



General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 March 2024

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Advisory Committee

Thirty-first session

19–23 February 2024

Agenda item 5

Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session

Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session*

Rapporteur: Nadia Amal Bernoussi

* Annexes I and II to the present report are circulated in the language of submission only.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Action taken by the Advisory Committee at its thirty-first session.....	3
II. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	4
A. Opening and duration of the session	4
B. Composition of the Advisory Committee	4
C. Attendance	4
D. Meetings	5
E. Election of officers	5
F. Adoption of the agenda.....	5
G. Organization of work	5
III. Requests addressed to the Advisory Committee stemming from Human Rights Council resolutions and currently under consideration by the Committee	5
A. Neurotechnology and human rights	5
B. Human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain	6
IV. Implementation of sections III and IV of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and of section III of the annex to Council resolution 16/21	6
A. Review of methods of work.....	6
B. Agenda and annual programme of work, including new priorities	6
C. Appointment of members of the Working Group on Communications	6
V. Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session.....	7
Annexes	
I. Documents issued for the thirty-first session of the Advisory Committee	8
II. List of speakers	9

I. Action taken by the Advisory Committee at its thirty-first session

31/1. Neurotechnology and human rights

The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution 51/3 of 6 October 2022, in which the Council requested the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare a study in an accessible format, including an easy-to-read version, on the impact, opportunities and challenges of neurotechnology with regard to the promotion and protection of all human rights, including recommendations on how human rights opportunities, challenges and gaps arising from neurotechnology could be addressed by the Human Rights Council and its special procedures and subsidiary bodies in a coherent, holistic, inclusive and action-oriented manner, and to present the study to the Council at its fifty-seventh session,

Recalling also that, at its twenty-ninth session, the Advisory Committee established a drafting group, currently composed of Nurah Alamro, Noor Al-Jehani, Joseph Gérard Angoh, Buhm-Suk Baek, Milena Costas Trascasas (Rapporteur), Riva Ganguly Das, Jewel Major, Javier Palummo, Vasilka Sancin, Patrycja Sasnal, Vassilis Tzevelekos (Chair), Catherine Van de Heyning, Frans Viljoen and Yue Zhang,

1. *Takes note* of the preliminary draft report on the impact, opportunities and challenges of neurotechnology with regard to the promotion and protection of all human rights, submitted by the drafting group to the Advisory Committee at its present session;¹

2. *Notes that* the drafting group and the full Advisory Committee held meetings to discuss the topic at the present session, and takes note of the views expressed thereon by States;

3. *Requests* the drafting group to finalize the report in the light of the discussion held by the Advisory Committee at its present session;

4. *Decides* to submit the report to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-seventh session after having circulated it electronically to all members of the Advisory Committee for approval.

*3rd meeting
23 February 2024*

[Adopted without a vote.]

31/2. Human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain

The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution 51/22 of 7 October 2022, in which the Council requested the Advisory Committee to prepare a study examining the human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain, while taking into account ongoing discussions within the United Nations system, and to present the study to the Council at its sixtieth session,

Recalling also that, at its twenty-ninth session, the Advisory Committee established a drafting group, currently composed of Buhm-Suk Baek (Chair), Nadia Amal Bernoussi, Rabah Boudache, Milena Costas Trascasas, Aldo de Campos Costa, Riva Ganguly Das, Jewel Major, Javier Palummo (Rapporteur), Vasilka Sancin, Patrycja Sasnal, Vassilis Tzevelekos, Catherine Van de Heyning, Frans Viljoen and Yue Zhang,

¹ See the draft report on impact, opportunities and challenges of neurotechnology with regard to the promotion and protection of all human rights, prepared by Milena Costas Trascasas, Rapporteur of the drafting group, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/advisory-committee/session31/index>.

1. *Welcomes* the inputs received from States and other stakeholders in response to the note verbale and questionnaire circulated after the thirtieth session of the Advisory Committee;
2. *Notes* that the drafting group and the full Advisory Committee held meetings to discuss the topic and the inputs received pursuant to the above-mentioned note verbale;
3. *Takes note* of the views expressed thereon by one State;
4. *Requests* the drafting group to submit a preliminary draft of the report to the Advisory Committee at its thirty-second session, taking into account the above-mentioned input from stakeholders and the discussions held at the current session;
5. *Encourages* stakeholders to continue to contribute to the work already under way.

*3rd meeting
23 February 2024*

[Adopted without a vote.]

II. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, held its thirty-first session from 19 to 23 February 2024 at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Chair of the thirtieth session, Milena Costas Trascasas, opened the session.
2. At the 1st meeting, on 19 February 2024, the President of the Human Rights Council, Omar Zniber, made an opening statement.
3. At the same meeting, the Director of the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) made a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.
4. Also at the same meeting, participants observed a minute of silence in memory of victims of human rights violations around the world.
5. At the same meeting, statements were made by representatives of States Members and observer States of the United Nations (see annex II).

B. Composition of the Advisory Committee

6. The current composition of the Advisory Committee and the term of membership of each expert are as follows:² Nurah Alamro (Saudi Arabia, 2024); Noor Al Malki Al-Jehani (Qatar, 2025); Joseph Gérard Angoh (Mauritius, 2026); Buhm-Suk Baek (Republic of Korea, 2026); Nadia Amal Bernoussi (Morocco, 2026); Rabah Boudache (Algeria, 2025); Aldo de Campos Costa (Brazil, 2024); Milena Costas Trascasas (Spain, 2025); Riva Ganguly Das (India, 2026); Sebastião Da Silva Isata (Angola, 2025); Jewel Major (Bahamas, 2026); Javier Palummo (Uruguay, 2025); Vasilka Sancin (Slovenia, 2025); Patrycja Sasnal (Poland, 2026); Vassilis Tzevelekos (Greece, 2024); Catherine Van de Heyning (Belgium, 2026); Frans Viljoen (South Africa, 2024); and Yue Zhang (China, 2025).

C. Attendance

7. The session was attended by all members of the Advisory Committee, with the exception of Sebastião Da Silva Isata, who was excused. States Members and observer States

² The year in which the term of membership expires is shown in parentheses.

of the United Nations and an observer for an intergovernmental organization were also in attendance.

D. Meetings

8. At its thirty-first session, the Advisory Committee held three plenary meetings and 17 closed meetings. The Committee exchanged views with members of the Human Rights Council Bureau, regional coordinators and non-governmental organizations.

E. Election of officers

9. In accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and rule 5 of the rules of procedure of the Advisory Committee, the following officers were elected by acclamation at the 1st meeting of the thirty-first session, held on 19 February 2024:

Chair:	Javier Palummo
Vice-Chairs:	Vasilka Sancin
	Vassilis Tzevelekos
	Nurah Alamro
Rapporteur:	Nadia Amal Bernoussi

F. Adoption of the agenda

10. At its 1st meeting, on 19 February 2024, the Advisory Committee adopted its agenda (A/HRC/AC/31/1).³

G. Organization of work

11. At its 1st meeting, the Advisory Committee adopted the draft programme of work prepared by the secretariat.

III. Requests addressed to the Advisory Committee stemming from Human Rights Council resolutions and currently under consideration by the Committee

A. Neurotechnology and human rights

12. At its 2nd meeting, on 20 February 2024, the Advisory Committee held, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 51/3, a discussion on the impact, opportunities and challenges of neurotechnology with regard to the promotion and protection of all human rights, including recommendations on how human rights opportunities, challenges and gaps arising from neurotechnology could be addressed by the Human Rights Council and its special procedures and subsidiary bodies in a coherent, holistic, inclusive and action-oriented manner. At the same meeting, the Advisory Committee had before it the draft report submitted by the drafting group.⁴ During the ensuing discussion, statements were made by members of the Committee, representatives of States Members of the United Nations, and an observer for an intergovernmental organization (see annex II).

13. At its 3rd meeting, on 23 February 2024, the Chair of the drafting group, Vassilis Tzevelekos, introduced a draft text (A/HRC/AC/31/L.1). The draft text was adopted without a vote (for the text as adopted, see sect. I, action 31/1, above).

³ For the list of documents issued for the thirty-first session, see annex I.

⁴ Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/advisory-committee/session31/index>.

B. Human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain

14. At its 2nd meeting, on 20 February 2024, the Advisory Committee held, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 51/22, a discussion on the human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain, while taking into account ongoing discussions within the United Nations system. During the discussion, statements were made by members of the Committee and a representative of States Members of the United Nations (see annex II). At the same meeting, the Advisory Committee considered the inputs received from stakeholders in response to the note verbale and the questionnaire circulated by the Committee after its thirtieth session.

15. At its 3rd meeting, on 23 February 2024, the Chair of the drafting group, Buhm-Suk Baek, introduced a draft text (A/HRC/AC/31/L.2). The draft text was adopted without a vote (for the text as adopted, see sect. I, action 31/2, above).

