

May after months of ill health. In order to fulfil his mandate, which included an analysis of gaps and ambiguities in international laws, as well as the development of a best practices guide, the Rapporteur would hold consultations and undertake country missions.

Human Rights Council action. On 26 September [A/69/53/Add.1 (res. 27/23)], the Council extended the Special Rapporteur's mandate for three years, and requested that he report annually to the Council; develop a guide to good practices and submit it to the Council's thirty-sixth (2017) session; and hold two international meetings of experts to draw up the guide.

Slavery and related issues

Report of Special Rapporteur. As requested by the Human Rights Council [YUN 2013, p. 712], the new Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Urmila Bhoola (South Africa), who was appointed by the Council on 8 May, submitted her first annual report [A/HRC/27/53] to the Council in July. The report summarized the activities undertaken by the previous mandate holder since her 2013 report [YUN 2013, p. 712], including country visits to Mauritania and Kazakhstan (see below), and outlined the priorities on which the new Rapporteur intended to focus.

Mission reports. Following her visit to Mauritania (24–27 February) [A/HRC/27/53/Add.1] to assess developments since her 2009 mission [YUN 2009, p. 731], the former Special Rapporteur, Gulnara Shahinian (Armenia), found that the Government had made progress in taking legislative and institutional measures to fight forms of slavery. It had adopted the road map for implementing the Rapporteur's recommendations, marking a new stage in the fight against all forms of slavery and slavery-like practices. The Rapporteur stressed the need to implement laws and policies fully and expressed concern at the lack of reliable information, which was a prerequisite for the efficiency of Government programmes. She stressed the need for the Government to publish in the official gazette the anti-slavery conventions it had ratified in order to raise awareness that all work should be entered into freely and fundamental human rights should be respected.

Following her mission to Kazakhstan (25–27 March) [A/HRC/27/53/Add.2] to assess developments since her 2012 visit [YUN 2012, p. 716], the Special Rapporteur, while welcoming the action taken in response to her recommendations, found that some challenges remained. The country was experiencing a growing demand for workers in a variety of sectors in which contemporary forms of slavery and forced and bonded labour persisted, in particular in the tobacco, cotton and construction industries. She recommended that the Government adopt a comprehensive legal and policy approach to the eradication of slavery, which involved a review of laws, policies, programmes and practices to

ensure subsequent streamlining. She stressed the need for a substantive survey and for the collection of disaggregated data and statistics. The Rapporteur made recommendations to the Government, the business community and the international community.

Following her mission to the Niger (11–21 November) [A/HRC/30/35/Add.1], the new Special Rapporteur highlighted issues of concern, including descent-based slavery, the practice known as *wahaya* (the purchase of one or more girls, usually of slave descent, under the guise of a fifth wife), child marriage, domestic servitude and child labour. While commending the criminalization of slavery in 2003 and acknowledging the Government's commitment to eradicating slavery, she noted challenges the Government faced to address the root causes of slavery, including poverty, inequality and customary norms that caused widespread discrimination against former slaves and their descendants. She made recommendations to assist the Government in improving the coordination and streamlining of anti-slavery efforts, ensure effective law enforcement, increase access to justice and enhance victim protection.

Trust fund on slavery

Report of Secretary-General. The Secretary-General reported [A/70/299] on the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. The Fund's Board of Trustees, at its nineteenth session (Geneva, 24–28 November), recommended 44 project grants amounting to \$588,900 to assist NGO projects in 35 countries in 2015. The High Commissioner approved those recommendations on behalf of the Secretary-General on 10 December. During 2014, the Fund received contributions and pledges amounting to \$683,005 from 11 States. The Board reiterated that the Fund would need a minimum of \$2 million in annual contributions to fulfil its mandate.

Slavery and transatlantic slave trade

Commemorative meeting. On 25 March (decision 68/553), the General Assembly decided that its commemorative meeting on the occasion of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, held on that day, would include a statement by Michaëlle Jean, Special Envoy for Haiti of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and member of the International Scientific Committee of the UNESCO Slave Route Project. The meeting was also addressed by the General Assembly President, the Chef de Cabinet on behalf of the Secretary-General, Member States on behalf of the regional groups and the representative of the host country [A/68/PV.77].