

Beat: News

Outcomes of the 50th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

US Department of State Fact Sheet

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USPA NEWS - In line with the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to robust re-engagement and leadership in multilateral institutions, the United States marked its second session back on the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) by actively advancing respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms during the body's 50th regular session.

The United States supported the Council's role of shining a spotlight on countries of concern, promoting accountability for governments and actors that abuse human rights, and addressing human rights issues across the globe.

Defending the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons: The United States strongly supported the mandate renewal of the UN Independent Expert (IE) on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). As a co-sponsor of the resolution, the United States successfully worked with partners to galvanize support to renew the mandate for the next three years and to secure inclusion of new language on intersectionality; decriminalization of consensual adult, same-sex conduct; and the importance of non-discrimination. The United States welcomes the SOGI IE's official visit to the United States in August.

Supporting the Rights of Women and Girls: Across several resolutions, joint statements, interactive dialogues, and side events, the United States strongly advocated for greater respect for the human rights and health of women and girls in all their diversity. The United States co-sponsored resolutions focused on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and Girls and the mandate renewal of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and its consequences. The Biden-Harris Administration remains resolutely committed to advancing and protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) at home and abroad—SRHR are essential to health, gender equality and equity, and sustainable development and are a central U.S. foreign policy priority.

Highlighting Human Rights Concerns in Afghanistan with an Urgent Debate: The United States, with the international community, supported an Urgent Debate and a resolution focused on the human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan. We are alarmed by human rights abuses in Afghanistan, often attributed to the Taliban, and are disturbed by the extensive restrictions on the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by Afghan women and girls. The resolution will enable Afghan civil society to address the HRC directly during its September session.

Opposing the Open-Ended Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Israel: The United States led a joint statement on behalf of 22 countries (representing all UN regional groups) expressing deep concern about the unprecedented and open-ended COI on the situation in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza.

Condemning the Human Rights Situation in the People's Republic of China (PRC): The United States was proud to be one of the record-breaking 47 countries to publicly condemn Beijing's domestic human rights record via a Netherlands-led joint statement that expressed deep concern over human rights abuses in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong.

Addressing the Deteriorating Human Rights Situation in Russia: The United States was one of 47 signatories to a strong European Union (EU)-led joint statement addressing the deteriorating human rights situation inside Russia. This statement highlighted serious concerns about the arrest of peaceful protestors, political prisoners including Alexei Navalny, the closure of civil society and media outlets, the particularly concerning situation in the Chechen Republic up to and including extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances, and discriminatory laws, policies, and practices against LGBTI persons and members of religious minority groups.

Upholding Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and of Association (FOAA): The United States was a member of the Core Group that drafted the resolution renewing the mandate for the Special Rapporteur on FOAA. As a co-sponsor, the United States successfully lobbied for the resolution to include language encouraging States to support diverse civil society participation in UN fora, stressing the importance of ensuring internet access extends to everyone, and calling upon States to establish and maintain a safe environment in which civil society can operate freely.

Promoting and Protecting Peaceful Protest: The United States co-sponsored the resolution on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protests. This resolution urges States to facilitate peaceful protests by providing protesters with access to public space within sight and sound of their intended target audience and to promote a safe and enabling environment for individuals to exercise their rights to freedoms of peaceful assembly, expression, and association, both online and offline.

Exposing Violations and Abuses in Belarus: The United States co-sponsored the EU-led resolution to extend the mandate for the Special Rapporteur on Belarus so they can continue to expose the Lukashenka regime's systemic and systematic human rights violations and abuses, including restrictions on the media and freedom of expression and interference with the work of journalists and civil society.

Addressing Ongoing Violations and Abuses in Syria: As part of the Core Group, the United States supported a resolution addressing a range of ongoing human rights violations and abuses in Syria, particularly against women and girls and including the issues of arbitrarily detained and missing persons.

Renewing the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya: The United States worked closely with Libya to renew the mandate for the Independent Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Libya. The FFM will release its final report in March 2023.

Calling for Cooperation on the Situation in Eritrea: The United States co-sponsored the EU-led resolution that successfully extended the mandate for the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea. The resolution calls for the government to fully cooperate with the Special Rapporteur.

Ensuring Continued Reporting on Sudan: As part of the Core Group, the United States helped draft and co-sponsored the resolution on the situation in Sudan, ensuring continued support for the Independent Expert (IE) on Sudan and ensuring the IE's mandate remains, along with reporting requirements on the human rights situation, until the restoration of Sudan's civilian-led government.

Co-sponsored Resolutions: The United States co-sponsored more than half of the resolutions adopted this session, including the resolutions on SOGI, FOAA, Freedom of Expression and Opinion, Peaceful Protest, Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Girls, Violence Against Women and Girls, Internally Displaced Persons, the Independence and Impartiality of the Judiciary with a focus on women's participation, the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, as well as the human rights situations in Belarus, Eritrea, Libya, Sudan, and Syria.

Joint Statements: Besides leading the joint statement on the COI on the situation in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza and signing onto the joint statements on the PRC and Russia, the United States also joined the joint statements on Sri Lanka and Ukraine (with a specific focus on Mariupol). The United States also supported thematic joint statements focused on SOGI, food security, special procedures, migrants, responsibility to protect, women and girls in the context of atrocities, the importance of ensuring stronger language on gender equality across HRC activity, water, and extreme poverty.

Across resolutions, joint statements, and interactive dialogues, the United States advanced language to promote equity and inclusion, including regarding women and girls in all their diversity, internally displaced persons, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous persons, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, and members of other marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Additionally, the United States participated in multiple interactive dialogues related to the human rights situation in Ukraine. We were also pleased to participate in the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on racism, highlighting the Administration's commitment to racial justice.

Side Events:

The United States led three side events: one on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) across different regions; one on the protection of ethnic and religious minority groups in Afghanistan; and one on FOAA.

The United States also participated in several other side events that focused on SOGI, the human rights situation in Belarus, countering antisemitism, and an event to launch a study on CRSV in Ukraine, among others.

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