



General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 May 2023

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Fifty-third session

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Vision and thematic priorities: addressing new challenges and consolidating gains

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Paula Gaviria Betancur

Summary

In the present report, submitted pursuant to resolution 50/6 of the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Paula Gaviria Betancur, provides an outline of the direction that she intends to take during her tenure, including her methods of work and her strategic and thematic priorities. She also provides an account of the activities undertaken in fulfilment of her mandate since her appointment by the Council on 1 November 2022, and describes activities undertaken by the previous Special Rapporteur during the reporting period and until the end of her tenure on 31 October 2022.



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I. Introduction

1. The present report was submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 50/6. It is the first report of the current mandate holder, Paula Gaviria Betancur, who was appointed Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons by the Council at its fiftieth session in September 2022 and assumed her mandate on 1 November 2022. She was a member (2019–2021) of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, mandated to identify specific recommendations on how to better respond to internal displacement. The Special Rapporteur wishes to thank the members and observers of the Human Rights Council for the trust and cooperation extended to her at the outset of taking up her duties.

2. The present report provides information on the activities undertaken by the previous mandate holder during the period under review, up to the end of her term in October 2022; the new mandate holder owns activities from 1 November 2022. It also provides the outline of the Special Rapporteur's strategic direction and thematic priorities that will guide the work under the mandate throughout the next three years.

3. The Special Rapporteur echoes the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, among others, in recognizing the catalytic role played by her predecessors in raising the level of awareness of the plight of internally displaced persons, and the relentless efforts to address their needs for protection, assistance and durable solutions, including through the mainstreaming of the human rights of internally displaced persons into the United Nations system. She acknowledges her predecessor's contribution to efforts to shed light on the critical importance of enabling the participation of internally displaced persons as citizens and rights holders in decision-making affecting them.

II. Activities of the Special Rapporteur

4. In her final annual report to the General Assembly,¹ the previous mandate holder provided reflections on her six-year tenure and examined the phenomenon of development-induced displacement and its impact on the human rights of those displaced. The Special Rapporteur has relied on that review to identify areas of priority for subsequent work under the mandate.

A. Visits undertaken by the previous mandate holder

5. At the invitation of the Governments concerned, the previous mandate holder undertook official country visits to Mexico, from 29 August to 9 September 2022, and Japan, from 26 September to 7 October 2022. The conclusions and recommendations of these visits are presented in [A/HRC/53/35/Add.2](#) and [A/HRC/53/35/Add.1](#), respectively.

B. Dialogue, advocacy and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the previous mandate holder

6. At the end of her tenure, the previous mandate holder launched a 35-part video series: *The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: Why and How They Matter*,² at an event co-hosted by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This was followed by a multi-stakeholder webinar on the reflections and outlook of the Special Rapporteur at the end of her Human Rights Council mandate, hosted by UNHCR in Geneva. During the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur provided advice to academics through the Data and Displacement Practitioner Advisory Group at the University of Warwick, and to the Internal Displacement Research Programme of the University of London. The Special Rapporteur continued the decade-long

¹ [A/77/182](#).

² Available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHNw5X5DGUG12QVrfy3tYLQ>.

tradition of the mandate holder co-presenting a law and policy course³ offered by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, intended for government authorities, civil society and United Nations entities working on internal displacement issues. On various occasions she delivered lectures, including at the first Summer School on Internal Displacement in the Middle East,⁴ and at the first joint United Nations system and International Committee of the Red Cross course on internal displacement in Mexico. The Special Rapporteur participated in an expert seminar organized by the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University, in Canada. She endorsed an e-learning course, on durable solutions for internally displaced persons, offered by the International Organization for Migration,⁵ contributed to promotional videos on the tenth anniversary of the Addis Ababa road map on cooperation between the special procedures of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights and of the Human Rights Council⁶ and on the role of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council,⁷ both produced by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

7. On the occasion of World Humanitarian Day, the Special Rapporteur and the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection issued a joint statement.⁸ The Special Rapporteur also issued a press release⁹ welcoming the launch of the Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, and met several times with the newly appointed Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement.

8. The Special Rapporteur led the first round table on key challenges in the protection of internally displaced persons, hosted by the expert group on the protection of internally displaced persons, organized jointly by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law and UNHCR. Building on the thematic report she had submitted to the Human Rights Council at its forty-fourth session,¹⁰ the Special Rapporteur delivered a statement at the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and later contributed to a workshop on the rights of older persons and persons with disabilities in armed conflicts, organized by the German Institute for Human Rights. She delivered a presentation to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and continued her active membership in the Action Network on Forced Displacement – Women as Agents of Change. The Special Rapporteur supported the drafting and finalization of the Guiding Principles for Children on the Move in the Context of Climate Change, led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).¹¹ In the area of housing, land and property,¹² she was a panel member for a discussion on internal displacement held at the World Urban Forum, invited by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). To promote the participation of internally displaced persons,¹³ with a specific focus on electoral processes,¹⁴ the Special Rapporteur held a side event during the fiftieth session of the Human Rights Council, co-sponsored by Austria, the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, OHCHR and UNHCR.

9. At the 116th annual meeting of the American Society of International Law, held in Washington, D.C., the Special Rapporteur joined an expert panel discussion on the topic "Climate change and global migration: locating international law in the defining crisis of our times". As a panellist, she spoke about the prevention and mitigation of climate change effects on internally displaced persons. On invitation by Australia and the United Nations

³ See <https://iihl.org/courses-on-internal-displacement/>.

⁴ See <https://researchinginternaldisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Summer-School-ID-Middle-East.pdf>.

⁵ See <https://gp2point0.org/>.

⁶ See <https://vimeo.com/764103333>.

⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures-human-rights-council>.

⁸ Available at <https://www.unhcr.org/news/announc/2022/8/62ff55d94/collective-efforts-needed-protect-internally-displaced-people.html>.

⁹ Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/06/un-secretary-generals-action-agenda-internal-displacement-time-lead-example>.

¹⁰ A/HRC/44/41.

¹¹ See also A/74/261 and A/74/261/Corr.1.

¹² See also A/HRC/47/37.

¹³ See also A/72/202.

¹⁴ See also A/HRC/50/24.

Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Special Rapporteur attended the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in 2022 in Brisbane, Australia. At the conference she delivered a presentation during the panel discussion on effective approaches to addressing disaster displacement. She also participated as a speaker in a partner event, organized by civil society groups, on placing disaster displacement at the forefront of disaster risk reduction strategies and policies. The Special Rapporteur delivered a presentation on emerging issues in a webinar entitled “Durable solutions to disaster displacement in Asia Pacific”, organized by the Asia Pacific Disaster Displacement Working Group and the Issue-Based Coalition on Building Resilience and Mitigation. The Special Rapporteur joined a collective declaration sponsored by the Climate Migration Council,¹⁵ and recorded a podcast with United Nations News on the topic of climate, conflict and human rights at risk,¹⁶ amplifying her report to the General Assembly on internal displacement in the context of slow-onset adverse effects of climate change.¹⁷ She gave presentations at regional workshops for the internal roll-out of the UNHCR guidance on climate change and disasters, and at a human rights engagement webinar on climate change, displacement and human rights, organized by the Global Protection Cluster. Throughout the term of her mandate, the Special Rapporteur retained her membership in the Advisory Committee of the Platform on Disaster Displacement.

10. Through the expert group on the protection of internally displaced persons, the Special Rapporteur led a delegation of senior experts to provide advice to the United Nations country team in South Sudan, under the auspices of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. Until the end of her tenure, the Special Rapporteur continued to engage with States Members of the United Nations and political entities on issues related to the human rights of internally displaced persons, in Geneva, Juba, Manila, New York, Vatican City and Washington, D.C.

C. Stocktaking by the Special Rapporteur at the start of her term

11. The Special Rapporteur thanks her predecessors for building on the immense standard-setting legacy and institutional trajectory of the mandate, in particular in the collaborative development and promotion of the substantive body of international human rights and humanitarian standards set out in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the framework for national responsibility,¹⁸ the Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters and the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons. She expresses her gratitude to Member States and their respective Governments, regional organizations, United Nations entities, civil society organizations, human rights entities, including national human rights institutions, and academic institutions for their valuable contribution to the work under the mandate.

12. The Special Rapporteur is committed to consolidating the gains made to date. This will include working collaboratively with Governments, intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations, the United Nations system and other relevant actors to address and strengthen the international response to the complex problem of internal displacement resulting from, among other causes, armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, the adverse effects of climate change, and disasters, and engaging in coordinated international advocacy and action for improving the protection and respect of the human rights of internally displaced persons.

13. The Special Rapporteur commends her predecessor for having successfully implemented her road map¹⁹ by, inter alia, adopting a human rights-based approach, conducting coordinated advocacy for the rights of internally displaced persons and raising awareness of neglected drivers of internal displacement and of specific vulnerable groups

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.climatemigrationcouncil.org/declaration>.

¹⁶ Available at <https://news.un.org/en/audio/2022/10/1129622>.

¹⁷ [A/75/207](#).

¹⁸ Brookings Institution and University of Bern School of Law, “Addressing internal displacement: a framework for national responsibility” (2005).

¹⁹ [A/HRC/35/27](#).

among internally displaced persons. She also promoted the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as the basis for the protection of internally displaced persons. Specifically, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles, the former mandate holder, UNHCR and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with the endorsement of Austria, Honduras and Uganda, launched the Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018–2020 (GP20 plan of action), which galvanized the international community to support the responsibility of States for protecting the rights of internally displaced persons.

14. Multi-stakeholder engagement has led to standards regarding the rights of internally displaced persons that are well rooted in international human rights and humanitarian law; the focus has now shifted to reflecting those standards in national and subnational law and policy instruments. The Special Rapporteur recognizes the States and stakeholders that are contributing to such law and policy initiatives. She wishes to build on, and support, the leadership of States in the expression of their primary responsibility through legislative and policy frameworks, as well as good practices concerning State governance, institution-building and effective responses to internal displacement.

15. The Special Rapporteur believes that a multi-stakeholder approach to internal displacement is critical to ensuring the intersectionality of human rights-based responses. It is key to ensuring that no displaced person or displaced group is left further behind as a result of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including on the basis of gender, disability, race or ethnicity, minority status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

16. The Special Rapporteur welcomes her predecessor's decision to create, in collaboration with UNHCR and the Global Protection Cluster, the expert group on the protection of internally displaced persons, which serves as a collaborative resource for the provision of expert advice and support to national leaders and coordinated international support for comprehensive protection responses, including the building of a protective environment conducive to prevention and solutions to internal displacement.

17. The Special Rapporteur stresses that the primary responsibility of States in the prevention of internal displacement and the coordinated implementation of protection and solutions for internally displaced persons comes with complex human rights, humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and climate change adaptation challenges, and remains to be universally fulfilled. States should recognize the importance of and ensure the centrality of protection²⁰ in humanitarian responses, on the basis of international human rights standards. To succeed, specific efforts to that end, such as the weaving of a protection lens into the Secretary-General's call to action for human rights as it applies to the policy, strategic and operational priorities of the United Nations,²¹ must be underpinned by effective implementation of a human rights-based approach, which is crucial to the prevention of arbitrary displacement and to ensuring protection and solutions.²²

18. The foundational nature of protection and human rights-based standards is further emphasized in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, in which the Committee defines "durable solution" and sets out a human rights-based process and substantive criteria for the attainment of durable solutions. The Interagency Durable Solutions Indicator Library and the Durable Solutions Analysis Guide²³ were developed under the leadership of the previous Special Rapporteur to guide the operational application of the Framework,²⁴ which has informed analyses of collaborative durable solutions; national laws, policies and durable solutions strategies; United Nations humanitarian country team strategies; and the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics. While such strides forward have been made, particularly among

²⁰ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, "Statement on the centrality of protection in humanitarian action" (December 2013).

²¹ Available at www.un.org/en/content/action-for-human-rights/index.shtml.

²² A/77/182, para. 10. The theme of prevention was also echoed in the report of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future* (2021).

²³ Available at <https://inform-durablesolutions-idp.org/>.

²⁴ See, for example, "Ten years since the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions", GP2.0 policy brief (2021).

humanitarian stakeholders, tackling internal displacement requires that the Framework be disseminated, adapted to context and applied more widely by humanitarian, development and peace actors.

19. Achieving solutions is also about access to remedies, and restitution of housing, land and property rights.²⁵ Reparations are key for enabling internally displaced persons to rebuild their lives; they also promote social cohesion and help to prevent new cycles of violence. Unfortunately, few such mechanisms are in place. Further efforts by Governments are needed.

