



General Assembly

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Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 7 October 2025

60/21. Situation of human rights in the Russian Federation

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights treaties and instruments,

Reaffirming that it is the primary responsibility of each State to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in accordance with its obligations under international human rights law,

Reaffirming also its strong commitment to the sovereignty and political independence of the Russian Federation within its internationally recognized borders,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 51/25 of 7 October 2022, 54/23 of 12 October 2023 and 57/20 of 10 October 2024 on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation,

Recalling also all relevant statements made by the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies concerning the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, including those by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation,

Recalling further the alarming findings in the report of the Moscow Mechanism of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on the legal and administrative practices of the Russian Federation of 22 September 2022,¹ as well as in its reports of 4 May 2023² and 25 April 2024,³

Gravely concerned at the continued significant deterioration of the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, in particular at reports of the extrajudicial killing of government critics, severe restrictions on the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association, both online and offline, to silence dissent, anti-war expression and other peaceful activities vital for the functioning of a democratic society, resulting in an unabating systematic crackdown by the Russian authorities on civil society organizations and representatives, human rights defenders, particularly women human rights

¹ www.osce.org/odihr/526720.

² www.osce.org/odihr/542751.

³ www.osce.org/odihr/567367.



defenders, who face specific sexual and gender-based violence and threats, independent media outlets, journalists, media workers, Indigenous Peoples, persons in vulnerable situations, children and their families, persons belonging to minorities, lawyers, political opposition representatives, and other individuals exercising their human rights,

Expressing its deep concern at the reported mass arbitrary arrest, detention and harassment of the persons referred to in the previous paragraph, including persons peacefully protesting and speaking out against the deterioration of the rule of law in the Russian Federation and the war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and the excessive use of force against these individuals, as well as at the lack of an independent judiciary and denial of the right to a fair trial and legal assistance of their own choice, including for those detained,

Expressing concern at reports of the widespread and systematic use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment against detainees, including acts involving the denial of access to adequate medical care, their arbitrary placement in punitive solitary isolation cells or solitary confinement, restriction of their contact with the outside world, and the misuse of psychiatric facilities; at the unwillingness of the authorities to investigate allegations of enforced disappearance, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as well as of sexual and gender-based violence against persons in detention; at the situation of individuals, especially children, deported to the Russian Federation; and at the persistent impunity for these acts, which is further compounded by the reduction in independent oversight following the announced withdrawal of the Russian Federation from the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,

Reiterating grave concerns at the death of the opposition leader Alexei Navalny in detention, the failure of the Russian authorities to conduct an effective, independent and impartial investigation into the circumstances of his death, and the conviction on so-called extremism charges of three lawyers who had been defending Mr. Navalny,

Calling upon the Russian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release and effectively rehabilitate all those persons arbitrarily or unlawfully detained, arrested, charged or sentenced on politically motivated grounds or for exercising their human rights,

Expressing its concern at the mass forced shutdowns of civil society organizations, including Memorial, the Moscow Helsinki Group, the Sakharov Centre, the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis, the Centre for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North, the human rights organization Man and Law, Sphere Foundation and the independent election monitoring organization Golos, the closure of the Gulag History Museum in Moscow, the blocking and forced closure of nearly all independent media outlets, including radio channels, television channels, online media and newspapers, the bans on foreign media and the targeted revocation of registration of foreign organizations by the Russian authorities, as well as their designation as “undesirable”, and also at the limited access of Russian society, including civil society, to information and communications infrastructure and to independent information, the increase in offline and online censorship and disinformation, including through the March 2024 legislative prohibition of advertisements by “foreign agents” and the September 2025 advertising ban targeting platforms labelled as “extremist” or “undesirable”, which have further undermined the financial viability of independent media, and the pervasive new cybersurveillance systems to control information and intimidate and silence critics,

Noting with deep concern the legislative measures to increasingly restrict the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association and expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, both online and offline, notably the laws on so-called “foreign agents”, “extremism” and “undesirable organizations”, as amended, the law on “fake news about the Russian army” and “discreditation of the use of the Russian armed forces” of March 2022, amending the Code on Administrative Offences and the Criminal Code, and general prohibitions on the dissemination of information based on vague and ambiguous notions, as well as the misuse of the court system for political purposes, which together have the effect of suppressing peaceful, independent and pluralistic views through the application of steep fines, arbitrary detention and lengthy prison sentences,

Expressing concern at the Russian authorities' expanding control of Internet infrastructure through mandatory technologies enabling State-directed traffic filtering and blocking, the adoption of legislation penalizing online searches for so-called "extremist" content, the promotion and advertising of virtual private networks and the accessing of banned content through virtual private networks, and the frequent application of Internet shutdowns,

Expressing concern also at the human rights violations stemming from the arbitrary use and instrumentalization of laws relating to the "security of the State", including "treason" or anti-terrorism and anti-extremism legislation with an excessively broad interpretation beyond their stated purpose, aimed at silencing dissenting voices, and at extrajudicial restrictions, the secret trial of civilians by military courts and laws that are used in practice to limit freedom of expression and association, and in this regard expressing concern at the addition of at least 55 Indigenous Peoples' organizations and other regional and minorities groups to the list of "extremist organizations", at the numerous organizations designated as "terrorist" organizations in January 2025 and at the continued expansion of such designations in 2025, further entrenching the criminalization of peaceful civic activity and dissent,

Deploing the fact that the Russian authorities have designated some human rights organizations and groups of persons in vulnerable situations, including groups of persons systematically persecuted and discriminated against by the State, as "extremist" and added them to the list of "undesirable" organizations, which has reportedly resulted in these persons suffering greater physical and verbal abuse, persecution, arbitrary detention, including in psychiatric facilities, enforced disappearance and torture, and other crimes committed against them with impunity,

