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HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

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The Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council are independent human rights experts with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. The system of Special Procedures is a central element of the United Nations human rights machinery and covers all rights: civil, cultural, economic, political, and social. As of November 2017, there are 56 Special Procedures (44 thematic mandates and 12 mandates relating to countries or territories) with currently 80 mandate-holders.

With the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Special Procedures undertake country visits; act on individual cases and concerns of a broader, structural nature by sending communications to States in which they bring alleged violations to their attention; conduct thematic studies and convene expert consultations, develop international human rights standards, engage in advocacy, raise public awareness; and provide advice and support for technical cooperation. Special Procedures report annually to the Human Rights Council; the majority of the mandates also report to the General Assembly.

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