

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

### CONTENTS

Web story: Supporting the creation of a new Deputy Ministry of Human Rights in Peru	2
Mechanisms to prevent torture in South America: the way forward for Chile	3
Press releases by OHCHR's Regional Office	4-5
Press briefings about the region by the High Commissioner's spokesperson	6
The High Commissioner's press releases about the region	7
Interviews with human rights mechanisms: Frank La Rue and Pastor Murillo	7
Activities of the Regional Office	8-12
New publications	13
Committee reports and official visits by Special Procedures	14- 15
Shrinking budgets	16
Future meetings, periodic reports and events for the second semester of 2012	16

## OHCHR participates in the inauguration of the National Truth Commission in Brazil

(16 May, 2012) The Regional Representative for South America of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Amerigo Incalcaterra, delivered a [speech on behalf of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay](#), alongside the President of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, and members of the new National Truth Commission.

"We hail the establishment of this Truth Commission as an essential and long-awaited step in the process of accountability for past human rights violations, which will help Brazilians to better understand their own history and to look forward to a future with guarantees against egregious abuse," said Incalcaterra.

The members of the Truth Commission are: Rosa Maria Cardoso da Cunha, José Filho Paulo Cavalcanti, Jose Carlos Dias, Gilson Dipp, Claudio Fonteles, Maria Rita Kehl and Paulo Sergio Pinheiro. On 11 May, OHCHR's Regional Representative congratulated the Brazilian government for the appointment of the seven members of the National Truth Commission, which will seek to clarify the human rights violations that occurred in the country between 1946 and 1988.

The inauguration ceremony for the National Truth Commission took place on 16 May at the Planalto Palace, in Brasilia.

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## Turning the tide together on HIV – a human rights imperative

*Editorial by: Navi Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

The world's collective response to HIV three decades ago can be summed up in one word: shameful. At worst, people living with HIV were, inexplicably, chained to their beds, detained, turned away from medical facilities, criminalised and deported. At best, they lost their jobs, were kicked out of schools and denied access to basic services.

Fortunately, impressive strides have since been made in the fight against HIV. In the last few years, major scientific advances have occurred and the number of new HIV infections, particularly among children, has been slowly declining, fewer people are dying from AIDS-related causes, nearly half of those people eligible for antiretroviral treatment, including in low- and middle-income countries, are now receiving it, and treatment has become the new engine for prevention. HIV is no longer the certain death sentence it once was.

Even today, we continue to focus on punitive approaches to HIV such as the criminalisation of HIV transmission, non-disclosure and exposure. Entry restrictions against and deportation of HIV-positive non-nationals at borders are still far too common, particularly in more affluent countries. The most vulnerable communities, the ones that least enjoy their fundamental human rights, also remain disproportionately more vulnerable to HIV infection – and this is no coincidence. [Read more](#)

## Multimedia web stories

# Supporting the creation of a new Deputy Ministry of Human Rights in Peru

"We strongly commend the Government of Peru for having established and created the new Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. It is an important achievement for the global human rights community which we value significantly," said Amerigo Incalcatera, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America. "The mere fact of creating a ministry with responsibilities for human rights involves a big commitment by the Peruvian State and will surely have a positive impact on the lives of all Peruvians."

OHCHR's Regional Office has been supporting the creation of a new Deputy Ministry of Human Rights and Access to Justice in Peru, which aims to articulate an integrated national policy on human rights. OHCHR provided technical assistance to the Peruvian State in developing the regulations for the Organic Law of the Ministry of Justice, adopted in December 2011, which created the Deputy Ministry within a restructured Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (MINJUSDH).



[Click on the photographs to watch video clips of their interviews](#)



"Since the beginning of the design phase, the Regional Office of the High Commission was working alongside us," commented the new Deputy Minister of Human Rights MINJUSDH, Daniel Figallo. "They participated with expert who assisted us in the process of identifying the most important issues for this great undertaking. The importance of this support has been vital, given the expertise of the Regional Office."

As part of this technical advice, OHCHR's Regional Office and MINJUSDH organized an international seminar with senior officials on the establishment and regulation of the new Deputy Ministry in Peru, held the 5-7 March. The goal was to share experiences and best practices among the countries of the region. It was attended by officials from the Ministries of Justice of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, as well as experts from the Institute for Public Policy on Human Rights (IPPDH) of MERCOSUR.

"I think the focus of this technical cooperation is strengthening the institutional set-up in our countries to enable greater policy-making in this area, so I think this is an important effort by the Regional Office and I hope it will continue to assist the work of the Deputy Ministry, accompanying the process of planning, implementation, and even of evaluation of its policies," said Victor Abramovich, Director of the IPPDH. He added that the creation of this new institution "makes human rights a public policy issue and cements the principle of State responsibility. The greater the hierarchy of the leading institution in this topic, the easier it is to coordinate actions with other State entities and to mainstream a human-rights-based approach to sectoral policies."



There were varying degrees of institutional progress among the countries that participated in the seminar. Argentina, for example, detailed its achievements in the fight against impunity and the process of reparations, while sharing the policy developed last year by the Under-Secretary for the Promotion of Human Rights, dubbed "Advancing Rights". It employs progressive indicators to gauge States' fulfillment of economic, social and cultural rights.



"We are working on various topics covering the agenda of civil, political, economic, cultural, and social rights as well as collective advocacy," explained Argentina's Under-Secretary for the Promotion of Human Rights, Marita Perceval, "and we are focusing on social groups and individuals who have seen their rights denied or violated due to situations of structural inequality..."

Perceval stressed the need to achieve greater regional coordination. "Working together means neither making disintegrated policies within our States nor contradictory policies between States, while at the same time insisting and furthering efforts to harmonize our laws so that this universal citizenship, which is the citizenship of human rights, may rule in all States across Latin America and the Caribbean, with laws that guarantee the full exercise of human rights, as well as their respect, protection and defense," expressed Perceval.

For Chile's Under-Secretary of Justice, Patricia Pérez, the seminar was also instructive for their own future institutionalization process. In January 2012, the Government of Chile introduced a bill to create a Deputy Ministry for Human Rights, which is pending in Congress. "We were able to share our experience and opinions. The development or evolution of each country is so diverse, which is really an advantage, because countries that have advanced more can naturally share their experiences with the implementation and consolidation of their work, which is extremely valuable," said Pérez.



Meanwhile, Uruguay is integrating a new National Human Rights Institution and at the governmental level it has a Department of Human Rights under the Ministry of Education and Culture, with designs on creating a Human Rights Office within the Presidency of the Republic, explained Javier Miranda, Director of Human Rights. He highlighted the dynamic of great confidence and openness that characterized the meeting in Lima. "I think it was an absolute success," praised Miranda. "We're starting to sketch a map in the region of strong institutions with a human rights perspective within the highest levels of executive power and I think that is really valuable."