20. Like her predecessor, the Special Rapporteur hopes that the implementation of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement and the work of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement will help to identify solutions that are focused primarily on the attainment by internally displaced persons of their human rights. The Special Rapporteur reiterates the commitment, stated in the Action Agenda, to drive forward the implementation of human rights as a key step in preventing displacement crises and ensuring better protection and assistance for internally displaced persons and host communities, with protection and human rights remaining at the heart of the work of the United Nations.

21. The Special Rapporteur was encouraged by developments supported by her predecessor with regard to States undertaking the primary responsibility to monitor and generate comprehensive, accurate and disaggregated data and statistics on internally displaced persons. While there are encouraging global initiatives aimed at improving the quality of and standards in data, analysis and statistics, there is still an indispensable need worldwide to conduct detailed profiling and needs assessments, including for the most vulnerable.

22. The Special Rapporteur recognizes the work of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics of the Statistical Commission as significant in providing an agreed framework for countries and international organizations to improve the production, coordination and dissemination of high-quality official statistics on internally displaced persons that are consistent over time and comparable among regions and countries. She looks forward to providing States with assistance in their efforts to implement those recommendations, in particular by investing in the systematic collection of reliable, adequate, centralized and disaggregated data to inform evidence-based and targeted preventive and protection interventions and an effective and rights-based response to internal displacement and to support the achievement of durable solutions.²⁶

23. The Special Rapporteur commends the work of her predecessor in contributing to a shift in mindset, away from regarding internally displaced persons as mere beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance and towards their more proactive engagement.²⁷ She stresses the importance of advancing the participation of internally displaced persons through law and policy, governance structures, implementation, and evaluation on the ground, with the participation of the affected populations in all their diversity and all their capacities.

D. Dialogue, advocacy and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Special Rapporteur

24. Since assuming her duties, the Special Rapporteur has had meetings and bilateral consultations with senior and technical stakeholders working at the country and global levels. The meetings have informed a global horizon scan of country and regional developments and trends in internal displacement, as well as follow-up to the report and recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement. They have also helped shape the Special Rapporteur's vision and priorities for the next three years. Building on the knowledge she gained as a member of the High-Level Panel and through its engagement with hundreds of stakeholders and more than 12,500 internally displaced persons and host community members, the Special Rapporteur met with Member State representatives, resident

²⁵ See [A/HRC/47/37](#).

²⁶ Human Rights Council resolution 50/6, para. 25.

²⁷ See [A/72/202](#).

coordinators, United Nations system representatives, representatives of non-governmental organizations and other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, representatives of other international organizations, and academics.

25. As a priority in the first month of her tenure and on several occasions after, the Special Rapporteur met with the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement to discuss follow-up to the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, countries and themes of common interest, potential synergies and complementarity in their respective work. They agreed on regular exchanges of information, planning between their teams and common key messages. They engaged with the inter-agency Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service at its event for partners, in March 2023, to support its work and the importance of collaborative data processes, national ownership and capacities to produce and use data. At a commemorative event for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, in April 2023, the Special Rapporteur and the Special Adviser, co-hosts of the event, emphasized the fundamental importance of States translating their commitments into law, policy, strategy, institutional frameworks and measures that protect and build solutions pathways for internally displaced persons.

26. Related to her core commitment to robustly promoting international standards, the Special Rapporteur issued a joint press statement, with the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, to underline the importance of the international standards set out in the binding Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of its entry into force. On the occasion of the opening of the eleventh online course offered by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law on internal displacement, the Special Rapporteur delivered online keynote speeches on 22 November 2022 and 13 February 2023. The course was developed to benefit government officials involved in the implementation of legislation and policies on internal displacement, and is also aimed at members of civil society and academics who can have a positive influence on the safeguarding of internally displaced persons' rights and advocate for their protection.

27. On 28 November 2022 and 23 May 2023, the Special Rapporteur attended the Inter-Agency Standing Committee principals meeting, a high-level stakeholder forum important for discharging her core responsibility to mainstream the human rights of internally displaced persons in the United Nations system. In the context of the ongoing independent review of humanitarian responses to internal displacement, steered by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Deputies Group, and as follow-up to the report of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, the Special Rapporteur was actively engaged in the Reference Group of the Committee. On 29 March, she attended a Deputies Group meeting to discuss the inception report presented by the head of the review team.

28. On 30 November 2022, in Mexico, the Special Rapporteur delivered a video address at the inauguration of a workshop on internal displacement data systems, international norms and practices, organized jointly by OHCHR and the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service. On 31 March, also in Mexico, she delivered a video address on the occasion of the inter-agency course on internal displacement, organized by UNHCR, OHCHR, the International Organization for Migration and other United Nations entities, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service, which was attended by the representatives of the Government of Mexico and civil society and private actors. On 16 February, the Special Rapporteur gave a keynote speech, on the rights and needs of internally displaced children and youth related to education, at the High-Level Financing Conference held by Education Cannot Wait.

29. On 17 April 2023, the Special Rapporteur convened, with UNHCR, a global online event to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The event brought together global experts and stakeholders, including displacement-affected populations, involved in related national events, to reflect on the achievements and outstanding challenges in the implementation of the Guiding Principles in law, policy and practice, against the backdrop of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. From 6 to 9 June, the Special Rapporteur co-hosted, with UNHCR and the International Institute for Humanitarian Law, a cross-regional forum on

implementing law and policy on internal displacement, with the participation of relevant authorities from a dozen countries.

III. Vision and thematic priorities: addressing new challenges and consolidating gains

A. Approach and working methods

1. Approach

30. The scope of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur is determined in the resolutions by which it was established and renewed.²⁸ The mandate is uniquely important in the United Nations human rights architecture: it is the only one focused on strengthening international responses to the complex problem of internal displacement, including with respect to mainstreaming the human rights of internally displaced persons in the United Nations system, coordinating international advocacy and action and maintaining a continuous dialogue with Governments and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations.²⁹

31. In 2022, deeply disturbed by the large number of internally displaced persons, and commending the work and contributions of the Special Rapporteur, the Human Rights Council, through its resolution 50/6, extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for three years. The Council requested the Special Rapporteur, in carrying out the mandate and through continuing dialogue with Governments, intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other relevant actors, to continue to analyse the root causes and drivers of internal displacement, the needs and human rights of all those displaced, measures of prevention, including measures relating to the protection of and assistance to persons at risk of displacement, and ways to strengthen protection, as well as assistance and durable solutions for internally displaced persons, taking into account relevant information, in particular statistics and disaggregated data, and to include reliable information thereon in the mandate holder's reports submitted to the Human Rights Council.

