

## BRIEFING ON AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE 47<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

This briefing paper sets out Amnesty International's key calls on all states ahead of the 47<sup>th</sup> regular session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC47).

All UN member states have a responsibility to ensure that the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) fulfils its mandate to promote and protect human rights, to respond to human rights crises, and to prevent violations of human rights.

The HRC must take urgent and robust action to address and seek to stem the ongoing serious human rights violations and abuses and violations of international law in the **Tigray** region of Ethiopia, building on the important [resolution](#) adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on 12 May 2021. States should also ensure meaningful action is taken to address other serious patterns of human rights violations that require the Council's urgent attention - including in **China, Cameroon, Egypt, India, Iran, Lebanon, the Philippines, Russia** and **Saudi Arabia**. States should support the renewal of important existing mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteurs on **Belarus** and **Eritrea**, and support continued examination of the situation in **Ukraine**. In addressing situations of concern, we encourage states, particularly those that have signed onto the HRC membership pledge, to root their positions in the [objective criteria for HRC action](#) and to ensure that HRC members are held to higher scrutiny, in line with the spirit of GA resolution 60/251.

Ensuring a meaningful follow-up to HRC resolution 43/1 to **address, prevent and ensure accountability for structural racism, the excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers against Africans and people of African descent, including in the United States of America (USA)**, will be a key test for the HRC, and of the [commitment](#) to common "resolve and cooperation" delivered by the USA on behalf of 156 states at HRC46. We call on the HRC to establish a **Special Procedure on Climate Change** at HRC47, and also hope to see states work towards bold and meaningful resolutions on **migration, civil society space, violence against women, and new and emerging technologies**; as well as clear strategies for their subsequent implementation. We hope to see an initiative to revive the regular interactive dialogues and OHCHR reporting on the **human rights impact of the Covid-19 pandemic**, which are critical to addressing ongoing and emerging challenges and providing space for international dialogue and cooperation.

States must vigorously **defend the HRC and its mechanisms against efforts to undermine them**. Of particular concern are efforts to undermine the independence of Special Procedures, which is central to their effectiveness as the "eyes and ears" of the Council, and we hope to see states take a principled stand to protect this vital mechanism from attack.

Finally, we encourage states to take additional efforts to consult meaningfully with **civil society, including national and regional actors**, and those directly affected in the context of the situations and issues under consideration, as they develop their positions and initiatives, and in this regard to leverage the additional opportunities presented by the move to online consultations and engagement. In a similar vein, we urge the HRC President, Bureau, and all UN member states, to ensure that the ability of civil society to engage in the full scope of the work of the HRC, including through formal debates and negotiations, is not unduly impacted by restrictions related to the pandemic.

## HUMAN RIGHTS CRISES THAT REQUIRE THE HRC'S URGENT ATTENTION

We urge states to take robust action to address several human rights crises not already on the HRC's agenda for HRC47. Among situations that merit the attention of the HRC, we urge States to:

- Follow up on the joint statement on **Cameroon**, delivered by the United Kingdom (UK) on behalf of 38 countries in March 2019,<sup>1</sup> given the continued deterioration of the situation on the ground following the High Commissioner's visit in May 2019.<sup>2</sup> Serious human rights violations and abuses continue to be committed by the security forces and armed groups, with OHCHR recently noting reports of extrajudicial executions, torture, sexual and gender-based violence and abductions.<sup>3</sup> Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced due to violence.<sup>4</sup> We also share concerns expressed by Special Procedures<sup>5</sup> over the ongoing crackdown on peaceful dissent and on critics of the Government<sup>6</sup> and increased intimidation and aggression against human rights defenders.<sup>7</sup> We would like to see a resolution putting in place monitoring and reporting on the situation, or at the very least an action-oriented joint statement, setting clear benchmarks to be fulfilled by the Government of Cameroon to ensure measurable progress on human rights.
- Take robust action to respond to the increasingly alarming human rights situation in **China**, building on joint statements delivered by the [UK on behalf of 27 states](#) at HRC44 and by [Germany on behalf of 39 states](#) at the Third Committee. We urge those states that continued to use their voice to defend China's record at HRC46 to re-evaluate their stance as the evidence of grave human rights violations against Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in Xinjiang continues to mount and the crackdown continues in Hong Kong. Given China's continued blanket denials in the face of mounting credible evidence, HRC action is overdue. We urge states to convene an Urgent Debate to address the human rights situation in China, and to launch a remote monitoring and reporting mechanism, in line with the clear and strong [call by an unprecedented number of Special Procedures](#) mandate-holders<sup>8</sup> and [hundreds of civil society organisations from all regions](#).<sup>9</sup>
- Establish a monitoring and reporting mechanism on the Human Rights situation in **Egypt**. A [joint cross regional declaration](#) delivered on 12 March 2021 at HRC 45 represented a critical and necessary first step by the international community to defend the survival of the human rights movement in Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Following the delivery of this statement we have seen some positive impact (including the release of a number of arbitrarily detained). At the same time, the Egyptian government has renewed its effort to defend and distort its alarming human rights record, denying the scale and gravity of the violations, and making clear that as of yet it is unwilling to undertake fundamental reform. Continued and enhanced pressure is the best way for the Human Rights Council to promote a meaningful improvement in the human rights situation in the country, and to urge the authorities to unshackle freedoms, including as set forth in a [joint call](#) by 64 organisations to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UK-led joint statement on Cameroon available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/human-rights-council-40-cameroon>.

