Human Rights Commission: Topic briefs.

Topic 1:

Question of: addressing the ongoing humanitarian crisis and civilian protection in the Civil War in Sudan:

The civil war in Sudan has triggered a severe humanitarian crisis, characterised by widespread violence, displacement, and the collapse of essential services. The conflict escalated in April 2923 due to tensions between the Sudanese armed forces and the rapid support forces, following a fragile political transition after the removal of Omar al-Bashir in 2019. Disagreements over power-sharing and the integration of armed groups led to open conflict, particularly in Khartoum, where infrastructure and governance rapidly deteriorated and state authority weakened significantly.

As the conflict intensified, millions of civilians were displaced internally or forced to flee neighbouring countries, placing additional strain on regional stability. Over 8-10 million people have been displaced, making it one of the largest displacement crises globally. Refugees have fled to neighbouring countries including Chad, South Sudan, and Egypt, increasing regional humanitarian pressures. The humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by acute food insecurity, limited access to healthcare, and the destruction of water and electricity systems. Sudan is also facing a severe risk of famine, particularly in regions such as Darfur, where access to food and aid remains critically limited. Reports indicate repeated violations of international humanitarian law, including attacks on civilians, hospitals, and aid workers, as well as obstruction of humanitarian relief efforts. In addition, there are alarming reports of ethnic violence, particularly in Darfur, where Masalit communities have been targeted in what has been described as ethnic cleansing. Essential supply chains have been disrupted, contributing to rising prices and worsening living conditions for vulnerable populations. Humanitarian organisations have struggled to deliver assistance due to insecurity, bureaucratic restrictions, and lack of access, further worsening conditions on the ground. Efforts to negotiate ceasefires have largely failed, with both sides continuing military operations despite international pressure, prolonging instability and civilian suffering.

Despite ongoing diplomatic initiatives, the crisis remains unresolved, and civilian protection continues to be a major challenge. Addressing the situation requires urgent and coordinated international action, including strengthened humanitarian access, enforcement of ceasefire agreements, and accountability for violations of international law. In the long term, sustainable peace will depend on rebuilding governance structures, promoting inclusive political dialogue, and addressing the underlying causes of conflict, including political fragmentation and military rivalry. Without sustained international engagement and effective mediation, the humanitarian situation in Sudan is likely to deteriorate further.

Topic 2:

Question of: Promoting and protecting women's rights and addressing gender-based legal and social restrictions in the Islamic Republic of Iran:

Women's rights in Iran remain a significant human rights concern, shaped by legal and social restrictions embedded within the country's political and religious system. Iran is governed under a system influenced by Sharia-based law, which plays a central role in shaping legislation and social norms. Following the 1979 revolution, laws based on conservative interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence limited women's freedoms in areas such as dress, marriage, employment, and political participation. Policies such as compulsory hijab laws, unequal divorce and inheritance rights, and restrictions on public conduct have contributed to systemic gender inequality. In some cases, woman are also required to obtain approval from a male guardian, particularly in matters such as marriage, reinforcing legal dependency and limiting personal autonomy. Over time, enforcement mechanisms, including morality policing and state surveillance, have reinforced these limitations and expanded state control over personal freedoms, further restricting women's autonomy in both public and private life.

Public resistance has increased in recent years, particularly following the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022, which has sparked widespread protests across the country. These demonstrations highlighted broader dissatisfaction with gender discrimination and governance, drawing significant international attention. Authorities have also employed digital repression tactics, including internet shutdowns and restrictions on online communication during protests, to limit coordination and the spread of information. As of 2026, reports indicate continued crackdowns on activists, restrictions on freedom of expression, and the use of force against protesters. Women's rights defenders, journalists, and civil society actors have faced arrests and legal consequences, limited organized advocacy efforts.

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive legal reform, stronger protections for civil liberties, and greater accountability for human rights violations. Efforts to improve women's rights must also include expanding access to education, employment opportunities, and legal representation. International cooperation and advocacy remain essential in supporting women's rights movements within Iran. Balancing respect for national sovereignty with the promotion of fundamental freedoms will be key to achieving long-term progress, strengthening civil society, and ensuring gender equality across the country.

Topic 3:

Question of: responding to the severe humanitarian crisis and governance collapse in Haiti amid rising gang control

The crisis in Haiti has escalated into a severe humanitarian emergency, driven by political instability, economic decline, and the collapse of state authority. The situation worsened significantly following the assassination of Jovenel Moïse in 2021, which created a prolonged power vacuum and further weakened already fragile institutions. In the absence of effective

governance and functioning state security forces, armed gangs rapidly expanded their influence, particularly in Port-au-Prince, where they now control key infrastructure, transport routes, and access to essential supplies such as fuel, effectively paralysing parts of the country. Gangs control roughly 90% of Port-au-Prince, and Haiti currently lacks fully functioning democratic leadership.

As gang control has increased, civilians have faced widespread violence, insecurity, and forced displacement. Many communities are cut off from essential services and lack access to necessities, including food, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare, while humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate. Reports indicate rising cases of kidnappings, sexual violence, and the recruitment of children by armed groups, further deepening the protection crisis. Humanitarian organizations have struggled to operate due to insecurity, restricted access, and logistical challenges, limiting the delivery of life-saving assistance. Efforts by the international community to stabilize the country, including support for security operations and humanitarian aid delivery, have faced significant obstacles, with limited success in restoring order or reducing gang influence in urban centres.

Despite ongoing international involvement, Haiti’s governance vacuum persists, and progress towards political stability remains limited. Addressing the crisis requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that combines immediate humanitarian assistance with long-term institution, and rebuilding public institutions will be essential to restoring state authority. In parallel, addressing underlying economic fragility and inequality is crucial to reducing long-term instability. Sustained international cooperation and commitment will be necessary to protect civilians, restore governance, and ensure lasting peace and development in Haiti.