

## Biannual newsletter of OHCHR's Regional Office for South America

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## Declare Yourself a Human Rights Defender campaign

Everyone can be a human rights defender. You don't need to belong to an organization. Human rights defenders speak out against abuse and violations including discrimination, exclusion, oppression and violence. They advocate justice and seek to protect the victims of human rights violations. They demand accountability for perpetrators and transparency in government action. They promote human rights and disseminate relevant information.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) calls on everyone to promote and protect human rights and defend them. Watch the [Declarate video](#) (selecting [English subtitles](#)), share it with others, and then declare yourself a human rights defender.

**Here's how:** Using your cell phone, camera or webcam, record a video of yourself in which you express the following message:

**"I am your name, from your country and/or organization, and I declare myself a Human Rights Defender"**

Then upload your video to *YouTube* and share it with your friends and followers through various social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Encourage your friends, family and colleagues to participate.

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### DECLARE YOURSELF A DEFENDER



## EDITORIAL

### Getting to where torturers practice their profession

By Amerigo Incalcaterra, Regional Representative for South America

The list of agreements and international measures against torture is long, but this abhorrent practice is still a fact of life for thousands of people in all the countries of our region and the world. In 1948, the international community condemned torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as one of the most heinous acts that humans can commit against one another. Then they passed an international convention which prohibits torture under all circumstances. A Special Rapporteur was also appointed to tackle the question of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, whose mandate is to assist countries in meeting their obligations on this matter.

However, this legal structure has failed to make the worldwide fight against torture and other ill-treatment more effective. Despite the many efforts made at both international and national levels to eradicate it, torture is deeply rooted in the institutional practices of many places for the deprivation of liberty.

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## Deputy High Commissioner's visit to the region

### CHILE

Deputy High Commissioner Kyung-wha Kang was on mission in Chile from 16-19 October. Kang met with the Foreign Affairs Minister, Education Minister, Minister of the Interior, Justice Minister, Labor Minister and Minister for Social Development. She also held meetings with the President of Supreme Court of Justice, the President of the Chamber of Deputies and the President of the Senate. The Deputy High Commissioner also met with the Director of the National Institute for Human Rights. Kang met with the executive board of the country's main national university students' federation (Confech), with representatives of the Mapuche, Rapa Nui and other indigenous peoples, as well as with members of several different civil society organizations. She also met with UN-ECLAC's Executive Secretary, the Resident Coordinator a.i. of the UN System in Chile, and with the diplomatic corps.



[Read more](#) Kang with Chilean Foreign Affairs Minister Alfredo Moreno

### URUGUAY



Kang with Uruguayan President José Mujica

During her three-day mission in Uruguay 24-26 October, the Deputy High Commissioner met with the President, the Vice-President of the Republic and President of the General Assembly, as well as the President of the Supreme Court. She held extensive discussions with the Secretary of the Presidency; the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Social Development; the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, and that Ministry's Director of Human Rights. She met with members of the Human Rights Commission of the Chamber of Deputies and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Penitentiary System, as well as civil society and the diplomatic corps. She also visited the El Molino prison for women with children under five years and participated in a ministerial-level human rights seminar organized by MERCOSUR to mark its 20-year anniversary.

[Read more](#)

## Kyung-wha Kang speaks about her mission in Chile

OHCHR's Regional Office for South America interviewed the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Kyung-wha Kang, on the end of her three-day mission in Chile (October 19, 2011). Transcript:

**Q: So, Deputy High Commissioner, you're on the end of a three-day visit here in Chile – the first of a three-country tour in the region; why have you come?**

**A:** Well I've been planning and looking forward to this visit for many months, first of all to come and look at the work of my colleagues here at the small regional office and what their challenges are and of course to bring the encouragement of all of us at headquarters to our colleagues here. And to see if there can be better support that we can provide to our work here in the six countries of the region.

**Q: And what have you learned here on the ground in your various meetings with civil society and Government?**

**A:** Well of course we get briefings from [the Regional Representative Amerigo Incalcaterra] and his team on a monthly basis. We read about the human rights challenges here in Chile and another countries but it is never the same as coming here and looking at the situation on the ground. So there's a great deal of depth added to what we have very superficially learnt. And of course I've come just coincidentally at a time when this issue of education has exploded out onto the streets. So in a way I think that challenge that the students have put to the government through the prism of education is emblematic of the whole spectrum of Human Rights challenges that faces Chile.



