



UN Photo/Caroline Glick #759947, 29/04/2018

A large crowd of people, including children, standing on a dirt road in a settlement. The image is overlaid with a blue tint. The text 'D. Promotion and protection of human rights' is written in white on the right side of the image.

D. Promotion and protection of human rights

THOUSANDS OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES LINE ROAD OF KUTUPALONG
MEGA REFUGEE SETTLEMENT
Bangladesh

The year 2018 marks the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a milestone document underpinning all progress made in the advancement of human rights at the global level, so that all people can live in freedom, equality and dignity. Challenges to the protection of human rights are a global phenomenon. Entrenched levels of discrimination, inequality and violent conflict continue to displace millions of people around the world. In 2017, 68.5 million people were on the move, with women and children the most vulnerable to further exploitation. The global threat to democracy and the rule of law is steadily increasing; this is manifested by the frequent repression of demonstrations, human rights defenders and the media, accompanied by the dismantling of institutions and policies that promote greater justice.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PREVENTING CONFLICT AND PROMOTING PEACE AND SECURITY

Alarmed by the large-scale military operations in the North Rakhine region of Myanmar that caused some 900,000 Rohingya Muslims to flee their homes, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights dispatched monitoring teams to Bangladesh. The subsequent reports starkly highlighted the extreme suffering of the refugees and resulted in the establishment of an independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar by the Human Rights Council. In other contexts, the Council has mandated the continuation or establishment of a total of nine fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry and groups of experts.

Monitoring of the human rights situation in Ukraine in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/262 contributed to early warning and provided support for conflict resolution activities under the auspices of the Minsk agreements.

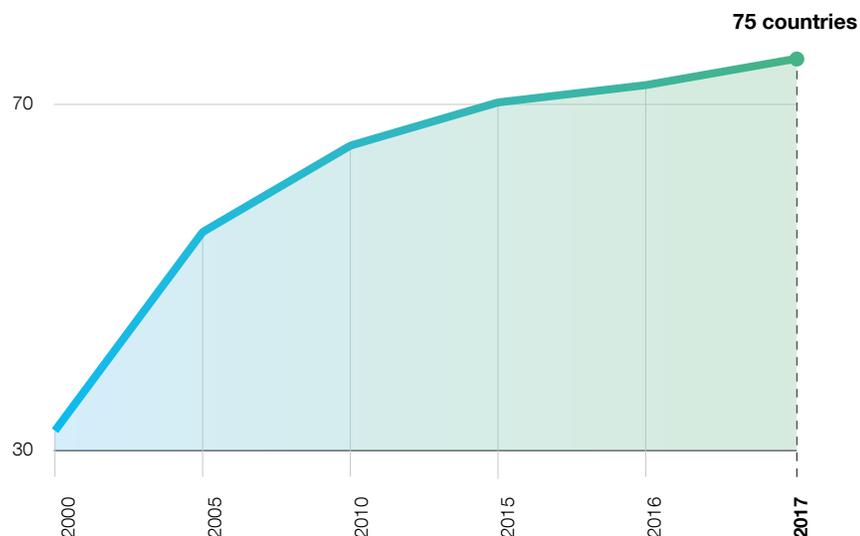
The United Nations supported the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms including in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia and the Gambia. In Kosovo, we worked closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross and authorities in Pristina and Belgrade to clarify the fate of 1,658 persons who went missing during the 1998–2000 conflict.

In April 2018, we developed the first African Union-United Nations Framework on Human Rights and policies on conduct and discipline relating to sexual exploitation and abuse for African Union peace support operations.

Protecting and promoting human rights is the cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda, as the High Commissioner for Human Rights emphasized at the conference held in Vienna in May 2018. The Sustainable Development Goals “seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”.

The number of countries with independent national human rights institutions, has more than doubled since 2000

Countries with Institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles



Source: DESA, UN

In 2017,
68.5 million
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HIGHLIGHTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

45,000

victims of torture in 80 countries received rehabilitation support through 178 NGOs

30,000

victims of contemporary forms of slavery obtained assistance and redress

4,000

visits to places of detention were conducted

7,500

monitoring missions were undertaken to investigate and document human rights situations worldwide

Over

2,600

training sessions delivered to some 54,700 government and civil society partners in more than 50 countries on monitoring and investigation, access to justice, anti-discrimination standards, responsible business conduct and other key human rights issues

Technical support to

70

national human rights institutions, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iceland, Kuwait, Lebanon, Madagascar, Seychelles, South Sudan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Treaty bodies considered

165

State party reports and received an additional 138 State party reports on progress towards fulfilling their international human rights obligations.

Officials from some

34

States increased their knowledge and skills on international human rights and their reporting requirements.

BROADENING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC SPACE AND DEVELOPMENT

During the period covered, we continued to monitor human rights situations in several countries, in particular the situations of vulnerable groups such as migrants, the displaced and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. The protection of human rights and the rule of law are key to the proper functioning of democratic institutions and the maintenance of civic and political space, which is increasingly under threat as a result of the adoption of repressive security legislation and emergency measures. We have therefore supported States in developing more comprehensive and human rights-compliant approaches to their security concerns through the provision of capacity-building and assistance to countries facing terrorism threats and attacks. We have also supported approaches

We launched an e-learning module on operationalizing the right to development while implementing the SDGs.

that enhance inter faith and inter-community understanding through the Faith for Rights initiative by means of which faith-based actors explore the deep connections between religion and human rights. On 14 July 2017, we launched the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes.

The United Nations contributed to the protection of human rights defenders worldwide by providing support to national human rights institutions and

carefully monitoring and reporting on cases of reprisals against persons cooperating with the United Nations. In 2017 we reported the largest number of cases spread across the broadest geographical locations, comprising 39 cases in 29 countries. Consequently, we have increased our advocacy work across all regions of the world to help better protect human rights defenders.

In Guatemala, we supported the National Statistics Institute in integrating a rights-based approach to the 2018 national population and housing census, facilitating its engagement with indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. In Kenya, Palestine and Uganda, national human rights institutions and national statistical offices have joined efforts to better engage with vulnerable population groups. In Chile, Germany, Malaysia, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam, we provided support to implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; and, in collaboration with academia, we launched an interactive e-learning module on operationalizing the right to development while implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.



Photo #72646 : 13/06/2017

Participants at the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations, New York.

THE WORLD SEVENTY YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Highlights of the status of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

+ Positive Developments



Agreement achieved on **18 human rights treaties** and options



Women have the **right to vote** in 198 countries, compared to 91 in 1948



Freedom of information laws and policies have been adopted by 111 countries



UN Special Rapporteurs as independent experts appointed by the UN Human Rights Council carry out country visits, monitor, advise and **publicly report** on situations where **human rights violations** may be taking place.



104 countries have **outlawed capital punishment**, compared to 9 in 1948



The majority of States have a **national parliament**, compared to 26 in 1948



The Human Rights Council continues its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) which **reviews human rights records** of all UN Member States



Peacekeeping operations now contain human rights components that address **human rights issues**

- Remaining gaps



1 in 10 children are subjected to **child labour**



1 in 3 people in detention are **held without trial**



880 million urban residents **live in slums**



250 million women are married **under 15 years old**



29 per cent of children under 5 years do not **have birth registration**



On average, **a journalist is killed every four days**