



Inter-Governmental, Outreach and External Relations

OHCHR-NY provides substantive support and advice to the General Assembly and its committees on human rights issues. We coordinate OHCHR's interaction with the Security Council to ensure that human rights concerns are taken into account in the Council's work on peace and security. We also provide support to the Geneva-based human rights mechanisms, including special procedures and treaty bodies, in their interactions with the United Nations bodies in New York.

Working with other United Nations departments, civil society organisations and through the media, we carry out public events to promote and advocate for the full realisation of human rights.

How we do it

OHCHR-NY works under the guidance of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and in close collaboration with OHCHR in Geneva and field offices. We contribute to the development and implementation of OHCHR's global policies, strategies and programmes. We also work very closely with other United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. We consult regularly with civil society organisations.

Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

Ivan Šimonović from Croatia is the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights heading OHCHR-NY. He assumed his functions in July 2010. Before joining the United Nations, he served as the Minister of Justice of Croatia. He reports to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay of South Africa.

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Photo credits:

Front panel: top left - the High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay and Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović, ©UN Photo, Devra Berkowitz; top right - OHCHR event honouring human rights defenders at General Assembly Hall with a picture of late Sergio de Mello, former High Commissioner for Human Rights, on large screens, ©UN Photo, Mark Garten; bottom left - UN Secretariat building in New York, home to OHCHR NY Office, ©UN Photo, Andrea Brizzi; bottom right - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (centre) with singer Yvonne Chaka Chaka (left) and singer/actor Ricky Martin at the 2012 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights event in New York, ©UN Photo, Rick Bajornas; back fold - poster for the 30th anniversary of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
Back panel: top - deaf hip-hop artist Signmark performing at OHCHR event on rights of persons with disabilities ©UN Photo, Nenad Vasić; bottom - UN Security Council chamber, ©UN Photo, Eskinder Debebe.



The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York

Safeguarding human rights is one of the three pillars of United Nations action, along with maintaining peace and security, and promoting development.

These goals are pursued primarily through the work of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat based at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, as well as the Human Rights Council based in Geneva.

With its headquarters in Geneva, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – OHCHR – maintains a presence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Who we are

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in New York (OHCHR-NY) works for the effective integration of human rights norms and standards in the decision-making and operational activities of United Nations inter-governmental and inter-agency bodies in New York.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights is represented in New York by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights who heads OHCHR-NY.

The Assistant Secretary-General assists the High Commissioner in advancing the human rights agenda with policy-making bodies, permanent missions of Member States, United Nations departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional groups and the media.

What we do

The greater part of OHCHR's work in New York is towards the integration of human rights into all areas of work of the United Nations. We aim to ensure that human rights standards and principles are incorporated fully into the peace and security, development, and humanitarian work of the United Nations.

OHCHR-NY represents the High Commissioner for Human Rights in meetings and activities at United Nations Headquarters at all levels and in interactions with the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other inter-governmental, inter-departmental and inter-agency bodies and mechanisms

We provide advice and support on human rights issues to the Office of the Secretary-General and interact with permanent missions of Member States and United Nations agencies and departments.

As part of our outreach and public information activities, we work with civil society organisations, academia and the media. The Office organises the annual commemoration of Human Rights Day in New York as well as seminars, training, panel discussions and related events on human rights.

OHCHR-NY is organised around three broad areas: geographic issues; global issues; and inter-governmental, outreach and external relations.



Geographic Issues

Work in the geographic area focuses on regions and countries on the agenda of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and United Nations political missions in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

We participate in United Nations processes to develop and implement crisis prevention and response measures. We provide technical advice on human rights aspects related to peace missions both to Member States and the United Nations system; provide human rights briefings on country situations on the agenda of the Security Council; contribute human rights observations and analysis for reports of the Secretary-General; and provide briefs for the Secretary-General and other senior officials on relevant human rights situations.



Global Issues

Under global issues, we focus on the thematic priorities contained in the High Commissioner's Strategic Framework and thematic issues that are on the agenda of the United Nations bodies in New York. Current areas of work include rule of law and democracy; respect for human rights while countering terrorism; peacekeeping and peacebuilding; protection of civilians; gender and women's rights; children's rights; the Millennium Development Goals; economic, social and cultural rights; and combating discrimination against minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, persons with disabilities and older persons.

OHCHR-NY leads OHCHR's efforts to end discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Work in this area includes clarifying State obligations under international human rights law; providing advice to Member States, United Nations bodies and officials; and conducting public information and advocacy campaigns.