



HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN A WEEK

14 – 20 November, 2022



Human Rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of the nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language or any other status without discrimination. These rights are all universal, inalienable, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

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LOCAL

Tuesday
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Lebanon – [Lebanon Shura Council suspends minister's decision to ban LGBT+ gatherings](#)

Lebanon's highest administrative court, the State Shura Council, has suspended the implementation of a decision earlier this year to ban LGBT+ gatherings in the country. Interior Minister Bassam al-Mawlawi had instructed the Internal Security Forces to "immediately take necessary measures to prevent any type of celebration, meeting or gathering" by the LGBT+ community in June. The Shura Council's move to overturn the decision comes after appeals filed in August by non-profit groups Helem, which advocates for LGBT+ rights, and The Legal Agenda, a research and advocacy organization. According to the council's decision, security forces will have no legal or constitutional basis to ban or break up any such gatherings. Helem said that the suspension of the ban was "a positive step toward protecting marginalized communities in Lebanon," but added that it is a temporary suspension, valid only until the Council issues its final ruling.

Wednesday
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Lebanon – [Higher Education Experts in Lebanon Produce Emergency Plan to Ensure Continuity](#)

Lebanese education experts have produced an emergency plan for the country's higher-education system that calls for an immediate injection of funds to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning. The document, which follows a series of dialogues called "Higher Education in Times of Collapse", says immediate action is needed to offset the effects of Lebanon's dire economic crisis on higher-education institutions, especially the national Lebanese University. The plan was produced by the HOPES-LEB project and the National Erasmus+ Office in Lebanon, with support from the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut. Its recommendations are based on input from a series of stakeholder dialogues held over the past year that brought together academics, higher-education professionals, students and others. The emergency plan, which is mainly trying to prevent the Lebanese University's collapse, also made recommendations for other universities, the Lebanese state, and international donors. It called for immediate funding to support administrative and operational needs to ensure continuity of teaching and learning, including the purchase of power generators and material support for alternative energy sources.

Thursday
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Lebanon – [National Commission for Lebanese Women, UN-Habitat sign agreement of cooperation](#)

The National Commission for Lebanese Women signed a cooperation agreement with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme – UN-Habitat – at the premises of the National Commission, in the presence of representatives from both working teams. The agreement aims to raise awareness on women's housing, land, and property rights in Lebanon and the importance of enhancing and ensuring these rights for all women. The agreement will launch a campaign that will highlight the importance of women benefiting from these rights in securing their well-being and that of their families, in their economic empowerment, and in achieving equality between women and men. It will further raise awareness on how these rights can increase women's empowerment and participation in decision-making within the household and in the public life and can protect women from gender-based violence, health hazards, and forced evictions.

Friday
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Lebanon – Trucks carrying wheat grains are not being sterilized in Beirut Port

The trucks carrying wheat, barley, and corn grains that Lebanon imports and distributes to mills for consumption are not being properly sterilized, according to State Security agents who are permanently present at the Beirut Port. One agent reported that one of the trucks passed by the company responsible for sterilization and received a certificate of cleanliness without actually cleaning it. The source then described the presence of trash and soil remains inside the truck. The State Security Directorate then looked into the issue and monitored the trucks from their entrance to the port until their exit. It found out that there were 50 trucks that entered the port and left carrying wheat without being cleaned at any point, despite receiving a fake certificate of sterilization. Accordingly, the head of the sterilization company was arrested alongside one of the employees, and the company's work was stopped for a day. The port's management stated that it had nothing to do with the situation and that the company was a private one that was appointed in 2017.

Saturday and Sunday
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Lebanon – Lebanon's child welfare drive 'lacks laws, national strategy'

A recent courtroom drama in which a judge offered to pay the bail amounts for two destitute brothers, who had been arrested in a financial dispute, has served to highlight the impact of Lebanon's economic crisis on children. The arrested duo, who collect and sell tin cans and scrap from streets and landfill for a living, had been detained for a month following a row. Dany Zeeny, the investigating judge, helped the minors and ordered their release from an Akkar police station in the far north of Lebanon. Many poor people across Lebanon have recently started collecting scraps of metal, which they sell for small amounts to provide for their families. The boys' case shows how the protection of children is no longer on Lebanon's list of priorities, although the country signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child more than 30 years ago. The number of beggars, including children, has been significantly increasing. Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi said the government was addressing the issue and added that there are plans to set up a juvenile rehabilitation center.