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## Multimedia web stories

# Mechanisms to prevent torture in South America: the way forward for Chile

"In places where the light doesn't shine, where there is no public access, where things occur behind closed doors – that is where extremely brutal violations of human rights continue to be committed," said Amerigo Incalcaterra, Regional Representative for South America of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in his [opening address](#) to the Workshop on National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture, held in Santiago, Chile from 28 to 29 May, 2012.

The [Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment \(OPCAT\)](#), an additional international instrument to the [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment \(CAT\)](#) provides that each State party should establish one or several [National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture \(NPM\)](#) within one year of the Protocol's entry into force. However, to date, few countries in the region have done so.

In Chile, the Government has indicated its intention to designate the National Human Rights Institute (INDH) as an NPM.

In order to discuss the challenges associated with this role, the INDH and OHCHR's Regional Office for South America organized this workshop, which brought together relevant national and international experts and authorities on the subject.

National participants included Chile's Minister of Justice, Director for Gendarmerie (responsible for prison guards), Director of Human Rights for the Police Force (*Carabineros*), the Chief of the Human Rights brigade of Investigations Police, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Chief of the legal area of the Human Rights Programme of the Ministry of the Interior, as well as lawyers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and advisors from the Presidency, among others.

Among the international experts were the Vice-President of the [United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture \(SPT\)](#), the President of Honduras' NPM, a representative of Costa Rica's NPM, and the Director for Latin America of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT).

"I hope that the result of this first discussion and reflection will be a roadmap leading to the prompt development of a Mechanism in line with the utmost in human rights standards," said Lorena Fries, Director of Chile's INDH.

Chile's Minister of Justice, Theodore Ribera, also attended the seminar and in his opening address he signaled the need for cultural change in State institutions.

"We all know that our system of deprivation of liberty is not only opaque but probably does not meet minimum standards in terms of ensuring dignity of the person," said the Minister. "I think this

mechanism is very effective to the extent that we can position it properly for the pursuit of human rights. ... We need to generate greater trust and a policy of gradual progress."

Incalcaterra also stressed the importance of establishing an appropriate legal framework for the future NPM. He emphasized the need to: involve all relevant stakeholders, both institutional and from civil society; limit the functions of the NPM to those established in the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; provide sufficient logistical and human resources so that they can be both efficient and effective, and; develop a plan coordinated at an inter-institutional level.

### Lessons learned

To share the experiences of other countries in the region that have implemented NPMs, representatives of these bodies from Honduras and Costa Rica shared their lessons learned with the workshop participants.

"The challenges are always going to be great considering that these mechanisms are largely based on prevention," said Odalis Najera, President of the NPM in Honduras. "Our populations are inadequately prepared for prevention, so every day we are learning how to implement public policies to prevent violence."

Esteban Vargas, a member of Costa Rica's NPM, said that a good practice for all such organs is to establish true dialogue with the authorities.

"As ombudsmen and national human rights institutions, we are used to confronting the authorities in charge of detention centers," said Vargas. "But through the Mechanism we have learned that dialogue is equally important. The NPM has to learn to negotiate, to sit at the table, to propose, to listen ... Not only to confront, but also to learn to build."

NPMs are independent bodies that carry out visits to examine the treatment and conditions of persons deprived of their liberty, at the country level. They make recommendations for improvement and formulate proposals for legislation or draft laws.

"We insist that NPMs be created by a law that establishes their independence and clearly defines places of detention in the same terms as the Optional Protocol," explained Mario Coriolano, Argentine public defender and Vice-President of the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture.

He added that in order to establish an effective NPM, "I consider three pillars as inseparable: political will, a plan, and a team to carry out the plan."

[Read more](#)

**Watch videos of speeches (in Spanish):**





## Press releases by the Regional Office



### OHCHR-South America welcomes law on gender identity in Argentina

(25 May, 2012) OHCHR's Regional Office for South America congratulates the Argentine State for the recent entry into force of Law 26,743, establishing the right to recognition of gender identity and the free development of people under that identity.

"Argentina has taken an important step to ensure equality, respect and dignity of transgendered people," said Amerigo Incalcaterra, Regional Representative of OHCHR for South America. "The law on gender identity is pioneering in the region and incorporates international human rights standards in terms of accessibility, confidentiality and universality," he said.

[Read more](#)

### OHCHR supports proposed Constitutional Amendment on slave labour in Brazil

(21 May, 2012) – OHCHR's Regional Office for South America expressed support for the Constitutional Amendment bill that seeks to fight slave labour in Brazil, which is currently being discussed in Congress.

"As noted by the High Commissioner, slave labour is one of the worst forms of deprivation of human rights," said OHCHR's Regional Representative, Amerigo Incalcaterra. "This constitutional amendment is an important step in combating this shameful practice in Brazil. It is also an opportunity to increase the protection of the rights of all workers. We call on all political, social and business sectors to support the initiative," he added. The Proposed Constitutional Amendment (*Proposta de Emenda à Constituição*) 438/2001, which allows the expropriation of urban and rural properties where the practice of slave labour is found to be used, is expected to be voted on Tuesday 22 May by the Brazilian Chamber of Representatives.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR South America welcomes the appointment of the Board of Directors of the INDDHH in Uruguay

(9 May, 2012) Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, welcomes the Uruguayan Parliament's appointment of five members to the Governing Board of the new National Human Rights Institution and Ombudsman (INDDHH) in Uruguay.

Incalcaterra extended his congratulations to the new Board of Directors, composed of: Juan Faroppa, Juan Raúl Ferreira, Mariana González Guyer, Mirtha Guianze and Ariela Peralta.

"These appointments represent the starting point for the establishment of this important institution for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Uruguay," said Incalcaterra. "We recognize that the task initiated by the members of the Board — to build a modern and efficient institution that is responsive to the yearnings of Uruguayan society — is arduous, so we

naturally offer the support, assistance and technical advice of our Regional Office."

[Read more](#)

### States must protect journalists against all kinds of attacks, says UN Human Rights

(3 May, 2012) On this World Press Freedom Day, Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, said that according to international human rights standards, States have the obligation to protect journalists from all kinds of attacks.

"We are alarmed that yet another journalist has been killed in Brazil, bringing to at least four the number of journalists murdered in the country so far this year," said Rupert Colville, spokesman for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, a few days ago, adding that OHCHR is "concerned at what appears to be a disturbing trend of killing journalists that is damaging the exercise of freedom of expression in Brazil."

The Regional Representative for South America indicated that freedom of expression is a necessary condition for the realization of the principles of transparency and accountability that are, in turn, essential for the promotion and protection of human rights.

"Journalists are human rights defenders that sometimes risk their lives in order to report and denounce abuses," said Incalcaterra. "We cannot allow this important job to be threatened."

