

ACHRS POLICY BRIEFING

HRC63



Our priorities ahead of the 63rd session of
the Human Rights Council.



*In special consultative status with UN ECOSOC
Honorary of UN Human Rights Prize 2023*

Telephone:

+962646655043

Address:

Sharaf Complex, Umayyah Bin Abd Shams
St. 6, Amman, Jordan

Email:

media@achrs.org

Fax:

+962646655043

Editor:

Victoria Rebok

Website:

www.achrs.org/english

OUR PRIORITIES

The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) is an independent non-governmental Think Tank center advocating for the enhancement of democracy and human rights in Jordan and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Center's seven priorities are:

The Center advances its objectives through strategic lobbying and advocacy, with the United Nations serving as its principal forum for engagement. ACHRS has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), allowing it to meaningfully participate in international debates and discussions. Ahead of our engagement at the 63rd session of the Human Rights Council, we've prepared this briefing to inform our community of the topics that we will be focusing on and discussions we will be partaking in.

THE RIGHT TO LIFE
THE RIGHT TO SPEAK
THE RIGHT TO THINK
THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE
WOMEN'S RIGHTS
THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION
YOUTH RIGHTS

THEMATIC PRIORITIES

THE QUESTION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

In resolution 1745 (LIV), the Economic and Social Council requested that the Secretary-General submit quinquennial reports on the status of capital punishment worldwide. Human Rights Council decision 18/117 subsequently requested that the Secretary-General submit an annual supplement to this report. While the supplement has yet to be published, it is expected to be available for the Council's consideration during the general debate under Item 3, scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 September.

As a long-standing advocate for the right to life, ACHRS takes a particular interest in this agenda item. The past year has witnessed a marked increase in executions worldwide, particularly in the Arab region. Of particular concern is the Israeli occupation's recently adopted death penalty legislation, which provides for the discriminatory application of capital punishment against Palestinians. In light of the Secretary-General's 2025 annual supplement, which examined the discriminatory impact of the death penalty, ACHRS hopes to see this issue addressed during the general debate.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 54/14, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) submitted a report outlining the activities conducted between 3 May 2025 and 8 May 2026, and highlighting any notable developments or areas of particular concern. The published report ([A/HRC/63/28](#)) will be discussed in an Interactive Dialogue (ID) between the Working Group and the Council on 14 September.

Given the troubling relationship between enforced disappearances and executions, ACHRS also takes a particular interest in this agenda item. It notes that the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has identified several Arab States as areas of particular concern, including Algeria, Egypt, Sudan and Syria. The report also highlights troubling developments in occupied Palestine, where Israeli authorities have been repeatedly accused of disappearing civilians seeking aid, including children. As highlighted by the report, these cases are particularly concerning in the context of the occupation's aforementioned death penalty legislation. ACHRS hopes to see this issue addressed in the upcoming Interactive Dialogue (ID).

ARBITRARY DETENTION

Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 60/8, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention submitted a report outlining its activities in the year 2025, and examining the thematic issue of arbitrary detention and transnational repression. The published report ([A/HRC/63/33](#)) will be discussed in an Interactive Dialogue (ID) between the Working Group and the Council on 15 September.

The troubling relationship between arbitrary detention and executions makes this agenda item of particular interest to ACHRS. As outlined in the report, a significant number of the opinions adopted by the Working Group concerned Arab States, underscoring the prevalence of arbitrary detention in the region. The majority of these cases concerned Egypt and Saudi Arabia, while other Gulf States were also the subject of the Working Group's consideration. ACHRS looks forward to the insights and conclusions arising from the forthcoming Interactive Dialogue on the topic.

FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION

In its Resolution 56/7, the Human Rights Council requested that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) conduct a study on the impact of strategic lawsuits on freedom of opinion and expression, and to convene a workshop on the topic.