[Read more and watch the interview](#)

## Defending the rights of African descendants in South America

Although African descendants make up close to 30% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean (numbering roughly 150 million according to a [2010 UNDP Report](#)), they continue to face a disproportionate degree of poverty and exclusion, compounded by overt racial discrimination.

Citing the need to strengthen national actions and international cooperation to ensure that people of African descent fully enjoy economic, cultural, social, civil and political rights, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2011 the Year of Peoples of African Descent. Currently, such efforts to raise awareness and increase cooperation are being spearheaded by various institutional as well as individual human rights defenders across the region. "My battleground relates to racism and racial discrimination," says Verónica Villagra, representative of the *Mundo Afro* collective, which defends the rights of black Uruguayans.



"In Uruguay we have made undeniable progress but maintaining and improving this is a daily task. We represent 9.2% of a population of 3 million. Seventy percent of afro-Uruguayans are poor and we have been historically invisible. We also face many challenges because racism mutates and acquires new forms," laments Villagra. "The divide stemming from 500 years of racism distances us from the rest of society in terms of access to skilled employment and to secondary and tertiary education. The practice of racism is so embedded in people's subconscious, that it is very hard to raise awareness and to deconstruct it."

A historic hub of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, today Brazil is the country with the greatest number of African descendants in the region, as well as one of the highest proportions per capita. It is also one of the countries with the greatest racial gaps in poverty, education and literacy rates.

[Read more](#)

## Defending the rights of indigenous peoples in South America



The Regional Office of OHCHR works to achieve equality for indigenous peoples in South America. "Indigenous communities have always structured their way of life and customs around the use and enjoyment of natural resources, but today, economic globalization discriminates against these traditional forms of development", explains Nancy Yañez, a Chilean lawyer and native rights activist with the NGO *Observatorio Ciudadano*.

Yañez has dedicated much of her life to defending ancestral land rights as well as the right to water and other natural resources – while empowering native communities to do the same. "The biggest obstacle we face when defending indigenous rights is inequality in power relations", says Yañez. "If the counterpart is the State or a big corporation, they have access to economic resources that ensure them legal and technical services that we do not have. That disparity translates into unequal access to justice."

Discrimination against native peoples is endemic in South America, where estimates of the number of indigenous peoples range widely. In the six countries covered by the OHCHR's Regional Office for South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela), there are roughly 10 million indigenous peoples, making up close to 6 percent of the population. The country with the highest proportion is Peru, where one in four people is indigenous. It is important to make indigenous peoples the "authors of our own changes," says Tarcila Rivera, a native leader with the Indigenous Cultural Center CHIRAPAQ, which has been active for the past 25 years in Peru.

She focuses on raising awareness among native women. "Our region still has a strong colonial presence. There is a lot of racism and discrimination and we find that our actions are often de-legitimized," laments Rivera. "But we have been gaining ground because people are changing; times are changing. I have so much hope in this regard". In many countries in the region there has been a renaissance in recent years, with both rural and urban natives recognizing their culture and taking a stand for their rights.

In Chile, Peru, and several other countries, programmes to ensure intercultural bilingual education have also been introduced with great success. Still, the challenges remain vast and have been highlighted by several UN human rights mechanisms: entire communities have been forcibly displaced; indigenous peoples still lack consultation mechanisms and proportional political representation; their land claims are largely ignored; rates of poverty, infant mortality, illiteracy and suicide are often twice as high as the national average; and many rights defenders and individuals face violence and persecution by security forces.

[Read more](#)



## Press releases of the High Commissioner

### Pillay hails creation of Brazilian Truth Commission



(18 November, 2011) The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay hailed Friday's signing into law by the President of Brazil of a long-awaited bill establishing a National Truth Commission, describing it as an important step towards unravelling the truth about past human rights violations.

"This development shows Brazil's commitment to addressing human rights at home, as well as elsewhere in the world," Pillay

said. "It is an essential and welcome first step towards healing the country's wounds and clarifying past wrongs."

During an official mission to Brazil in 2009, Pillay drew attention to the need for Brazil to initiate such a Commission, which has been contemplated for many years. It was provided for in the country's Third National Human Rights Programme in 2010, but only recently passed the final legislative hurdles in Parliament.

