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# Eighty Years of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms: Evolution and Future Prospects

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The year 2025 marked the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United Nations (UN). Over the past eight decades, the UN has played an irreplaceable and important role in safeguarding peace and security, advancing economic and social development, and protecting human rights.<sup>1</sup> It has evolved into the most important multilateral platform for advancing global governance. In the field of human rights, the *UN Charter* enshrines “promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion” as one of the UN’s core purposes, and sets forth a series of provisions on human rights. Driven by the UN, the international human rights standards system and human rights mechanisms have been continuously improved, and the global movement for the universalization of human rights has flourished, emerging as one of the most prominent areas of international rule of law and global governance in the postwar era.

## I. The Evolution of UN Human Rights Mechanisms over 80 Years

Human rights are a crucial hallmark of the progress of human civilization. Human rights are universal in nature, and “It is the pursuit of all societies to protect the life, value, and dignity of every person and ensure their entitlement to human rights.”<sup>2</sup> However, the international institutional framework for human rights based on the principle of universality took shape primarily after the establishment of the UN. Overall, the development of UN human rights mechanisms has gone through three phases: (1) The Initial Phase (the establishment of the UN in 1945 to the late 1960s): This phase focused on the formulation of human rights standards. In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)*. In 1966, it adopted the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* and its *Optional Protocols*, as well as the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*. These instruments laid the cornerstone of the international human rights standards system. (2) The Expansion Phase (the late 1960s to end of the Cold War): The development of international

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<sup>1</sup> “Li Qiang Meets with UN Secretary-General António Guterres,” *People’s Daily* 3, September 26, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Xi Jinping, “Steadfastly Following the Chinese Path to Promote Further Progress in Human Rights,” *Qiushi* 12 (2022).

human rights standards continued to thrive during this period, with the successive adoption of landmark conventions such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, and the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*. Two prominent features characterized this phase: First, the 1970s witnessed a global upsurge in the ratification and accession to UN human rights conventions.<sup>3</sup> Second, the UN Commission on Human Rights began to break through the “no-action doctrine” by establishing Procedures 1235 and 1503, which enabled it to address situations of massive human rights violations. This marked a significant shift in the Commission’s mandate, expanding its role from standard-setting alone to encompassing monitoring and remedy. (3) The Optimization Phase (the end of the Cold War to the present): This phase has seen the most rapid development of the global movement for universal human rights. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna forged international consensus on the universality of human rights, bridging ideological divides in the international community in the field of human rights to the greatest extent possible. Against this backdrop, the 1990s saw another climax of ratification and accession to UN human rights conventions. The UN designated human rights as one of its three core pillars, initiating the process of mainstreaming human rights, which has gradually become a central issue in global governance. In terms of institutional development, the UN General Assembly established the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 1993 to coordinate UN human rights activities. In 2006, the UN General Assembly set up a specific Human Rights Council to strengthen the UN’s human rights mechanism. In addition to inheriting and developing the mechanisms of the former Commission on Human Rights, the new Council has also established the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, representing an innovative achievement of the United Nations human rights mechanism reform in recent years. A review of the 80-year history of UN human rights mechanisms yields the following observations on its underlying patterns.

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<sup>3</sup> In the 1960s, the ICESCR and ICCPR had only 5 and 6 State Parties respectively; these numbers increased by 55 and 52 in the 1970s, 31 and 28 in the 1980s, and 50 and 57 in the 1990s. The *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* gained 68 State Parties in the 1970s. By the 1990s, 190 countries had ratified or acceded to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* has 175 State Parties, 70 of which ratified or acceded to it in the 1990s. The peak period for ratification of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* was the 1980s, with 97 new State Parties, followed by 67 in the 1990s. Data compiled by the author based on the official UN sources, accessed October 24, 2025, [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-2&chapter=4&clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-2&chapter=4&clang=_en).