Monday
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Qatar – Rights abuses stain FIFA world cup

The FIFA World Cup will be played following years of serious migrant labor and human rights abuses in Qatar, Human Rights Watch said, publishing a “Reporters’ Guide” to support journalists covering the Qatar World Cup. The guide summarizes Human Rights Watch’s concerns associated with Qatar’s preparations for and hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup and outlines broader problems with protecting human rights in the country. The guide also describes FIFA’s human rights policies and how the global football governing body can more effectively address serious violations in Qatar and mitigate harm. “The 2022 World Cup’s legacy will depend on whether Qatar remedies with FIFA the deaths and other abuses of migrant workers who built the tournament, carries out recent labor reforms, and protects human rights for all in Qatar – not just for visiting fans and footballers,” said Minky Worden, director of global initiatives at Human Rights Watch.

Iran – Iran court issues first death sentence in protest-linked cases

A court in Tehran has issued the first death sentence to a person involved in Iran’s ongoing protests and handed out prison terms to several others. The Iranian judiciary said that an unnamed individual has been sentenced to execution for “setting fire to a government center, disturbing public order, and collusion for committing crimes against national security” in addition to “moharebeh” (waging war against God) and “corruption on Earth”. Five more unnamed people were handed between five and 10 years in prison on national security-related charges. The judiciary noted that the sentences were preliminary and would need to be confirmed by an appeals court. The judiciary had previously said that more than 1,000 indictments have been issued in Tehran alone, with hundreds more brought against people arrested across the country.

Iran – Iran sends sick German woman back to prison

A German-Iranian woman held for rights activism in Iran has been sent back to prison after being granted medical leave four months ago, her daughter said. Taghavi was arrested in October 2020 after fighting for human rights in Iran for years, especially women’s rights and freedom of expression, according to the rights group IGFM. Taghavi spent seven months in solitary confinement and was interrogated by Iran’s Revolutionary Guards for more than 1,000 hours without legal assistance, her daughter said. She was handed a decade-long sentence last year for participating in an outlawed group, a verdict Germany described as “incomprehensible.” According to Claren, Taghavi was granted “an urgently needed medical furlough” on July 19 for back and neck problems. She also reportedly suffers from pre-existing conditions including high blood pressure and diabetes.

Iran – Iran launches deadly missile, drone strikes on exiled Kurds in Iraq

Iran launched cross-border missile and drone strikes against Kurdish opposition groups based in northern Iraq, where local authorities reported one death and eight wounded. An Iranian military source confirmed that “Iran has carried out attacks with drones and missiles targeting the headquarters of terrorist parties in the northern region of Iraq,” Iran’s Fars news agency reported. Tariq Al-Haidari, mayor of Koysanjaq in Kurdish Iraq, told AFP that “five Iranian missiles targeted a building used by the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran.” Other strikes hit elsewhere in Iraq’s autonomous Kurdistan region, authorities there said, without immediately providing a toll for those attacks.

Occupied Palestine – Israeli army kills Palestinian teenager in occupied West Bank

The Israeli army has shot dead a 15-year-old Palestinian girl in the town of Beitunia near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian health ministry identified the victims as 15-year-old Fulla Rasmi Abdelazeez Masalmeh. “She was due to turn 16 on her birthday tomorrow. She was killed when occupation soldiers fired at her during a raid on Beitunia,” it said in a statement. According to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, another Palestinian, 26-year-old Anas Hassouneh, was injured and arrested in the shooting. A witness told Wafa that Masalmeh and Hassouneh were in a vehicle driving up a road, unaware that Israeli forces had stationed themselves at several points until they were surprised by the army’s presence.