32. In line with that resolution, the Special Rapporteur will continue her efforts to promote comprehensive and inclusive strategies that focus on the prevention of displacement, better protection and assistance, durable solutions, the integration of issues related to internally displaced persons into national and local development plans and budgets, and the participation of internally displaced persons in peace processes and agreements and in integration, reintegration and rehabilitation processes, stressing the primary responsibility of States in that regard.

33. As mandated by the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur will continue using the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in her dialogue with Governments, States in post-conflict or other situations, intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations and other relevant actors. She will emphasize and strengthen the mainstreaming of the human rights of internally displaced persons and maintain and reinforce follow-up and capacity-building activities as cornerstones of the mandate, and will engage with relevant actors, most notably Governments, for the adoption and implementation of national policies, strategies and legislation that are in line with the Guiding Principles, the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons and other related tools developed under the leadership of the mandate.

34. The Special Rapporteur believes that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Guiding Principles offers an excellent opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved since the adoption of the GP20 plan of action, the commitments made and lessons learned, including from the compilation of national practices,³⁰ with the aim of renewing commitment to the Guiding Principles as the shared framework for implementing the rights and protection of

²⁸ Human Rights Council resolution 50/6. See also General Assembly resolution 76/167.

²⁹ Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, pp. 11 and 12.

³⁰ UNHCR and others, *Working Together Better to Prevent, Address and Find Durable Solutions to Internal Displacement: Compilation of National Practices* (2020).

internally displaced persons, and for building pathways in the implementation of durable solutions.

35. The Special Rapporteur will continue to pay attention to the role of the international community in providing, upon request, assistance to affected States in their efforts to meet the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons, and will incorporate in her advocacy activities an emphasis on the mobilization of adequate resources. The Special Rapporteur is concerned about the gaps in predictable financing for the prevention of and solutions for displacement risks, and in the systematic inclusion of such prevention and solutions within developing financing designed to promote national responsibility and accountability. The Special Rapporteur urges donors, in coordination with and with the engagement of displacement-affected States, the United Nations system, civil society and the private sector, to provide funding as locally as possible and support municipal authorities and local civil society actors in strengthening their institutional capacities; to explore opportunities for complementary funding across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus; to provide financial and technical support for national and local plans and strategies; and to promote performance monitoring and accountability.³¹

36. At the national level, the Special Rapporteur will continue supporting and collaborating with United Nations country teams to advocate for authorities, including Governments, as well as non-State armed groups and similar non-State actors, particularly in conflict situations, to fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law and standards to provide free and unhindered access to humanitarian and development partners in the delivery of their essential services and assistance to persons and communities affected by internal displacement.

37. The Special Rapporteur will continue to remind States that addressing the needs of internally displaced persons is central to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda, and that in this regard, risk-informed sustainable development is essential for reducing displacement risks, facilitating durable solutions and therefore ensuring that no one is left behind.³²

38. The Special Rapporteur will adopt a people-centred approach in the implementation of her mandate, recognizing internally displaced persons as rights holders. She will take every opportunity to strengthen their meaningful participation and amplify their voices as key agents and partners. She recalls the critical importance of the participation of internally displaced persons in electoral processes, and of addressing obstacles to their political participation in support of their full enjoyment of rights.

39. The Special Rapporteur will integrate throughout her work a perspective that considers gender in all its diversity and will pay special attention to the needs of displaced women and girls. She will urge States to effectively address pre-existing patterns and structures of gender-based discrimination and inequalities, and the barriers that women and girls may encounter in realizing their right to effective participation in decisions that affect them. She will work to ensure that gender-sensitive protection and assistance measures are put in place by Governments. Aware that failure to address this critical situation will exacerbate sexual and gender-based violence and inequalities and compound intersecting forms of discrimination in situations of crisis, she will urge authorities and the international community to work together for effective prevention of and responses to sexual and gender-based violence, protection of human rights, and victim assistance, and in addressing the root causes of sexual and gender-based violence and fighting impunity.

40. The disproportionate impact of displacement on those who are most vulnerable needs to be addressed. The mandate holder will adopt an intersectional approach throughout her work for these groups, including children, especially unaccompanied minors, young people, women, expectant mothers, mothers with young children, female heads of household, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons with mental health and psychosocial support needs, persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, persons belonging to minority

³¹ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement*, pp. 33–36.

³² Human Rights Council resolution 50/6.

groups and Indigenous Peoples, rural workers, pastoralists and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands.

41. There is urgency to make internal displacement more visible on the spectrum of displacement and to act collectively. The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, with its 31 United Nations commitments to realizing the goals of preventing displacement crises, protecting and assisting internally displaced persons, and finding durable solutions to displacement, is a step in that direction. The Special Rapporteur will support United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and country teams to implement the Action Agenda and will continue engaging with States and communities affected by such situations at every stage, including in the prevention of forced displacement, during the displacement phase itself and in the search for durable solutions.

42. The Special Rapporteur will strengthen the cooperation established among the office of the mandate and the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, the Steering Group on Solutions to Internal Displacement and United Nations resident coordinators in the framework of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as cooperation with other international and regional organizations. With the leadership of the Special Adviser and resources mobilized to deliver on the United Nations commitments to unlock and effectively support durable solutions for internally displaced persons, the Special Rapporteur will build on the current momentum, seizing on opportunities and synergies to set a steady course for humanitarian, development, peace and climate change stakeholders to move towards more comprehensive, collaborative and coherent responses to internal displacement.

43. The Special Rapporteur will incorporate regional and subregional dimensions in her activities, will maintain dialogue with relevant regional and subregional organizations, and will take into account regional commonalities and specificities of trends and related national responses to internal displacement and of normative and governance frameworks, as well as action in the areas of human rights, humanitarian assistance, development, peace and climate change.

2. Working methods

44. The Special Rapporteur will continue to strengthen stakeholder alliances and disseminate, promote and encourage the use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement among them, to assist them in building their capacities to apply the binding international norms reflected in the Guiding Principles. She will do so in her dialogues with authorities about the value of the Guiding Principles as a practical tool for designing and implementing responses; when providing technical advice on the implementation of international commitments through laws and policies; in her coordinated advocacy and engagement with global and regional stakeholders on international responses and support to authorities at all levels; when promoting understanding of the human rights of internally displaced persons and building capacities to respect, protect and fulfil those rights; and by supporting the engagement of, and accountability to, internally displaced persons as rights-holding citizens and residents. She will strive to ensure coordination and complementarity with other relevant mandate holders and United Nations mechanisms and bodies.