The Commission that is being established should seek to promote the right to truth and public knowledge and understanding of human rights violations that took place during 42 years' of political repression from 1946 to 1988. The Law establishing the Commission was signed on Friday by President Dilma Rousseff, who was herself a victim of the types of violation the Commission will investigate. At the same time, President Rousseff promulgated a Law for Public Access to Information, which aims in part to enable the Truth Commission to bring facts and information into the public arena.

The High Commissioner encouraged Brazil to take additional measures to facilitate the prosecution of those believed responsible for past human rights violations, including as a result of the work of the Commission. Such measures should include enacting new legislation to abrogate the 1979 Amnesty Law or declaring it inapplicable because it impedes the investigation and ending of impunity for serious human rights violations, in contravention of international human rights law.

[Read more](#)

### UN human rights chief applauds convictions of ministers and military for serious crimes in Bolivia, cites "healthy trend" in Latin America

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on Friday welcomed a historic decision by the top court in Bolivia to convict two former ministers and five senior military officers for their involvement in the deaths of more than 60 people during anti-government demonstrations in 2003, and noted what she described as "a very healthy trend towards combatting long-standing impunity" in Latin America. "I commend the Bolivian Supreme Court for its decision, which is an important step in the fight against impunity," said Pillay. "I also urge the Government to take all necessary steps to ensure victims and their relatives receive suitable reparations and redress."



In what became known as "Black October," 69 people were left dead and over 400 injured when, over a period of several days, soldiers repeatedly fired on crowds demonstrating against a government plan to build a gas pipeline through El Alto, near La Paz. After a trial that lasted two years, and encountered numerous obstacles, this week the five military officers received prison sentences ranging from 10 to 15 years, while the former Ministers of Sustainable Development and of Employment were sentenced to three years each. Bolivia's president at the time, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, and two other ministers fled to the United States soon after the events, and are currently the subject of extradition requests. Several other former ministers and military officers also subsequently fled the country.

"I welcome this signal by yet another Latin American country that impunity for past human rights violations will no longer be tolerated," Pillay said. "A number of Latin American countries have been demonstrating to the rest of the world that it is possible not just to move from dictatorship to democracy, but also to bring justice – no matter how powerful or influential those responsible for human rights violations may be, and irrespective of their civilian or military status."

[Read more](#)

## Special Procedures

### Venezuela: UN experts alarmed at continued detention of Judge Afiuni



Three United Nations independent experts on 27 December expressed their deep shock and concern at new and alarming developments in the case of Judge Maria Lourdes Afiuni Mora. "We are very concerned by the extension of the measure of preventative detention issued against Judge Afiuni Mora," the experts said. On 13 December 2011, a judge granted the request of the Public Prosecutor to extend the measure of house arrest against Judge Afiuni by two more years.

"Honestly, it is becoming increasingly difficult to understand what Judge Afiuni is living through," said the Special Rapporteur on Torture, Mr. Juan Méndez. "The substitutive preventive measure of house arrest imposed a few months ago seemed to be a positive step," said Mr. Méndez. "However, this latest decision represents an unacceptable worsening of her situation, particularly in light of her delicate physical and mental state". [Read more](#)

### Chile: UN expert calls for quality education that is accessible and affordable for all



Recent student protests in Chile, which were marked by violence in which a student was killed, provide an opportunity to reevaluate the country's education policies with an emphasis on human rights, a United Nations expert said on 9 September.

"Quality education must be within the reach of everyone," UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education Kishore Singh stressed, noting that the protesters were concerned at the quality and cost of education in the country. "Access to quality education, whether primary, secondary or at a higher level, cannot be subjected to students' or their families' ability to pay or take on debt." According to media reports high school students are demanding an end to for-profit educational institutions, lower interest rates on student loans and a bus pass that is valid year-round. [Read more](#)

### Peru: Consultation law marks key step forward in the country and region, says UN expert



On 25 August, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, today said the approval of a law on consultation with indigenous peoples by the Congress of Peru "represents an important step forward for indigenous peoples' rights in the country and elsewhere in the Latin American region.

"I hope that this is indicative of a strong commitment by the Peruvian State to respond to the demands of indigenous peoples to be consulted about measures that directly affect them, and in particular about extractive industry projects in and around their territories," Mr. Anaya stressed.

"Now I urge the President of the Republic to promulgate the consultation law", the Special Rapporteur said, "and call upon the Government to take all necessary measures to ensure the adequate implementation of this law". [Read more](#)

### Brazil: UN expert urges government to set up an effective protection system for judges



On 19 August, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Gabriela Knaul, urged the Brazilian authorities to take immediate action to provide judges, magistrates, prosecutors, public defenders and lawyers with effective and adequate measures of protection.

