

RCIL

# International Law News Coverage



December 1st - 15th, 2024



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## Theme in Focus

*Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now*

**Human Rights Day  
2024**

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# The International Court of Justice

The public hearings on the **request for an advisory opinion** on the *Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change* concluded on **13 December 2024**. During the hearings, 96 States and 11 international organizations presented oral statements. The Court will now begin its deliberation and the advisory opinion will be delivered in a public sitting (date to be announced).

On 10 December 2024, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and on 4 December 2024, **Slovenia**, filed a **declaration of intervention** in the case concerning *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia v. Myanmar: 7 States intervening)* under **Article 63** of the Statute of the Court. Pursuant to Article 63, whenever the construction of a convention to which States other than those concerned in the case are parties is in question, each of these States has the right to intervene in the proceedings.

## The United Nations Treaty Collection - Depositary Notifications

**Seychelles** ratifies the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism on 3 December 2024.

**Dominica** accedes to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on 5 December 2024.

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## **The United Nations and International Law**

### **Secretary-General Urges Countries to ‘Deliver on Historic Pandemic Agreement to Ensure World Works Better, Together’**

Noting that COVID-19 was a wake-up call to the world, the Secretary-General in his message on the International Day on Epidemic Preparedness (observed on 27 December), expressed that the crisis may have passed, but a harsh lesson remains: the world is woefully unprepared for the next pandemic. He called on countries to heed the lessons of past health emergencies to help prepare for the next. The Secretary-General added that this means building resilient public and primary healthcare systems, making good on the promise of universal health coverage, making investments in pandemic monitoring, detection and response, among others.

### **Security Council Committee Receives Briefing on Behalf of Emergency Relief Coordinator**

The Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 2745 (2024) received a briefing on behalf of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, in pursuance of paragraph 5 of resolution 2664 (2022), on the delivery of life-saving assistance and other activities that support essential human needs in the Central African Republic.

### **Secretary-General Appoints Major General Anita Asmah of Ghana to Head United Nations Disengagement Observer Force**

The Secretary-General has announced the appointment of Major General Anita Asmah of Ghana as Head of Mission and Force Commander of the UNDOF. Major General Asmah succeeds Lieutenant General Nirmal Kumar Thapa of Nepal, and brings to the position more than thirty years of leadership and command experience in the Ghana Armed Forces and United Nations peacekeeping.

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## The United Nations and International Law

### **Secretary General Says Central Emergency Response Fund Must be Funded at \$1 Billion**

At the high-level pledging event for the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, the Secretary-General noted that the CERF is a United Nations success story and a first responder in crisis. He added that year after year, the CERF has proven its unique, effective and vital role, supporting millions of people and communities across the world and deploying over \$9 billion for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General further emphasized how the CERF is helping countries confront climate disasters through its new Climate Action Account and investing in anticipatory action in Bangladesh, Nepal and Chad before disaster strikes. He noted that the need for a fully funded CERF, at \$1 billion, has never been greater.

### **Statement by Chair of Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict**

After the examination of the eighth report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan and the adoption of conclusions on the report, the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict through a public statement by the Chair, addressed the following messages.

The statement condemns all violations and abuses that continue to be committed against children by all parties to the conflict in the Sudan, calls upon all parties to further implement the previous conclusions of the Working Group, stresses that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration, strongly condemns the increase and continued recruitment and use of children to fulfil various roles, including in combat, expresses deep concern at the high number of children killed or maimed and at the high number of cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated against children, among others.

Further, it calls upon all parties to the conflict to swiftly enter into a dialogue with the United Nations for the purpose of developing and implementing an action plan to end and prevent violations and abuses against children.

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## **The United Nations and International Law**

### **Secretary-General Strongly Condemns Continued Violence, Loss of Life in Haiti**

The Secretary-General has strongly condemned the continued gang violence and loss of life in Haiti, where an armed gang is reported to have killed at least 184 people.

### **Secretary-General Says People of Syria Can Seize an Historic Opportunity to Build a Stable, Peaceful Future**

In his statement, the Secretary-General has said that after 14 years of brutal war and the fall of the dictatorial regime, the people of Syria can seize an historic opportunity to build a stable and peaceful future. He added that the future of Syria is a matter for the Syrians to determine and his Special Envoy will be working with them towards that end. He also stressed the need for support from the international community to ensure that any political transition is inclusive and comprehensive and meets the legitimate aspirations of the people of Syria.