45. The Special Rapporteur will take an impact-oriented and human rights-based approach to her work, focusing on building and strengthening constructive partnerships and collaboration to deliver effective assistance and protection on the ground. She intends to adopt a consultative approach to the development of her thematic reports. This will entail engaging constructively with States and other stakeholders, including by holding consultations with displacement-affected communities and associations of displaced persons in emerging, ongoing and protracted internal displacement situations. The Special Rapporteur will continue collaborating with civil society organizations at the national, regional and international levels, in order to amplify their voices by providing information and increasing their capacity for action. She also intends to communicate regularly, in an agile and efficient manner, through different channels, considering the specific needs, voices, capacities and talents of groups that are affected, and to engage society as a whole through dialogues and campaigns with various actors, such as young leaders and activists, artists and media workers, to promote cultural shifts and the inclusion and full integration of internally displaced populations.

46. The Special Rapporteur believes that the development of her activities, the protection of the human rights of internally displaced persons, and coordination with other bodies of the United Nations system and the integration of her vision with theirs require the fundamental and unwavering support of civil society and the private sector. The mandate should provide a place for discussion and advocacy concerning the human rights of internally displaced persons; a space in which the visions, perspectives and interests of civil society, States, the private sector, the United Nations system and, of course, internally displaced persons, converge.

Country visits

47. The Special Rapporteur highly appreciates the invitation sent by the Government of the Marshall Islands and looks forward to agreeing on mutually convenient dates for a visit. She has followed up on the country visit request sent by her predecessor to Vanuatu and has sent initial requests for visits to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique and South Sudan. She intends to follow up on outstanding requests and make new requests based on her ongoing analysis. The Special Rapporteur encourages Governments, in particular those with situations of internal displacement, to respond favourably and expeditiously to her requests for visits and information, and invites them to proactively request her to visit where she may be of assistance. She stresses the need for unimpeded access in accordance with her mandate, and urges Governments and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to follow up effectively on her recommendations and to make available information on measures taken in that regard. The Special Rapporteur will give high priority to those States with the most critical, challenging and persistent displacement situations and will seek ways to have a more regional or subregional approach in analysing country situations. In conformity with the practice of the mandate, the Special Rapporteur will also conduct working visits, at the invitation of a variety of stakeholders, to consider internal displacement issues and to engage with a range of actors, including national authorities.

48. In the context of the United Nations system's strengthened action and mobilization under the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement in more than a dozen affected countries and the ongoing independent review of humanitarian responses to internal displacement, the Special Rapporteur is requesting, timing and planning her official country visits with national authorities in accordance with the established terms of reference for special procedures visits, and with due consideration of the activities of the Special Adviser in the same countries. She is similarly planning her working visits in consideration of shared objectives under the Action Agenda and communicating her cooperation with the Special Adviser in all engagements.

49. The Special Rapporteur stresses the importance of meaningful follow-up to ensuring continuous provision of advice and, whenever possible, technical support. In this respect, she hopes that partnerships with civil society and international non-governmental organizations will help to ensure concrete follow-up to her recommendations and enhance responses to specific situations.

Communications

50. In partnership with civil society organizations and other stakeholders, the Special Rapporteur will seek to step up efforts to increase awareness of the mandate. In this regard, she intends to further promote communication with States and other authorities as an advocacy tool by accelerating efforts to receive and act on information concerning possible allegations of human rights and by sending communications covering a wide range of issues requiring the protection of internally displaced persons, or situations in which violations related to the mandate have occurred or are at risk of occurring.

B. State of play on internal displacement and strategic directions

1. State of play on internal displacement and evolution of the international response

51. At the end of 2022, the highest number of internally displaced persons ever recorded – a staggering 71 million people – were living in internal displacement.³³ This figure reflects the pressing need for Governments around the world to prevent, mitigate and address the humanitarian consequences of internal displacement, and to address causes such as armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, climate change and disasters.

52. Numbers alone do not encapsulate the full range of challenges confronting internally displaced persons. They face losing their livelihoods, means of survival and social and cultural networks, which can lead to impoverishment, marginalization, exclusion and stigmatization. Many continue to suffer or remain at high risk of physical attacks, sexual and gender-based violence and severe psychological distress. Women, children and members of vulnerable and marginalized groups experience the worst effects. For many internally displaced persons, the prospect of rebuilding their lives remains elusive for years or even generations. Large-scale protracted displacement is imperilling progress towards development, peace and prosperity for communities and societies as a whole.³⁴

53. With widespread recognition of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as the common global framework, much progress has been made in the adoption of national frameworks and responses with, as of October 2022, 62 instruments across 27 countries in the global database on laws and policies on internal displacement.³⁵ The unprecedented level of displacement is, however, alarming and an indication that, with regard to the implementation of national legislation and other protection measures, many States are failing to deliver on their primary responsibility to address and resolve the plight of internally displaced persons.

54. In 2019, the Secretary-General established the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement to identify concrete and practical recommendations on how to better respond to internal displacement, in particular where it is protracted, and achieve government-led solutions to internal displacement.³⁶ The High-Level Panel was established as a response to concerns that internal displacement was not high enough on the international agenda. Promoting visibility and effective protection for all internally displaced persons, particularly for those who have become invisible or neglected – the most vulnerable – will therefore be a core priority of the Special Rapporteur.

55. The report of the High-Level Panel provides an overview of the global crisis against the backdrop of key milestones in global and regional action on internal displacement. Building on the High-Level Panel's findings and recommendations, the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement provides a framework for the United Nations system to make the changes that are urgently needed, including with regard to finding solutions to internal displacement, preventing future displacement crises and ensuring better protection and assistance for internally displaced persons and host communities.

56. While recognizing the role of development in durable solutions, the Special Rapporteur stresses that the protection, safety, security and rights of internally displaced persons should guide all aspects of the solutions approach. She reiterates that the human rights-based approach to solutions must include the participation of the host communities, as well as that of the displaced, and must adopt a systems-wide and area-based approach.³⁷

57. There is a need to understand that internal displacement is directly linked to the challenges of governance, development, human rights and peace and closely tied to the

³³ Information provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

³⁴ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future*, Executive Summary (2021).

³⁵ UNHCR and Global Protection Cluster, *Global Report on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement: Implementing National Responsibility* (2022).

³⁶ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement*, Executive Summary.