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### UN Human Rights South America deplores a Brazilian Superior Court ruling absolving a man of raping three 12-year-old girls

(5 April, 2012) OHCHR's Regional Office for South America deplores the decision of Brazil's Superior Tribunal de Justiça (STJ) which has absolved a man charged with raping three 12-year-old girls, basing its arguments on the fact that the girls were alleged sex workers.

"It is unthinkable that the sexual life of a 12-year-old could be used to waive her rights," said Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America. "This decision marks a dangerous precedent and discriminates against the victims based on both their age and gender."

Incalcaterra noted that the STJ's decision contravenes several international human rights treaties, which Brazil has ratified, including the [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#), [International](#)

[Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#) and the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#).

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## Press releases by the Regional Office

### OHCHR seeks approval of an anti-discrimination law in Chile and disseminates report submitted to the Senate in 2011

(4 April, 2012) As part of Chile's current parliamentary debate on the anti-discrimination bill, OHCHR's Regional Office has asked Congress to pass a law that effectively protects all individuals from discrimination according to international human rights instruments and standards. "Upon ratifying a human rights treaty, the State of Chile effectively incorporates it into national law and assumes the obligation to develop an effective regulatory framework that ensures respect for the rights of all persons without discrimination of any kind," said OHCHR's Regional Representative. "A new opportunity is now open for the bill in question to conform to international commitments."

On 4 April, 2012, the Chamber of Deputies confirmed the referral of the bill to a Joint Commission to review and refine the proposal currently under discussion.

[Read OHCHR's report to the Senate](#) (in Spanish)



### OHCHR's Regional Office for South America mourns the passing of Argentina's Secretary of State for Human Rights

(3 April, 2012) OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra, expressed his sadness over the death of the Secretary of State for Human Rights of Argentina, Eduardo Luis Duhalde and offered his condolences to his family, friends, colleagues and the human rights community. "Today, it is with deep sadness that we say goodbye a great human rights defender," said Incalcaterra. "Dr. Duhalde was a leader who built a strong human rights institution in Argentina. We recognize his significant contribution to the defense and promotion of human rights throughout Latin America."

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### UN Human Rights South America expresses concern over recent wave of deaths and violence in prisons

(7 February, 2012) Amerigo Incalcaterra expressed the concern of the Regional Office over the recent wave of violence in prisons across South America, which in the past few days has claimed the lives of at least three inmates in Uruguay, two in Argentina, two in Venezuela, and one in Chile. "These events reflect an alarming pattern of prison violence in the region, which is a direct consequence of –or is aggravated by– among others, poor conditions of detention, including chronic prison overcrowding, the lack of access to basic services such as adequate floor space, potable water, food, health care, and lack of basic sanitary and hygienic standards," noted Incalcaterra. "These conditions are exacerbated by judicial delays and excessive resort to pre-trial detention."

The Regional Representative stressed that prison conditions across South America have been repeatedly criticized in many reports by United Nations [Treaty Bodies](#), [Special Procedures mandate holders](#), as well as in the context of the [Universal Periodic Review](#), and that the Governments of the region must act on these recommendations.

[Read more](#)



### Social protest: What are States' responsibilities according to international human rights standards?

(2 February, 2012) In South America, as in other regions of the world, social protest movements are taking hold. States are required to ensure the safety of their citizens and maintain law and order, in particular to prevent the loss of life or other personal or material damage. In addition, States must ensure respect for the rights of citizens who peacefully express social demands. The response – both normative and of law enforcement – of States against such movements must conform to international human rights standards. They must at all times ensure the exercise of these rights, particularly the **right of peaceful assembly** and the **right to freedom of opinion and expression**.

The right to peaceful assembly is recognized in the following universal human rights instruments:

[Read more](#)

### OHCHR welcomes signing of bill to create an Under-Secretariat for Human Rights in Chile

(31 January, 2012) OHCHR's Regional Office for South America welcomes the signing of a bill to create an Under-Secretariat for Human Rights in Chile.

The Regional Office takes note of a positive trend in the region to create State institutions for human rights. The approval on 12 December of the bill establishing a Deputy Ministry of Human Rights in Peru is the latest example of that trend.

The Regional Office would like to express its willingness to support such processes, with the firm belief that these reinforce the promotion and protection of human rights by its main guarantors.

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## Press briefings by OHCHR's spokesperson

### UN Human Rights expresses concern over Venezuela's potential withdrawal from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

(4 May, 2012) We are concerned at Venezuela's announcement that it is establishing a State committee to evaluate the possibility of withdrawing from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Regional human rights bodies play a very important role in the promotion and protection of human rights mechanisms and reinforce universal human rights standards and treaties — something that has been repeatedly recognized by the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

The IACHR, which is more than 50 years old and is a highly respected body, has in particular had a very positive impact in the region, and it has been crucial in obtaining justice for large numbers of victims of human rights violations, particularly during the period when dictatorships ruled many countries in the region. The IACHR's work has also played a key role in the transition to democracy. [...]

We would like to encourage the Venezuelan Government, and all other States in the Americas, to continue to cooperate with regional and international human rights mechanisms, and urge them not to take any measures that would weaken human rights protection – not just in Venezuela but also with potentially negative ramifications for people all across the continent. [Read more](#)

### OHCHR concerned over disturbing trend of killing journalists that is damaging the exercise of freedom of expression in Brazil

(27 April, 2012) We are alarmed that yet another journalist has been killed in Brazil, bringing to at least four the number of journalists murdered in the country so far this year. Décio Sá, an investigative journalist reporting on local politics, corruption and organized crime, was gunned down in a bar on Monday, 23 April.

We condemn his murder and are concerned at what appears to be a disturbing trend of killing journalists that is damaging the exercise of freedom of expression in Brazil. We have long been concerned about the need for Brazilian human rights defenders, including journalists, to be able to conduct their work without fear of intimidation or worse.

We welcome the fact that state authorities have committed to conducting a thorough investigation and call for this and other similar cases to be treated as a major priority so that perpetrators are not emboldened by the prevailing lack of accountability for such crimes. At the same time, we urge the Government to immediately implement protection measures to prevent any more such incidents. [Read more](#)

### OHCHR deplores the violent killing of Daniel Zamudio and urges the Chilean Congress to pass a law against discrimination

(30 March, 2012) In Chile, a 24 year-old gay man, Daniel Zamudio, died on Tuesday 27 March, 25 days after being viciously assaulted by a group of alleged neo-Nazis in a Santiago park. He was reportedly tortured for an hour by his attackers, who stubbed cigarettes out on him, carved swastikas into his body, and mutilated him in other ways.

We deplore the violent criminal act that took the life of this young man and urge the Chilean Congress to pass a law against discrimination, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, in full compliance with relevant international human rights standards.

