

# Support civil society's international solidarity efforts for peace: UN experts

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**Online Desk:** UN experts have made a resounding call for robust backing from the international community toward civil society groups actively expressing international solidarity in the pursuit of peace and social justice.

Stressing the imperative need to dissociate international solidarity from antisemitism or islamophobia, they issued a statement in anticipation of International Human Solidarity Day.

“In the face of numerous global humanitarian crises, it’s paramount to recognize our shared humanity’s unity and our collective responsibility in addressing these challenges. International Solidarity Day serves as a poignant reminder to Governments, Non-State Actors, and businesses to honor their commitments to international agreements, particularly in upholding human rights,” emphasized the UN experts.

Drawing attention to the necessity of supporting tangible actions by civil society groups championing international solidarity, they underlined the Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ foundational principle: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood [and sisterhood].”

Across the globe, various civil society groups have showcased solidarity through marches and social media campaigns, advocating for peace, protecting civilians in conflict zones, and championing non-discrimination and equality. This includes advocating for justice, truth, protection, and humane treatment for marginalized groups subjected to violence, discrimination, and hate speech.

“The recent extensive engagement in international solidarity from diverse demographics signifies a powerful affirmation of human rights as a counter to violence, oppression, and marginalization,” the experts highlighted.

Emphasizing the need to safeguard civil society actors expressing international solidarity, they urged against censorship or reprisals, which could include financial loss, employment repercussions, arrests, attacks, harassment, persecution, or criminalization.

“Actions fostering transnational unity, empathy, tolerance, and cooperation constitute the bedrock of a resilient culture of international solidarity, supporting peace and societal advancement,” stated the experts.

Highlighting the contemporary expressions of international solidarity’s significant impact, they stressed the alignment with the principle of humanity—prioritizing the protection of life and alleviation of human suffering. This underscores the necessity of exploring peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms before resorting to force.

The UN experts concluded by urging the international community to endorse and encourage civil society groups and human rights defenders expressing international solidarity, emphasizing that everyone should enjoy human rights without discrimination. They called upon states to uphold open civic spaces and refrain from criminalizing non-violent actions and expressions promoting international solidarity, emphasizing the need to avoid conflating International Solidarity with exclusionary movements that violate non-discrimination and equality principles.

“International Solidarity, as a beacon for inclusion through bridge-building, invites everyone to advocate for peace as a fundamental premise for the enjoyment of human rights,” the experts concluded.

The experts: Cecilia M. Bailliet, Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity; Aua Baldé (Chair-Rapporteur), Gabriella Citroni (Vice-Chair), Angkhana Neelapaijit, Grażyna Baranowska, Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez, Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances; Reem Alsalem, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences; Tomoya Obokata, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences; Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the protection and promotion of freedom of opinion and expression; Farida Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on the right to education; Livingstone Sewanyana, Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; Alice Jill Edwards, Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Paula Gaviria Betancur, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; Ben Saul, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; Graeme Reid, Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; Marcos Orellana, Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights; Alioune Tine, Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali; Mama Fatima Singhateh, The Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children; Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food; Beatriz Miranda Galarza, Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members; Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.; Dorothy Estrada Tanck (Chair), Claudia Flores, Ivana Krstić, Haina Lu, and Laura Nyirinkindi, Working Group on discrimination against women and girls; Damilola Olawuyi (Chairperson), Robert McCorquodale (Vice-Chairperson), Elżbieta Karska, Fernanda Hopenhaym, and Pichamon Yeophantong, Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; Carlos Salazar Couto (Chair-Rapporteur), SORCHA MacLeod, Jovana Jezdimirovic Ranito, Chris M. A. Kwaja, Ravindran Daniel, Working Group on the use of mercenaries; Javaid Rehman, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; Gehad Madi, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; Richard Bennett, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan; Tlaleng Mofokeng, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; David Boyd, Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; Alexandra Xanthaki, Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; Priya Gopalan (Chair-Rapporteur), Matthew Gillett (Vice-Chair on Communications), Ganna Yudkivska (Vice-Chair on Follow-Up), Miriam Estrada-Castillo, and Mumba Malila, Working Group on arbitrary detention; Ms Attiya Waris, Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations and human rights.