"It is high time for the Government to set up a national system of protection in order to allow judges to discharge their functions without fear for their life, integrity and security, and that of their families," Ms. Knaul stressed.

The human rights expert's pressing appeal comes after the recent assassination of Judge Patrícia Lourival Acioli, known for her fight against criminal gangs, death squads and corrupt police officers, and reports of mounting deaths threats against numerous judges. [Read more](#)

## ACTIVITIES

### Indigenous leaders from across Peru participate in training session



To strengthen the rights of indigenous peoples, the Regional Office, the Ombudsman of Peru and UNDP organized a workshop for indigenous leaders from all parts of Peru and for staff of the Ombudsman's office. The Seminar "The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the national and universal area" was held **29- 30 November** at the La Casona of the Condors Convention Centre located in Chacacayo. The event was supported by the ILO and featured expert José Carlos Morales, of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### Workshop in Chile on the Convention on the Rights of the Child



OHCHR participated in an international workshop on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Chile on **28 and 29 November**. Organized by the Human Rights Directorate of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the "Development of the National Report on Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child" seminar aimed to integrate assessments and perspectives from the three branches of Government, civil society, international organizations and children's own opinions regarding what compliance the country has given to the recommendations of the CRC Committee, in view of its forthcoming examination of Chile. OHCHR's Deputy Regional Representative for South America, Humberto Henderson, presented the conventional UN human rights mechanisms, the work of the CRC and its methods.

### UN agencies in Chile train indigenous leaders in Temuco



A series of training sessions for indigenous leaders were held on **17-18 November** at the Aitúe Hotel in the city of Temuco, Chile. Attended by over 30 indigenous leaders from both from the Araucanía as well as the Bío-Bío, Los Lagos and Los Ríos regions, the conference was organized by the UNCT in Chile and included presentations by the Regional Office, the ILO, and UNICEF. agencies disseminated the main international instruments in recognition and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and on issues relating to their areas of knowledge and action. Among these subjects were the scope of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Convention No. 169 (ratified by Chile in 2008) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (signed by Chile in 1990 ), among others. The objective of the workshop was to strengthen knowledge of the mechanisms available in the UN system for the promotion and implementation of their rights.

### International Seminar on "Terrorism and Human Rights Standards"



To discuss the definition of terrorism and the efforts of States to protect the lives and safety of all persons under their jurisdiction, the Regional Office and the National Human Rights Institute in Chile organized an International Seminar on "Terrorism and Human Rights Standards," on **15 November**. With more than 100 participants, the topics of discussion included the current Chilean laws on this issue, international definitions of the crime of terrorism and its implications for fundamental rights. The event was inaugurated by Lorena Fries, Director of Chile's National Institute for Human Rights, and Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America ([watch video, in Spanish](#)). Panelists also offered their legal interpretations, including: Manuel Cancio Meliá, Doctor of Law and Professor of Criminal Law at the Autonomous University of Madrid and Myrna Villegas, PhD in Criminal Law at the Universidad Central de Chile. The panel concluded with a statement sent by UN Special Rapporteur on terrorism, Ben Emmerson ([read statement](#)).



## ACTIVITIES

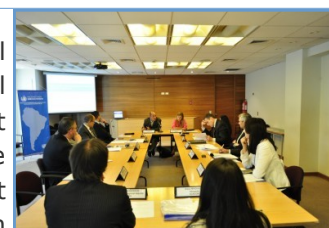
### OHCHR and the Supreme Court of Chile train judges

The seminar "Human Rights and multiculturalism: hermeneutics and international and national jurisprudence," aimed at high-level justice officials in Chile, took place from **11 to 12 November**. The event was organized by the Supreme Court of Chile and OHCHR's Regional Office for South America. Seeking to contribute to the interpretation and application of international human rights law, particularly regarding indigenous peoples, the seminar reviewed the jurisprudence of the UN human rights system, the Inter-American system, as well as developments in incorporation and application in various national courts across the continent.



### International seminar on "The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: content and scope"

On **3-4 November**, representatives of the six countries covered by OHCHR's Regional Office for South America shared ideas and experiences in a seminar on "The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: content and scope." The purpose of the activity was to provide support and technical assistance to participating States to promote the ratification of this Optional Protocol. The event was organized by the Regional Office with the participation of the Institute for Human Rights Policy of MERCOSUR, and was attended by the Human Rights directors of various Foreign Ministries or Human Rights Secretariats, as well as parliamentarians from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.