Yemen – Detainees in Houthi-run prison go on hunger strike to protest detentions, abuse

A number of Yemeni prisoners at a detention center in Houthi-controlled Sanaa have gone on hunger strike to put pressure on the militia to release them and end their brutal treatment, their families said on Monday. Prisoners held at the Houthi-run Intelligence Prison in Sanaa’s Shamlan area went on hunger strike to protest their extended confinement and demand that the Houthis free them, put them on trial, or at least improve the circumstances within the prison. Since taking power in late 2014, the Houthis have abducted hundreds of Yemenis from various locations under their control and subjected them to physical and psychological torture, according to local and international rights organizations, resulting in multiple deaths.

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Syria – [Two Egyptian girls found dead at Syria camp hosting ISIL families](#)

The bodies of two Egyptian girls have been discovered at the al-Hol detention camp hosting people linked to ISIS (ISIL) in northeastern Syria, according to local Kurdish security forces that administer the facility. "The bodies of two Egyptian girls were found in the sewage waters" at the camp, a Kurdish security source told the AFP news agency on Tuesday, requesting anonymity. Another camp official, who also requested anonymity for fear of reprisals, said the beheaded girls were aged 11 and 13, the Associated Press news agency reported. Siamand Ali, an official with the Kurdish-led United States-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, confirmed the killings. The overcrowded camp in northeast Syria is home to more than 50,000 people, including relatives of suspected ISIL fighters, as well as displaced Syrians, and Iraqi refugees.

Occupied Palestine – [UNRWA in urgent cash appeal to help Palestinian refugees](#)

The UN relief agency has warned of a major disruption to services for Palestinian refugees unless it receives an immediate cash injection. Philippe Lazzarini, commissioner general of the financially troubled UN Relief and Works Agency, said that in the coming weeks, UNRWA urgently needed between \$50 million and \$80 million "to be able to end the year and keep schools, health centers, and other basic services running." The official was addressing a news conference on the sidelines of the biannual UNRWA Advisory Commission meeting in the Jordanian capital Amman. He pointed out that many Palestinian refugees in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan were "almost entirely dependent on the agency's support," adding that the agency required close to \$200 million over the next three years to achieve the objectives of its strategic plan.

Wednesday
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Kuwait – [Kuwait hangs seven people in first executions since 2017](#)

Kuwait has put seven people to death in a mass execution, the state-run KUNA news agency confirmed, making it the first execution since 2017 despite appeals from human rights organizations for clemency. The inmates who were hanged on Wednesday were four Kuwaitis, a Pakistani, a Syrian, and an Ethiopian. Two of the seven were women. It was the first execution since January 25, 2017, when seven people were also hanged, including one member of the royal Al-Sabah family, which has ruled the country for two and a half centuries. Prominent rights organization Amnesty International called on Tuesday for the executions to be halted, saying they were a "violation of the right to life and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment" and that Kuwait should abolish the death penalty "entirely".

Iran – [Outrage as Iran sentences three more protesters to death](#)

Iran faced new international outrage on Wednesday after three more protesters were sentenced to death in the crackdown on demonstrations sweeping the country. The Iranian judiciary claimed one demonstrator had attacked police with his car, the second had stabbed a security officer, and the third tried to block traffic and spread "terror." Five death sentences have now been imposed since Sunday. Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, director of the Iran Human Rights activist group, condemned the sentences and said the proceedings were unfair. "Protesters don't have access to lawyers in the interrogation phase," he said. "They are subjected to physical and mental torture to give false confessions and sentenced based on the confessions by the revolutionary courts."

Thursday
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Egypt – [Emirati humanitarian group to build school for marginalized community in Egypt](#)

The Big Heart Foundation, a humanitarian organization based in the UAE, has announced that it is building a primary school to help meet the educational needs of vulnerable communities in Egypt's Matrouh Governorate. El-Nour Primary School will accommodate 600 students, teachers, and support staff. The project, valued at \$607,743, aims to increase access to high-quality, early-childhood education, provide pupils with a nurturing and empowering learning environment, and reduce dropout rates, which are typically higher in marginalized communities. It is being carried out in collaboration with Misr El-Kheir Foundation, an Egyptian non-profit organization. TBHF said it will build, furnish and equip the new school, which will have 11 classrooms, a library, a science lab, a technology lab, and an activity room. It will also provide capacity-building programs to help teachers improve their professional skills and expand their knowledge and capabilities.

