

Human Rights Council
**Inter-sessional meeting on technical cooperation and capacity-building in the
field of human rights**

***Theme: Technical cooperation and capacity-building in the Human Rights Council: taking
stock of the past for a better discharge of this mission in the future***

Concept Note (as April 17, 2023)

- Date and venue:** **Thursday, 20 April 2023, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (UTC+2)**
Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva and online platform (Zoom)
(will be broadcast live and archived on <https://media.un.org/en/webtv/schedule/2023-04-20>)
- Objective:** The Human Rights Council Resolution 51/34 asked OHCHR to prepare Agenda Item 10 report on enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights and conduct an interactive dialogue during the fifty-third session of the Human Rights Council on the same issue.
- The resolution 51/34 also requested OHCHR to hold, prior to the Human Rights Council's fifty-third session, an inter-sessional meeting tailored to technical cooperation and capacity-building **in the Human Rights Council**. This meeting, scheduled for April 20, aims to provide a platform for States, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international organizations, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to identify and reflect on the achievements made and obstacles faced in technical cooperation and capacity-building **in the Human Rights Council**, by sharing concrete best practices and experiences in this regard.
- The outcome of the inter-sessional meeting will be included in the Agenda Item 10 report, which will be presented to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-third session, assessing technical cooperation and capacity building in the field of human rights and recommending the way forward to improve it.
- Chair and Moderator:** **H.E. Ms. Maira Mariela Macdonal Alvarez**, Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva and Vice-President of the Human Rights Council and Rapporteur.
- Panellists:**
- **H.E. Mr. Federico Villegas**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.
 - **Mr. Gustavo Gonzalez**, UN Resident Coordinator in the Philippines (*video message*).
 - **Ms. Alice Bahumi Mogwe**, Founder and director of the human rights organization DITSHWANELO - The Botswana Centre for Human Rights and sitting President of the International Federation for Human Rights (*video message*).
 - **Mr. Carsten Staur**, Chair of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (*video message*).
 - **Ms. Roueida El Hage**, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (*video message*).
- Outcomes:** The expected outcomes of this thematic discussion are as follows:
- Achievements made and obstacles faced when designing and implementing technical cooperation and capacity-building activities in the Human Rights Council identified and reflected on.
 - Best practices and concrete experiences in supporting technical cooperation frameworks that responded to local needs and priorities, adapted to the context, and materialized universality and indivisibility of human rights shared.

- Inputs for the Agenda Item 10 report on the enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights, received.
- Paths to further strengthen technical cooperation and capacity-building in the Human Rights Council and new ways to promote that States and all relevant stakeholders work in complementarity and collaboration with one another discussed.

Mandate: In its [resolution 51/34](#), the Human Rights Council decided to hold, before the fifty-third session of the Council, an intersessional meeting focused on technical cooperation and capacity-building in the Human Rights Council, aiming to take stock of the past for a better discharge of this mission in the future. Accordingly, panelists will be requested to reflect on the role of the Human Rights Council in the areas they will be presenting on.

Format: The panel discussion will be limited to two hours. The opening by the Chair and initial presentations by the panellists will be followed by a two-part interactive discussion and conclusions from the panellists. A maximum of 40 minutes will be set aside for the panel, which will cover the introduction to the inter-sessional meeting and panellists' presentations. The remaining hour and 20 minutes will be reserved for two segments of interventions from the floor to exchange experiences on technical cooperation or raise questions to the panellists and their responses to questions. The Chair will close the inter-sessional meeting at the end of the second segment (please see the tentative agenda attached to the present for further details).

The list of speakers for the discussion will be established during the meeting by raising of nameplates for State delegations, while non-governmental organizations would inscribe on the list through the list of speakers desk in the room. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions. Statements of delegates who have not been able to take the floor due to time constraints, if made available to the secretariat by email at cisneros@un.org, will be posted on the webpage of the intersessional meeting. Space will be provided for national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations to participate.

Background: The 75th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights reminds the universality, indivisibility and interdependency of human rights. They are at the core of efforts to prevent and overcome current economic, social, political, and environmental challenges. The United Nations Secretary-General has acknowledged the potential of human rights to act as problem-solving measures and ways to address grievances. Technical cooperation serves as a mechanism to materialize that potential while strengthening the capacity of member states to comply with their human rights obligations and provide a platform for other stakeholders to participate in this process. The Human Rights Council's mandate incorporated technical cooperation and capacity-building as vital mechanisms to promoting respect and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, while advancing partnerships, collaboration and genuine dialogue. Also, technical cooperation on human rights is at the core of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) work, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and the consolidation of peacebuilding efforts.

The Human Rights Council fulfils its mandate to promote advisory services, technical assistance and capacity-building through a variety of mechanisms, instruments and forums such as the Universal Periodic Review, Special Procedures, UPR Trust Fund on Implementation, Trust Fund to support the participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the work of the Council, and annual thematic discussions and reports. OHCHR has offered technical cooperation to advance civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and has assisted governments, policymakers, the judiciary, and civil society organizations to built capacity in a variety of areas aiming to connect human rights mechanisms' recommendations to local implementation.

Technical cooperation and capacity-building efforts auspiced by the Human Rights Council have enabled building strong human rights frameworks at the national level, the deployment of human rights advisers to assist the integration of human rights in UN national programming strategies, to advise implementation of the 2030 Agenda rooted in human rights, expand in-country human rights expertise, and support the follow-up to the recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review, Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies.

The new global challenges, States obligations under international law, and their voluntary commitment to fulfil human rights and sustainable development goals require the enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights. This enhancement calls for technical cooperation and capacity-building to deepen genuine dialogue, explore new partnerships, and promote a context-based approach. All this, considering three interlinked factors that should be seen in unison rather than separately: (a) the country's human rights situation (as expressed for example in recommendations by human rights mechanisms), (b) the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights (which requires a holistic rather than a selective approach to rights), and (c) the aim of making a concrete impact at all levels on the ground (focusing on what has the most catalytic and transformational potential). The mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set an important landmark to review ways to make technical cooperation more efficient, effective and coherent, which comprises of, but is not limited to expanding funding for technical cooperation and capacity-building in human rights, boosting OHCHR's role to promote and protect human rights, including rights integration in United Nations country teams' work, advancing mainstreaming of human rights in sustainable development, increasing South-South, South-North, and North-South collaboration, and promoting forums to dialogue, exchange experiences, strengthen synergies between and resilience of stakeholders.

Background documents:

- [Human Rights Council resolution 51/34](#) of 7 October 2022 on enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights
- General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 that established the [Human Rights Council](#)
- Human Rights Council resolutions [5/1](#) of 18 June 2007 on the institution-building of the United Nations Human Rights Council
- Human Rights Council resolution [16/21](#) of March 2011 to review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council
- General Assembly resolution [48/141](#) of 7 January 1994, that created the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Report of the Secretary General on the current system-wide delivery and financing of, and existing gaps in, technical assistance and capacity-building that support the implementation by States of their international human rights obligations and commitments ([A/HRC/49/68](#), 4 February 2022)
- Report of OHCHR on the operations of the voluntary fund for financial and technical assistance in the implementation of the universal periodic review ([A/HRC/50/18](#), 26 April 2022)
- Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights ([A/HRC/52/80](#) (advanced edited version), 23 March 2023)
- [Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#), 2021

- General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)
- Report of OHCHR on the best practices, challenges and lessons learned concerning integrated approaches to the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level ([A/HRC/51/9](#), 4 August 2022).