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

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 30 March 2026

61/20. Human rights of persons in street situations

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other relevant international human rights instruments,

Recalling also relevant Human Rights Council resolutions, in particular those on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, on extreme poverty and human rights, on the right to education, on the right to food, on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, on the rights of persons with disabilities, on the rights of the child, on the human rights of older persons, on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, on human rights and climate change, on the question of the realization in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights, and on the human rights implications of drug policy,

Noting the relevant work and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 80/175 of 15 December 2025 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/7 of 18 June 2020,

Bearing in mind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and the announcements on initiatives to accelerate progress towards the Goals at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in 2023,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 79/1 of 22 September 2024, in which the Assembly adopted the Pact for the Future,

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Recalling also General Assembly resolution 79/323 of 25 August 2025, in which the Assembly endorsed the Sevilla Commitment adopted by the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, which reaffirmed that the pursuit and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, encompassing civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, which included the right to development, must be respected, protected and promoted, without distinction or discrimination of any kind,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 80/5 of 4 November 2025, in which the Assembly adopted the Doha Political Declaration of the "World Social Summit" under the title "the Second World Summit for Social Development",

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, entitled "Breaking the cycle: ending the criminalization of homelessness and poverty",[1] the report of the Secretary-General on inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness,[2] the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the street[3] and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children,[4]

Recalling the guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights,

Noting the work of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, including the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing,[5] and the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All,

Recalling the New Urban Agenda, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and endorsed by General Assembly in its resolution 71/256 of 23 December 2016, and UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/7 of 9 June 2023,

Noting the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), of the International Labour Organization, and the Organization's decent work agenda,

Recognizing the importance of the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights, of robust and efficient public policies, of adequately resourced and fully functioning public services and of cooperation at the national, regional and international levels to achieve progressively the full realization of all economic, social and cultural rights,

Acknowledging that there is no universal and globally accepted definition of persons in street situations, which poses particular challenges for accurately determining the number of individuals in different street situations worldwide, and recognizing that definitions vary significantly by country, reflecting different socioeconomic contexts, cultural backgrounds and political approaches,

Taking into consideration that persons in street situations are a heterogeneous population group, often facing in common extreme poverty, social exclusion, stigmatization, interrupted or weakened family ties and a lack of regular conventional housing, who use public spaces, temporarily or permanently, and shelters or other forms of short- or long-term emergency or transitional housing,

Bearing in mind that persons in street situations also comprise children, including orphans, with minimal protection from violence or exploitation, and noting in that regard general comment No. 21 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,

[1] A/HRC/56/61/Add.3 and A/HRC/56/61/Add.3/Corr.1.
[2] A/80/316.
[3] A/HRC/19/35.
[4] A/80/113.
[5] A/HRC/43/43.

Recognizing that children in street situations are at a heightened risk of trafficking, exploitation, abuse and recruitment into criminal activities, and emphasizing the need for responses that strengthen child protection systems consistent with the best interests of the child and, where appropriate, promote safe family- and community-based prevention and reintegration,

Expressing deep concern at the significant number of persons in street situations in both developing and developed countries,

Noting that factors leading to street situations are complex and multidimensional, including drivers such as systemic inequality, extreme poverty, lack of access to affordable housing, lack of employment opportunities, lack of social protection, insufficient physical and mental healthcare, forced evictions, limited or lack of access to education, insufficient preparation for release from healthcare or correctional institutions and displacement induced by extreme weather events, environmental degradation or conflicts,

Noting also that street situations can be driven by family and personal circumstances, including family breakdowns, unemployment, alcoholism and/or drug addiction and abuse, discrimination on the basis of physical and psychosocial disabilities, loss of housing, domestic violence, abandonment and child abuse,

Recognizing the important role that families can play in combating social exclusion, and highlighting the importance of investing in inclusive and responsive family-oriented policies and programmes in areas such as education, training, decent work, work-family balance, healthcare, social services, intergenerational relationships and solidarity and targeted cash transfers for vulnerable families, in order to reduce inequality and promote the well-being of all persons of all ages, as well as to contribute to better outcomes for children and other vulnerable family members in vulnerable situations and help to break the intergenerational transfer of poverty,

