SPECIAL PROCEDURES AND COVID-19
A human rights response to the pandemic

Special Procedures have taken numerous initiatives in relation to COVID-19 with the aim of stressing the importance of adopting a human rights-based approach in addressing the crisis. Special Procedures have issued recommendations to States and other stakeholders through various public actions, such as guidance tools, dispatches, trackers, videos or press releases, and they stand ready to assist. Mandate holders are also addressing these issues through their communications procedure and their reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.

A general call stressing that “everyone has the right to life-saving interventions” has been issued by more than 60 mandate holders.

158 press releases* (79 individual and 79 joint) have been issued and 602 communications* have been sent to States and non-State actors by mandate holders.

Guidelines, dispatches, open letters and other reference tools have been released on the following themes:
- Humanitarian concerns and negative impact of unilateral sanctions and their exemptions;
- COVID-19 response and recovery free from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
- the impact and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on trafficked and exploited persons;
- persons affected by leprosy;
- negative impact of unilateral sanctions during the state of emergency;
- prison overcrowding;
- impact on LGBT communities around the world;
- protecting informal settlements, homeless, renters and mortgage payers, prohibition of evictions, and financialization and the future;
- responding to the crisis without halting freedoms of assembly and of association;
- government responses to the pandemic that affect civic freedoms and human rights;
- disability considerations during the outbreak and disability-inclusive social protection;
- recommended economic, financial, monetary, fiscal, tax, trade and social policies;
- keeping the judiciary functioning during the crisis;
- the use of force by law-enforcement personnel;
- racial equity and racial equality in providing health services for all.

* Updated to 28 February 2022