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### **A. The central mission throughout the development and operation of the UN human rights mechanisms is the advancement of the universality of human rights**

First, it involves articulating foundational human rights concepts that have gained international consensus in international human rights instruments. If the *UN Charter* constitutes the legal basis for the post-war movement for the universality of human rights, then the UDHR serves as its ideological cornerstone. This document is widely regarded as a product of compromise among diverse philosophical perspectives rather than being dominated by a single human rights philosophy. The most distinct and concentrated manifestation of the pluralistic culture of human rights in the UDHR lies in its enshrinement of human dignity as the cornerstone of human rights, thereby forging a universal consensus on the essence of human rights. The spirit of moderation, tolerance, and mutual understanding embodied in the UDHR is regarded as one of the greatest advances in humanity's march toward a global civilization.<sup>4</sup> Second, the formal carrier of the universality of human rights is the international human rights standards. Formulating and adopting internationally recognized human rights standards is an indispensable requirement for advancing the movement for the universality of human rights. Under the auspices of the UN, a series of international human rights conventions have been adopted, forming a comprehensive system of international human rights standards. Third, it entails establishing universal human rights mechanisms to promote the acceptance and implementation of international human rights standards by all countries, and narrowing the realistic gap between human rights values and human rights practices. Universal human rights mechanisms apply universal human rights values and standards to monitor the human rights practices of all countries and provide remedies for human rights violations, which constitutes the most meaningful component of the movement for the universality of human rights.

### **B. The UN human rights mechanisms have developed a dual-system featuring “weak legal binding force and strong political attributes”**

This dual-system consists of the *UN Charter*-based human rights mechanism and the UN human rights convention-based human rights mechanism. Pursuant to Articles 1 (3) and 55 of the *UN Charter*, the United Nations and its principal organs are obligated to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all human beings. The *UN Charter*-based human rights mechanism is entrusted with the main functions of developing human rights standards and supervising the

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<sup>4</sup> Gudmundur Alfredsson and Asbjørn Eide (eds.), *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Common Standard of Achievement*, translated by the China Society for Human Rights Studies (Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1999), “Preface”: 5.

implementation of human rights. The former function is grounded in Article 13 (1) of the *UN Charter*, which stipulates that “the General Assembly shall initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of... promoting international cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.” The latter function is anchored in Article 62 (2) of the *UN Charter*, which provides that the Economic and Social Council “may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.” The supervisory function for implementation has been realized through the establishment of various supervision mechanisms via the expansion of functional mandates in practice. To a certain extent, the UN human rights conventions are the outcomes of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council fulfilling their mandate to “make recommendations” in the human rights field under the *UN Charter*. Therefore, the UN human rights convention-based human rights mechanism is an important achievement of the *UN Charter*-based human rights mechanism in exercising its *UN Charter*-mandated duties. Based on legal rules yet highly reliant on political cooperation among states, both mechanisms present a dual character that integrates legal and political logics. The UN human rights convention-based human rights mechanism is more reflective of the relativity of treaty effectiveness, meaning that it applies only to the State Parties to the human rights conventions. In comparison with the convention-based mechanism, the *UN Charter*-based human rights mechanism thus has greater substantive significance in the development of human rights standards — given that human rights treaty bodies are not legally mandated with the function of developing human rights standards. It also embodies greater extensiveness and universality in the supervision of human rights practices.

**C. The UN human rights mechanisms are founded on three cornerstones: multilateralism, common values, and inclusiveness and mutual learning**

The UN is both a product of multilateralism and its foremost manifestation, and multilateralism has always served as the core cornerstone of the UN human rights mechanisms. Without the recognition and endorsement of multilateralism by all countries, the UN human rights mechanisms would cease to exist. The second cornerstone of the UN human rights mechanisms is common values. Even with multilateralism in place, the historic process of the internationalization of human rights launched by the *UN Charter* would have been inconceivable in the absence of a shared recognition of human rights values. Internally, such commonly shared human rights values are embodied in the dignity of the human person, a principle repeatedly emphasized in the *UN Charter*, the UDHR, the UN human rights conventions, and the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*. Externally, they find expression in the

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human rights standards enumerated in the UDHR and the UN human rights conventions. The third cornerstone is inclusiveness and mutual learning. While human rights values are universal, the philosophies, systems, models, and practices for their realization are diverse. During the drafting of the UDHR, there were indeed tendencies to emphasize or prioritize a particular human rights philosophy or ideology. Nevertheless, this document ultimately transcended such tendencies, creating normative and ideological space for the existence, development, exchange, and dialogue of diverse human rights cultures in the international community. Over the past 80 years, the movement for the universality of human rights has striven to strike a balance between the universality of values and the diversity of cultures. It encourages equal dialogue, exchanges, and mutual learning among different human rights cultures, systems, and models, and this is the essence of human rights.