IV. Implementation of sections III and IV of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and of section III of the annex to Council resolution 16/21**A. Review of methods of work**

16. On 20 February 2024, the Advisory Committee, in a closed meeting, held discussions on its methods of work to examine its rules of procedures with a view to assessing whether any of the rules may need to be updated or reviewed. Lastly, the Committee agreed to continue discussions on its methods of work at its thirty-second session.

B. Agenda and annual programme of work, including new priorities

17. On 21, 22 and 23 February 2024, the Advisory Committee, in closed meetings, held a discussion on the following research proposals:

- The implications of the life cycle of plastics for the realization of human rights, presented by Vasilka Sancin
- Promoting and protecting the human rights of intersex persons, presented by Frans Viljoen.

18. At the same meetings, the Advisory Committee held a discussion on the following reflection papers:

- Human rights education, presented by Nadia Amal Bernoussi
- The rights of older persons, presented by Joseph Angoh
- The rights of prisoners on remand awaiting trial, presented by Joseph Angoh.

C. Appointment of members of the Working Group on Communications

19. In accordance with paragraphs 91 to 93 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, the Advisory Committee appoints five of its members, one from each regional group, with due consideration to gender balance, to constitute the Working Group on Communications. In the event of a vacancy, the Advisory Committee is to appoint an independent and highly qualified expert from the same regional group. Since there is a need for independent expertise and continuity with regard to the examination and assessment of communications received, the independent and highly qualified experts of the Working Group are appointed for three years. Their mandate is renewable only once.

20. The current members of the Working Group on Communications were last appointed by the Advisory Committee at its twenty-sixth,⁵ twenty-eighth⁶ and thirtieth⁷ sessions and during the intersessional period of 2023.

21. In view of the fact that the Working Group had one vacancy in the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean owing to the resignation of Javier Palummo in November 2023, the Advisory Committee took note, at its 3rd meeting, on 23 February 2024, of the appointment, made in the intersessional period through the silence procedure, of Aldo de Campos Costa as a new member of the Working Group to replace the outgoing member.

V. Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session

22. At its 3rd meeting, on 23 February 2024, the Rapporteur of the Advisory Committee presented the draft report on the thirty-first session. The Committee adopted the draft report ad referendum and entrusted the Rapporteur with its finalization.

23. At the same meeting, the Rapporteur made closing remarks. Statements were also made by members of the Advisory Committee (see annex II).

24. Also at the same meeting, the Chair made final remarks and declared the thirty-first session of the Advisory Committee closed.

⁵ A/HRC/AC/26/2, paras. 23–25.

⁶ A/HRC/AC/28/2, paras. 23–26.

⁷ A/HRC/AC/30/2, paras. 21–24.

Annex I**Documents issued for the thirty-first session of the Advisory Committee****Documents issued in the general series**

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	
A/HRC/AC/31/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
A/HRC/AC/31/2	5	Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session

Documents issued in the limited series (actions)

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	
A/HRC/AC/31/L.1	3 (d)	Neurotechnology and human rights
A/HRC/AC/31/L.2	3 (e)	Human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain

Annex II

List of speakers

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Speakers</i>
1. Election of officers	1st meeting 19 February 2024	Members: Buhm-Suk Baek, Nadia Amal Bernoussi, Rabah Boudache, Aldo de Campos Costa, Javier Palummo, Patrycja Sasnal, Catherine Van de Heyning
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	1st meeting 19 February 2024	States Members and observer States of the United Nations: Luxembourg, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
3. Requests addressed to the Advisory Committee stemming from Human Rights Council resolutions and currently under consideration by the Committee		
(d) Neurotechnology and human rights	2nd meeting 20 February 2024	Members: Buhm-Suk Baek, Nadia Amal Bernoussi, Aldo de Campos Costa, Milena Costas Trascasas (Rapporteur), Vasilka Sancin, Patrycja Sasnal, Vassilis Tzevelekos, Yue Zhang States Members and Observer States of the United Nations: India Observer for an intergovernmental organization: European Union
(e) Human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain	2nd meeting 20 February 2024	Members: Buhm-Suk Baek, Javier Palummo (Rapporteur), Vasilka Sancin, Catherine Van de Heyning, Frans Viljoen States Members and observer States of the United Nations: India
4. Report of the Advisory Committee on its thirty-first session	3rd meeting 23 February 2024	Members: Nadia Amal Bernoussi