Recognizing also that the international community faces increasing challenges posed by the negative impact of climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation, which have exacerbated vulnerabilities and inequalities for persons in street situations, particularly in developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, and stresses the need to anticipate, plan for and reduce disaster risk and to ensure that the right to an adequate standard of living is promoted and respected,

Considering that the complexity of this issue, in general, has not yet been properly addressed and analysed in a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and integrated manner that takes into consideration the different causes and circumstances that have led people to live on the streets, as well as their particular needs,

Bearing in mind the challenges in the collection of data on persons in street situations and their specificities, owing to the fact that censuses in most countries are household-based,

Encouraging States to prevent and combat discrimination and violence against persons in street situations, ensure their full reintegration and participation in society, promote their social inclusion and reaffirm their inherent human dignity,

Recognizing, in this context, the need to take action through a partnership between central and local governments, the judicial and legislative branch, the private sector, academia, research institutes, social movements, international organizations, civil society organizations and national human rights institutions with a view to addressing the structural drivers that lead people to live and work on the streets,

Bearing in mind the rights and needs of persons in street situations, to be addressed by multiple, interdisciplinary, comprehensive and coordinated action,

1. *Condemns* all forms of discrimination, stigmatization, abuse and violence against persons in street situations and calls upon States to promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons in street situations, especially women, girls, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations facing heightened risks of violence;

2. *Calls upon* States to take all measures necessary to eliminate legislation that criminalizes homelessness, and to refrain from measures that revictimize persons in street situations and perpetuate the vicious circle of extreme poverty, in accordance with international human rights law obligations;

3. *Also calls upon* States to implement and strengthen nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including social protection floors, as an important contribution to preventive efforts to promote and protect the human rights of persons in street situations;

4. *Encourages* States to promote broad technical discussions, as appropriate, in order to seek a definition of persons in street situations, and to debate on new census methods to better understand the complexity and different profiles, circumstances and needs of persons in street situations;

5. *Also encourages* States, in accordance with their domestic legislation, national capacities and international human rights law, to consider designing or implementing multiple, comprehensive, interdisciplinary and coordinated programmes that are aimed at addressing the needs of persons in street situations, such as in the following areas:

(a) Adequate housing programmes, including housing-led approaches to address homelessness;

(b) Social protection systems, including child protection systems, and food security measures;

(c) Physical and psychosocial healthcare services;

(d) Programmes for the issuing of civil registration or citizenship documents to ensure access to public services, legal aid and justice;

(e) The building of shelters and facilities for personal care and storage of belongings;

(f) Measures to combat institutional and structural discrimination, violence and stigmatization against persons in street situations by promoting respect for human rights in society as a whole and among law enforcement officials in particular;

(g) Educational and cultural facilities, sports venues, leisure locations, community integration programmes and access to education;

(h) Opportunities for income generation, decent work and formal jobs, including through professional training, entrepreneurship and/or participation in cooperatives in the social and solidarity economy;

(i) Population censuses and other surveys to collect data disaggregated by sex, age, nationality, migration status, race, ethnicity, disability, religion and culture, in order to design and implement polices for different groups and profiles;

(j) Integration of persons in street situations into national policies on disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and housing reconstruction strategies, particularly in disaster-prone and climate-vulnerable regions;

6. *Invites* States to share lessons learned and best practices on action to address the rights and needs of persons in street situations, with a view to advancing further discussions on the subject in the Human Rights Council;

7. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to take into consideration the rights of persons in street situations in its technical assistance, capacity-building activities and advisory services;

8. *Encourages* the human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council to address the rights of persons in street situations in their debates, reports and work, bearing in mind the complexity of the phenomenon and the need to address it with a multidisciplinary approach;

9. *Reaffirms* that international cooperation has an essential role in assisting developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing

States, in strengthening their human, institutional and technological capacity to fulfil human rights for all;

10. *Decides* to continue the consideration of this matter under the same agenda item, in accordance with the programme of work of the Human Rights Council.

53rd meeting
30 March 2026

[Adopted without a vote.]