SPECIAL PROCEDURES
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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Ben Saul

A/80/284: Best practices to protect human rights while using administrative measures to prevent terrorism: restrictive orders, terrorist listings, security detention and compulsory interventions

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Annex I: Activities from March to July 2025

1. 58th Session of the Human Rights Council, March 2025

On 11 March 2025 the Special Rapporteur presented to the 58th session of the Human Rights Council his report A/HRC/58/47: Protection of human rights by regional organizations while countering terrorism: civil society engagement, sanctions and military cooperation[1] and his report A/HRC/58/47/Add.1 on his visit to Benin.[2] Following his opening statement[3] he engaged in an interactive dialogue with 50 States and various civil society organizations. He also presented at a press conference on Gaza.[4]

In Geneva, from 10 to 14 March he spoke at numerous events. He hosted a side event marking the 20th anniversary of the mandate,[5] alongside two former Special Rapporteurs. He presented at events on:

- civil society engagement in counter-terrorism by regional organizations[6] (hosted by the Global Center for Cooperative Security);
- respecting human rights while preventing and suppressing nuclear terrorism[7] (hosted by UNOCT and UNODC with the support of the European Union);
- the abuse of counter-terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa[8] (hosted by MENA Rights Group); and
- the definition of terrorism (hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism).

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1 https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc5847-protection-human-rights-regional-organizations-while-countering.
2 https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5847add1-visit-benin-report-special-rapporteur-promotion-and.
3 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-11-sr-ct-hrc-id-stm.pdf.
4 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-12-sr-ct-remarks-gaza-presser.pdf.
5 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/activities/st-ct-remarks-20th-anniversary-14-3-2025.pdf.
6 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/activities/sr-ct-remarks-global-center-csos-13-3-2025.pdf.
7 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-12-sr-ct-remarks-nuclear-terrorism.pdf.
8 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-10-sr-ct-remarks-mena-event.pdf.

He also held briefings for and exchanged views with Member States and regional groups on civil society engagement in counter-terrorism, the role of regional organizations in protecting human rights while countering terrorism and current challenges in human rights and counter-terrorism. He also had constructive bilateral engagements with various permanent missions in Geneva.

2. Country Visit to Somalia

The Special Rapporteur undertook a country visit to Somalia (10 to 20 May 2025), publishing an end -of-mission statement with preliminary findings and recommendations[9] and a news release[10] and held a press conference in Mogadishu.[11] The final report will be presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2026. He provided briefings on his findings to diplomatic missions in Mogadishu, including to the United Nations Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS), the UNTMIS Human Rights and Protection Group, the African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia, foreign delegations, and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) in New York. In preparation for his visit to Somalia he completed the United Nations Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) and Individual First Aid Kit (IFAK) courses in Copenhagen. On an academic visit to Denmark he met with officials and civil society stakeholders.

3. Court Interventions

In March, the Special Rapporteur received permission from the European Court of Human Rights (Grand Chamber) to submit a third party intervention[12] in the case of *Yasak v. Türkiye* (Application No. 17389/20), concerning legality and foreseeability in the context of the proscription of organizations as terrorist; the case is ongoing.

In July, the Special Rapporteur submitted a third-party intervention request to the England and Wales High Court in *Ammori v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2025] EWHC 1708 (Admin), concerning the proscription as terrorist of the "direct action" protest group Palestine Action. The intervention was quoted in the Court's judgment denying injunctive relief. Intervention was also requested in subsequent judicial review proceedings.

The Special Rapporteur further requested to intervene as third party in proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights on the same matter, *Ammori v the United Kingdom*. The interventions are available on the mandate's website.[13]

4. Publications

In June, the Special Rapporteur issued a Briefing Note: Israel's International Legal Obligations to Protect UNRWA from 'Terrorist' Activities and Armed Interference.[14] He also published legal blogs on the Council of Europe's proposed definition of terrorism (in the EJIL: Talk! The Blog of the European Journal of International Law);[15] Gaza-related amendments to Israel's "Unlawful Combatants Law" (in Opinio

[9] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/statements/20250521-eom-somalia-sr-terrorism-en.pdf.
[10] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/un-expert-urges-international-community-not-leave-somalia-behind.
[11] https://media.un.org/unifeed/en/asset/d339/d3399392.
[12] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/court-submissions/amicus-ecthr-yasak-v.-turkiye-un-sr-ct.pdf.
[13] https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-terrorism/submissions-courts.
[14] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/SR-CT-UNRWA-brief.pdf.
[15] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/activities/blog-council-europe-new-definition-of.docx.

