

Mr. President,

I honoured to take the floor on behalf of a group composed of 35 countries and counting.

We thank the High Commissioner and the Director-General of UNOG for their comprehensive updates and for the sustained efforts undertaken to support the work of this Council under unprecedented financial constraints. We also thank the Secretariat and the Presidency for steering another productive year of the HRC, despite these challenges.

We wish to draw the attention of States to the serious and systemic budgetary pressures affecting the human rights pillar. As highlighted in today's briefing—and as reflected in the UN80 budget reform process—the human rights system is facing a chronic and deepening resource crisis. While the percentage reductions applied across the UN pillars may appear similar, in practice the impact is markedly disproportionate due to how resources are structured and executed within the human rights pillar, which is already the smallest and most overstretched. Currently in New York, under Workstream 1 of UN80, the human rights pillar faces a proposed 15% budget reduction compared to the original proposed budget for 2026, which reflects the budget needed to adequately deliver on the human rights mandates we collectively adopted at the Human Rights Council and other bodies. This is higher than the proposed reduction for the development pillar, and also affecting it more severely than comparable adjustments within the peace and security pillar. Given its chronically limited baseline and its human-resource-intensive mandates, even equivalent percentage cuts translate into a significantly greater loss of capacity for OHCHR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.

These pressures have concrete and far-reaching implications. In recent years, many of the posts lost have been in regional offices, which directly diminishes the Organisation's presence on the ground, its ability to collect information in developing countries, and its capacity to support States—particularly in the Global South—in building stronger human rights protection systems.

Limitations linked to the liquidity crisis, such as reduced translation capacity and the absence of hybrid meeting modalities, also disproportionately affect delegations with fewer resources and constrain inclusive participation. More broadly, the proposed loss of funded staff posts risks weakening mandate delivery across thematic and country situations, affecting every region and every category of rights—civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.

Human rights are a shared responsibility. The credibility and effectiveness of this Council depend on a human rights system that is adequately and predictably resourced. Disproportionate reductions to the human rights pillar will not substantially contribute to overall savings under the UN80 initiative, yet they will have an outsized impact on individuals and communities whose protection relies on our collective action.

As we approach the next budgetary milestones, we call on all States—here in Geneva and in New York—to work together to ensure equity across the UN’s three pillars, to safeguard the capacity of OHCHR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures to fulfil their mandates, and to uphold the integrity of the international human rights architecture. The effectiveness of human rights protection everywhere depends on our resolve.

Thank you.

Endorsed by:

1. Afghanistan
2. Albania
3. Andorra
4. Austria
5. Bahamas
6. Barbados
7. Belgium
8. Chile

9. Colombia
10. Costa Rica
11. Croatia
12. Cyprus
13. Czech Republic
14. Dominican Republic
15. Ecuador
16. Estonia
17. Finland
18. Georgia
19. Germany
20. Guatemala
21. Iceland
22. Ireland
23. Liechtenstein
24. Lithuania
25. Luxembourg
26. Malta
27. Marshall Islands
28. Mexico
29. Monaco
30. Montenegro
31. Netherlands (Kingdom of the)
32. Portugal
33. Sierra Leone
34. Slovenia
35. South Africa
36. Spain
37. Switzerland
38. Thailand
39. Uruguay
40. Ukraine