<sup>2</sup> OHCHR, Bachelet welcomes Cameroon's willingness to cooperate to tackle human rights crises, 6 May 2019, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24565&LangID=E>.

<sup>3</sup> OHCHR, Press briefing notes on Cameroon: Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Ravina Shamdasani, 27 October 2020 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26428&LangID=E>.

<sup>4</sup> OCHA, Cameroon: North-West and South-West Situation Report No.29, 26 April 2021, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/fr/operations/cameroon/document/cameroon-north-west-and-south-west-situation-report-no29>.

<sup>5</sup> OHCHR, Cameroon: UN human rights experts call for end to detention and intimidation of peaceful protesters, 12 October 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26372&LangID=E>.

<sup>6</sup> Amnesty International, Cameroon: Arbitrary detentions and military courts highlight the latest crackdown on opposition members, 9 December 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/cameroon-arbitrary-detentions-and-military-courts-highlight-the-latest-crackdown/>.

<sup>7</sup> OHCHR, Cameroon must protect human rights defenders – UN experts, 28 April 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25835&LangID=E>.

<sup>8</sup> OHCHR, UN experts call for decisive measures to protect fundamental freedoms in China, 26 June 2020, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26006&LangID=E>.

<sup>9</sup> Global call for international human rights monitoring mechanisms on China, 9 September 2020, AI ref. ASA 17/3026/2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/3026/2020/en/>.

<sup>10</sup> Joint statement on Egypt delivered by Finland, available at [https://finlandabroad.fi/web/geneve/current-affairs/-/asset\\_publisher/h5w4iTUJhNne/content/finland-together-with-a-group-of-countries-express-their-concern-over-the-trajectory-of-human-rights-in-egypt-during-the-item-4-general-debate-at-the-/384951](https://finlandabroad.fi/web/geneve/current-affairs/-/asset_publisher/h5w4iTUJhNne/content/finland-together-with-a-group-of-countries-express-their-concern-over-the-trajectory-of-human-rights-in-egypt-during-the-item-4-general-debate-at-the-/384951).

<sup>11</sup> Joint Public Statement, Egypt: President Should Act to Unshackle Freedoms, 1 June 2021, MDE 12/4228/2021, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde12/4228/2021/en/>.