³⁷ [A/77/182](#), para. 15.

interconnected realities of climate change, urbanization and fragility. In this context, development, peace and disaster risk reduction actors must be engaged earlier, systematically and comprehensively, in a whole-of-society approach in which the capacities of the private sector and civil society should be leveraged. These efforts must draw on strong data and evidence and adequate financing. The Special Rapporteur believes that these changes will have transformative effects for internally displaced persons, displacement-affected communities and their countries.

58. Prevention will be a key priority for the mandate holder. More research and specific and effective policies at the country and local levels are required to create the conditions necessary to avoid displacement in the first place. Policies to prevent child recruitment and use of children in illegal activities, as well as sexual violence, trafficking in persons and kidnapping, among other human rights violations that lead people to seek protection and move, are an essential part of the national responsibilities of States. States also have the responsibility to create the conditions for conflict prevention, particularly through the construction of social cohesion and prevention of tensions between communities.

59. The Special Rapporteur is aware that more research is needed to understand and address the issue of internal displacement in the context of growing global food insecurity and to move forward on a protection agenda that will help prevent exposure of the most vulnerable to famine. She will work with different stakeholders to explore ways to address that pressing issue.

60. The Special Rapporteur recalls that more and more internally displaced persons are relocating in urban areas. Response strategies must consider the urban ecosystem and engage municipal governments; local authorities should be recognized as core partners in all settings. A whole-of-society approach, including the strong involvement of civil society, national human rights institutions and the private sector, is critical to ensuring action is locally owned and informed and that it draws on the full spectrum of available capacities.³⁸ In that regard, the Secretary-General has encouraged States to proactively address displacement in national and local development action and disaster risk reduction and climate change plans and to engage disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation actors in the processes.³⁹

61. The primary responsibility to provide protection and assistance for internally displaced persons, facilitate durable solutions, prevent arbitrary displacement and address the root causes of displacement lies with Governments. However, the Special Rapporteur recognizes that Governments are often unable or unwilling, particularly in conflict situations or absent sufficient resources, to provide such assistance and sometimes are themselves the primary cause of displacement. As indicated in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and reiterated in the Action Agenda, sovereignty comes with responsibility,⁴⁰ and States should put in place and implement relevant laws and policy frameworks to outline how displacement will be addressed as a whole-of-government priority. Although the Special Rapporteur sees that significant progress has been made on the acceptance of the notion of sovereignty as responsibility since benchmarks on comprehensively addressing internal displacement were first set out in the framework for national responsibility of 2005,⁴¹ further evidence is expected to be gathered during the tenure of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement. In this context, the Special Rapporteur believes there is an opportunity to explore, with relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, the possibility of initiating, during her tenure, a multi-stakeholder process to review and update the framework.

2. Strategic directions, the progress made and remaining challenges

62. Since the establishment of the mandate, successive mandate holders covered various subjects in great breadth, underpinned by an extensive body of research and raising awareness of the global crisis of internal displacement, strengthening the normative framework on the

³⁸ See the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁰ See also E/CN.4/2003/86, para. 68.

⁴¹ Human Rights Council and General Assembly resolutions on internal displacement, the report of the High-Level Panel and the Action Agenda reflect much learning and consensus built in this regard.

basis of the Guiding Principles, mainstreaming the human rights of internally displaced persons in the United Nations system, and expanding the participation of such persons. The mandate holders incisively addressed a wide variety of issues with a view to providing guidance on the understanding of the phenomenon of internal displacement, how it affects different groups, and measures required to address it effectively in terms of law, policy, practice and governance structures.

63. Going forward, the Special Rapporteur offers some reflections on what she sees as the challenges lying ahead for the mandate in terms of responding to the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons, fostering durable solutions and addressing the overall root causes of displacement, and how she will approach those challenges during her tenure.

64. Mandate holders have continually highlighted the agency of internally displaced persons as an essential pillar of the responses to internal displacement from the very onset of displacement. The Special Rapporteur will continue strengthening the role of internally displaced persons, particularly displaced women and girls, and persons in vulnerable situations, in national and local development strategies, both rural and urban, and ensuring their full and meaningful participation in the decisions affecting them.

65. Durable solutions remain elusive, and many internally displaced persons globally still live in protracted displacement. The Special Rapporteur is convinced that the rights-based approach must remain high on the agenda of humanitarian and development responses if all stakeholders are to address internal displacement in a comprehensive, collaborative and less-fragmented way.

66. Recognizing that internal displacement is an increasingly urban phenomenon, the Special Rapporteur will seek to address the needs and vulnerabilities of internally displaced persons in urban settings, while supporting host communities and acknowledging the role of local governments in responding to this complex phenomenon.

67. The Special Rapporteur will continue to promote the operationalization of the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, including through the dissemination and use of the Interagency Durable Solutions Indicator Library and the Durable Solutions Analysis Guide to measure progress towards durable solutions for internally displaced persons. She welcomes the inter-agency collaborative analysis and initiatives under way, aimed at shedding light on coordinated approaches to improving data for solutions to internal displacement and addressing data-specific issues and gaps in reference to commitments under the Action Agenda, and recalls that the human rights-based and collaborative approaches in the Framework should remain foundational.

68. The Special Rapporteur will continue essential work to promote the development and implementation of legal and policy frameworks that are key to addressing internal displacement at all levels. She will prioritize the operationalization and implementation of those policies in close collaboration with national Governments, regional mechanisms and other relevant stakeholders, and will assist States and other organizations through direct engagement, recommendations, awareness-raising and mobilization of support. In line with this, the mandate holder will continue to actively participate in the Global Protection Cluster task team on law and policy, led by UNHCR. She will also draw on the lessons learned from domestic judicial systems that have played key roles in compelling action on displacement, and will work to promote regional exchanges around those good practices.⁴²

69. At the regional level, the Special Rapporteur welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the African Union, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and subregional organizations to address the protection, assistance and development needs of internally displaced persons and to find durable solutions for them. In accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 50/6, she encourages such organizations to strengthen their activities and their cooperation with the mandate. She will seek to strengthen collaboration with the Organization of American States, working towards implementing the human rights of internally displaced persons, addressing

⁴² See, for example, Colombia, Constitutional Court Decision T-025 of 2004; and El Salvador, Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice, Amparo Judgment 411-2017 of 2018.

displacement patterns, causes of displacement and, in particular, organized crime and the impact it has on gender-based violence and the risks for children and young people. The Special Rapporteur will also strengthen engagement with the Council of Europe and explore avenues of addressing protracted internal displacement in the region.

