



Bringing Human Rights Home

Webinar 4 Using the UPR Cities Strategy
to Fight Racism & Xenophobia

3 C's Collect, Compile, Clamor

UPR Cities aim to develop local human rights assessments focusing on the particular challenges in communities across the country, generating recommendations of policies and actions to improve human rights protections.

- *2 reports: one for national Cities report to UN; the other for local work*
- *"Clamor": Our key aim is human rights movement-building: Building political will, skills, and collective momentum to carry out recommendations and change policy script to make human rights are the top priority*
- *Recommendations for change can focus on local, state, national govt. & civil society*
 - [Community Forum Worksheet](#)

Human Rights, Culture, & Historical Truth-Telling

- [International Decade of People of African Descent \(2015-2024\)](#)
- 400th Anniversary of the first arrival of enslaved Africans in North America
 - [400 years of inequality](#)

Treaty Bodies

The United States has ratified the following international human rights treaties, which makes the US government subject to periodic reviews of its performance. **Civil society must help hold public officials at all levels accountable to international commitments.**

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Human Rights
- Convention Against Torture
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

*[Link to all UN Treaty Bodies](#)

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

- [2014 Concluding Observations Report*](#)
- [General recommendation No. 34 adopted by the Committee - Racial discrimination against people of African descent](#)
- [General recommendation No. 31 on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system](#)
- [General recommendation No. 25 on gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination](#)
- [General recommendation No. 13 on the training of law enforcement officials in the protection of human rights](#)

**These reports provide a baseline of the most recent set of recommendations made by treaty review committees to the US government. We can draw from these recommendations in assessing local human rights practices and the extent to which they reflect these recommendations.*

Treaties:

Immigrants & Refugees: International Human Rights Standards & Protections

- [International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families](#)
- [Convention relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [Global Compact on Migration](#) (2018)

The Global Compact for Migration is the first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions (non-legally binding).

- Addresses causes of migration.
- Seeks to reduce risks and vulnerabilities of migrants and ensure their ability to enjoy human rights protections in destination countries.

Other international mechanisms

- UN Expert Working Group on People of African Descent
 - Report: WG People of African Descent's visit to the US ([A/HRC/33/61/Add.2](#), 2016)
- Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty (1998)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/38/33/Add.1](#), 2018)
- Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing (2000)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/13/20/Add.4](#), 2010)
 - 2019 Letter to US Government: ["UN to US Government-Do Better on Housing"](#)

Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing

U.S. housing and financial policies “have disproportionately affected African-American households and other minority groups, contrary to the U.S. government’s obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)....

your Government must develop policies and laws that include a full range of taxation, regulatory and planning measures in order to *re-establish housing as a human right, promote an inclusive housing system, prevent speculation and limit the extraction of profits at the expense of tenants*”

(March, 2019)

2019 Letter to US Government: [“UN to US Government-Do Better on Housing”](#)

Other international mechanisms

- [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (2015) “2030 Agenda”
- Special Rapporteur on the right to education
 - Report on UN Special Rapporteur’s visit to the US ([E/CN.4/2002/60/Add.1](#), 2006)
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur’s visit to US ([A/HRC/11/36/Add.3](#), 2009)
 - [US shootings: Use of racist language to gain votes or power must stop: UN experts](#)
- UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues
 - [“Legitimate concerns” over outcome of Michael Brown and Eric Garner cases](#)
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights [Special Rapporteurship on the rights of persons of African descent and on racial discrimination](#)

Sample recommendations from [2015 UPR Report to US](#)

- “Prohibit that federal authorities undertake racial profiles, and investigate the disproportionate use of lethal force against [people of color] by state and local police” [*supported**]
- Take necessary measures to combat discriminatory practices against women and migrant workers in the labour market” [*supported*]
- Strengthen human rights education programmes and training for all civil servants, particularly for law enforcement and immigration officers, and combat impunity concerning abuses against defenceless persons [*supported*]

* According to Resolution 5/1, the State Under Review can either ‘support’ or ‘note’ a recommendation. States cannot “reject” recommendations but can provide comments on “noted” recommendations, including explanations on why they do not support said recommendations.

Sample recommendations from [2015 UPR](#) [Report to US](#) (*cont.*)

- “Undertake measures to combat racial discrimination, including adoption of a National Action Plan to Combat Racial Discrimination as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination” [*noted*]
- “Take further measures to eliminate racial discrimination in all of its forms and manifestations, in particular, by prohibiting the practice of race profiling in law enforcement, as recommended by the United Nations treaty bodies” [*supported*]
- “Prohibit racial discrimination and racist hate speech, as well as broaden the protection afforded by law” [*noted*]

Speakers: Examples from UPR Cities

- Robin Benton, Grand Rapids, MI
- Vickie Casanova-Willis, Chicago, IL
- Molefi Askari, Greenville, SC
- Jackie Smith, Pittsburgh, PA
 - [Immigration rights are human rights, speakers at Downtown forum say](#) *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* August 6, 2019. Coverage of our UPR Cities Roundtable on the Rights of Immigrants and Refugees in the Pittsburgh Region.

Upcoming UPR Cities Webinars

Wednesday, September 11: **Telling Your City's Story: Preparing UPR Cities Reports**

To register for upcoming webinars, please send your name, organization (if applicable), and location to: uprcities@humanrightscities.mayfirst.org

All webinars are at 6:00PM EST/3:00PM PST



Bring Human Rights Home!