ACHRS is saddened to learn that, due to the liquidity crisis affecting the organisation, OHCHR was unable to complete the requested study. Instead, the Council will have before it a summary of the workshop convened on 28 May 2025 ([A/HRC/63/47](#)) when considering the issue of freedom of opinion and expression during the general debate under Item 3, scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 September.

As one of its seven priorities, ACHRS attaches particular importance to the protection of freedom of opinion and expression. It considers that, since the OHCHR-led workshop was convened in early 2025, several concerning developments have emerged, particularly with regard to the use of strategic lawsuits to restrict the exercise of these freedoms. At the global level, ACHRS, together with the **Arab Society for Academic Freedom (ASAF)**, expresses deep concern over the use of such lawsuits against pro-Palestinian students and organisations, particularly on university campuses. More broadly, across the Arab world, freedom of expression has come under increasing restriction under the pretext of national security concerns following the US and Israeli attacks against Iran. ACHRS looks forward to bringing these developments to the Council's attention during its consideration of the issue from 15 to 16 September.

EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In 2018, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) developed draft guidelines on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs, which were subsequently presented in Human Rights Council Resolution 39/11 as a set of orientations for States to follow. Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 57/17, the OHCHR has prepared a follow-up report ([A/HRC/63/50](#)) on good practices and challenges that States face when implementing the guidelines. The Council will consider this report during the general debate under Item 3, scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 September.

As a long-standing advocate for democracy in the Arab world, ACHRS takes particular interest in this agenda item. Despite initial gains made in the wake of the 2011 Arab Uprising, progress towards democracy has stalled in the region, with many States backsliding on their commitments. ACHRS therefore welcomes the report's emphasis on the need for sustained, long-term political commitment to promoting electoral participation, including through the constitutional entrenchment of voting rights. Together with the **Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR)**, ACHRS also expresses concern over persistently low levels of electoral participation across the region, with declining numbers of citizens— particularly young people— expressing an interest in participating in elections. ACHRS looks forward to bringing this concern to the Council's attention during its consideration of the report from 15 to 16 September.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

In its Resolution 60/19, the Human Rights Council requested that the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights prepare a report on best practices and main challenges in the promotion and protection of the human rights of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations. Although not yet published, the Council is expected to discuss the findings of the report through an Interactive Dialogue (ID) with the High Commissioner on 16 September.

Given that women's rights is one of its seven priority areas, ACHRS takes special interest in this topic. In anticipation of the forthcoming report, which is expected to focus on ending impunity and ensuring accountability for gross violations of human rights, ACHRS expresses particular concern over the systematic use of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) as a tactic of war by Israeli forces, as documented in the Secretary-General's follow-up report on Security Council resolution 1820 (2008). In light of Israel's ongoing illegal invasion of Lebanon, ACHRS expects the Council to pay particular attention to this issue.

YOUTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In its Resolution 57/30, the Human Rights Council requested that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) conduct a study on the impact of mental health challenges on the enjoyment of human rights by young people. While the report is yet to be published, it is expected to be presented to the Council to be considered during the general debate under Item 3, scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 September.

With youth rights being a key priority area, ACHRS takes particular interest in this topic. It notes that youth in the Arab world are deeply affected by poor standards in higher education institutions, high unemployment rates, and a lack of political representation needed to address these issues. ACHRS hopes to see these issues addressed in the forthcoming report, as well as during the general debate scheduled from 15 to 16 September.

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PALESTINE AND OTHER OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

ACHRS welcomes the continued inclusion of Item 7, concerning the human rights situation in Palestine and other Arab territories, on the Human Rights Council's agenda, underscoring the continued importance of maintaining this stand-alone agenda item. While no reports have been submitted under Item 7 for the upcoming session, there are several issues that ACHRS hopes the Council will continue to monitor and address.