**D. The UN human rights mechanisms have earnestly assumed three core functions: formulating human rights standards, supervising their implementation, and building human rights capacity**

(1) The formulation and development of human rights standards. The international human rights movement is grounded in legal rule-based principles, and the noble aspirations of humanity for human rights must all be interpreted through rules formed by international consensus. The *UN Charter* is the world's first multilateral treaty to explicitly enshrine the internationalization of human rights issues, and the UDHR constitutes humanity's first multilateral catalogue of human rights. The UN human rights conventions are legal instruments that concretize this catalogue of human rights based on the UDHR. In terms of international human rights standards, there are two primary categories of sources: First, sources of human rights standards in the strict sense, namely, legally binding human rights conventions or customary international law. These represent the legal expression of human rights standards and embody well-established human rights rules. Second, sources of human rights standards in the broad sense, namely non-legally binding human rights declarations or resolutions, serve as preliminary rules for human rights standards. Though adopted as a resolution of the UN General Assembly, the UDHR is widely recognized as having the nature of customary international law,<sup>5</sup> and thus may be regarded as a source of human rights standards in the strict sense. As for their interrelationship, sources of human rights standards in the strict sense have often developed from those in the broad sense. The formulation of human rights standards has tended to follow a normative trajectory of “declarations first, conventions second,” with the latter representing developing human rights rules. Sources of human rights standards

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<sup>5</sup> David Weissbrodt, Fionnuala Ni Aolain, Joan Fitzpatrick, and Frank Newman, *International Human Rights: Law, Policy and Process* (Fourth Edition), Lexis Nexis, 2009, page 33.

in the broad sense may also be products of the extension of those in the strict sense: They interpret or deepen the content of sources of human rights standards in the strict sense, and may themselves evolve into sources of human rights standards in the strict sense. In addition, a third category of human rights norms has been gaining growing prominence, including the general comments adopted by human rights treaty bodies, and reports on specific human rights issues submitted by special rapporteurs or working groups of the Human Rights Council. These instruments clarify the ambiguities in the interpretation and application of the provisions of human rights conventions, and have in practice served the function of interpreting and developing such provisions. They may therefore be defined as auxiliary sources of human rights standards.

(2) Supervision over the implementation of human rights conventions. Ensuring supervision over the implementation is the concrete embodiment of the vitality of the UN human rights mechanisms. In the early stage of their operation, these mechanisms adhered to the “no-action” doctrine, with their core focus placed on formulating human rights rules. It was not until the 1960s that the Commission on Human Rights gradually developed the function of supervision over implementation.<sup>6</sup> Against the backdrop that UN human rights conventions had not yet been extensively formulated and entered into force, the Commission’s establishment of Procedure 1503 in the late 1960s to conduct human rights supervision was an initiative of profound pioneering significance. With the extensive rollout of supervision mechanisms under the UN human rights conventions, the UN human rights mechanisms have built two core supervision systems for implementation: Overall supervision and individual case remedy. Overall supervision refers to the supervision by the UN human rights mechanisms of the overall compliance of a state with its obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights, in accordance with international human rights standards. The primary modalities of such supervision include the State Party reporting mechanism under the UN human rights conventions and the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council. While overall supervision may also entail attention to individual cases, its core focus lies on the formulation, implementation, amendment, and revocation of national legislation and policies, as well as their impact on the protection of human rights for specific groups or the general population of a state. What contrasts with overall supervision is the individual case remedy. Embodying the justice inherent in upholding human rights, individual case remedy has emerged as a new developmental trend of the UN human rights mechanisms in the post-Cold War era. Its primary manifestations are the individual

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<sup>6</sup> A. M. Bolin Pennegard, “Overview over Human Rights-the Regime of the UN”, in *International Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms: Essays in Honor of Jakob Th. Moller*, edited by Gudmundur Alfredsson, Jonas Grimheden, Bertram G. Ramcharan and Alfred de Zayas (The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2001), 61.

