

FUNDING

To implement its work plan, the Office of the High Commissioner receives funds from the United Nations regular budget and voluntary contributions from Member States, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and individuals. For 2010-2011, total resource requirements are expected to reach \$388 million. Of this amount, regular budget funding is expected to cover approximately \$138 million, while donors will be asked to provide the remaining \$250 million needed to implement the Office's programme of work in full.



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UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Navi Pillay.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Navi Pillay, a South African national, became High Commissioner for Human Rights on 1 September 2008. Appointed by the UN Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly, with due regard to geographical rotation, the post is for a fixed term of four years, with the possibility of one renewal for another fixed term of four years.

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Human Rights for everyone everywhere



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

"Our work focuses on victims and their needs. It is essential to ensure that victims obtain justice."

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay

UNIVERSAL IDEALS

The United Nations Human Rights office represents the world's commitment to universal ideals of human dignity. Ideals that began in ancient philosophical thought are now enshrined in international human rights law. The UN human rights programme aims to make the protection of human rights law a reality in the lives of people everywhere. In so doing the Office of the High Commissioner plays a crucial role in safeguarding the integrity of the three pillars of the United Nations - peace and security, human rights and development.



UN human rights officer meeting members of the landless Chepang community in Nepal.

© OHCHR Photo / Robert Few

training police, soldiers and judges or helping draft new national laws that are in line with international human rights standards.

In many countries the High Commissioner's office also works with human rights institutions, with academic and research institutions and with civil society - charities, advocacy groups, and other social justice organizations that are not linked to government - to strengthen their effectiveness.

The Office of the High Commissioner also provides expert assistance to the Human Rights Council. The Council is made up of representatives of 47 Member States of the UN, elected by the General Assembly for fixed terms. Its major role is to respond with remedies to human rights violations. While the Council is independent and separate from the High Commissioner's Office, a branch of her office facilitates the work of the Council. The High Commissioner's Office also assists the group of independent human rights experts, known as Special Procedures, appointed by the Council, with their investigations and reports. The Council's Universal Periodic Review of the human rights situation in all 192 UN member States also makes demands on the knowledge and drafting expertise of the High Commissioner's staff.

Another branch of the office provides similar expert support to the eight committees, known as Treaty Bodies that monitor countries' efforts to meet the requirements of the international human rights agreements they have signed.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All activities in the programme of the Office are founded in its knowledge of international human rights law. Knowledge, objectivity and independence underpin the entire range of its work including, investigations of gross violations of human rights, documenting the stories of the 'disappeared', providing human rights education to armed and police forces, researching and analysing post conflict rule of law issues, and disbursing money to local organizations that are promoting and protecting human rights in their communities.



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Pottery-makers in the minority Batwa community in Burundi. Poverty is a cause and a product of human rights violations.

THE ISSUES

The variety of ways in which the programme acts on the unique mandate given it by the international community has evolved over time. The current thematic priorities focus on making the human rights achievements of the past half century a universal reality. In 2010-11 the work of the Office is captured in the following six themes:

- ensuring the realisation of human rights in the context of migration
- eliminating discrimination, in particular on the basis of race, sex or religion and against marginalised groups
- protecting economic, social and cultural rights in efforts to combat inequities and poverty, particularly in the context of the economic, food and climate crises
- protecting human rights in situations of armed conflict, violence and insecurity
- combating impunity and strengthening accountability, rule of law and democratic institutions
- strengthening international human rights mechanisms and the progressive development of international human rights law.

human rights* in numbers

100
ratifications of human rights treaties by countries

16
countries where new human rights laws were created

48
countries reviewed by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council

2,206
individuals claimed human rights violations through Special Procedures

11,000
law enforcement personnel trained in human rights norms and standards