ACHRS expresses deep concern over the continued expansion of Israeli settlements and the resulting displacement of Palestinians from their homes and communities. In the first three months of 2026 alone, the number of Palestinians displaced from the West Bank reportedly surpassed the total recorded throughout 2025. This escalation has taken place against a backdrop of increasing settler violence, including incidents of sexual violence, to which women and girls are particularly vulnerable. ACHRS is further concerned that similar patterns of displacement and territorial encroachment are emerging in Lebanon, where Israeli forces have established a military presence across significant parts of the south, resulting in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. ACHRS urges the Council to consider these developments together, particularly in light of the broader patterns of occupation, settlement expansion, displacement and violence affecting Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. It hopes that these concerns will receive sustained attention during the Council's consideration of Item 7 on 28 and 29 September.

ACHRS further calls on the Council to address Israel's recently adopted death penalty legislation and its discriminatory application to Palestinians. This development should, in ACHRS's view, be considered within the broader context of the systemic discrimination and institutionalised domination associated with the Israeli occupation. ACHRS looks forward to drawing the Council's attention to these concerns and to the implications of the legislation for the protection of the right to life and the principle of non-discrimination.

RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED FORMS OF INTOLERANCE

As an organisation committed to the principles of equality and justice, ACHRS likewise welcomes the inclusion of Item 8 on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance. Numerous topics are expected to be debated under this item, including a report prepared by the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement. Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolutions 47/21 and 56/13, the Mechanism prepared an annual report ([A/HRC/63/72](#)) outlining its activities and exploring the topic of racial discrimination in drug policy, to be discussed during an Interactive Dialogue (ID) on 29 September. Given the report's troubling findings on the racial underpinnings of national drug policies, ACHRS is eager to hear how the Council will continue its work in promoting equitable and fair drug legislations. ACHRS is also deeply concerned by the High Commissioner's parallel report ([A/HRC/63/69](#)), which notes increased levels of violence being used against individuals and communities of African descent by law enforcement. It looks forward to hearing this issue addressed during the Interactive Dialogue (ID) on 29 September.

ACHRS is also interested in the report ([A/HRC/63/75](#)) by the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, requested by Human Rights Council Resolution 54/27. Adopted in 2001, the Durban Declaration is a framework intended to eliminate global racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. ACHRS is concerned by the findings of the report, which note the challenges posed by the continuing far-right growth. It looks forward to hearing this issue addressed during the general debate under Item 9 on 30 September and 1 October.

COUNTRY PRIORITIES

SYRIA

In its Resolution 61/3, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. The Commission of Inquiry is expected to provide the Council with an oral update on 7 September.

Given the period of profound societal transformation Syria is currently undergoing, ACHRS looks forward to the Commission of Inquiry's oral update. As an organisation committed to promoting democracy in the Arab world, ACHRS is particularly interested in the discussion surrounding Syria's recent elections for the People's Assembly, including the concerningly low levels of popular participation. ACHRS hopes that the Commission's update will provide insight into the broader implications of these developments for democratic governance in Syria.

SUDAN

In its Resolution 62/1, the Human Rights Council requested that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) present an oral update on the human rights situation in and around El Obeid, to be presented at the 63rd session. This is complemented by Resolution 60/3, in which the Human Rights Council requested the independent international Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan to submit a comprehensive report on its work ([A/HRC/63/23](#)), with particular attention paid to El Obeid. The oral update and report are to be presented to the Council on 7 September, with an Interactive Dialogue (ID) being held on the same day.

Given the deepening humanitarian crisis engulfing the country, ACHRS looks forward to the Council's consideration of the situation. It notes with deep concern the findings of the Fact-Finding Mission that external support is playing a key role in sustaining the conflict, with the provision of advanced military technologies contributing to increasing civilian casualties. ACHRS looks forward to hearing how States providing such support and military capabilities will be held accountable for their role in the conflict and for any resulting violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

YEMEN

In its Resolution 60/31, the Human Rights Council requested that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights present a report on the implementation of technical assistance in Yemen ([A/HRC/63/78](#)). The report is expected to be presented to the Council on 5 October.