### Training on enforced disappearances for Uruguayan judicial officers

The Regional Office held a training session for members of the courts of justice, prosecutors and public defenders in Uruguay on **29 October**. Organized in conjunction with the Supreme Court and the Center for Judicial Studies (CEJU), the event was inaugurated by OHCHR's Regional Representative, Amerigo Incalcatera, and the President of the Supreme Court of Uruguay, Leslie van Rompaey. About 60 professionals participated in the training that was provided by the Deputy Regional Representative and OHCHR expert Alejandro Morlachetti. The training included topics such as the use of treaties by international tribunals, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances and the evolution of the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on enforced disappearances. Recently, the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the Gelman case against Uruguay required the State to provide training to judges on such disappearances.



### OHCHR provides training workshop for Uruguayan parliamentarians

OHCHR's Regional Representative inaugurated a two-day training session for 40 legislators, advisers and technical secretaries of the Uruguayan Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Held **28-29 October**, participants included the Vice-President of the Nation and President of the Senate, Danilo Astori and the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Luis Lacalle Pou. Introductory remarks were also offered by the Resident Coordinator of United Nations System in Uruguay, Susan McDade. During the seminar, entitled "Human rights for parliamentarians, legislation and enforcement," the Regional Representative recommended analyzing the possibility of updating the chapter on the Constitution regarding Rights, Duties and Guarantees to incorporate the international treaties Uruguay has ratified. Moreover, he said that the Office of the High Commissioner "is always going to support the highest protection that can be given to human rights," while understanding that "it is a sovereign decision that corresponds to the General Assembly of Uruguay."



## ACTIVITIES

### OHCHR shares books and interactive games with Chilean school children on United Nations Day 2011



To mark United Nations Day 2011, on **24 October**, 200 children from three schools enjoyed a street party on Dag Hammarskjöld Avenue, where several United Nations agencies are located, in Chile. The Regional Office was among seven that set up information stands to publicize their activities and youth-oriented products, including illustrated books of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and manuals for teachers. Students also played an interactive digital game about human rights, painted a mural on the theme of peace and played mock UN peacekeeping simulation games.

### Training workshop for civil society organizations in Uruguay



On **3 October**, the Regional Office provided a training workshop geared towards civil society organizations in Uruguay, in which 32 people from 20 different non-governmental organizations participated. The training workshop was led by OHCHR's Deputy Regional Representative, Humberto Henderson, and former UN special rapporteur Juan Miguel Petit. It was inaugurated by the Resident Coordinator for the UN System in Uruguay, Susan McDade. The subject matter included how to present alternative reports to Treaty bodies and how to participate in the Universal Periodic Review, as well as the steps to take when communicating with special procedures. The workshop also reviewed international law and human

rights monitoring mechanisms: treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council, the UPR and special procedures.

### Sixth International seminar on Conditional Transfer Programmes



OHCHR's Regional Office, FAO and ECLAC jointly organized the sixth International seminar on Conditional Transfer Programmes held **29-30 September** in Santiago, Chile. One in five people in Latin America and the Caribbean receive cash transfers for their children to go to school or participate in health check-ups, and to ensure their adequate nutrition. The Deputy Regional Representative inaugurated the event, (Watch a [video of his presentation](#), in Spanish) and

UN Special Rapporteur for Extreme Poverty, Magdalena Sepúlveda, also participated in the seminar, with a presentation. (Watch a [video of her presentation](#), in Spanish, or a [video interview](#) with the Special Rapporteur, in English).

### Indigenous leaders from all provinces in Argentina participate in OHCHR training session



To strengthen the ability of indigenous peoples to exercise their rights, the Regional Office, the Defender of the Nation of Argentina, and the Governor of Chaco Province offered a two-day training workshop to more than 100 indigenous leaders and attorneys from all provinces of Argentina. The seminar took place from **15 to 16 September** in the Nu Porá complex, in the city of Resistencia, Chaco Province. Representatives of all the main ethnic groups in Argentina participated, including the: Mapuche, Toba, Kolla, Guaraní, Diaguita, Wichí, Tapiete, Chulupi, Chane, Calchaqui Chorote, Pilagá, Nivaklé, Lules Tonokoté, Kolla Guaraní Guaraní Mocoví and Mbya, and peoples from the north of the country. The event was inaugurated by Humberto Henderson, Deputy Regional Representative of OHCHR-South America and Anselmo Sella, Deputy in charge of the National Ombudsman's Office. A [new flyer](#) by OHCHR's Regional Office, on Human Rights Mechanisms of Indigenous Peoples was also provided.