70. The Special Rapporteur sees the added value in taking stock of the transposition of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa into national law and facilitating the development of a regional road map on the implementation. In this respect, she will engage closely with African States to initiate and extend dialogue and to offer technical cooperation to assist them in fulfilling their commitments under that Convention. The Special Rapporteur will also continue advocating for regional standards for the protection of internally displaced persons to be adopted in other regions.

71. The Special Rapporteur believes that regional and cross-regional networks and exchanges are excellent vehicles to promote, support and build capacity at the country level. This is complemented by the idea of creating a network of friends or champions of the mandate in order to ensure up-to-date contextual knowledge and responses and to be able to continue amplifying the concerns raised by academics and civil society. A systemic approach, in which all of the actors are considered, will be encouraged. Cross-regional exchanges and documenting good practices and lessons learned will be promoted as tools to influence policymakers. These tools can also be vehicles to help unpack the Guiding Principles in terms of the institutionalization and localization of responses.

IV. Thematic priorities

72. Based on her preliminary engagement and discussions with Member States and a wide range of interlocutors, the Special Rapporteur has identified the following preliminary thematic priorities, which will inform her reports, dialogues and provision of expert advice to stakeholders at the global and country levels: (a) internal displacement resulting from generalized violence; (b) peace processes, peace agreements and peacebuilding and internal displacement; (c) climate change and internal displacement; and (d) the integration and reintegration of internally displaced persons. At the same time, the mandate holder will remain open and alert to emerging issues.

A. Internal displacement resulting from generalized violence

73. On the issue of displacement resulting from generalized violence, the Special Rapporteur recognizes the responsibility under the mandate to continue supporting action to prevent and address neglected causes of displacement, and to raise awareness about internally displaced persons who require greater visibility and attention. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur will undertake missions and analysis, engage in dialogue and develop a thematic report to shed light on a variety of situations of generalized violence that cause internal displacement in the world.

74. The previous mandate holders addressed the prevention of arbitrary displacement in situations of armed conflict and generalized violence, analysing the international legal standards on the obligation to prevent arbitrary displacement.⁴³ Generalized violence may be gang-related or criminal in nature, or may be targeted at minority ethnic, religious, political or other groups. It may affect a small group in a localized area or a large, widely dispersed community. In some contexts, the nature of armed conflicts has evolved to become more complex, asymmetric and fragmented, where conflict dynamics can be mixed with situations of generalized violence involving other non-State actors, including gangs and organized crime networks. Political solutions have become more elusive and displacement increasingly prevalent and protracted.⁴⁴ All of this is happening more and more in contexts where risks related to climate change and disasters are higher.

⁴³ See [A/76/169](#).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 28; see also para. 30.

75. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that displacement in situations of generalized violence remains largely unacknowledged in various contexts, as does the disproportionate impact such violence has on specific groups. She will work with different stakeholders to shed light on this neglected driver of displacement, with a view to supporting Governments and the international community to develop proactive and effective prevention strategies based on, inter alia, meaningful and inclusive consultation with and the participation of internally displaced persons and displacement-affected communities and the support of humanitarian, development and peace actors.

B. Peace processes, peace agreements and peacebuilding and internal displacement

76. The international community has identified the importance of human rights and its interlinkages with security and development in sustaining peace. The 2030 Agenda reinforces the interdependence of peace, security and sustainable development and the need to redouble efforts to resolve and prevent conflict. The Special Rapporteur concurs with the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement and the Action Agenda on the importance of integrating internal displacement in peace processes, peace agreements and peacebuilding, which have not consistently addressed internal displacement or included internally displaced persons, particularly women, young people and minority groups, themselves.⁴⁵

77. The Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons calls for durable solutions to be a specific goal of peace agreements; to that end such agreements should address the specific needs, rights and legitimate interests of internally displaced persons, and incorporate a human rights-based approach to supporting durable solutions that ensures the participation of internally displaced persons in peace processes and peacebuilding activities. The Framework also highlights the importance of women's participation, in line with Security Council resolution 1325/2000 on women and peace and security. Under the mandate there is a long history of commitment to supporting durable solutions through engagement with key stakeholders, including the Peacebuilding Commission.⁴⁶

78. Peace actors have an important role to play, including through community-based approaches, in resolving and preventing the recurrence of displacement by supporting and monitoring peace processes and promoting reconciliation and the participation of internally displaced persons and displacement-affected communities in those processes. Peace missions have advanced the protection of civilians, thus preventing conflict-induced displacement, and have supported conflict resolution, access to justice and accountability for crimes committed during conflict.

79. The Special Rapporteur recalls the recommendation of her predecessor that States and the international community should be more committed to supporting comprehensive frameworks of transitional justice to address the root causes of violence and conflict that lead to internal displacement. Building on the previous mandate holder's reports on housing, land and property⁴⁷ and transitional justice in contexts of internal displacement,⁴⁸ the Special Rapporteur will consider the progress made, in order to identify good practices, case studies and challenges encountered. She will also seek collaboration with United Nations bodies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions in order to follow up on transitional justice and peace processes that are under way, promote the inclusion of internally displaced persons, and learn about the experiences,

⁴⁵ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement*, pp. 15 and 16. On ensuring the participation of women in consultations with communities of internally displaced persons, see also United Nations Development Fund for Women, "Securing the peace: guiding the international community towards women's effective participation throughout peace processes" (New York, October 2005).

⁴⁶ See [A/68/225](#). See also [A/HRC/35/27](#), paras. 56 and 57; and Gerard McHugh, *Integrating Internal Displacement in Peace Processes and Agreements* (Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace and Brookings Institution, 2010).

⁴⁷ [A/HRC/47/37](#).

⁴⁸ [A/73/173](#).

challenges and practices of the respective Governments. She hopes to revitalize and enhance a needed conversation between a range of actors, with the ultimate goal of moving from discussion to improved practice.⁴⁹

80. She takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence on practical experiences of domestic reparation programmes,⁵⁰ in particular his conclusion that internally displaced persons continue to be neglected in reparations programmes, and will further consider that issue. A key challenge is how best to include them in such programmes so that they can obtain adequate reparations.⁵¹ In that regard, the Special Rapporteur will draw from her own experience in transitional justice processes, peace negotiation and peacebuilding from her country of origin.

