




















TREATY BODIES & HUMANITARIAN FUNDS
Human Rights Impact Stories 2023

Title of Impact Story	Short Summary	Category	SDG
<p>475 disappeared persons have been located, 445 of them alive</p> <p>Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)</p> <p>Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Cuba, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan – 2023</p>	<p>Following the filing of urgent actions requests with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, 475 disappeared persons have been located; 445 of them alive.</p>	<p>– Enforced disappearances</p>	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 
<p>State Party creates a Commission to follow up and promote the implementation of the recommendations of the visit report of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances</p> <p>Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)</p> <p>Mexico – 2023</p>	<p>Upon receipt of the CED report on its visit to Mexico, the State party set up an interinstitutional ‘Follow-up Mechanism to the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Committee’s Visit Report’, and various mechanisms have been set up at the level of states of the Federation. Each one of these mechanisms is considered as a positive step with high potential, which must be encouraged and promoted in view of the actions that will be taken at all levels for the implementation of the recommendations.</p>	<p>– Enforced disappearances</p>	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>  <p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 

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<p>Indigenous leader victim of torture receives reparation and public apology</p> <p>Committee against Torture (CAT)</p> <p>Mexico – 2023</p>	<p>Indigenous leader & victim of torture receives reparation, including public apology, cf. Discurso Alejandro Encinas Rodriguez – Disculpa Pública al Defensor Damián Gallardo y familia – YouTube. This is following a decision of the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/72/D/992/2020) and follow-up work from OHCHR Mexico on this case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevention of torture 	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>  <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 
<p>First conviction for Crimes Against Humanity relating to the First Liberian Civil War handed down in Switzerland</p> <p>Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture</p> <p>Switzerland, Liberia – 2023</p>	<p>A court in Switzerland handed down the country’s first conviction for Crimes Against Humanity today, thanks to the work of United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT) grantees Civitas Maxima and Global Justice and Research Project (GJRP). The decision relates to crimes committed during the First Liberian Civil War. Civitas Maxima and GJRP have been receiving financial support from the Fund since 2012. They were awarded a 55,000 USD grant in 2023. OHCHR’s Liberia Country Office provided technical support and policy advise to GJRP, a local human rights organization, in its engagement with this process. See: “First Conviction in Switzerland for Crimes Against Humanity”.</p> <p>See: “First Conviction in Switzerland for Crimes Against Humanity”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – International humanitarian law 	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 
<p>Australian Federal Police puts an end to the use of spit hoods against individuals, providing equipment and implementing procedures to better protect police officers instead</p> <p>Committee against Torture (CAT)</p> <p>Australia – 2023</p>	<p>The Committee against Torture in its concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Australia, urged the State party to take all necessary measures to end the use of spit hoods in all circumstances across all jurisdictions and to provide adequate and regular training for those involved in detention activities on legal safeguards and monitor compliance and penalize any failure on the part of officials to comply (see CAT/C/AUS/CO/6, paras. 12-14). On 14 April 2023, the Australian Federal Police announced an end to the use of spit hoods. A review found that their use was not a reasonable or proportionate response against individuals who assault police officers by spitting saliva or blood. Instead, the police are providing equipment and implementing procedures to better protect its police officers from spitting and biting. Source: ‘Media Statement’, Australia Federal Police, 14 April 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Detention – Prevention of torture 	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 