## ACTIVITIES

### Training workshop to officials from various UN agencies in Peru

From **22 to 24 August**, the Regional Office for South America provided a training workshop to 27 officials from various UN agencies in Peru, including: UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, ILO, WFP, UN Women, UN AIDS, UNODC, UNLIREC, UNOPS, as well as joint programmes of the FODM and OCR. The subject matter was related to international law and human rights monitoring mechanisms: treaty bodies (including the reporting process, individual communications and monitoring recommendations), the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review and special procedures (rapporteurs and independent experts).



### OHCHR's regional office trains prison supervisors in Uruguay

From **8 to 12 August**, the course "Human Rights and Prisons: Standards, guarantees and prospects" was offered as part of a specialized training programme aimed at new entrants to Level 5-prison Supervisors, for the Uruguay's new National Rehabilitation Institute. A total of 15 prison supervisors took part in the workshop, organized by OHCHR's Regional Office for South America, United Nations Uruguay and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). Speakers included OHCHR's Deputy Regional Representative, Humberto Henderson, officials from UN Women, authorities of the National Rehabilitation Institute and of the National System for Imprisoned and Released Detainees in Uruguay; SERPAJ and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Prison System, Dr. Alvaro Garcé.



### UN-ECLAC and OHCHR meet with the Mapuche Territorial Alliance in Chile

During a meeting at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), in Santiago, Chile, OHCHR discussed the situation in the communities of Temucuicui and Huañaco Millao, from the town of Ercilla, Araucanía region. On **9 August**, ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, and OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incaltterra, received members of the Mapuche Territorial Alliance (MTA). They expressed concern over the insecurity and serious threats to the physical integrity of the people living in the communities of Temucuicui and Huañaco Millao, both from the town of Ercilla. The MTA members also submitted a letter addressed to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, and the Special Rapporteur for Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya. Bárcena and Incaltterra requested more background on the origins of the conflict and the actions of police forces within those communities. They expressed their concern over the grievances expressed by the MTA representatives.



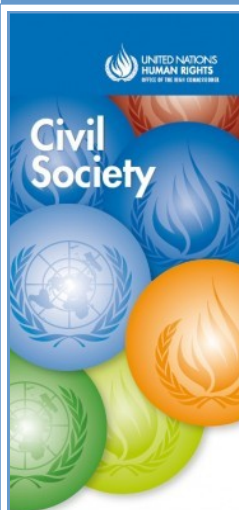
[Read more](#)

### OHCHR's Regional Office offers training workshop for 22 officials from the United Nations Country Team in Uruguay

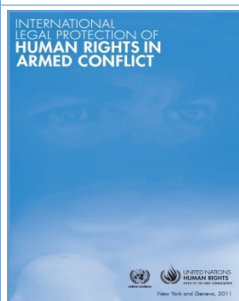
From **26 to 27 July**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America offered a training workshop to 22 officials from various UN agencies in Uruguay, including UNICEF, UNDP, FAO and the ILO. The subject matter related to international law and United Nations human rights monitoring mechanisms, such as: treaty bodies (including the reporting process, individual communications and monitoring recommendations), the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review and special procedures.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

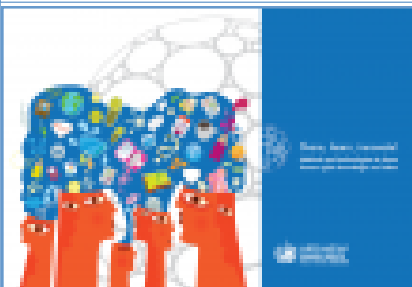
**Civil Society (brochure)****31 December, 2011**

This brochure outlines OHCHR's work with civil society, through its Civil Society Section. It is dedicated to empowering civil society actors through increasing their awareness of international human rights standards, information and strategies, as well as developing their capacities to engage effectively with the UN human rights system.

