



## Special Rapporteur

On 2 June 2014, **Ms. Urmila Bhoola** assumed her mandate as Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences.

Ms. Bhoola is an international human rights lawyer specialised in labour law and gender equality. She served as a Judge of the Labour Court of South Africa after twenty years of work as a labour and human rights lawyer in South Africa. Ms. Bhoola is also a former Executive Director of International Women's Rights Action Watch for the Asia Pacific (IWRAW AP), a women's rights advocacy organization which monitors compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

## Contact Details

### Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences

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## Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences

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## Introduction to the mandate

On 28 September 2007, the United Nations Human Rights Council in **resolution 6/14** created a new mandate of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, to replace the Working Group on contemporary forms of slavery established in 1974, in order to better address the issue of contemporary forms of slavery within the United Nations system.

On 29 September 2010, the Human Rights Council adopted **resolution 15/2**, which extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for a period of three years. **Resolution 24/3** of 26 September 2013 renewed the mandate for three more years.

## Mandate of the Special Rapporteur

The Special Rapporteur has been mandated through Human Rights Council resolution 24/3 to, *inter alia*:

- **Examine and report** on all contemporary forms of slavery and slavery-like practices, but in particular those defined in the Slavery Convention of 1926, and the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956, as well as other issues covered by the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery;
- **Promote the effective application** of relevant international norms and standards on slavery;
- **Respond effectively** to reliable information on alleged human rights violations with a view to protecting the human rights victims of slavery and preventing violations;
- **Recommend actions and measures** applicable at the national, regional and international levels to eliminate slavery practices wherever they occur, including **remedies** which address the **causes and consequences** of contemporary forms of slavery, such as poverty, discrimination and conflict as well as the existence of demand factors and relevant measures to strengthen **international cooperation**;
- Give careful **consideration to specific issues** within the scope of the mandate and to include examples of effective practices as well as relevant **recommendations**;
- Take account of the **gender and age dimensions** of contemporary forms of slavery.



## Methods of work

In the discharge of the mandate the Special Rapporteur utilizes the following main methods of work:

### *Communications*

The Special Rapporteur acts upon reliable information received with regard to cases of contemporary forms of slavery by sending communications to the Government involved. The issues in question include: traditional slavery, forced labour, debt bondage, serfdom, children working in slavery or slavery-like conditions, domestic servitude, sexual slavery, and servile forms of marriage.

### *Country visits*

The Special Rapporteur undertakes fact-finding country visits in order to obtain first-hand information on slavery and slavery-like practices from relevant stakeholders including Government representatives, members of the civil society, United Nations agencies and victims. Reports of these visits, highlighting findings, conclusions and recommendations, are submitted to the Human Rights Council.

For more information on country visits see: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Slavery/SRSlavery/Pages/CountryVisits.aspx>

### *Annual reporting*

The Special Rapporteur submits annual reports to the Human Rights Council on the activities of the mandate and provides recommendations on measures that should be taken to prevent and eradicate contemporary forms of slavery, and to protect victims.

For more information on annual reports visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Slavery/SRSlavery/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx>

### *Other activities*

The Special Rapporteur participates in seminars and conferences, convenes expert meetings, issues press statements and holds press conferences on issues relevant to the mandate.