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communications complaint system under the UN human rights conventions and the complaint procedure of the UN Human Rights Council. At present, all UN human rights conventions have established optional individual communications complaint mechanisms. Resolution 5/1 of the UN Human Rights Council has also absorbed the core guiding principles of Procedure 1503, establishing a complaint procedure to receive communications submitted by individuals, groups, or non-governmental organizations that claim to be victims of human rights violations or possess direct and reliable information on such violations. The most distinctive feature of individual case remedies is that it provides quasi-judicial remedies to petitioners or victims. Its impact, however, is not confined to individual cases: such a remedy often entails a review of the domestic legislation and policies of the relevant state, and thus may also achieve the effect of overall supervision.

(3) Capacity-building. Fundamentally, states bear the primary responsibility for the protection of human rights, and thus, states' capacity-building to fulfill their human rights protection obligations is crucial. Since their establishment, the UN human rights mechanisms have actively carried out human rights assistance and cooperation programs aimed at helping states enhance their capacity in the field of human rights. Capacity-building in the human rights field originates from Article 1 (3) of the *UN Charter*, which stipulates the obligation to "achieve international cooperation... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all." As early as the 1950s, the UN General Assembly had begun to adopt human rights assistance programs as a means of implementing Article 1 (3) of the *UN Charter*. On December 17, 1955, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 926 (IX) to establish the UN Programme of Advisory Services in the Field of Human Rights. The two international covenants on human rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1966, also emphasize that States Parties shall strive to obtain international assistance, either individually or through international cooperation, to enhance their capacity and level of rights protection. The 1993 *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* underscored the need to strengthen human rights advisory services and technical cooperation programs, and to provide technical assistance in the field of human rights. In the same year, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 48/141 to establish the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), authorizing the High Commissioner to provide human rights advisory services, as well as technical and financial assistance through OHCHR or other appropriate institutions — thereby further enhancing advisory services and capacity-building programs in the human rights field. Pursuant to the General Assembly Resolution 60/251, one of the core functions of the UN Human Rights Council is to promote human rights education and learning, as well as capacity-building initiatives such as advisory services and technical assistance.

Capacity-building in the human rights field aims to help states and regions improve their capacity to prevent human rights violations and protect human rights. From a long-term perspective, it may well be one of the most valuable functions of the UN human rights mechanisms.

## **II. Current Dilemmas of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms**

### **A. The cornerstone of multilateralism is shaking**

In recent years, multilateralism has encountered severe challenges, and the problems of insufficient representativeness, authority, and effectiveness of multilateralist human rights mechanisms have become more prominent. The UN Commission on Human Rights, a typical multilateral human rights platform, was severely condemned by the majority of developing countries due to its serious politicization, and was ultimately replaced by the Human Rights Council. Less than 20 years after the establishment of the Human Rights Council, it has repeatedly faced boycotts by the United States. The US government, during the Bush administration, opposed the Human Rights Council and refused to run for a seat. The Obama administration sought to run for membership and promote reforms. During the first term of the Trump administration, the US government officially withdrew from the Human Rights Council in 2018. The Biden administration ran for a seat on the Human Rights Council for the 2022-2024 term. On February 4, 2025, the Trump administration (second term) signed and issued an executive order, announcing that the United States would not participate in the UN Human Rights Council nor run for any position in the body. In addition, the United States has withdrawn from other human rights-related international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). In the long term, the US boycott of the Human Rights Council will undoubtedly lead to negative effects: it impairs the principles of universality and non-selectivity proclaimed by the Human Rights Council, and seriously erodes the multilateral cornerstone of the human rights mechanisms.