Iran – [Motorbike-borne gunmen kill 9 in protest-hit Iran cities – state media](#)

Assailants on motorbikes shot dead nine people, including a woman and two children, during protests in two separate attacks in southern Iran, state media said on Thursday. Three suspects were arrested and the hunt was on for others after Wednesday's first attack on protesters and security forces in Izeh, said a senior judicial official in Khuzestan province. In a separate attack four hours later in Iran's third largest city Isfahan, two assailants on a motorcycle fired automatic weapons at Basij paramilitary force members, killing two and wounding two others, Fars news agency reported. The dead included a 45-year-old woman and two children aged nine and 13, said an official at the Jondishapour hospital in Ahvaz, the provincial capital.

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Occupied Palestine – [Fire rips through Gaza residential building, killing 21 people](#)

At least 21 people have been killed and several others injured after a fire ripped through a residential building in the densely-populated Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip, according to local sources. Ambulances rushed several injured people to local hospitals, and the Israeli regime, which together with Egypt maintains a blockade on Gaza, said it would allow in those in need of medical treatment. The Palestinian Wafa news agency reported that several children were among the dead. Gaza's Interior Ministry said an initial investigation revealed that large amounts of gasoline had been stored at the site, fueling the blaze that quickly engulfed the building.

Egypt – [Jailed Egyptian activist's health 'deteriorated severely': Family](#)

The health of imprisoned Egyptian activist Alaa Abd el-Fattah "deteriorated severely", his sister Mona Seif has said, as the family was allowed to visit him for the first time in nearly a month. Abd el-Fattah, a blogger and software developer, is one of the most well-known voices to have come out of the uprising of 2011, when millions of Egyptians protested against then-President Hosni Mubarak's rule. He has been imprisoned for most of the past decade, and in April, he began a partial hunger strike to protest against his arrest and sentencing. Concerns for his health intensified as the family was barred from seeing him. Last Thursday, prison authorities began an unspecified medical intervention on Abd el-Fattah – prompting thoughts that he was being force-fed. Earlier this week, Abd el-Fattah informed his family in handwritten notes that he first started drinking water again and then also ended the hunger strike.

Iraq – [Gas cylinder explosion in Iraq's Sulaimaniyah kills 15 people](#)

The death toll from a gas cylinder explosion in a residential area of the northern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniyah has risen to 15. Thursday's explosion, which caused a house to collapse, also left 16 people injured. Sulaimaniyah's civil defense said on Friday that the rescue operation to find the victims lasted 17 hours. Firefighters managed to contain the fire that broke out after the gas cylinder exploded in the second-largest city in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq. "A total of 15 bodies have been pulled out from under the rubble," said the head of civil defense in the city, Diyar Ibrahim, according to the official Iraqi News Agency. Ibrahim said search operations continued into the early hours of Friday, adding that there were no more bodies under the rubble. The city's emergency response chief, Saman Nader, blamed the blast on "a gas leak from a tank".

Saturday and Sunday
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Syria – [Israeli air attacks in Syria kill four soldiers, wound one](#)

Four Syrian soldiers have been killed and one wounded by Israeli air strikes on military posts in the central and western regions of Syria, the Syrian state news agency SANA reported. At about 6:30 am on Saturday, Israeli jets flying over the Mediterranean targeted military posts in central and coastal Syria, according to the report, which cited a military source. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based war monitor, said the attacks were aimed at pro-Iranian groups in the provinces of Homs and Hama, hitting weapons and ammunition sites. The Syrian Observatory also said that Israeli forces targeted a Syrian air defense battery in Latakia province. Syria's air defenses counter-attacked, causing material damage, SANA reported. There has been no comment from the Israeli military.



INTERNATIONAL

Monday
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United States – [Three dead, two injured in University of Virginia campus shooting](#)

U.S. police have held a student on second-degree murder charges after a shooting on the campus of the University of Virginia (UVA) killed three people and wounded two others. “Police have the suspect in custody,” UVA Police Chief Timothy Longo announced on Monday. Longo thanked law enforcement for responding to the incident “very quickly”. Student Christopher Darnell Jones, 22, was arrested hours after the shooting that unfolded at the school in Charlottesville, Virginia. He was being held on three counts of second-degree murder and three counts of using a handgun in the commission of a felony, Longo said. The shooting targeted a bus full of students returning from an off-campus trip. All three of the students killed were members of the university’s American football team. Jones had previously been a team member, but not for at least a year. Authorities have said that the motive for the attack is not yet clear.