Alarmed that legislative measures are being used by the authorities against Russian civil society, human rights defenders and Indigenous Peoples to penalize and criminalize cooperation with international organizations, including as intimidation and reprisal for cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, and that the enforcement of such legislation is reportedly leading to self-censorship and dissuading civil society actors from publicly engaging with the United Nations and other organizations,

Condemning the use by the Russian Federation of transnational repression of political activists, real or perceived political opponents, journalists and other media workers, lawyers and human rights defenders, including through the targeting of their relatives and through extraterritorial legislation, and condemning also all acts of intimidation or reprisal, both online and offline, against individuals and groups who seek to cooperate, cooperate or have cooperated with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights,

Reiterating that the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, the integrity of the judicial system and an independent legal profession are essential prerequisites for the protection of human rights, the rule of law, good governance and democracy, and for ensuring that there is no discrimination in the administration of justice, and should therefore be respected in all circumstances, and consequently expressing concern at the lack of judicial independence in the Russian Federation,

Recalling the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, stressing the confidentiality of lawyer-client communications and the independence of bar associations and expressing concern at the ongoing deterioration of legal protections and escalating pressures on lawyers, including the intimidation and harassment of, arbitrary disciplinary measures against, disbarment, criminal prosecution and arbitrary detention of lawyers for performing their professional duties, including lawyers defending those arrested and sentenced on politically motivated grounds,

Deploing the continuing social, political and economic discrimination and violence against women and girls and individuals in vulnerable situations and the level of sexual and gender-based violence in the country, urging the Russian authorities to take effective measures to criminalize in national law all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and to prevent, investigate and ensure accountability for sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic and intimate partner violence, as well as, in particular in the North Caucasus region, enforced disappearance, gender-related killings, such as "honour" killings,

forced marriage and the practice of female genital mutilation, and to take a survivor-centred approach to fighting sexual and gender-based violence and abuse, and expressing concern at the continued lack of access to justice and support services for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and abuse, particularly in rural and underserved regions,

Regretting that, despite the two postponements granted by the Human Rights Committee, the Russian Federation did not participate in the constructive dialogue with the Committee during its 136th session, and taking note of the Committee's concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of the Russian Federation,⁴ the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of the Russian Federation⁵ and the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the combined twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth periodic reports of the Russian Federation,⁶

Noting with concern the impact of the liquidity crisis affecting the United Nations on the sufficient resourcing of the mandate and mandated activities, including consultations with all stakeholders,

Recalling that the Russian Federation ceased to be a high contracting party to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights) on 16 September 2022, and that 8,050 applications directed against the Russian Federation are currently pending before the European Court of Human Rights, which remains competent to deal with cases concerning acts or omissions that took place before that date, and recalling also that the Russian Federation remains bound by the decisions taken by the European Court of Human Rights on the aforementioned pending cases,

1. *Strongly urges* the Russian authorities to comply with all of the State's obligations under international human rights law;

2. *Urges* the Russian authorities to uphold the fundamental freedoms of thought, conscience, religion or belief, opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association, and political participation, and a democratic election process, in particular by removing restrictions on diversity in ideas, criticism and dissent, as well as associated rights to liberty and security of person; to put an immediate end to the reported violations of the rights to a fair trial and freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, misuse of the judicial system, in particular the arbitrary use and instrumentalization of laws on "security of the State", including on "treason", or anti-terrorism and anti-extremism laws, to suppress the rights of journalists and other media workers, cultural figures, lawyers, researchers, historians, civil society and human rights defenders, and peaceful anti-war protesters, notably women and persons in vulnerable situations; and to release immediately and unconditionally all those arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared, and to ensure the safe return of deported individuals, especially children;

3. *Welcomes* the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation;⁷

4. *Decides* to extend the mandate of Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation as defined by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 54/23 for a period of one year, and requests the mandate holder to hold consultations with all stakeholders, including civil society inside and outside the Russian Federation, and to present a comprehensive report to the Council at its sixty-third session and to the General Assembly at its eighty-first session;

5. *Calls upon* the Russian authorities to establish full and non-selective engagement with all United Nations human rights mechanisms, including constructive communication and full cooperation with the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, to allow

⁴ CCPR/C/RUS/CO/8.

⁵ CRC/C/RUS/CO/6-7.

⁶ CERD/C/RUS/CO/25-26.

⁷ A/HRC/60/59.

the mandate holder free, full and unhindered access to visit the country and to meet freely with relevant stakeholders, including civil society and human rights defenders, as well as individuals in detention, including prisoners of war and civilians deported to the territory of the Russian Federation, and to provide the Special Rapporteur with the information necessary to properly fulfil the mandate, and also calls upon the Russian authorities to cooperate fully with all other special procedure mandate holders, the treaty bodies, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as all stakeholders in the context of the universal periodic review, and to refrain from all forms of intimidation and reprisal against persons and associations for their cooperation with these bodies;

6. *Also calls upon* the Russian authorities to adopt and publish a time-bound action plan to implement the recommendations made by international and regional human rights mechanisms, including the treaty bodies, and by the Special Rapporteur, and the recommendations accepted by the Russian Federation during the third and fourth cycles of the universal periodic review, in meaningful consultation with civil society and victims;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide the Special Rapporteur with all the assistance and adequate human, technical and financial resources necessary to enable the effective fulfilment of the mandate.

*44th meeting
7 October 2025*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 20 to 8, with 18 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechia, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Marshall Islands, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Switzerland

Against:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, Viet Nam

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Qatar, South Africa, Thailand]