We also urge Chile to enact hate crime legislation that establishes hatred based on various grounds, including sexual orientation and gender identity, as an aggravating factor for the purposes of criminal prosecution.

The incident has sparked a public outcry in Chile, with hundreds joining vigils outside the hospital where Mr. Zamudio was taken after the attack. It has also provoked a debate about homophobia and hate crimes and calls for Parliament to pass an anti-discrimination law, which is currently before the Chilean Parliament, awaiting approval by the lower House. The bill was initially presented in Parliament in 2005 and has undergone much debate and reformulation. [Read more](#)

### OHCHR hopeful that the Brazilian judiciary will uphold the fundamental rights of the disappeared during the dictatorship

(16 March, 2012) In Brazil this week, prosecutors announced that they will bring criminal charges against a retired army colonel for the disappearance of five individuals during the military dictatorship in the country between 1964 and 1985. This is the first time that Brazil is prosecuting human rights violations committed during that period – previous attempts have been blocked by interpretations of the 1979 amnesty law. We welcome the prosecution of the retired colonel, Sebastião Curió Rodrigues de Moura as a first and crucial step in fighting the impunity that surrounds the period of military rule in Brazil. Curió will be charged with aggravated kidnapping in relation to the disappearance of five members of the Araguaia guerrilla movement who were detained in 1974. The charges must still be approved by a judge before the case can go to trial. It is worth noting that in 2010, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled that the amnesty law in Brazil is invalid and that criminal investigations and prosecutions must proceed.

This is a long-awaited development towards accountability for the hundreds of people who were disappeared during the 21-year dictatorship and who remain unaccounted for. We are hopeful that the Brazilian judiciary will uphold the fundamental rights of the victims to truth and justice by allowing this very important criminal prosecution to go forward. [Read more](#)

## Press releases by the High Commissioner on the region

### New restrictions on NGOs are undermining human rights – Pillay

(25 April 2012) – UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on Wednesday expressed deep concern about current or recent moves in a number of countries to curtail the freedom of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society actors to operate independently and effectively.

A draft law on regulation of NGOs in seriously undermine the spirit of played such a pivotal role," Pillay said. to regulate, monitor and restrict the

She urged the Egyptian authorities to "a potentially serious blow to the human doms for which so many Egyptians have

Pillay noted that freedom of association countries across the world. "Freedom of said. "Systemic legal or administrative very damaging."



Egypt "will, if passed in its current form, Egypt's revolution, in which civil society "It gives the Government too much power work of civil society organizations."

withdraw the law which she described as rights aspirations and fundamental free-struggled for so long and at such cost."

is under increasing pressure in many association is the lifeblood of NGOs," she attempts to curtail their activities can be

The High Commissioner cited recent or proposed new laws and other measures in a number of countries which, to varying degrees, place new restrictions on the right to freedom of association, noting for example that in February provincial authorities in Zimbabwe ordered the activities of 29 NGOs to be suspended. [...]

In Venezuela, in January 2012, a new Organic Law against Terrorism and Organised Delinquency was adopted by Congress, but has not yet been signed into law by the President. The law establishes a broad definition of "terrorist acts" that may apply to legitimate acts of social protest or dissidence. It also places NGOs under the permanent surveillance of a State organ and imposes restrictions on foreign funding. [...]

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## Interviews with Human Rights Mechanisms

### New barriers for journalists in South America: rapporteur

**Interview with: Frank La Rue (Guatemala) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression**

**Could you summarize some of the worrying trends you've seen in Latin America?**

I have four main preoccupations for freedom of expression. The first one is the growing use of criminal law to intimidate or censor communicators and journalists, especially the use of the crime of defamation, which for me should never be used by public officials. Every public official has to understand that public office comes with public scrutiny and public scrutiny goes with public criticism. And they should never feel bad about being criticized, whether they understand it is valid or not. That should never be censored. And criminal law has a chilling or silencing effect. So there should never be an excess of the use of criminal law. ...



[Watch a video of this interview](#)

### Challenges and progress towards the elimination of racial discrimination in South America

**Interview with: Pastor Murillo (Colombia)**

**Member of the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**

**What are the main challenges in the fight against racial discrimination in South America?**



[Watch the interview \(in Spanish\)](#)

Full recognition and social inclusion are the basis for overcoming the structural discrimination affecting indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. Indeed, after the conferences of Santiago and Durban, racial discrimination occupies in increasing profile in the agendas of governments, international organizations and civil

society. The proclamation of 2011 as International Year of Peoples of African Descent gave a renewed impulse in regard to this population, as occurred after the first Global Summit of African Descendants, held in Honduras, and the Ibero-American Presidential Summit held in Brazil.

However, major challenges remain. Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, who represent over one third of the population, have not yet been sufficiently recognized, and therefore do not participate effectively in decisions that affect them. Moreover, there is a systematic violation of their right to equality (to equal treatment and equality of opportunity). Likewise, the historic link between poverty and racism has made people of indigenous and African descent the poorest of the poor in South America.

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## Activities of the Regional Office



### OHCHR's Regional Representative participates in seminar on historic memory in Brazil

Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, participated on **28 June** in the seminar "Rights and the importance of the historical memory", in São Paulo, Brazil. The event, jointly organized by Vladimir Herzog Institute and Itaú Cultural Institute, discussed the need to rebuild the historical memory in the country, which is in vogue after the recent creation of a National Truth Commission in Brazil.

On the occasion, the Regional Representative spoke of experiences in other South American countries in the rescue of historic memory and justice processes to address the human rights violations committed in the region during different moments in history.

[Read more](#)



### Regional Representative speaks at the inauguration of Uruguay's National Human Rights Institution

On **22 June** in the "Hall of Lost Steps" of the Legislative Assembly of Uruguay, the opening ceremony took place for the National Institution for Human Rights and Ombudsman (INDDHH) of that country. During the event, the five members of the Board of the INDDHH assumed their positions. On this occasion, the Vice-president of the National Assembly of Uruguay, Danilo Astori, said the formation of this institution is of great importance for the country, because human rights are a matter of "high social sensitivity" and the INDDHH seeks "the defense, protection and promotion of human rights in their entirety."

OHCHR's Regional Representative, Amerigo Incalcaterra also took part in the ceremony and delivered a speech to welcome the implementation of this new mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights.

[Read his speech \(in Spanish\)](#)



### Regional Representative participates in virtual seminar "Child labour and human rights"

On **12 June**, OHCHR's Regional Representative, Amerigo Incalcaterra, participated in the online seminar "Child labour and human rights", organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Telefónica Foundation of Peru to commemorate the International Day against Child Labour.