- Ensure a meaningful response to the ferocious tide of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in the armed conflict that has now raged for over six months in Ethiopia's **Tigray** region as a matter of urgency. Since fighting broke out on 4 November 2020, thousands of civilians have been killed, hundreds of thousands of people have been internally displaced within Tigray, and 63,000 refugees have fled to Sudan. Amnesty International and other organizations have documented a string of serious human rights violations that include war crimes and likely crimes against humanity.<sup>12</sup> There are also numerous credible reports of women and girls being subjected to sexual violence, including gang rape by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers. According to the UN, the humanitarian situation in Tigray is worsening due to restrictions on humanitarian movement and the ongoing fighting. Displacement and insecurity are challenging crop production in Tigray during the main rainy season (June-August), which poses a serious risk of famine. Amnesty welcomes the [important resolution](#) adopted by the African Commission on 12 May, establishing a Commission of Inquiry, and urges the HRC to do all it can to support, bolster and create synergies with that initiative. A space should be created for the HRC to be briefed on the findings of the investigation, to provide a concrete basis to decide what more can be done by the international community to prevent further human rights violations and abuses and to ensure accountability. A robust and dedicated approach is both critical and urgent, given the gravity of the crimes that continue to be committed, the complexity of the crisis, and the involvement of various parties.
- Hold **India** to its commitments and pledges as an HRC member, and to address the increasing concerns being raised consistently by civil society as well as the High Commissioner<sup>13</sup> and Special Procedures. Despite committing in its [membership pledges](#) to “foster the genuine participation and effective involvement of civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights,” since assuming its seat on the HRC, we have witnessed an alarming crackdown on civil society in India and excessive use of force, arrests and arbitrary detention of peaceful protesters.<sup>14</sup> Amnesty International India has been among those targeted for human rights work, and was forced to shut down operations in September 2020,<sup>15</sup> while former staff members continue to be intimidated and harassed. We have also been alarmed by increased discrimination against minorities – particularly Muslims – including through the weaponization of the National Population Register and the Foreigners Tribunals by the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). States should raise these concerns at HRC47 and urge India to take urgent remedial measures.
- Take concrete steps to address systematic impunity for the most serious crimes under international law committed in **Iran** by establishing an impartial and independent mechanism, complementary to the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, to collect, consolidate, preserve, and analyse evidence that meet general standards of admissibility in criminal proceedings in order to facilitate future fair and independent criminal proceedings. These crimes and serious violations of international law include the [unlawful killing of hundreds of unarmed men, women and children](#), and widespread commission of arbitrary detention, [torture and enforced disappearance](#) since the crackdown on nationwide protests in November 2019.<sup>16</sup> They also include past and

<sup>12</sup> Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Tepid international response to Tigray conflict fuels horrific violations over past six months, 4 May 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/ethiopia-tepid-international-response-to-tigray-conflict-fuels-horrific-violations-over-past-six-months/>; Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Eritrean troops' massacre of hundreds of Axum civilians may amount to crime against humanity, 26 February 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-axum-civilians-may-amount-to-crime-against-humanity/>.

<sup>13</sup> OHCHR, Bachelet dismayed at restrictions on human rights NGOs and arrests of activists in India, 20 October 2020, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26398>.

<sup>14</sup> See for example Special Procedures communication AL IND 3/2020, 28 February 2020, available at <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25080>.

<sup>15</sup> On 21 October, a group of UN Special Procedures sent a communication to the Indian government, expressing concerns about the allegations of police and judicial harassment of Amnesty India, in part, as retaliation for its human rights work in the country and the incompatibility of the FCRA with international human rights standards. See: Special Procedure communication AL IND 17/2020, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25633>.

<sup>16</sup> Amnesty International, Iran: Details released of 304 deaths during protests six months after security forces' killing spree, 20 May 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/05/iran-details-released-of-304-deaths-during-protests-six-months-after-security-forces-killing-sprees/>; Iran: At least 23 children killed by security forces in November protests – new evidence, 4 March 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/iran-at-least-23-children-killed-by-security-forces-in-november-protests-new-evidence/>; Iran: Trampling Humanity - Mass arrests, disappearances and torture since Iran's 2019 November protests, 2 September 2020, Index number: MDE

ongoing violations related to prison massacres in 1988, which a group of UN experts stated in a September 2020 [communication](#) “may amount to crimes against humanity.”<sup>17</sup> The experts stated that should Iran “continue to refuse to uphold its obligations under international law, we call on the international community to take action ... through the establishment of an international investigation.” Amnesty International [has concluded](#) that in addition to committing the crime against humanity of murder in 1988, the Iranian authorities continue to commit the crimes against humanity of enforced disappearance, torture, persecution and other inhumane acts.<sup>18</sup> Failure to investigate and prosecute those against whom there is evidence of direct involvement with these crimes, who include the current head of the judiciary and minister of justice, has not only further entrenched impunity but also facilitated the repetition of such crimes.