### **Secretary-General Appoints Group of Experts to Promote Policy Solutions to Resolve Debt Crisis**

The Secretary-General is appointing a group of prominent experts to promote actionable policy solutions and galvanize political and public support required to resolve the unprecedented debt crisis that the developing world is currently facing. This work will inform the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development which is an intergovernmental process facilitated by the UN. The group will be led by Mahmoud Mohieldin, the UN Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

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# The United Nations and International Law

## **Secretary-General Renews Call for Immediate Release of Humanitarian Personnel Arbitrarily Detained by Houthis in Yemen**

The Secretary-General has renewed his call for the immediate and unconditional release of the humanitarian personnel arbitrarily detained by the Houthis, since six months. He further recalled that the continued arbitrary detention is unacceptable and constitutes a violation of international law.

## **Secretary-General Says Human Rights Are about Building the Future - Right Now**

In his message for Human Rights Day, observed on 10 December, the Secretary General observed that this year's theme (Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now) reminds us that human rights are about building the future - right now. He added that all human rights are indivisible and whether economic, social, civic, cultural or political, when one right is undermined, all rights are undermined.

## **Don't Leave Migrants Behind, Says Deputy Secretary-General in Introducing United Nations Report on Global Compact**

The Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed remarked that migration is a defining issue of our time and how we approach migration weighs on our ability to reach the SDGs. She added that the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was adopted to address many of the challenges persisting in the context of migration and that the next review of the Global Compact in 2026 will be a critical test of our commitment to collective action.

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## **The United Nations and International Law**

### **In his Message to Launch of 2025 Humanitarian Overview, Secretary-General Says \$47 Billion Needed to Assist 190 Million People Across 72 Countries**

The Secretary-General in his message stated that the 2025 Humanitarian Overview is an indictment of our failings as an international community. He noted that a record number of armed conflicts are inflicting enormous pain and suffering, nearly 123 million people have been forcibly displaced and the climate crisis is sending temperatures to deadly new records every year. He expressed that in 2025, the United Nations is appealing to donors for \$47 billion to assist 190 million people across 72 countries.

### **Security Council Sanctions Committee concerning South Sudan Discusses Interim Report of Panel of Experts**

The Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan briefed the members of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) in connection with the panel's interim report. The coordinator provided an overview of the findings and recommendations contained in the Panel's report, noting the current challenges with respect to humanitarian situation and food security in South Sudan and also reporting that the Kenya-led Tumaini Initiative has made some important steps towards brokering a peace with several opposition groups.

### **Security Council ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Amends Three Entries on Its Sanctions List**

The Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities enacted the amendments in its entries on its ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List of individuals and entities subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2610 (2021), and adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

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# The International Criminal Court

## The ICC Office of the Prosecutor Publishes New Policy on Slavery Crimes

The ICC Office of the Prosecutor launched its policy on Slavery Crimes on 2 December 2024, on the sidelines of the Assembly of States Parties. The Prosecutor Karim A.A. Khan KC stated that this represents the first policy of its kind issued by an international court or tribunal, seeking to enhance the understanding, investigation and prosecution of slavery crimes under the Rome Statute.

He added that landmark historical legal decisions, including the Nuremberg and the Tokyo judgments as well as more recent cases of the ICC such as *Ntaganda* (situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and *Ongwen* (Situation in Uganda) have recognised slavery crimes as war crimes and as crimes against humanity. However, he noted, unfortunately slavery crimes are not a thing of the past. The new Policy sets out the scope of slavery crimes under the Rome Statute and will guide the Office to properly investigate and prosecute the full character of enslavement and sexual slavery as crimes against humanity, and sexual slavery as war crimes.



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# The International Criminal Court

## ICC OTP Launches Annual Report 2024: “The Law in Action for All”

The 2024 edition of the OTP’s Annual Report provides an in-depth overview of its activities in the last year, and steps taken towards implementing the Office’s Strategic Plan for 2023-2025.

The report highlights the increased impact in investigations and prosecutions (including key figures about the 12 ongoing investigations and the 3 ongoing preliminary examinations, significant developments in various situations, record number of applications for arrest warrants), the strengthening of the the OTP’s operational efficiency (such as steps to enhance digital capabilities for investigations, a renewed internal Operations Manual), the advanced global policy expertise (through a renewed Policy on Gender-Based Crimes launched at the Assembly of States Parties, the launch of the renewed Policy on Children, a new Policy on Slavery Crimes), among others.

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## UN International Law Commission

**Forthcoming Deadline** for Comments  
from Governments and Relevant  
International Organizations on *Non-  
Legally Binding International  
Agreements* - 31 December 2024



**Next Issue:** 1 January 2025

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