*Join other cities & communities in
the 2019-2020 UPR Cities Project*

Human Rights Cities Alliance (USA)

wiki.humanrightscities.mayfirst.org

Contact us: uprcities@humanrightscities.mayfirst.org



Appendix

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

- [2014 Concluding Observations Report*](#)
- [General recommendation No. 34 adopted by the Committee - Racial discrimination against people of African descent](#)
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**These reports provide a baseline of the most recent set of recommendations made by treaty review committees to the US government. We can draw from these recommendations in assessing local human rights practices and the extent to which they reflect these recommendations.*

Treaty Bodies (*cont.*)

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Human Rights
 - [2014 Concluding Observations Report](#)*
 - [General comment No. 36 - Article 6 \(the right to life\)](#) (para. 44)
- Convention Against Torture
 - [2014 Concluding Observations Report](#)*
 - Link to [2014 USHRN Stakeholder Report](#) “Torture in the Homeland” with Chicago Police case

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Other international mechanisms

- [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (2015) “2030 Agenda”
 - [Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries](#)
 - **Target 10.3** Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
 - [Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies](#)
 - **Target 16.B** Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
- [U.S. National Statistics for the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals](#)

Other international mechanisms for use by Human Rights Cities (*cont.*)

- Intergovernmental Working group on the Effective implementation and Follow-up to the Durban declaration and Programme of Action
 - [Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on its 9th session](#)
- [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteurship on the rights of persons of African descent and on racial discrimination](#)
 - The core objectives of the Office of the Rapporteur include working with OAS member States to generate awareness regarding States' duty to respect the human rights of afro-descendants and on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, analyzing the current challenges that confront countries of the region in this area, formulating recommendations designed to overcome the obstacles, identifying and sharing best practices in the region with respect to this matter, and providing any technical assistance requested by member States in the implementation of the recommendations in national law and practice.
- [International Decade for People of African Descent](#)
 - [Preventing and Countering Racial Profiling of People of African Descent](#)
 - [Women and Girls of African Descent: Human Rights Achievements and Challenges](#)
 - [More IDPAD resources and publications](#)

United Nations Special Rapporteurs & Expert Working Groups

- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (Est. 1993)
 - [Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US \(A/HRC/11/36/Add.3, 2009\)](#)
 - Xenophobia: Its conceptualization, trends and manifestations ([A/HRC/32/50, 2016](#))
 - [US shootings: Use of racist language to gain votes or power must stop, say UN rights experts](#)
 - [Statement delivered at the occasion of 2019 International Day against Racial Discrimination](#)
- UN Expert Working Group on People of African Descent
 - Report on the WG People of African Descent's visit to the US ([A/HRC/33/61/Add.2, 2016](#))
 - [Human Rights experts find racial discrimination in the USA alive and thriving \(2016\)](#)
 - [Fact-finding mission to US looks at human rights condition of African Americans \(2016\)](#)
- UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues
 - ["Legitimate concerns" over outcome of Michael Brown and Eric Garner cases – UN rights experts](#)
 - [Statement for 2018 Int'l Day Against Racial Discrimination: Confronting the Two Faces of Racism: Resurgent Hate and Structural Discrimination](#)

[Fact Sheet N° 27: Seventeen Frequently Asked Questions about United Nations Special Rapporteurs.](#)

United Nations Special Rapporteurs & Expert Working Groups (*cont.*)

- Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty (1998)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/38/33/Add.1](#), 2018)
- Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing (2000)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/13/20/Add.4](#), 2010)
 - [Annual report Main focus: Financialization of housing and the right to adequate housing](#) (2017)
 - [Special Rapporteurs on the right to adequate housing and on the right to safe drinking water and sanitation Visit to city of Detroit](#) (2014)
- Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice
 - Report on the UN WG's visit to the US ([A/HRC/32/44/Add.2](#), 2016)
 - [Migrant caravan: States have duty to protect human rights](#)
- Special Rapporteur on the right to education
 - Report on UN Special Rapporteur's visit to the US ([E/CN.4/2002/60/Add.1](#), 2006)

Guide for advocates ["Engaging UN Special Procedures to Advance Human Rights at Home"](#)

When crafting local reports, activists can draw from prior UPR reports:

- **Prior UPR Reviews of US Human Rights Record**

- [2015 Official Report of the UPR Working Group of the UN Human Rights Council](#)
- [2011 Official Report of the UPR Working Group of the UN Human Rights Council](#)

Civil Society/Stakeholder Reports

- [2015 US Human Rights Network UPR Stakeholder Report](#)
- [2010 Shadow Report- USHRN](#)
- [2010 submission focusing on racial health disparities and discrimination](#)

Further Resources

- Beyond Promises: The Impact of the UPR on the Ground
 - An analysis by *UPR Info* of the implementation of 11,000 recommendations. http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/general-document/pdf/2014_beyond_promises.pdf
- Glossary of terms and on the UPR (compiled by *UPR info*)
 - <https://www.upr-info.org/en/glossary#r>
- The Civil Society Compendium
 - A comprehensive guide for Civil Society Organizations engaging in the Universal Periodic Review A good background document by *UPR Info* on the UPR process for Civil Society Organizations and concrete examples on how to craft effective action oriented recommendations. https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/general-document/pdf/upr_info_cso_compendium_en.pdf

Resources (*cont.*)

- **Cities for CEDAW** toolkits, templates and resources: <http://citiesforcedaw.org/resources/>
- [Human Rights Council holds general debate on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance](#) (March 2019)
 - Though the USA did not participate the position and presentations of a number of States and Civil Society Organizations can be read.
- Toolkit for UPR Follow-up: Mobilizing civil society and public officials: <http://www.civicus.org/images/CIVICUSPostUPRConsultationToolkit.pdf>
- *For UPR Cities Consultations and Compiling Reports:* [Community Forum Worksheet](#)