United States – [48,000 California academic workers strike for higher wages](#)

More than 48,000 academic workers in the University of California system have gone on strike over what they say are unfair labor practices and low wages. Researchers, postdoctoral scholars, teaching assistants, and other employees headed to the picket line on Monday, launching what they describe as the largest academic worker strike in US history. The move is expected to halt activities within the University of California system, a network of 10 public universities and more than 280,000 students. “Our material conditions have been so bad for so long that a lot of people have run out of patience with the university,” Janna Haider, a graduate student in the history department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, told Al Jazeera.

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Belarus – [Jailed Belarusian Rights Defender Faces Ill-Treatment](#)

A court in Minsk, Belarus, sentenced human rights defender Nasta Lojka to 15 days’ detention on bogus charges of “petty hooliganism”. This is the fourth time in three months that authorities have locked her up for a 15-day period. Nasta has worked for years to protect foreigners and stateless persons in Belarus, as well as on Belarus’s repressive “anti-extremist” legislation. Her imprisonment is part of government efforts to annihilate any vestige of human rights work in the country. On October 31, a court sentenced Nasta to her third 15 days. During this detention, Nasta was held in very cold conditions, including once outside without a coat for eight hours, causing her to fall seriously ill. Authorities also refused her medical assistance, denied her meetings with a lawyer, and prevented her from receiving packages with medication, warm clothes, or hygiene products. Instead of releasing her on November 12, authorities brought their 4th prosecution. At her latest court hearing, Nasta said that in detention, officers from the GUBOPiK (The Main Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption) questioned her twice, using electric shock on her on one occasion.

Ukraine – [Russia hits cities across Ukraine with wave of missiles](#)

Air raid sirens blared and explosions rang out in nearly a dozen major cities as Russia rained missiles across Ukraine on Tuesday, in what Kyiv said was the heaviest wave of missile attacks in nearly nine months of war. A Ukrainian Air Force spokesman said Russia had launched about 100 missiles into Ukraine by early evening, more than on October 10, previously described as the largest number since the opening salvos of the war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the main target of the missile flurry was energy infrastructure. In the capital Kyiv, flames came out of a five-story apartment block, one of two residential buildings that authorities said had been hit. Residents later huddled by the smoldering ruins. Kyiv’s mayor said one person was confirmed dead and half the capital was without power.

Russia and Ukraine – [Russia and Ukraine have tortured prisoners of war](#)

Russia and Ukraine have tortured prisoners of war during the conflict in Ukraine, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has said, citing examples of mistreatment including beatings, the use of electric shocks and forced nudity. The OHCHR’s Ukraine-based monitoring team’s findings were based on interviews with more than 100 prisoners of war (POWs) on each side of the war. The office called on Kyiv and Moscow – both of which are parties to the Geneva Conventions that set out the laws of war – to “investigate and prosecute all allegations of violations”. Matilda Bogner, head of the monitoring mission, told a Geneva press briefing that the “vast majority” of the 159 Ukrainian prisoners interviewed reported torture and ill-treatment. She gave examples of dog attacks, electric shocks with Tasers and military phones, and sexual violence.

Wednesday
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Haiti – [Haiti, UN appeal for help as fears grow over cholera's spread](#)

The United Nations and authorities in Haiti have called for international assistance to respond to a deadly outbreak of cholera that the World Health Organization has warned puts hundreds of thousands of people across the Caribbean nation at risk. In a statement on Tuesday, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) appealed for \$145.6m to help Haiti contain the outbreak, which began in early October, and provide much-needed assistance to its citizens. More than 7,200 people have been hospitalized with cholera in Haiti and at least 155 have died as of Saturday, according to the latest figures (PDF) from the Haitian public health department. But the real figures are believed to be higher due to under-reporting.