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<p>DRC’s criminal court hands down a conviction for forced pregnancy as an international crime for the first time</p> <p>Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture</p> <p>Democratic Republic of Congo – 2023</p>	<p>For the first time ever, a national criminal court handed down a conviction for forced pregnancy as an international crime, thanks to a project implemented by the grantee 'TRIAL' in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A warlord was found guilty, sentenced to life imprisonment and ordered to provide financial compensation to survivors. With the grant of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT), 'TRIAL' supports survivors of sexual violence through strategic litigation and by building the capacity of local actors to seek accountability for international crimes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – International humanitarian law – Women’s rights 	 
<p>Lebanon amends its Code of Criminal Procedure thanks to the advocacy efforts of the non-governmental organisation ‘Restart’, which created a road map based on CAT’s concluding observations</p> <p>Committee against Torture (CAT)</p> <p>Lebanon – 2023</p>	<p>Following the 2017 CAT review of Lebanon, the non-governmental organisation 'Restart' proposed a road map for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Committee’s concluding observations, notably those concerning fundamental legal safeguards against torture and ill-treatment (see CAT/C/LBN/CO/1). Its advocacy efforts with the national authorities contributed to the amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure on this issue. 'Restart' has further engaged with public authorities to establish a medical centre for conducting medical examinations of detainees, including alleged torture victims.</p> <p>Source: IRCT anti-torture advocacy at national level using UN mechanisms, December 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevention of torture – Ill-treatment of detainees 	 
<p>NGO ‘Collective Against Torture’ successfully advocated for the rights of victims of torture, in line with CAT’s 2019 recommendations</p> <p>Committee against Torture (CAT)</p> <p>Mexico – 2023</p>	<p>The non-governmental organisation 'Collective Against Torture and Impunity' successfully advocated for the enhancement of the quality of State rehabilitation programmes available to torture victims in Mexico, and the admission of torture evidence documented by accredited independent specialised medical experts and psychologists in court proceedings, as recommended by the Committee against Torture in its 2019 concluding observations on Mexico (CAT/C/MEX/CO/7, paras. 26-27 (d) and 46-47).</p> <p>Source: IRCT anti-torture advocacy at national level using UN mechanisms, December 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Medical care of victims of torture 	 

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<p>Father successfully enters a settlement agreement where his rights and the child's best interests are taken into consideration</p> <p>Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</p> <p>Ireland – 2023</p>	<p>After Committee on the Rights of the Child had registered a communication against the Republic of Ireland (in which a father alleged that a UK court order allowing him visitation rights to his child was not being enforced by the Republic of Ireland during the COVID-19 pandemic), the parties entered into a settlement agreement that the father considered to be in his child's best interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Children's rights 	
<p>Ghana's Parliament votes to abolish death penalty</p> <p>Human Rights Committee (CCPR)</p> <p>Ghana – 2023</p>	<p>After Ghana had supported the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee to abolish the death penalty (CCPR/C/GHA/CO/1) at its 4th Universal Periodic Review, Ghana's Parliament voted on 25 July 2023 to abolish death penalty by amending the 1960 Criminal and Other Offences Act and the 1962 Armed Forces Act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Right to life – Death penalty 	
<p>Fiji adopts its National Gender Policy and the Fiji National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against All Women and Girls (VAWG) (2023–28)</p> <p>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Fiji – 2023</p>	<p>Fiji adopted the National Gender Policy 'to promote the development of women's human rights and the Fiji National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against All Women and Girls (VAWG) (2023–28) in accordance with Fiji's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and its General Recommendation, and other international norms relevant to women(CEDAW/C/FJI/CO/5, para. 189; CEDAW/C/FJI/QPR/6, para. 5). The Working Group on EVAWG included a strong leadership from the Fiji Women Rights Movement and the Fiji Women Crisis Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rights of women and girls 	
<p>Fiji repeals its restrictive media laws</p> <p>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</p> <p>Fiji – 2023</p>	<p>After CEDAW made a number of recommendations to repeal parts of the media laws that restrict freedom of expression and the work of human rights defenders, Fiji repealed its 2010 Media Industry Development Act in its entirety and is in the process of conducting consultations on a new media bill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Freedom of opinion and expression & access to information 	 

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<p>The Cook Islands adopts its National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment</p> <p>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</p> <p>The Cook Islands – 2023</p>	<p>The Cook Islands adopted the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/COK/CO/2-3, para. 18) and to establish a roadmap and strategic goals to better align Cook Islands’ laws and policies with it, through a strong advocacy from the women groups and the Crisis Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rights of women and girls 	
<p>The Cook Islands decriminalises same sex relations between males and expands protection for victims of sexual offences</p> <p>Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</p> <p>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</p> <p>The Cook Islands – 2023</p>	<p>After the Committee on the Rights of the Child made recommendations in 2020 (CRC/C/COK/CO/2-5, para. 18) and expressed concerns about the prevalence of discriminatory legislation, in particular the Crimes Act 1969 that criminalized consensual sexual activity between males, the Cook Islands passed the Crimes (Sexual Offences) Amendment Act 2023 that has amended the Crimes Act and removed provisions that qualified consensual sexual acts between men as being illegal.</p> <p>The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had also recommended to amend the Crimes Act (CEDAW/C/COK/CO/2-3, para. 24(a), which was reflected in the Amendment Act by expanding the definition of circumstances that do not amount to consent; broadening the term ‘rape’ to include ‘sexual violation’; removing the marital defence to rape; and ensuring better protection of children from sexual offences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Equality and non-discrimination 	