### **B. The politicization tendency cannot be overcome**

The tendency toward politicization is an inherent chronic flaw of the UN human rights mechanisms, yet these mechanisms are unable to eliminate political interference. On the one hand, politics and human rights cannot be absolutely separated. From an international perspective, human rights have become a crucial issue in international relations since the end of World War II. The international community has recognized that respecting and protecting human rights is closely linked to maintaining international peace and security. The *UN Charter* enshrines human rights as one of the UN's purposes, and the preamble to the UDHR opens with the assertion that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the

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human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” From a domestic perspective, the connection between human rights and politics is even closer. Human rights are highly sensitive political issues, as they are related to the nature of a country’s domestic political system, regime security, and ideological security. On the other hand, the United Nations itself is a political body, and human rights constitute a core agenda item of this political institution. The Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council, as UN human rights bodies, are intergovernmental political institutions. The operation of the UN human rights mechanisms cannot avoid the influence of political logic. A consequent problem is that the UN human rights mechanisms have repeatedly encountered politicized manipulation when addressing human rights issues, making it difficult to avoid political confrontation and antagonism.

### **C. The problem of mechanism expansion and functional overlap in the UN human rights mechanisms is becoming increasingly severe**

The UN human rights mechanisms based on international human rights conventions are highly homogenized, characterized by a “nine-convention, nine-system” model. This reflects the trend of self-sustaining development and expansion of the UN human rights mechanisms, which has led to a high degree of functional overlap between various mechanisms. Both the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR), the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR), and the UN’s specialized human rights conventions have established their own comprehensive oversight and individual case remedy mechanisms. However, the areas of supervision among them cannot be completely separated. In terms of supervision over implementation, there is also a problem of duplicate supervision between the *UN Charter*-based human rights mechanisms and the convention-based ones. For example, although the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the State Party reporting mechanism are based on different legal foundations, their functions overlap for most states, resulting in a heavy burden on states to fulfill their reporting obligations. Problems such as the growing backlog of state reports, individual communications, and urgent actions; insufficient fulfillment of reporting obligations by States Parties; differences in the working methods of various treaty bodies; and the lack of digital tools to carry out the work of treaty bodies more efficiently continue to plague the UN human rights mechanisms.

### **D. The intractable predicament of global governance**

Human rights are not castles in the air or a Utopian vision; they are an ideal value based on politics, economy, society, and culture, and the realization of human rights comes at a cost. Holmes and Sunstein long ago asserted that all legally enforced rights are inevitably positive rights, and that a poverty-stricken

government is incapable of protecting rights.<sup>7</sup> Human rights are dependent on governments: without public funding and public support, human rights cannot be protected or enforced. The realization of human rights hinges on how governments allocate resources to protect and enforce rights, and more importantly, on how they achieve sustainable development to provide sustainable resources. “Currently, unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise, international cooperation on development is under serious strain, drivers for global economic growth become weaker, and the contest for available resources is heating up.”<sup>8</sup> Governance and development challenges, such as wars and poverty, constitute the gravest violations of human rights. Many human rights abuses are often caused by unbalanced development and poor governance. Therefore, the protection of human rights is not only a matter of distributive justice, but more importantly, an issue of universal security, sustainable development, and sound governance.

### **III. Prospects for the Future UN Human Rights Mechanisms**

#### **A. Guiding global human rights governance through the four major global initiatives**

In recent years, the four major global initiatives successively proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping — the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), and the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) — all carry profound human rights significance. The Global Development Initiative emphasizes that prosperous development is the foundation for realizing human rights, adheres to promoting human rights through development, and focuses on advancing international development cooperation. The Global Security Initiative highlights that peace and security are the prerequisites for enjoying human rights, insists on protecting human rights through security, and aims to resolve international disputes through dialogue and consultation. The Global Civilization Initiative stresses that respecting cultural diversity is the essence of human rights, upholds nurturing human rights through diversity of civilizations, and is committed to promoting exchanges and mutual learning among them. The Global Governance Initiative emphasizes building a fairer, just, reasonable, and inclusive global human rights governance system, adheres to advancing human rights through cooperation, and defines the direction, principles, and pathways for the reform of global governance systems and mechanisms. The four global initiatives provide principled frameworks and practical guidance on the basic prerequisites, cultural foundations, realization pathways, and reform directions of global human rights governance, pointing out the development direction and

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen Holmes and Cass R. Sunstein, *The Cost of Rights: Why Liberty Depends on Taxes* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004), 35-38.