United States – [US Senate bill to protect same-sex marriage clears key hurdle](#)

A bill safeguarding federal recognition of same-sex marriage has cleared a procedural hurdle in the US Senate amid concerns that the US Supreme Court could undermine such rights in the future. Fifty Democrats and 12 Republicans voted in favor of limiting debate on the bill before a final vote, which would require the federal government to recognize any marriage that is legal in the state in which it was performed. US President Joe Biden welcomed the vote results, thanking Congress for sending "a strong message that Republicans and Democrats can work together to secure the fundamental right of Americans to marry the person they love". Biden also urged US legislators to approve the bill and send it to his desk. The measure will have to pass through a number of procedural hoops in the Senate before returning to the House of Representatives for a final vote and, if passed, Biden's signature.

Haiti – [Armed gangs 'terrorizing' Haiti as cholera spreads: UN official](#)

Armed gangs are "terrorizing" residents in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, a United Nations official has warned, as deadly violence and instability continue to complicate the country's response to a worsening outbreak of cholera. Ulrika Richardson, the UN's resident and humanitarian coordinator in Haiti, told reporters on Wednesday that 195 murders were recorded in October – about three per day – along with 102 kidnappings. Armed gangs that control approximately 60 percent of the territory in Port-au-Prince are using "sexual violence, including rape ... to instill fear and to punish and to terrorize the local populations", Richardson said during a news conference broadcast at UN headquarters. "They do this in order to expand their influence throughout the capital," she added.

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Kenya – [Two killed in second Kenya building collapse this week](#)

A multi-story building under construction collapsed on a neighboring home in the outskirts of the Kenyan capital Nairobi, killing two people on Thursday, authorities said. Three other people have been rescued alive from the family home that was next to the collapsed building located in the Ruaka suburb. The early morning collapse is the second such incident this week as construction authorities warn of unpermitted buildings coming up in the city and its outskirts. On Tuesday, a multi-story building collapsed in the city, and construction workers were trapped inside. Three people were confirmed dead from that incident, and the owner of the building, who is to be arrested and charged, has been on the run. Building collapses are common in Nairobi, where housing is in high demand and unscrupulous developers often bypass regulations.

South Africa – [Summit on Gender-Based Violence Left Key Questions Unanswered](#)

The second Presidential Summit on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) on November 1 and 2 presented an opportunity to honestly reflect on South Africa's successes and challenges for tackling widespread gender based violence in the country. The first Presidential summit in 2018 was convened after civil society organizations and activists organized the #TotalShutdown march to protest against the rising GBVF. That summit was aptly themed 'Accountability. Acceleration and Amplification, NOW!', given that, despite steps taken by the government, women were still facing high rates of violence, including murder, with very low conviction rates. Once again, at the second summit, all the right things were said. Important steps have been taken, but for new laws and new promises of funding and better policy to be successful, there needs to be more transparency and significant government resources committed to carrying them out.

United States – [Starbucks workers strike at more than 100 US stores](#)

Starbucks workers at more than 100 US stores are on strike Thursday in their largest labor action since a campaign to unionize the company's stores began late last year. The walkouts coincide with Starbucks's annual Red Cup Day, when the company gives free reusable cups to customers who order a holiday drink. Workers say it's often one of the busiest days of the year. Workers say they're seeking better pay, more consistent schedules and higher staffing levels in busy stores. Stores in 25 states planned to take part in the labor action, according to Starbucks Workers United, the group organizing the effort. Strikers are handing out their own red cups with union logos. Starbucks, which opposes the unionization effort, said it is aware of the walkouts and respects its employees' right to lawfully protest. The Seattle company noted that the protests are happening at a small number of its 9,000 company-run US locations.

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Uganda – [Ugandan doctors face fear and shortages in Ebola outbreak](#)

When Ebola broke out in Uganda in September, 10 doctors immediately stepped forward to work in an isolation unit at Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital, but now only three are left. Staff are reluctant to work in the unit for fear of catching the deadly hemorrhagic fever, and also because of exhaustion and delayed wages. Two health workers at the hospital in western Uganda have died from Ebola in this outbreak. Nationwide, 15 health workers have tested positive and six have died. Uganda has one of the world's lowest doctor-to-patient ratios, with one doctor for every 25,000 people. The WHO and aid groups are providing Uganda with assistance to cope with the Ebola outbreak, and the United States says it has channeled \$22m through local partners. Yet Uganda still faces significant funding shortfalls – a WHO official said an initial \$20m the government earmarked was burned through in the first month as cases soared.