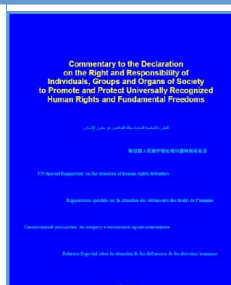
[Download the pdf](#)**International legal protection of human rights in armed conflicts****24 November, 2011**

This publication provides a thorough legal analysis and guidance to State authorities, human rights and humanitarian actors and others on the application of international

human rights law and international humanitarian law for the protection of persons in armed conflict. It addresses, in particular, the complementary application of these two bodies of law. It does not aim to cover all relevant aspects, but seeks instead to provide an overview of their current application.. It provides the necessary legal background and analysis of the relevant notions in order for the reader to better understand the relationships between both bodies of law.

[Download the pdf](#)**Share, Learn, Innovate! Methods and technologies to share human rights knowledge and ideas****11 November, 2011**

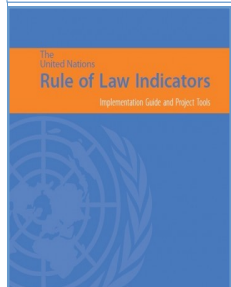
This online toolkit presents methods and technologies to enhance knowledge sharing within OHCHR and through its activities. It includes practical training exercises such as workshops as well as an overview of available online tools.

[Download the pdf](#)**Commentary to the Declaration on the Right & Responsibility of Individuals, Groups & Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Human Rights****27 July, 2011**

The purpose of this commentary is to fill this gap by enhancing States' understanding of the responsibilities contained in the Declaration, as well as to increase awareness of this instrument among relevant non-state actors that can contribute to the development of a conducive environment for the work of defenders.

[Download the pdf](#)**Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: In Pursuit of Justice****6 July, 2011**

This first major UN Women report shows that where laws and justice systems work well, they can provide an essential mechanism for women to realize their human rights. It also underscores the fact that, despite widespread guarantees of equality, the reality for many millions of women is that justice remains out of reach. This edition builds on the work of colleagues across the UN system in highlighting women's part in strengthening the rule of law and outlines a vision for the future in which women and men, worldwide, can work side-by-side to make gender equality and women's empowerment a reality.

[Download the pdf](#)**The United Nations Rule of Law Indicators****6 July, 2011**

The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in cooperation with other United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes, have developed instruments to monitor changes in the performance and fundamental characteristics of criminal justice institutions in conflict and post-conflict situations.

[Download the pdf](#)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OFFICIAL VISITS BY SPECIAL PROCEDURES

### Venezuela passes its first Universal Periodic Review

On 7 October, 2011, during the 12th and final session of this cycle of the Working Group of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was examined for the first time regarding the situation of human rights in the country, in the context of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which all Member States of the United Nations must undergo every four years. The UPR is a mechanism of the Human Rights Council which regularly monitors the compliance in each of the 193 UN Member States with their human rights obligations and commitments. The examination is conducted by a working group composed of 47 Member States of the HRC, with the help of a troika of three members selected by States, which prepares the final report and bases its exam on three key documents (found [here](#)).

[Read the outcome report of the UPR](#)

### First visit to Argentina by a UN expert on indigenous peoples

The UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya visited Argentina from 27 November to 7 December 2011 to discuss the general situation of the country's indigenous peoples, including issues such as their right to lands and natural resources. "During my mission, I will analyze the situation of indigenous peoples, who are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups worldwide," said Mr. Anaya upon announcing the first visit to Argentina by an independent expert appointed by the UN Human Rights Council to investigate the rights of indigenous peoples.

### The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights publishes concluding observations for its examination of Argentina

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights published its [concluding observations](#) after its examination of Argentina on 23-24 November, 2011. In August, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America collaborated with the State of Argentina in the analysis of the [List of Issues and Written Replies](#) for the CESCR Committee examination. Read the State report for Argentina [here](#), and the alternative reports from civil society [here](#).

### Prevention of Torture: UN rights body presents confidential preliminary observations to the Government of Brazil

The United Nations [Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture \(SPT\)](#) presented today its confidential preliminary observations to the Government of Brazil, in conclusion of its first regular visit to the country, which took place from 19 to 30 September 2011. During the visit, the SPT met with the relevant national authorities and representatives of civil society, and conducted visits to a number of places of deprivation of liberty, including police stations, prisons, juvenile detention centres and psychiatric institutions in the states of Espírito Santo, Goiás, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. "We hope that our visit to Brazil will contribute to the ongoing efforts of the Brazilian Government and other stakeholders to ensure that persons deprived of their liberty in Brazil are not put at risk of torture or ill-treatment", stated Mr. Wilder Tayler-Souto, Head of the SPT Delegation to Brazil.