In light of the findings of the report, ACHRS expresses deep concern over the persistent targeting of United Nations personnel by parties to the conflict. It is also concerned that the Organisation's ongoing liquidity crisis may undermine the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)'s capacity to continue providing support to the mission in Yemen. ACHRS looks forward to hearing how OHCHR intends to address these challenges and ensure the continuity of its assistance.

AFGHANISTAN

Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 60/2, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan submitted a report ([A/HRC/63/22](#)) outlining developments and emerging concerns between November 2025 and August 2026. The Council is expected to discuss the report through an Interactive Dialogue (ID) with the Special Rapporteur on 7 September.

Given the dire state of women's rights in Afghanistan, ACHRS takes a particular interest in the Council's consideration of this issue. Together with the **Arab Society for Academic Freedom (ASAF)**, ACHRS expresses particular concern over the Special Rapporteur's findings regarding the severe restrictions on women's and girls' access to education. ACHRS further highlights that these restrictions extend beyond the exclusion of women and girls from educational institutions to the systematic removal of female and gender perspectives from curricula. ACHRS looks forward to the Council's discussion of these developments and their broader implications for women's and girls' right to education.

OUR ENGAGEMENT

WRITTEN STATEMENTS*

ACHRS' engagement with the 63rd session of the Human Rights Council has already begun. The Center has submitted numerous Written Statements to be considered by the Council, including on:

- The Question of the Death Penalty (authored by Victoria Rebok);
- Freedom of Speech and Expression (authored by Victoria Rebok);
- Equal Participation in Political and Public Affairs – submitted in conjunction with ASAF (authored by Victoria Rebok);
- Afghanistan – submitted in conjunction with ASAF (authored by Victoria Rebok);
- Implementing the Durban Declaration in the Middle East (authored by Filipe Dias Kalgaard and Romina M. Iramloo).

ORAL STATEMENTS*

In addition to monitoring sessions, ACHRS will attend various discussions of the Human Rights Council in-person, represented by Victoria Rebok and Filipe Dias Kalgaard. They are expected to deliver oral statements on various issues, such as:

- Academic Freedom – delivered in conjunction with ASAF (delivered by Victoria Rebok);
- Equal Participation in Political and Public Affairs (delivered by Victoria Rebok);
- Racism and Discrimination (delivered by Filipe Dias Kalgaard);
- Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories (delivered by Filipe Dias Kalgaard).

SIDE EVENTS

During its in-person attendance, ACHRS will also aim to attend and participate in various networking and side events, particularly those organised by fellow NGOs.

*These are expected to be published on our website following the conclusion of the Human Rights Council's 63rd session.

KEY EVENTS & DATES

7 OPENING OF HRC63. ID on Sudan; ID on Afghanistan; Update on Syria.	8	9 Panel on Promoting and Protecting Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Within the Context of Addressing Inequalities	10 UNITED NATIONS HOLIDAY	11 Biennial Panel on Right to Development.	12	13
14 ID with WGEID on Enforced Disappearances.	15 High-Level Panel on 15th Anniversary of UN Declaration on Human Rights Education. ID with WG on Arbitrary Detention.	16 ID on the human rights of women and children in conflict situations. ITEM 3 – General Debate	17 High-Level Panel on 60th Anniversary of International Covenants on Human Rights. ITEM 3 – General Debate.	18	19	20
21	22	23 Annual Panel on Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	24	25	26	27
28 ITEM 7 – General Debate.	29 ITEM 7 – General Debate. ID with HC and International Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement.	30 ID with WG on People of African Descent; ID on report of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. ITEM 9 – General Debate.	SEPTEMBER			

OCTOBER

1 ITEM 9 – General Debate.	2	3	4
5 Presentation of Yemen country report.	6 Decisions & Conclusions.	7 Decisions & Conclusions. END OF HRC63.	

KEEP UPDATED
THROUGH OUR SOCIAL
MEDIA!



#HRC63