and other marginalized groups in order to ensure that they fully enjoy their rights.

Also, it is crucial to include human rights principles and standards in early recovery, and reconstruction work to re-establish the livelihoods of the local population, ensure access without discrimination to food, water, sanitation and housing and to consult the local population on all decisions affecting them.

Recently, with the occurrence of major natural disasters, some of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council have drawn international attention to the human rights dimension of relief and rehabilitation efforts.

One year after the Asian Tsunami, several Special Rapporteurs recalled that human rights should be upheld and guide all rehabilitation and reconstructions efforts.¹ More recently, following the Human Rights Council Special Session on Haiti held on 27 and 28 January 2010, the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council were called upon to collaborate with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights "to identify, in collaboration with the Haitian government, areas for cooperation and technical assistance with Haiti, on the basis of the expertise and the presence of the U.N. system on the ground".²

Drawing on lessons learned from Haiti, this side event will explore how mandate-holders support humanitarian emergency responses with a view to contributing to durable solutions grounded in human rights. This side event also aims to contribute to the debate on the relevance and added value of the work (and working methods) of Special Procedures in relation to relief, recovery and reconstruction.

OBJECTIVES

The side event aims, *inter alia*, at:

- Providing suggestions on how to create stronger institutional links between human rights mechanisms and humanitarian actors;
- Raising awareness about the specific protection needs of groups in vulnerable situations, that would need to be addressed in relief efforts as well as in the recovery and reconstruction planning efforts.

¹Relief and rehabilitation efforts remain problematic one year after asian tsunami, say UN experts, United Nations Press Release, 19 December 2005. Available from:

² A/HRC/S13/2. para. 12.

What are the Special Procedures Mechanisms?

The special procedures are experts commonly called special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts or working groups and whose mandates are provided by the Human Rights Council (formerly the Commission on Human Rights). Although the titles of the special procedures vary, there are no major differences in their general responsibilities and methods of work. The experts are entrusted with the mandate to examine, monitor, advise and publicly report on human rights situations in specific countries or on major human rights related themes worldwide. They submit thematic reports to the Human Rights Council (with some also reporting to the General Assembly); undertake country visits and report on these to the Human Rights Council; send communications on alleged violations of human rights (urgent appeals and letters of allegation) to the Governments ; and issue press releases on specific matters of grave concern.

List of Special Procedures Mechanisms

THEMATIC MANDATES

- **Independent Experts on:**
 - minority issues
 - cultural rights
 - the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation
 - human rights and international solidarity
- **Working Groups on:**
 - arbitrary detention
 - enforced or involuntary disappearances
 - the use of mercenaries as a means of impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination
 - people of African descent
- **Special Representatives on:**
 - human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises
 - the human rights of internally displaced persons