- Take concrete steps to establish an international investigation to ensure the rights to truth, justice, and remedy for victims of the 4 August 2020 explosion at the port of Beirut in **Lebanon**. Amnesty International issued a [detailed statement](#) in support of such an investigation in the immediate aftermath of the explosion.<sup>19</sup> Since then the case for such an international investigation has only strengthened, with a domestic process that has failed to protect and guarantee human rights, to conduct effective, independent, or impartial investigations, and to guarantee effective remedy and reparations. As we approach the one-year anniversary of the blast, and in the face of this vacuum, the HRC must take meaningful steps to create the type of investigation that is lacking at domestic level.
- Take steps towards launching an investigation into unlawful killings and other serious violations in the **Philippines**. HRC47 will mark one year since the presentation of the OHCHR report on the Philippines ([A/HRC/44/22](#)). Since then, the violations identified in the report have continued unabated. Amnesty continues to receive reports of unlawful killings of people suspected of using and selling drugs and President Duterte continues to publicly endorse and incite violence.<sup>20</sup> There has been an upsurge of violations including a wave of killings, threats, and harassment of activists and human rights defenders, as well as Indigenous peoples, lawyers and judges, journalists, government critics and other groups who have been “red-tagged” or labelled as “communists” and “terrorists”<sup>21</sup> under the government’s “counter-insurgency” campaign.<sup>22</sup> Amnesty is aware of only one known prosecution of police involved in thousands of suspected extrajudicial executions, while the Office of the President has yet to allow the release of the findings of an interagency group set up to review over 5,000 killings in police anti-drug operations.<sup>23</sup> A full international investigation is needed to address the pervasive impunity that continues to fuel these serious violations. States must take steps at HRC47 towards a more robust approach to the situation, in line with the High Commissioner’s recommendation that “in the absence of clear and measurable outcomes from domestic mechanisms,” the HRC should “consider options for international accountability measures.”<sup>24</sup>
- Call on **Russia** to fulfil its international obligations and to meet its commitments as an HRC member to promote the highest standards of human rights and cooperate with the HRC and its mechanisms. HRC47 will occur against the backdrop of a wide-scale clampdown on human rights and dissent in Russia. We welcome the joint [cross regional statement](#) by 45 states at HRC46, raising concern about

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13/2891/2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2891/2020/en/>.

<sup>17</sup> Correspondence to Iran from a group of UN Special Procedures, 3 September 2020, Ref. Special Procedure communication AL IRN 20/2020, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25503>.

<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International, Iran: Blood Soaked Secrets Why Iran’s Prison Massacres are Ongoing Crimes Against Humanity, 4 December 2018, Index number: MDE 13/9421/2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/9421/2018/en/>.

<sup>19</sup> Lebanon: Only an International Investigation can Ensure Beirut Explosion Victims’ Rights to Truth, Justice and Remedy, 7 September 2020, Index number: MDE 18/2997/2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde18/2997/2020/en/>.

<sup>20</sup> News Info Inquirer, Why blame me for drug pushers’ death? Going into drug trade is suicide, Duterte says, Gabriel Pabico Lalu, 15 October 2020, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1348059/why-blame-me-for-drug-pushers-death-going-into-drug-trade-is-suicide-duterte-says>.

<sup>21</sup> Press Briefing Notes on Philippines, Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Ravina Shamdasani, Geneva, 9 March 2021 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26865&LangID=E>.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/nation/tumandok-killed-nabbed-police-panay-island>; <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1386167/cordillera-police-chief-issues-shootkill-order-vs-ip-group-leader>.

<sup>23</sup> Rappler, 2 months after DOJ’s drug war report: Where are the cases?, Lian Buan, 23 April 2021, <https://www.rappler.com/nation/where-are-cases-after-doj-drug-war-report-april-2021>.

<sup>24</sup> OHCHR, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Philippines, 4 June 2021, UN doc. A/HRC/44/22, para 88.iii.

this crackdown and the deteriorating situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Russia.<sup>25</sup> We note with alarm however that since then the Russian authorities appear to have further accelerated their crackdown on dissent, including through the increased abuse of “anti-extremism”, “foreign agent” and “undesirable” organizations legislation and a raft of further legislative amendments designed to facilitate such abuse. In this context it is crucial that the HRC pays close attention to Russia and urges it to fundamentally change its direction on human rights.