81. The Special Rapporteur firmly believes that transitional justice, namely initiatives to promote recovery from widespread rights violations through recognition of harm⁵² and efforts to promote social cohesion through effective dialogue and reconciliation between communities, is a crucial component for sustainably resolving conflicts and preventing the emergence or resurgence of new conflicts in the future.⁵³ In that regard, she recalls the conclusion of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement regarding the insufficient application of these types of initiatives, which contribute to healing, recovery, reconciliation and social cohesion.⁵⁴

C. Climate change and internal displacement

82. Climate change is not only a driver of displacement but also a risk multiplier. In 2022, nearly 2,350 disasters triggered 32.6 million new displacements across 148 countries and territories. Of the 71 million persons who remained internally displaced at the end of 2022, 8.7 million had been displaced by disasters.⁵⁵ According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the scale of recent changes in the climate system is unprecedented; the scale and severity of displacement risks are likely to increase dramatically. Many of the countries that are most at risk are among the least responsible for the emissions driving climate change. For some small island developing States, the threat posed by climate change is truly existential.⁵⁶

83. The Special Rapporteur is grateful to previous mandate holders for advancing the understanding of the slow-onset adverse effects of climate change,⁵⁷ in particular with regard to the view that addressing internal displacement in these contexts requires a holistic, multi-stakeholder, coordinated approach to climate action, disaster risk reduction, development and human rights protection, as well as the involvement of peace actors in settings in which the adverse effects of climate change interact with armed conflict.⁵⁸ The Special Rapporteur is convinced that improving the understanding of the interplay between climate change, disasters and conflict and how it affects displacement dynamics and the rights of internally displaced persons is much needed. She believes that a more integrated response to climate change and internal displacement, overcoming fragmentation stemming from the different causes of displacement, is required.

84. The Special Rapporteur reiterates the need to adopt a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach to disaster risk reduction, early warning, disaster contingency planning, disaster management, mitigation and adaptation, and recovery efforts, in order to prevent,

⁴⁹ Ibid., paras. 66 and 67.

⁵⁰ [A/HRC/42/45](#).

⁵¹ Ibid., paras. 125 and 129.

⁵² See [A/73/173](#).

⁵³ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 16 and 17.

⁵⁵ Information provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

⁵⁶ High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement*, p. 6.

⁵⁷ See [A/60/338](#), [A/60/338/Corr.1](#), [A/64/214](#), [A/66/285](#), [A/75/207](#) and [A/HRC/10/13/Add.1](#).

⁵⁸ [A/76/169](#).

reduce and address disaster displacement, to better protect and meet the needs of affected persons and to find durable solutions.

85. The Special Rapporteur echoes the work of previous mandate holders who recognized the numerous protection challenges faced by persons displaced by disaster.⁵⁹ She also recalls the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters, which indicate that these protection risks relate to short-term needs, including the right to protection of life, to access to life-saving food, water and shelter and to health services to treat wounds. In that regard, she will work closely with relevant actors, including the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change and stakeholders such as the Platform on Disaster and Displacement, to advocate with States to take action to fill the law and policy gaps for the protection of persons who are internally displaced by the impacts of climate change and disasters.⁶⁰

86. Recalling principle 5 (on the role of authorities and international actors in preventing and avoiding conditions that might lead to displacement of persons) and principle 6 (on the right of every human being to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced) of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the Special Rapporteur wishes to explore existing strategies (or the lack thereof) to prevent causes of displacement and arbitrary displacement related to disasters and climate change. This will likely require a differentiated approach that takes into account the intersectionality of conflict and disasters, and situations in which the two intertwine, as well as the system-readiness linked to early warning mechanisms.

D. Integration and reintegration of internally displaced persons

87. The Special Rapporteur will engage in ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue and initiatives to support human rights-based analysis, and will dedicate a thematic report to the integration and reintegration of internally displaced persons, particularly the conditions that contribute to the sustainability of return, local integration and settlement elsewhere in their countries and the lived experiences and perceptions of internally displaced persons that impart, among other factors, a sense of belonging. In accordance with principle 28 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return or resettle voluntarily elsewhere in the country, and the authorities are to endeavour to facilitate their integration or reintegration. The Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons enumerates eight human rights-based criteria for determining when durable solutions have been achieved. As mentioned above, indicators have been developed on that basis for assessing progress towards those criteria.⁶¹

88. In the Framework, the path towards the sustainable integration or reintegration is described as “a gradual, often long-term process of reducing displacement-specific needs and ensuring the enjoyment of human rights without discrimination”. Integration or reintegration is contextual, multidimensional and based partly on individual experiences, perceptions and aspirations of internally displaced, formerly displaced and host communities. The Special Rapporteur will examine programmes that have addressed social cohesion, psychosocial well-being, subjective feelings about belonging, family and social networks, and access to information, and how such programmes address the discrimination and marginalization internally displaced persons face in their new communities or communities of origin, in particular with respect to progress made along the path to durable solutions.

89. Principle 9 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement recalls that States are under a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of Indigenous Peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands. For them, displacement has meant the loss of their social and

⁵⁹ See, for example, A/HRC/10/13/Add.1, para. 4.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Platform on Disaster Displacement, “Internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change: submission to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement” (2020).

⁶¹ See <https://inform-durablesolutions-idp.org/>.

cultural identity. Regarding this obligation, the Special Rapporteur will focus particularly on the role of identity, for example with regard to cultural, spiritual and religious practices, in enabling integration or reintegration. The Special Rapporteur recalls the need to adopt a differentiated approach to facilitating integration, focusing not only on the harm suffered by internally displaced persons but also, in fact mainly, on their resilience, capacities and agency.

90. The Special Rapporteur will analyse the link between mental health and suffering, including transgenerational impacts resulting from the lack of territorial and cultural roots as a consequence of displacement; post-traumatic stress; loneliness and isolation; the impact of discrimination and prejudice; and other mental health-related challenges that can hamper local integration and active participation of internally displaced persons in the development of solutions. She will describe the importance of psychosocial care, social support and community networks, protection of freedom from discrimination, and access to information and mental health care in the context of the impacts of life-changing events on internally displaced persons and how such support affects their integration. She notes that the aspect of mental health has received little attention in durable solutions frameworks, which tend to be focused on the physical, material and legal aspects. The Special Rapporteur will examine the psychosocial impact of displacement and offer recommendations on how targeted interventions can support durable solutions.

91. The Special Rapporteur will also consider the indispensable role of the use of technology and digital tools among internally displaced persons, and how best to support them and host communities given the reality of the digital divide, the accessibility of digital tools and the gender gap in Internet use,⁶² how digital access contributes to their inclusion and integration, what challenges they face and how to better leverage digital tools and solutions for these groups of users given their specific situations, which may be assisted or exacerbated by technology.

⁶² See [A/74/821](#).