[Read more](#)

### The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families publishes its reports on Argentina and Chile

The [Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families \(CMW\)](#) has published its findings and concluding observations after examining Argentina and Chile in this matter. These reports were the result of the committee's 15th session, held from 12 to 23 September, 2011 in Geneva. This was the first time the Committee has evaluated both Argentina and Chile. Since its inception in March 2004, the CMW has been dedicated to supervising the proper implementation of the [International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families](#) by its State parties. For more information, see the [press release about the session](#) in English (or ACNUDH's [regional version in Spanish](#)).

[Download PDF of Argentina's report \(265 kb\)](#) [Download PDF of Chile's report \(200 kb\)](#)



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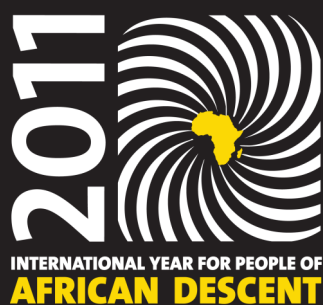
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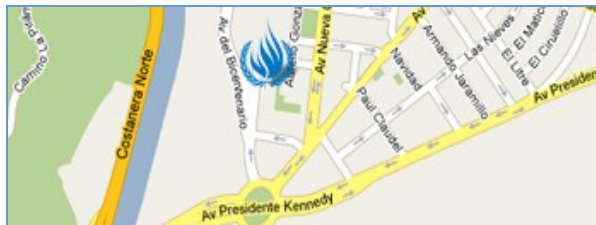


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everyone, everywhere*

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## Our Mission

The mission of OHCHR's Regional Office for South America is to observe, promote and protect human rights in six countries across the region: **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela**. To that end, we establish relationships for close cooperation, technical assistance and permanent dialogue with governments, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, UN country teams and agencies, among others. We contribute to strengthening the capacity of these actors, so as to improve the promotion and protection of human rights, according to international norms.



## Future meetings and events (2012)

### February

**6-9 February**– OHCHR's Regional Office provides training to the UNCT and civil society in Argentina regarding the UPR

**10 February**– Regional Office participates in seminar on indicators in Rio de Janeiro

**13-17 February**– Independent Expert on water and sanitation visits Uruguay

**13-17 February**– OHCHR's Regional Office provides training on the UPR in Peru

**17 February**– Brazil presents its 7th periodic report to the CEDAW Committee

**27 February -23 March**– 19th regular session of the Human Rights Council

### March

**6-9 March**– OHCHR's Regional Office organizes seminar on the creation of a new Deputy Ministry for Human Rights in Peru

**8 March**– International Women's Day

**21 March**– International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**19-22 March**– OHCHR offers workshops for Peruvian civil servants on submitting reports to the CERD and CMW Committees

**26 March**– CRC Consultation on a General Comment regarding the rights of the child and the business sector, in Buenos Aires

**26-30 March**– Regional Office participates in the Mercosur meeting of High-Level Human Rights officials, in Buenos Aires

**29-30 March**– Seminar on combating torture for public defenders from all states in Brazil, held in Sao Paulo

### April

**13-14 April**– OHCHR provides workshop for indigenous communities in southern Chile

**17 April**– CRPD considers State party report of Peru (session concludes **20 April**)

**17-18 April**– OHCHR's Regional Office offers workshop in Uruguay on the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

**18-19 April**– CRPD Task Force Adopts List of Issues for Argentina

**18-27 April**– 15th visit of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture: Argentina

**30 April-13 May**– CESCR Committee holds its 48th session and examines Peru

### May

**3 May**– World Press Freedom Day

**14-19 May**– OHCHR's Regional Office trains the Human Rights Council of the Brazilian State of Rio de Janeiro and participates in a regional seminar on human rights action plans

**21 May-4 June**– 13th session of the Universal Periodic Review. Brazil is to be examined for the second time.

### June

**June**– 20th regular session of the Human Rights Council

**June**– Launch in Peru of a new OHCHR publication on indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation

**6 June**– Presentation in Buenos Aires of the Citizen's Security report, to Ministers of Justice and the Interior, of Mercosur

**20-22 June**– Rio+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio, Brazil.