Juris);[16] and Australia's compensation scheme for war crimes in Afghanistan (in Articles of War – Lieber Institute West Point).[17]

5. Presentations at High-Level Events

The Special Rapporteur intervened in high-level meetings, including:

- G7 Kananaskis Dialogue on Transnational Repression, "Turning Collective Experiences into Actionable Solutions", Ottawa, 26 February 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "The Misuse of Counter-terrorism Laws and Narratives to Transnationally Repress Civil Society".[18]
- UNOCT Ambassadorial-level Briefing to Member States on Key United Nations Counter-terrorism Activities and Achievements in 2024, New York, 4 March 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "Highlights of the Special Rapporteur in 2024".[19]
- UNOCT – Global Sports Programme and the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, Securing the Legacy: Debriefing from Paris 2024 for Future Major Sporting Events, New York, 5 March 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur (published but not delivered): "Human Rights Lessons from the Paris Olympics".[20]
- Conference on National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies, Malta, 12-13 March 2025, Co-hosted by the Government of Malta and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "Strengthening Human Rights in the Proposed Valetta Principles on National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies".[21]
- Second Roundtable of Counter-Terrorism, Centres of Excellence, The Impact of New Technologies on Countering the Financing of Terrorism, Riyadh, 29-30 April 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "Regulating New Payment Technologies to Prevent Adverse Human Rights Impacts".[22]
- International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law and CTED, Strengthening the Oversight and Accountability of National Security Agencies in South and South-East Asian countries, Jakarta, 5-6 May 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "The Role of International and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms".[23]
- Networked Multilateralism – Strengthening Partnerships: A Rule of Law and Human Rights-Based Approach to Counter-Terrorism in Support of Peacebuilding, Hosted by Austria, DPPA and UNOCT, Vienna, 4-5 June

[16] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/blog-israel-s-unlawful-combatants-amendme.pdf.
[17] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-14-australian-compensation-war-crimes-in-afg.pdf.
[18] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-remarks-g7-transnational-repression.pdf.
[19] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-remarks-unoct-ambassadorial-briefing.pdf.
[20] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/2025-03-05-sr-ct-remarks-paris-olympics.pdf.
[21] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/sr/activities/sr-ct-remarks-malta-strategies-12-3-2025.pdf.
[22] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-remarks-riyadh-roundtable-cft-new-tec.pdf.
[23] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-remarks-oversight-jakarta.pdf.

2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "Reconciling Human Rights and Security Responses to Terrorism".[24]

- United Nations Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Retreat, Strengthening Partnerships between Regional Organizations and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, New York, 25 June 2025. Remarks of the Special Rapporteur: "Embedding Human Rights in Cooperation between the United Nations Global Compact and Regional Organizations".[25]

6. Other Presentations

The Special Rapporteur delivered various other presentations, including:

- Lecture on Protection of Civilians in Counter-Terrorism Contexts, Australian Civil-Military Centre, Civil-Military Police Course: Protection of Civilians, Canberra, 1 April 2025.
- Training Webinar on United Nations Special Procedures, hosted by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors, Sydney, 3 April 2025.
- Conference on "The Draft Comprehensive Convention against Terrorism: 25 Years Later", Allameh Tabatabaei University Faculty of Law and Political Science, 15 April 2025.
- Lectures on Terrorism and International Law, Executive Master – Master of Advanced Studies in International Law in Armed Conflict, "Preventing and Combating Terrorism" course, with Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, 24-25 April 2025.
- Conversation on Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights, National Chengchi University, International College of Innovation, Taipei, 5 June 2025.
- Briefing to a United Nations Country Team on the Human Rights Implications of the Cybercrime Convention, 31 July 2025.

7. Inputs to Other Entities

The Special Rapporteur was an active member of the Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact and its Working Groups and met frequently with relevant United Nations entities. In addition, the Special Rapporteur provided inputs to various processes and documents by other bodies, including:

- OHCHR's Guidance Note on Defining 'Terrorism' in National Legislation;
- the consultation on a results-based framework for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact;
- OHCHR's consultation on the proposed human rights cluster under the Secretary-General's UN80 reforms;
- UNOCT's draft Training of Trainers' Manual on Gender Mainstreaming in Counter-Terrorism and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism;
- the draft National Counter-Terrorism Strategy of Nigeria, through the Global Compact Working Group on National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies;

[24] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-vienna-event-4-5-june-2025.pdf.

[25] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/activities/sr-ct-compact-retreat-remarks-25-6-2025.pdf.

- the Draft Operational Guide on Crowd Management for Major Sporting Event Security of UNOCT's Global Sports Programme;
- a United Nations country team proposal;
- a thematic hearing of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on "The Situation of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the United States of America", 24 July 2025.

The mandate also participated in various events, including UNOCT's Launch of the Victims of Terrorism Associations Network (VoTAN) in New York on 28 April 2025 and the Expert Meeting on the Rule of Law and Human Rights Aspects of Using Artificial Intelligence for Counter-Terrorism Purposes in Geneva on 8 May 2025 (hosted by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy in cooperation with Switzerland and CTED).

8. Other Activities

The Special Rapporteur engaged actively with a broad range of stakeholders, issued numerous communications and press releases, held bilateral meetings with diverse States, and engaged with the media globally to raise awareness of human rights concerns.

9. External Assistance

The Special Rapporteur highly appreciated assistance from the University of Sydney and Sydney Law School; Fordham Law School's Leitner Center for International Law; the Human Rights Clinic at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law; the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, LLM International Law Clinic; and Columbia Law School.

He welcomed the pro bono legal assistance of Hickman & Rose Solicitors in London two barristers from Doughty Street Chambers.

He acknowledges the extrabudgetary contributions of China, Spain and Switzerland in 2025. He reiterates that greater resources are required from member States to effectively carry out his mandate and to enhance protection for victims.