Incalcaterra discussed the situation of children and adolescents worldwide, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting some good practices implemented in Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala and Bolivia. However, the Representative stated that "the situation is worrying" for the 20 million children who work in the region, who remain victims of dangerous labour, slavery, human trafficking, indentured servitude, prostitution or pornography, among others. The International Programme to Eradicate Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO gathered more

than 3,000 people online for this seminar from 19 countries of the region.

[Read more](#)



### The Peruvian Ministry of Culture and OHCHR release publication on the protection of indigenous peoples in isolation

At a joint event with the Culture Ministry of Peru on **11 July**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America released the publication "*Guidelines for the protection of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact of the Amazon region, Gran Chaco and Eastern Paraguay*". The event was held at the Ministry of Culture in Lima and inaugurated by the Minister of Culture of Peru, Alberto Luis Peirano, the Resident Coordinator of the UN system in the country, Rebeca Arias, the OHCHR Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra, and the Peruvian Deputy Minister for Multi-culturalism, Ivan Lanegra. The Deputy Minister chaired a roundtable discussion, along with a representative of the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Division of OHCHR, Belén Rodríguez de Alba, the Regional Coordinator for the 169 programme, Manuel García and a representative for the Peruvian Ombudsman, Alicia Abanto. Also active in

the discussion were the President of the Confederation of Amazon Natives (CONAP), Oseas Barbaran Sánchez, and a Representative of the Inter-ethnic Association for the Peruvian Amazon (AIDESEP), Israil Aquisé.

[Read more](#)



## Activities of the Regional Office



### The Peruvian Congress and OHCHR organize seminar on human rights for parliamentarians

Human rights and their treatment in South American Congresses were discussed during the international forum "The Role of Parliamentarians in Human Rights", organized by the office of the President of the Peruvian Congress and the OHCHR held on **8 June** in Lima.

In his keynote speech, OHCHR's Regional Representative Amerigo Incalcaterra said that when legislating on human rights, States must take into account their international commitments and treaties on human rights made by their respective countries and that even if the treaties are ratified, they will be less effective unless they are translated into law.

The event was attended by the President of the Congress of Peru, Daniel Abugattás, the President of the Chamber of Representatives of Uruguay, José Orrico; the Mexican Senator Santiago Creel and the President of the Justice Commission of Peru, Alberto Beingolea, who commented on the progress made in the area.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR's Regional Office and Mercosur's IPPDH present joint report at Meeting of Justice and Security Ministers

The Regional Office for South America and Mercosur's Institute for Public Policy on Human Rights (IPPDH) presented a report on policies for the prevention of institutional violence and public safety that respect human rights at the Joint Meeting of Ministers of Justice and Security of Mercosur, which took place in Buenos Aires from **5 to 7 June**.

In particular, both institutions referred to the importance of promoting public policies to prevent the practice of torture in places of confinement (prisons, police stations, psychiatric institutions, youth detention centers), and offered technical cooperation to Mercosur States in the process of implementing National Prevention Mechanisms against Torture, as established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (OPCAT) ratified by most countries in the region.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR prepares Uruguayan public servants for their first report to the Committee on Migrant Workers

From **30-31 May**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America held a workshop for public servants and other authorities from Uruguay in preparation for the State's first report to the Committee on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families (CMW).

Led by Humberto Henderson, Deputy Regional Representative for OHCHR-South America, 35 officials attended from various government ministries, the Parliament as well as the Supreme Court. Participants discussed the guidelines established by the Committee for the preparation of initial reports by States Parties. Later, officials gathered into thematic groupings, whose work led to a draft document that will guide the preparation of inputs for the final report.

This event was jointly organized by OHCHR-South America and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

[Read more](#)



### Regional Representative speaks at international seminar on discrimination, held in Chile

Amerigo Incalcaterra, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America gave a speech at the seminar "Discrimination and Human Rights: exchange of experiences between Mexico, Argentina Ecuador and Chile," organized by the Centre for Socio-cultural Studies (CESC) and sponsored by the Chilean Senate.

During his speech on **31 May**, Incalcaterra highlighted recent developments in the region "that allow for some optimism" concerning equality and non-discrimination. "In recent months, we have witnessed progress and regulatory approval of anti-discrimination laws, the establishment of gender equality plans and quotas for female political representation in several countries in the region." He noted that the rights of the LGBT community are beginning to have legal recognition in some countries which permit same-sex civil unions.

[Read more](#)

## Activities of the Regional Office



### OHCHR provides workshop on the Universal Periodic Review in Argentina

Between **24 and 25 April**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America provided training to the Argentine State on the [Universal Periodic Review \(UPR\)](#). Gathered at the Palacio San Martin, 18 officials from various State institutions received a two-day training course on the UPR process, the presentation of national reports and follow-up to the recommendations made to Argentina by the Human Rights Council in 2008 ([see outcome report](#)).

Inaugurated by Federico Villegas, Director of Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, and Humberto Henderson, Deputy Regional Representative of OHCHR, the workshop also covered the functions of the UN Human Rights Council and its new guidelines.

Argentina will undergo its second periodic review in October 2012.

[Read more](#)



### Regional Representative visits Uruguay and meets with Government officials

OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra, visited Uruguay from **17-20 April** and met with various authorities to monitor the cooperation and assistance that the Regional Office provides the country regarding human rights issues. He met with Interior Minister Eduardo Bonomi and spoke about public safety and particularly the progress of prison reform being promoted by the Uruguayan Government. He also met with the Director of Human Rights for the Ministry of Education and Culture, Javier Miranda, to explore future areas of joint work. With the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Jorge Orrico, the Regional Representative exchanged ideas about the human rights situation in Uruguay and possible parliamentary initiatives in this area. Furthermore, he addressed the issue of the new National Human Rights Institution

and Public Defender and training for young politicians in the School of Governance of the Uruguayan Parliament.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR provides training in Uruguay on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

From **17 to 18 April**, the Regional Office for South America of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), provided training on the rights of people with disabilities for more than 30 participants from the State and civil society in Uruguay. The training objective was to support the State's preparation of its initial report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Participants included representatives of several ministries, such as: Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture, Health, Labour, as well as Social Development (and its associated institutes). It was also attended by officials of the judiciary, relevant municipal institutions, and there was broad representation of civil society, including NGOs promoting the rights of people with disabilities and family associations of persons with disabilities. In addition, the meeting featured a videoconference with three Spanish-speaking members of the CRPD Committee,

among them: Maria Soledad Cisternas (Chile), Silvia Quan-Chang (Guatemala) and Ana Pelaez Narvaez (Spain).

[Read more](#)



### Regional Office participates in Second Symposium on Public Security in Mercosur

On **16 April**, the first of a two-day symposium on Public and Citizen's Security in MERCOSUR, Argentine Security Minister Nilda Garré stressed the need to address the public safety agenda in a coordinated manner between Mercosur members.