Global – [UN Decision to Advance Crimes Against Humanity Treaty](#)

The United Nations General Assembly's Sixth Committee adopted a resolution to move toward drafting a treaty on crimes against humanity, Human Rights Watch said today. The consensus decision by the Committee, which handles legal issues for the General Assembly, including possible new treaties, breaks three years of paralysis brought on by the opposition of a handful of countries. Crimes against humanity are acts of murder, rape, torture, apartheid, deportations, persecution, and other offenses committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population based on a government or organizational policy. These crimes can be committed at any time, not only in situations of internal or international armed conflict. The proposed treaty would require all states parties to include the definition of these acts in their national laws and to take steps to prevent and punish them in national courts.

Portugal – [Portugal's public sector workers strike over pay amid inflation](#)

Thousands of Portugal's doctors, nurses, teachers and civil servants have staged a walkout to demand wage increases amid rampant inflation, challenging the majority Socialist government a week before a final vote on the 2023 budget. Across the country many schools and courts were shut on Friday, hospital appointments and surgeries have been cancelled, and rubbish left uncollected. Many European countries are facing labour strife due to high energy prices and the mounting cost of living. The Common Front of the Public Administration Union represents nearly half of Portugal's 730,000 civil servants and called the one-day strike. "This year all workers have already lost one month's salary due to inflation," union coordinator Sebastiao Santana told reporters. "We are getting poorer."

Ukraine – [Blackouts hit 10 million in Ukraine after Russian strikes](#)

More than 10 million Ukrainians are without electricity after dozens of Russian air attacks on the country's energy infrastructure as winter sets in and temperatures plummet, President Volodymyr Zelensky has said. Repeated barrages disrupted electricity and water supplies across Ukraine, but Russia blamed the civilian suffering on Ukraine's refusal to negotiate an end to the war that began on February 24. On Thursday, residents of the recently recaptured city of Kherson in southern Ukraine rushed to stockpile food, blankets, and winter clothing, with shouting matches and shoving erupting as volunteers tossed supplies into the crowds that waited hours in freezing rain. Several Ukrainian cities were attacked as the latest assault coincided with the season's first snow, and officials in Kyiv warned of "difficult" days ahead.

Pakistan – [Bus plunges into ditch, killing 20 in flood-hit southern Pakistan](#)

At least 20 people have been killed in Pakistan's flood-hit south after a minibus crashed into a deep and water-logged ditch. The vehicle crashed in the Sehwan region of the southern Sindh province, local police official Khadim Hussain told AFP news agency. "The driver could not see the diversion sign on the road and so the van plunged into a 25-foot [8 metres] deep ditch" near the town of Sehwan Sharif, Hussain said on Friday. Eleven children aged between two and eight years were killed in the crash, police said. A further 14 people were injured, two of them in critical condition. Police officer Imran Qureshi told The Associated Press news agency the van was bringing passengers from Khairpur district to a famous Sufi shrine in Sehwan.

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Ecuador – [Ten killed as gang bosses' transfer sparks prison riot in Ecuador](#)

Ten inmates have been killed in a riot at a prison in Ecuador's capital Quito, which authorities said took place as a result of the government's decision to relocate three crime bosses to a high-security facility. The prison riot and killings are the latest challenges for the country's prison system, in which some 400 inmates have been killed in gang-related violence since last year, the prison authority said. The latest unrest broke out on Friday at El Inca prison shortly after the government said it was moving inmates it suspected of being the masterminds behind previous prison disturbances to a maximum security prison. The prison authority said that "members of this criminal organization (Los Lobos) undertook violent reprisals" for the relocation of Bermudez to another prison. Police commander Victor Herrera told reporters the prison had been secured, with heavy security deployed as forensics personnel removed the bodies of those killed. Herrera said the cause of death "appeared to be strangulation".