- Establish a monitoring and reporting mechanism on the human rights situation **Saudi Arabia**. A series of joint declarations on the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia at [HRC40](#), [HRC42](#), and [HRC45](#) brought much-needed attention to the situation and identified clear benchmarks for improvement.<sup>26</sup> The government responded to this international pressure in an attempt to burnish its image: authorities have released several prominent human rights defenders including Loujain al-Hathoul and taken some initial steps to improve major human rights concerns related to the guardianship system and the death penalty. We have not, however, seen institutionalized and sustained improvement on the benchmarks identified related to freedom of expression and human rights defenders, and reforms related to the death penalty have not been formally institutionalized in the country’s legislation; on the contrary, we have seen the situation in Saudi Arabia deteriorate, in particular with further harsh prison sentences against human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience. The authorities continue to prosecute and harshly sentence women’s rights activists and human rights defenders for their peaceful activism. While we acknowledge the important reforms of the male guardianship system, women human rights defenders and independent civil society organisations must be able to carry out their work freely and without hindrance including by monitoring the implementation of the reforms and raising their concerns over areas that require further reforms. Additionally, with the scale of continuing repression on human rights defenders, there is a continuing lack of access to independent monitors and international organizations to the country. HRC47 marks two years since the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions published her [investigation](#) into the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The Special Rapporteur [stated](#) following the end of the trial in December 2019 that “those who ordered the executions not only walk free but have barely been touched by the investigation and the trial.”

## KEY PRIORITY SITUATIONS ON THE AGENDA OF THE HRC

Regarding situations already on the agenda requiring further follow-up, we urge states to:

- Support the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on **Belarus** in full, urging the Belarusian authorities to end their continued crackdown on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including on [independent online media](#) outlets, and by immediately releasing detained journalists including [Raman Pratasevich and his partner](#) Sofia Sapega.<sup>27</sup>
- Support the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on **Eritrea** in full and addresses crimes committed by Eritrean troops (as well as other parties) in Ethiopia’s Tigray region.<sup>28</sup> > [See joint civil society letter on Eritrea](#).
- Engage actively in the interactive dialogues with the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur

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<sup>25</sup> Joint statement on Russia delivered by Poland, available at <https://www.gov.pl/web/un/Cross-regional-joint-statement-of-45-States-delivered-by-Poland>.

<sup>26</sup> Joint statement on Saudi Arabia delivered at HRC40 by Iceland, available <https://www.government.is/library/01-Ministries/Ministry-for-Foreign-Affairs/Myndir/Joint%20Statement%20on%20Saudi%20Arabia%20-%207%20March%202019.pdf>; Joint Statement on Saudi Arabia delivered by Australia at HRC42, available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/42nd-hrc-joint-statement-human-rights-saudi-arabia.pdf>; Joint statement on Saudi Arabia delivered by Denmark at HRC 45, available at <https://fngeneve.um.dk/en/news/newsdisplaypage/?newsid=f80a37c6-260f-46f9-b4a6-30d07198d2f8>.

<sup>27</sup> Amnesty International, Belarus: Blocking leading online media outlet is a brazen attack on freedom of expression, 18 May 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/belarus-blocking-leading-online-media-outlet-is-a-brazen-attack-on-freedom-of-expression/>; Belarus: Journalist apprehended in Minsk airport after emergency landing must be released immediately, 23 May 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/belarus-journalist-apprehended-in-minsk-airport-after-emergency-landing-must-be-released-immediately/>.

<sup>28</sup> Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Three killed, 19 injured in Tigray as Eritrean troops open fire on civilians, 14 April 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/04/ethiopia-three-killed-19-injured-in-tigray-as-eritrean-troops-open-fire-on-civilians-2/>; Amnesty International, Ethiopia: Eritrean troops’ massacre of hundreds of Axum civilians may amount to crime against humanity, 26 February 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-axum-civilians-may-amount-to-crime-against-humanity/>.

on **Myanmar** to urge the military to immediately end their brutal ongoing crackdown and express support for more robust action by the UN Security Council. States from all regions should speak up to express outrage at the use of [extrajudicial executions](#) to target overwhelmingly peaceful protesters and bystanders and the torture and deaths of detainees [in custody](#), including [activists](#). They should urge the military to immediately release all those [arbitrarily detained](#) and to restore full access to the internet. They should raise concerns and call for the protection of civilians and humanitarian access to displaced communities amid escalating armed conflicts in [Karen](#), [Kachin](#) and [northern Shan](#) States. They should commit to redoubling efforts – including at the Security Council – to holding the military to account for their grave violations and doing all they can to protect the rights and lives of the people of Myanmar.