"These meetings allow us to compare experiences, models, mechanisms, and similar realities regarding conflict and social violence," said Garré, President *pro tempore* of the Meeting of Interior Ministers of Mercosur and Associated States. "We also found an absolute echo in the need for political leadership of security forces, grounded in the foundations of democratic security."

The Minister was accompanied by OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra. "We see these types of meetings as very positive developments," said Incalcaterra.

"We approached the Ministry of Security of Argentina to see their focus and we were happy to see that the approach is correct: respond to situations of violence and insecurity through respect for human rights; establish protocols for action; create centers to monitor police action, with all the difficulties that implies; but we believe that the Argentine effort is highly positive."

[Read more](#)



## Activities of the Regional Office



### Regional Representative Participates in MERCOSUR Meeting of High-Level Authorities

From **26 to 30 March**, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra, participated in various activities in Buenos Aires, Argentina. On 26 March, he attended a consultation for the elaboration of a General Comment by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), related to children's rights in the corporate sector. Organized by UNICEF Argentina and the International Commission of Jurists, the event featured a presentation and closing remarks by Marta Maurás, Vice-President of the CRC. On 27 March, the Regional Representative gave a lecture at the 1st International Course on the Promotion of Human Rights, in which more than 40 people from five continents participated. Incalcaterra took part in a panel on universal justice in the current context of human rights in the world, next to Colonel Claudio Piedrabuena, Director of

Argentina's Joint Training Center for Peacekeeping Operations, Paul Celi, Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies for the Defense of the Union of South American Nations, and Rodolfo Mattarollo, Ambassador of the Union of South American Nations to Haiti. Finally, from 28-30 March, at the Meeting of High-Level Authorities from Human Rights Secretariats and Foreign Ministries of MERCOSUR and Associated States (RAADDHH), Mr. Incalcaterra spoke about the status of ratification of international treaties in South America, the status of submission of outstanding reports to treaty body committees and the Universal Periodic Review. [Read more](#)



### OHCHR takes part in seminar on torture prevention for public defenders in Brazil

On **29-30 March**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America participated in a seminar in São Paulo, Brazil, entitled "Capacity building of the Public Defense to combat torture". The seminar was convened by the Public Defense Office of São Paulo and more than 70 public defenders participated from different states across Brazil. Academics were also present at the event.

The seminar included panelists from the Subcommittee Against Torture, the International Bar Association and OHCHR's Regional Office, as well as from the Public Defense Office and the Public Ministry of São Paulo. [Read more](#)



### OHCHR offers workshop for Peruvian civil servants on upcoming report to the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination

From **21-22 March**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America held a workshop for civil servants of the Peruvian State on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, its Committee and its periodic reports.

Imparted by Humberto Henderson, Deputy Regional Representative for OHCHR-South America, the event was attended by 18 officials from the ministries of: Education, Labour, Health, Foreign Affairs, Culture, Defense, Social Development, Housing, the Interior, and Justice and Human Rights. Members of Congress and representatives of the Public Ministry, the Judiciary and the National Statistics Institute (INEI) also attended.

Following the guidelines of the CERD Committee and considering its latest concluding observations of Peru, the civil servants gathered into thematic groups, whose work resulted in a preliminary document that will serve to guide the inputs for the final State report. In 2012, Peru must send its periodic reports 18-20 to the CERD Committee. [Read more](#)



### OHCHR trains Peruvian officials for their first report to the Committee on Migrant Workers

Between **19 and 21 March**, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America held a workshop for officials of the Peruvian State in preparation for the country's first report to the Committee on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families (CMW).

Led by Anna Batalla, Human Rights Advisor for OHCHR-South America, the event was attended by 14 officials from the ministries of: Justice and Human Rights, the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Women and Labour. Representatives of the Public Ministry, the National Statistics Institute (INEI) and the National Penitentiary Institute (INPE) also attended.

Congregated at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, and then at the Ministry of Labour, participants discussed their doubts or questions regarding the new guidelines established by the Committee for the preparation of initial reports by States Parties. Later, officials gathered into thematic groupings, whose work led to a draft document that will guide the preparation of inputs for the final report. [Read more](#)



## Activities of the Regional Office



### OHCHR observes act of recognition of the State's responsibility for human rights violations in Uruguay

During a public ceremony held in the General Assembly Hall of the Uruguayan Parliament on **21 March**, the President of Uruguay, José Mujica, recognized the institutional responsibility of the Uruguayan State in the violation of the human rights of María Claudia García Iruretagoyena Gelman, her daughter María Macarena Gelman, and of John Gelman. This act was in compliance with the judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights regarding that case.

Invited as a special guest, OHCHR's Regional Representative for South America, Amerigo Incalcaterra, witnessed this act of recognition, as well as the unveiling of a plaque in honour of María Claudia García and all victims detained clandestinely in the building that was home to the Defense Information Service during the dictatorship.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR provides trainings on the Universal Periodic Review in Peru

From **14 to 17 February**, a delegation from OHCHR's Regional Office for South America provided a series of training sessions and workshops to the State, NGOs and the UN System in Peru. The mission was carried out by OHCHR's Deputy Regional Representative, Humberto Henderson, and Human Rights Adviser, Anna Batalla. The activities included the new guidelines adopted by the Council of the UN Human Rights for the second cycle of Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

Some 50 State officials from the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches -who gathered at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights- received a two-day training on the UPR process, the presentation of the national report and the follow up of the recommendations made by the Human Rights Council in 2008 ([see report](#)).

[Read more](#)



### Regional Representative of OHCHR participates in activities in Argentina

Between **7 and 9 February**, the Regional Representative for South America of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Amerigo Incalcaterra, paid a visit to Argentina to discuss the situation of human rights in the country and to explore possibilities for cooperation and technical assistance with national and regional authorities.

During his visit, Incalcaterra met with Alicia Kirchner, Minister of Social Development, Federico Villegas, Director of Rights Human of the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as with Nilda Garré, Minister of National Security.

The Regional Representative subsequently met with Víctor Abramovich, Director of the Public Policy Institute of Human Rights of MERCOSUR, and with Martín Santiago, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Argentina. The Representative of OHCHR also participated in an

academic event at the University of San Martín, where spoke about human rights in the international context.

[Read more](#)



### OHCHR provides training for the UN System and civil society organizations in Argentina on the Universal Periodic Review

From **6 to 9 February**, the Regional Office for South America of the UN Human Rights Office conducted a series of training sessions about the new guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council during 2011 for the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

The training sessions were held in the context that Argentina will go through its second review between 22 October and 4 November 2012. The country went through its first UPR in May 2008 ([see report](#)).

The sessions took place in Buenos Aires and were conducted by the OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for South America, Humberto Henderson, who provided technical advice to the UN Country Team, which is preparing a report in Argentina.

