

UNGA74 | Bachelet urges States to step up defence of human rights values and system

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Michelle Bachelet addressed the General Assembly for the second year in her capacity as High Commissioner for Human Rights on 15 October 2019. Following calls at last year's interactive dialogue for the reinstatement of the High Commissioner's yearly report for the General Assembly, this year Bachelet presented her latest report ([A/74/36](#)) before a packed Third Committee.



One year into her mandate, the High Commissioner was able to report both positive and negative developments.

On the one hand, she stressed that 'undeniably, we are facing rising challenges to multilateralism and to many international human rights treaties, laws, and values. We are witnessing an increase in xenophobia, hate speech, pushbacks on women's equality and the rights of minorities, as well as restrictions on the civic space.'

However, Bachelet also reported on the positive impact her office has had over the last year, citing their support of consultations for the implementation of a draft law on human rights defenders in Mongolia as one such example. In the interactive dialogue that followed, Peru also took the opportunity to speak on behalf of 11 other members of the Lima Group. They jointly commended the Human Rights Council for establishing an independent fact finding mission to investigate the situation in Venezuela.

Throughout her presentation, the High Commissioner highlighted the urgent threat that a lack of adequate funding poses to the entire United Nations human rights architecture. The United Kingdom urged others to follow their example in making great voluntary contributions to the OHCHR and several other States echoed the High Commissioner's concerns. However, she also urged States not to earmark their contributions, so that the OHCHR can freely and independently fulfill its mandate of protecting international human rights.

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