

United Nations Human Rights Fora: Council approves EU priorities

The Council today approved conclusions on the priorities of the European Union in United Nations Human Rights fora in 2024. In its Conclusions, the Council **reaffirms** the EU's commitment to **human rights, multilateralism** and the **international criminal justice system** in the current fraught international environment marked by armed conflict, authoritarianism, disinformation and a pushback against gender equality.

In the year of the **Summit of the Future**, the Council reaffirms the EU's commitment to **effective multilateralism and strengthening of the United Nations human rights system**, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), calling on all states to respect and fully cooperate with the OHCHR.

The Council emphasises the EU's readiness to continue monitoring the human rights situation globally and **denouncing human rights violations and abuses wherever they occur**, and to take up a number of initiatives in international fora. The EU will support independent **investigations** into violations and abuses of human rights, in order to hold perpetrators accountable.

Regarding **thematic priorities**, the conclusions highlight the EU's continued strong opposition to the **death penalty** in all cases and circumstances and its condemnation of the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The EU will continue to call for all countries to abolish the death penalty, continue to promote the Global Alliance for Torture-Free-Trade and consider further steps to ban trade in goods used for capital punishment and torture.

Furthermore, the EU calls on all countries to ensure proper functioning of **democratic institutions**, fight **corruption** and uphold **freedom of religion or belief** and **freedom of expression and opinion**.

Importantly, the conclusions highlight the EU's determination to continue to vigorously promote and scale up efforts towards **gender equality**, combat **all forms of discrimination** and strive to eliminate **racism**, building on the EU Anti-racism action plan 2020-2025.

The Council emphasises that the EU will continue to take a leading role in human rights **initiatives** and stress human rights issues in **interactive dialogues** and **general debates** and invites all partners to join efforts to uphold and advance human rights globally and to build stronger partnerships.

The EU will continue working on strengthening respect for, and the protection and fulfilment of, human rights and will continue to cooperate with all regions of the world, organisations and relevant stakeholders in order to fulfil these goals.

Council conclusions on EU priorities at UN human rights fora are approved on a yearly basis.

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