Also, on Wednesday 8 February, over 40 civil society organisations from several areas received a training regarding the UPR. The session was opened with a keynote speech by OHCHR's Regional Representative, Amerigo Incalcaterra.

[Read more](#)

## New publications



### National Human Rights Action Plans

Ingredients for success



Naciones Unidas  
Derechos Humanos

### **National Human Rights Action Plans: Ingredients for Success** 30 June, 2012

This brochure explains National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs) and what they seek to achieve. It details who should participate and how to design the plan. It equally stresses the importance of political will and support as well as the need for public participation in such initiatives. Finally, it provides an overview of the development of NHRAPs in South America.

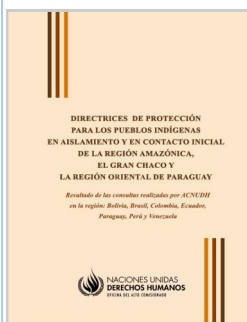
[PDF](#)



### **Sustainable Development 20 Years on from the Earth Summit** 31 March, 2012

The present document is divided into two parts: an analysis of progress made and difficulties encountered in Latin America and the Caribbean in implementing global commitments on sustainable development since 1992, and proposed guidelines for moving towards sustainable development in the region. The proposal by the United Nations to reflect upon a "green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" aspires to catalyse the changes needed in the region.

[PDF](#)



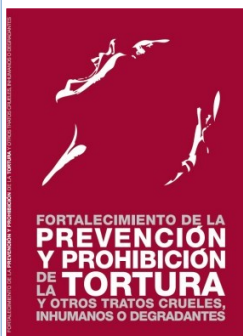
### **Directrices de protección de los pueblos indígenas en aislamiento y en contacto inicial de la región Amazónica, el Gran Chaco y la Región Oriental de Paraguay**

22 May, 2012 (Spanish only)

This publication serves as a reference for the different actors

working with indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact in South America. It is the result of collaboration between OHCHR, the Institute for Promotion of Social Studies (IPES), the governments of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela, and indigenous organizations and civil society, who received support from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency.

[PDF](#)

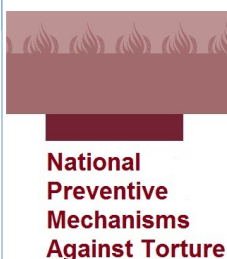


### **Fortalecimiento de la Prevención y Prohibición de la Tortura y otros tratos crueles, inhumanos o degradantes**

29 February, 2012 (Spanish only)

This book contains the presentations of speakers at the international seminar "Strengthening the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment," held in Buenos Aires on 9 and 10 August 2010. The seminar was organized by the Argentine Foreign Ministry, under the auspices of OHCHR and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT).

[PDF](#)



### **National Preventive Mechanisms Against Torture**



Naciones Unidas  
Derechos Humanos

### **National Preventive Mechanisms Against Torture** 12 April, 2012

This brochure explains National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs) against Torture, the importance of their implementation in the region, their functions and requirements (among others the need for autonomy and Independence, diversity, transparency, etc.). The responsibilities of the State *vis-à-vis* these organs is also detailed as well as their current state of development in South America.

[PDF](#)



### **Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework**

18 January, 2012

This publication contains the "Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' Framework", which were developed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises.

[PDF](#)

## Committee reports and official visits by Special Procedures



### UN expert launches study mission on Brazil's "Solidarity Diplomacy"

United Nations Independent Expert, Virginia Dandan, undertook an official visit to Brazil from **25 to 29 June 2012** to study the country's experiences on the implementation of the so-called "Solidarity Diplomacy" built upon Brazil's commitment to human rights and social development.

"Brazil's international cooperation initiatives are leading to ground-breaking South-South and Triangular Cooperation frameworks in areas such as the fight against hunger, agriculture, education and health among others," Ms. Dandan said. This is the first country mission by the Independent Expert on international solidarity designated by the UN Human Rights Council to draft

a declaration on the Right of Individuals and Peoples to International Solidarity.

[Read more](#)

### Brazil publishes the mission report of the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture

In **June 2012**, the Brazilian government released the report of the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture (SPT), which was presented to the Brazilian State after his first mission to the country, from 19-30 September, 2011.

During the visit, the SPT met with national authorities and civil society representatives, in addition to a series of visits to detention centers, which included police stations, prisons, juvenile detention centers and psychiatric institutions in the states of Espirito Santo, Goias, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. Access the full report (*in Portuguese*) on the website of the Human Rights Secretariat of the Presidency of Brazil:

[http://www.sedh.gov.br/acessoainformacao/acoes-e-programas/relatorio\\_do\\_SPT.pdf](http://www.sedh.gov.br/acessoainformacao/acoes-e-programas/relatorio_do_SPT.pdf)



### Brazil undergoes its second Universal Periodic Review

On **May 25, 2012**, during the 13th session of the second cycle of the Working Group of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, the State of Brazil reviewed its human rights situation under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The UPR is an inter-state review process which all Member States of the United Nations must undergo every four years. It is intended to improve the human rights situation on the ground. The final report is based on three key documents: the national report of the State, a compilation prepared by OHCHR and a summary of the information provided by other partners such as NGOs, NHRIs, unions and others. Brazil passed its first UPR in

May 2008 (read the [final report](#) of the Working Group). The final report of this second review is expected to be presented at the upcoming session of the HRC in September 2012.

[Read more](#)

### Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopts concluding observations for Peru

The [Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(CESCR\)](#) has issued its concluding observations after considering the second, third and fourth reports by the Peruvian State during its [48th session](#) in Geneva, from **30 April to 18 May**.

On this occasion, 12 non-governmental organizations delivered seven [alternative reports](#) for consideration by the Committee. The State of Peru delivered its [first periodic report](#) in May 1997.

**Read the concluding observations of the CESCR Committee:** [PDF 90 kb](#)



### Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities publishes concluding observations for Peru

The [Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) issued its concluding observations after considering the initial report by the Peruvian State to this United Nations treaty body during its seventh session in Geneva from **16 to 20 April 2012**. In its [initial report](#), the State Party explained its progress and challenges in terms of the rights of persons with disabilities:

"In the process of reviewing the implementation of the Convention, in terms of progress and difficulties two years after its entry into force, we have come to understand the true gap between what must be and what is ... It is not by decree or by some exceptionally drastic measure that social and cultural patterns are changed, and discrimination cannot be reduced automatically."

In addition to the official report, three civil society organizations presented alternative reports to the Committee.

