



**2024 ECOSOC Management Segment
Item 19 (f) Human rights
5 June 2024**

Introduction of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ([E/2024/13](#))

**Statement by Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant-Secretary-General for Human Rights
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to present the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which provides an overview of OHCHR's activities, key achievements, and challenges in the field of economic, social and cultural rights over the last year.

OHCHR's work in economic, social and cultural rights is guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, and other international human rights instruments as well as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which recognized that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

The overarching priority of our Office is to contribute to making all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights as well as the right to development and the right to a clean and healthy environment – a reality for everyone.

We need to overcome the artificial divide that has existed among these rights.

Last September, as requested by the Human Rights Council, the High Commissioner presented his vision and priorities for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, which will be driven by actions in five key areas:

First, we will strengthen support to States to shape their macroeconomic and fiscal policies to enable them to meet their obligations on economic, social and cultural rights.

Second, we will reinforce States' efforts to address the root causes of inequalities and deliver on the commitment to leave no one behind.

Third, we will foster an enabling environment and strengthen the active and meaningful participation of all in policy and decision-making, as real progress on economic, social, and cultural rights – and indeed all human rights and the SDGs – depends on efforts and engagement across society.

Fourth, we will work with international financial and development finance institutions to integrate economic, social, and cultural rights into their policies and operations and to promote international cooperation and resource mobilization for the fulfilment of economic, social, and cultural rights.

And lastly, we will help States to harness the power of data to develop targeted, inclusive, and evidence-based policies for the realization of these rights and achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Guided by this vision, and the relevant mandates given by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, OHCHR has actively engaged in a range of activities including technical assistance, capacity building, research and advocacy, and partnership and engagement with governments, national human rights institutions, universities, academia, civil society and other stakeholders at country, regional and global levels.

This report highlights achievements and progress made by the Office on economic, social and cultural rights, including through engagement on economic policies, and links those efforts to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and securing the right to development. For example:

In November 2023, the Office, in collaboration with ILO, the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Ethiopia, organized a national policy dialogue on the protection and promotion of the rights of domestic workers in Ethiopia.

In Jordan, OHCHR has worked with the Economic and Social Council of Jordan to place human rights at the centre of public finance policies, including by developing a policy brief to guide domestic revenue collection in order to tackle inequalities.

Our office in Cambodia, in collaboration with the ILO and other UN country team members, provided technical advice to support the Government's efforts to develop the National Social Protection Policy Framework Vision 2030.

In Kenya, OHCHR has supported citizens' engagement in the local budget formulation, thus promoting participation, transparency, and accountability.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Despite 172 countries having ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the actual implementation of these rights remains a pressing challenge.

Deliberate efforts by Member States are needed, nationally and internationally, for the realization of these rights.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath vividly exposed decades of underinvestment in economic, social, and cultural rights. The report draws attention to the emerging

concept of a human rights economy, which presents an additional avenue and opportunity for States to align their economic policies with human rights obligations, in particular by ring-fencing and thus protecting expenditures on economic, social and cultural rights related initiatives during financial crises.

OHCHR's systematic approach to implementing economic, social, and cultural rights and providing tailored support to governments and stakeholders has suffered significantly due to the current liquidity crisis.

A number of activities planned for this year and next year have been delayed or cancelled as a result. These include knowledge-sharing, technical assistance, capacity-building and advisory services.

OHCHR is committed to further strengthen its capacity and work on economic, social and cultural rights to positively impact people's lives. We count on continuous support from Member States towards this end.
