

# SPECIAL PROCEDURES AND COVID-19

## *A human rights response to the pandemic*



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
SPECIAL PROCEDURES

SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS, INDEPENDENT EXPERTS & WORKING GROUPS

Special procedures have taken various initiatives in relation to COVID-19 with the objective to stress the importance of adopting a human rights approach in addressing the crisis. Special procedures mandate holders have issued various 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 communication procedure and their reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.

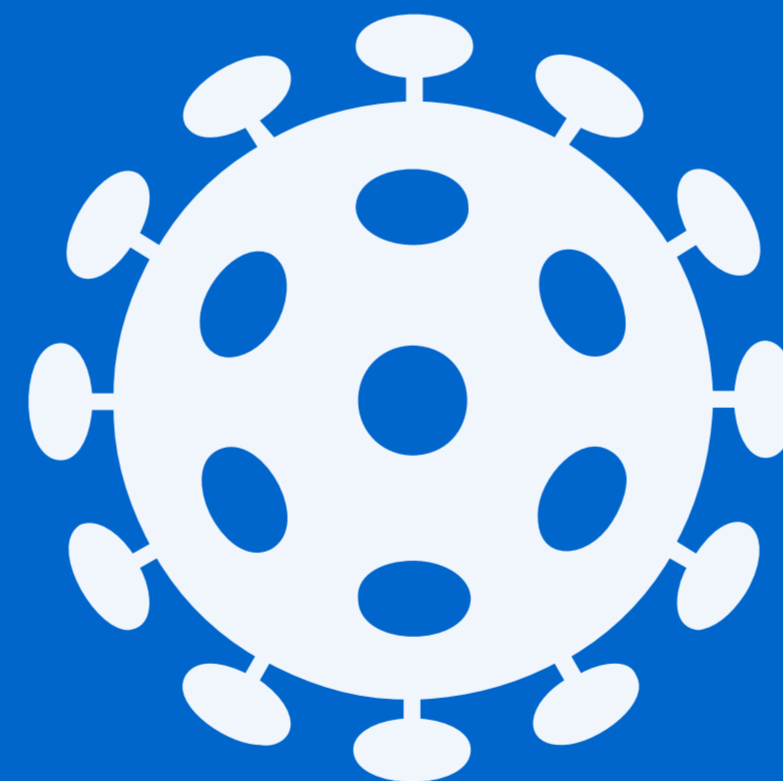
A **general call** stressing that “everyone has the right to life-saving interventions” has been issued by more than **60 mandate holders**.

**92 press releases\*** (53 individual and 39 joint) have been issued and **127 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:

- 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.

- A **statement** delivered by the *Special Rapporteur on racism* at a **webinar** has been made available;
- a **video advisory** has been issued by the *Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association*;
- a **podcast** featuring the *Special Rapporteur on racism* warning against the rise of xenophobia has been made available;
- a **talk** on “Beyond the outbreak: cultural rights during and after the pandemic” has been delivered by the *Special Rapporteur on cultural rights*;
- a **video campaign** focusing on hand washing, access to sanitation as a measure to prevent the disease, and COVID-19, water and gender equality has been issued by the *Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation*;
- a **video campaign** with a call for a global ban on evictions and recommendations concerning informal settlements has been launched by the *Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing*;
- a **social media campaign** aimed at sharing trends and recommendations issued by Special Procedures, including an open letter addressed to the LGBT community, has been launched by the *Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity*.



**Two reports** have been released, by the *Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression* and the *Special Rapporteur on the right to education*. **15 mandate holders\*** are planning to issue reports relating to the pandemic.



**COVID-19  
RESPONSE**

\* As of 7 August 2020