**Read the concluding observations of the CRPD Committee:** [PDF 106 kb](#)



## Committee reports and official visits by Special Procedures

### Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture concludes first visit to Argentina

The [Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture \(SPT\)](#), visiting the country from **18 to 27 April**, presented to the Argentine Government its confidential preliminary conclusions and recommendations following the visit. The SPT met with national and regional authorities and with civil society representatives. Also, it visited several detention centres, including prisons, police stations, juvenile detention centres and psychiatric institutions in Buenos Aires Province and Buenos Aires city.

"We hope that our visit to Argentina contributes to the ongoing efforts of the country to prevent torture and ill treatments. In this regard, and to promote transparency, we hope that the State decides to publish our final report, which will be presented to the State in the coming months," said the head of the SPT delegation, Víctor Rodríguez-Rescia.

[Read more](#)



### Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women publishes its concluding observations on Brazil

On **23 March**, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) published its concluding observations after considering the seventh periodic report of the State of Brazil, during its 51st session (held 13 February - 2 March, 2012) in Geneva. Together with the [periodic report](#) of the State, seven non-governmental organizations presented [alternative reports](#) to the Committee. Brazil presented its sixth periodic report to CEDAW in 2007 and published its [concluding observations](#) in August of that same year.

*Read CEDAW's concluding observations: [PDF 98 kb](#)*

### Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing presents report on her mission to Argentina

On **2 March**, during the 19th session of the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Raquel Rolnik, presented the concluding report based on her April 2011 mission to Argentina. This was the first mission to the country by this independent expert designated by the Human Rights Council to examine obstacles and progress towards the right to adequate housing. During her visit, the special rapporteur learned about the difficulties faced by low-income populations in terms of gaining access to urban land and housing, as well as the proposed public policies in this regard. Rolnik also concentrated on the regulation and urbanization of informal or squatter settlements as well as the problems associated with forceful evictions.

*Read the Special Rapporteur's report: [PDF 138 kb](#)*



### Water/Sanitation: UN expert highlights Uruguay's achievements but urges greater priority for the most vulnerable

"Uruguay has made significant progress in the realization of the rights to water and sanitation, but now it is urgent to give priority to the most vulnerable and marginalized," said UN Special Rapporteur Catarina de Albuquerque at the end of his first mission to Uruguay, from **13-17 February**. She visited several neighbourhoods in Montevideo, including Malvin Norte, Casavalle, Casabó, Borro as well as the country's interior, such as Colonia Berro INAU, Ciudad de la Costa and Maldonado, which included settlements and rural areas where many still lack access to clean water or sanitation. The Special Rapporteur will submit a mission report to the Human Rights Council in September 2012.

[Read more](#)

### Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights publishes concluding observations on Argentina

In **January 2012**, the [Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(CESCR\)](#) published its concluding observations after considering the third periodic report of the State of Argentina from 23-24 November, 2011, during its [47nd session](#) in Geneva. In August of 2011, OHCHR's Regional Office for South America collaborated with the State of Argentina in the analysis of the [List of Issues and Written Replies](#) prior to the CESCR Committee's examination.

In addition to the [State report by Argentina](#), 17 civil society organizations presented [alternative reports](#) to the Committee. Argentina presented its second periodic report in November 1999 and the CESCR published its [concluding observations](#) in December of that same year.

*Read CESCR's concluding observations: [Word 153 kb](#)*

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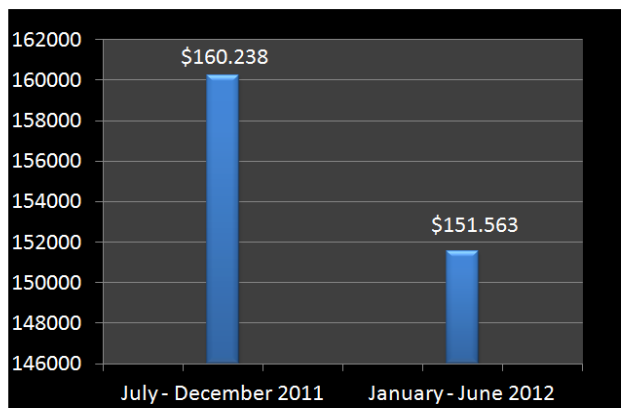


## Shrinking budgets

During the first half of 2012, the activities of OHCHR's Regional Office for South America have increased in its countries of coverage. Meanwhile, the budget for activities in this period fell by 4.8 percent, in comparison with that for the second semester of 2011 (see table).

By 2013, due to reduced contributions from donor States, the budget for activities will be further reduced, which will likely have a negative impact on the future activities of the Regional Office.

Comparison of the costs (in \$USD) of activities in the 2nd semester of 2011 & 1st semester of 2012



## Future meetings and events in 2012

### July 2012

**9-10 July** - OHCHR and Chile's National Human Rights Institute visit jails in Santiago

**19 July** - OHCHR and Brazil's SEASDH conduct workshop in Rio de Janeiro on the universal human rights system

**20 July** - OHCHR speaks at seminar on democratic security and human rights, of Chile's INDH and Mercosur's IPPDH, in Santiago

**23-24 July** - OHCHR leads workshop for indigenous leaders in Tucumán, Argentina, on universal human rights for indigenous peoples

**24 July** - Second phase of the #yomedecarlo campaign is launched at Chile's National Institute for Human Rights (INDH)

**9-27 July** - Human Rights Committee adopts [list of questions](#) for Peru

### August

**9-10 August** - OHCHR participates in international colloquium on the implementation of criminal policy in Peru

**13 - 21 August** - Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances visits Chile

**14-16 August** - Training for prison directors in Uruguay, organized by OHCHR / UN Women

**30-31 August** - 1st International Meeting on Human Rights Action Plans, in Rio de Janeiro

### September

**3-4 September** - International seminar on Truth Commissions, in Brasilia

**5-6 September** - Regional Representative participates in High-Level Meeting of Human Rights Authorities of Mercosur, in Porto Alegre, Brazil

**6-7 September** - OHCHR and the Judicial Academy of Chile offer first training course for judges

**10-28 September** - 21st regular session of the Human Rights Council

**12-13 September** - OHCHR speaks at INDH seminar on the state of Chile's penitentiary system

### October

**1-19 October** - CEDAW Committee holds its [53rd session](#) and considers Chile's periodic report

**15-20 October** - In Lima, Peru, OHCHR trains civil society women's organizations as well as judges and prosecutors on women's rights

**22-23 October** - OHCHR workshop on human rights mechanisms, for public defenders from all states in Brazil

**22 October - 5 November** - Universal Periodic Review Working Group holds 14th session (Argentina and Peru to be examined the first week)

**29 October - 23 November** - Committee Against Torture examines Peru during its [49th session](#)

### November

**6-7 November** - OHCHR and the Judicial Academy of Chile offer second training course for judges

### December

**10 December** - Events in Chile and other countries to conclude the #yomedecarlo campaign and to commemorate Human Rights Day

<http://acnudh.org>

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.**