- Engage actively in the interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner on **Venezuela** and continue to press Venezuela to take concrete steps to put an immediate end to its policy of repression, particularly recent measures taken against civil society organisations, and to allow full access to the country to the FFM. In recent months, Amnesty has continued to receive reports of [attacks on humanitarian](#) and [non-governmental organisations](#), politically motivated [arbitrary detentions](#), alleged mass [extrajudicial executions](#), and harassment of media outlets.

## THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Regarding thematic and institutional questions, we call on states to:

- Ensure a meaningful follow-up to HRC resolution 43/1 to **address, prevent and ensure accountability for structural racism and systemic violence, including the excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers against Africans and people of African descent, including in the United States of America (USA)**. We share the High Commissioner's [assessment](#) that we cannot let the urgency felt in the Council in June 2020 subside, and that the Council “can contribute to making this moment a critical turning point in the respect and protection of the human rights of people of African descent.” We welcome the [cross-regional joint statement](#) on countering racism delivered by the USA on behalf of 156 countries at HRC46, and hope that this initiative and common pledge of “resolve and cooperation” can be built on further. We hope to see a robust resolution adopted at HRC47 that would support and complement efforts to dismantle structural racism and prevent and contribute to accountability for systemic violence against Africans and people of African descent, in the USA as well as globally. > [See joint civil society coalition letter](#).
- **Establish a Special Procedure mandate on human rights and climate change**, thereby elevating the work of the HRC on the climate crisis and help states to address the urgent threats to human rights posed by the climate emergency.
- Engage fully with the report by the Special Rapporteur on the **human rights of migrants** on pushbacks, including its recommendations; support the establishment of **independent monitoring and verification of pushbacks and collective expulsions, and the accompanying violations used to enact them**, at sea and land borders; and commit to fair access to Covid-19 vaccines for all marginalized people, including migrants, and regardless of their legal status.
- Work together to revive regular OHCHR reporting and space for dialogue on the question of the **impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights** (following on from PRST 43/1). It is critical to create a regular space for dialogue on key human rights issues stemming from or exacerbated by the pandemic, including for example the use of emergency measures; the policing of lockdown regulations;<sup>29</sup> the protection of frontline workers and their inclusion in decision-making processes;<sup>30</sup> international cooperation and assistance to ensure universal access to Covid-19 diagnostics, treatments and vaccines to all, without discrimination;<sup>31</sup> and other emerging issues

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<sup>29</sup> Amnesty International, COVID-19 crackdowns: police abuse and the global pandemic, 17 December 2020, Index number: ACT 30/3443/2020, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/3443/2020/en/>.

<sup>30</sup> Amnesty International, Oral statement on protection of frontline workers in the context of Covid-19, delivered at UN Human Rights Council, 14 September 2020, Index number: IOR 40/3046/2020, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/IO4030462020ENGLISH.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> See Amnesty International, A fair shot: Ensuring universal access to COVID-19 diagnostics, treatments and vaccines, 8 December 2020, Index number: POL 30/3409/2020, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol30/3409/2020/en/>.

requiring urgent international attention and cooperation.

## INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

From an institutional perspective, we encourage states at HRC46 to:

- Counter efforts to attack or undermine the independence of **Special Procedures** through timely cross regional partnerships to resist attempts to introduce political oversight by the HRC and support the Special Procedures in their own initiatives to enhance their effectiveness.
- Remain vigilant and **oppose any other attacks on the international human rights system** or framework.

## UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

We call on states to participate actively in the UPR adoptions under Item 6, including by making substantive statements during the 14 adoptions of review outcomes of countries that were reviewed during the 37th session of the UPR Working Group in January 2021.<sup>32</sup> States should encourage the states reviewed to act on recommendations to address human rights violations and strengthen the protection of human rights and, wherever possible, work with them over the next five years to assist in their implementation.

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<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International produced briefings on its concerns in [Australia](#), [Austria](#), [Myanmar](#), [Nauru](#), [Nepal](#), [Rwanda](#), and [Oman](#), as well as additional [recommendations](#) on these countries, as well as Lebanon and Mauritania, ahead of the review.