<sup>8</sup> Li Qiang, “Address at the High-Level Meeting on the Global Development Initiative,” *Guangming Daily*, September 25, 2025.

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prospects for global human rights governance.

### **B. Upholding genuine multilateralism**

At present, forces and ideologies of populism, protectionism, and unilateralism are on the rise, and multilateralism stands at a historic crossroads. Political cooperation underpinned by multilateralism enables the sound operation of human rights mechanisms, whereas political manipulation driven by unilateralism undermines the foundation of global human rights governance.<sup>9</sup> “History tells us that multilateralism is the shared aspiration of the people and the overarching trend of our time. It provides an important underpinning for world peace and development.”<sup>10</sup> In the international human rights field, the core of upholding genuine multilateralism is to adhere to the international system with the UN at its core and the international order based on international law. Genuine multilateralism must always be a rule-based doctrine grounded in international law. To uphold genuine multilateralism, it is also imperative to enhance the representativeness and voice of Global South countries in the international human rights system. This encompasses their representativeness and voice in the formulation, interpretation, and implementation of international human rights rules, as well as in the internal governance and operation of the UN human rights mechanisms. Upholding genuine multilateralism also requires elevating the authority of the UN human rights mechanisms. All countries need to strengthen their commitment to multilateralism, refrain from following the realist logic of putting their own country first, and faithfully honor their commitments to the UN human rights mechanisms and international human rights rules.

### **C. Enhancing the effectiveness of UN human rights mechanisms**

The challenge of enhancing the effectiveness of UN human rights mechanisms has long been a focus of scholarly attention. Within the UN system, proposals for reforms targeting human rights treaty bodies have successively emerged, including Philip Alston’s “comprehensive report,” Kofi Annan’s “single report,” Louise Arbour’s “unified standing treaty body,” and Navanethem Pillay’s “consultative procedure.”<sup>11</sup> However, to date, the chronic problems of inefficiency in treaty bodies and severe backlogs of reports have not been fundamentally addressed. Moving forward, the UN human rights mechanisms should enhance their authority by improving effectiveness. First, reforms of the UN human rights mechanisms should adhere to the principles

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<sup>9</sup> China Society for Human Rights Studies, “America’s Politicization of Human Rights Undermines the Foundation of Sound Human Rights Governance,” *People’s Daily*, December 28, 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Xi Jinping, “Forging Ahead in Solidarity and Cooperation: Statement by Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China, at the Virtual BRICS Summit,” *People’s Daily*, September 8, 2025.

<sup>11</sup> Suzanne Egan and Shi Hui, “Transforming the UN Human Rights Treaty System: A Realistic Appraisal,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 1 (2023); “History of treaty body strengthening,” accessed on October 26, 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/history-treaty-body-strengthening#proposals>.

and direction of fairness, justice, reasonableness, and inclusiveness, and promote the democratization of the operation of UN human rights mechanisms. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen coordination between the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism of the Human Rights Council and the State Parties' reporting mechanism under human rights conventions. Consideration may be given to merging the State Parties' reports under the ICCPR and the ICESCR with the UPR mechanism. This will reduce the burden on States Parties and the review pressure on treaty bodies, and provide pilot experience for the future reform of the State Parties' reporting mechanism under human rights conventions. Thirdly, efforts can be made to explore the establishment of cross-human rights convention treaty bodies, unify the working methods of treaty bodies, carry out the compilation and collation of general comments of human rights treaty bodies, and promote the establishment of international human rights jurisprudence based on general comments. Finally, within the framework of the Human Rights Council, the threshold for initiating country-specific human rights reviews should be raised, and the tendency to politicize human rights issues through manipulation should be reduced.

( Translated by *LI Donglin* )