OHCHR

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

ations are financed by donor contributions and are carried out by external consultants. There is deemed to be a need to improve procedures to ensure the systematic use of the conclusions reached in the evaluations.

OHCHR is subject to the UN Secretariat's guidelines for dealing with and preventing corruption, and for ensuring protection of whistle-blowers. OIOS has established a whistle-blowing channel that is open for all types of reports of fraud in the UN system.

In the past few years, OHCHR has focused on strengthening its presence in the field. The purpose of this effort is to help provide protection of human rights where it is most needed, thereby contributing specifically to closing the gap between the normative standards and the situation on the ground.

OHCHR has also carried out several change processes aimed at improving its effectiveness and intensifying the focus on results. International surveys indicate that the office has moved in a positive direction.

In the past few years, the agency has received a larger share of the UN's regular budget, making it less vulnerable to unpredictable donors and countries that do not want an effective OHCHR. However, the financial crisis has led to a decline in voluntary contributions and put greater strain on the High Commissioner's financial situation.

3. Norway's policy towards OHCHR

OHCHR's mandate coincides with the strong emphasis Norway places on human rights in its foreign policy. OHCHR plays a decisive role in efforts to strengthen the international system for securing and protecting human rights. Both the role of the High Commissioner as secretariat for the treaty bodies and for the special rapporteurs and the OHCHR's provision of technical support to other parts of the UN system are regarded as important contributions to international efforts to ensure that human rights instruments are respected at the local and national level. The High Commissioner's thematic priorities are largely concurrent with Norway's priorities in the field of human rights. This applies to thematic priorities such as efforts to support human rights defenders, combat discrimination, secure the rights of sexual minorities, and ensure private sector compliance with human rights standards.

Norway has actively supported the High Commissioner's independent mandate and efforts to ensure that her activities are not made subject to the control of Member States. Norway has also supported OHCHR's efforts to strengthen its field presence. Moreover, Norway has provided support for OHCHR's efforts to strengthen its organisational capacity to respond to acute human rights situations.

One of Norway's focal areas recently has been to contribute actively to strengthening OHCHR's focus on the implementation of accepted recommendations from the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Reviews (UPR). Norway also works systematically to underpin OHCHR's efforts to ensure that the human rights perspective is included in the UN's other operations, as well as in funds and programmes.

Norway has also sought to promote better monitoring and reporting of results in collaboration with other donors.

As a consequence of the progress that OHCHR has made towards improving its effectiveness and focus on results, Norway has gradually increased its unearmarked contributions. In May 2011, Norway entered into a multi-year cooperation agreement with OHCHR for the first time.

1. Facts and figures

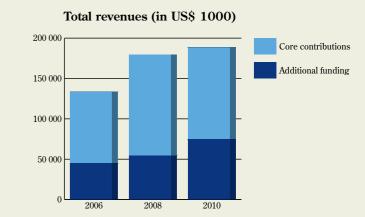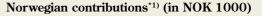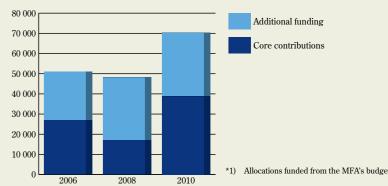| |
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| **Type of organisation:** Office of the UN Secretariat |
| **Established in:** 1993 |
| **Headquarters:** Geneva |
| **Number of country offices:** 12 country offices and 12 regional offices, as well as a presence in 12 peace missions and in 16 of the UN country teams in the form of deployed human rights officers |
| **Head of organisation:** UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay (South Africa) |
| **Date of Board meetings 2011:** OHCHR is part of the UN Secretariat and does not have its own Board. However, the largest donors have joint annual donor country consultations with OHCHR, called the Rubens consultations. The Rubens Group consists of Norway, UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Consultations last took place on 3-4 February 2011 |
| **Number of Norwegian staff:** 3 |
| **Responsible ministry:** Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) |
| **Website:** http://www.ohchr.org/ |

Total revenues (in US$ 1000)

Legend: Core contributions; Additional funding (2006, 2008, 2010)

Norwegian contributions[*1] **(in NOK 1000)**

Legend: Additional funding; Core contributions (2006, 2008, 2010)

*1) Allocations funded from the MFA's budget

Five largest donors, including Norway, 2010 (in US$ 1000)

1. UNs regular budget, 2. USA, 3. Norway, 4. Netherlands, 5. Sweden

NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Mandate and areas of activity

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was established by a resolution (res 48/141-1993) adopted by the UN General Assembly, and its mandate is to promote and protect human rights for all. OHCHR's mission is to draw attention to the human rights situation in the world and speak out clearly when human rights are violated. OHCHR also acts as an important international contact point for research and education, capacity-building and advocacy activities relating to human rights. The Office provides technical assistance to a number of UN Member States. The High Commissioner is also the UN system's secretariat for the bodies established to monitor States Parties' implementation of international human rights treaties. Moreover, the OHCHR is tasked with supporting the work of special rapporteurs appointed to monitor human rights in different countries or in relation to specific issues. Another important task is to ensure that a human rights perspective is integrated into and strengthened in all the activities of the UN system, including all funds and programmes. The work of the OHCHR particularly targets three levels of activity: the normative development of human rights, monitoring of the degree of compliance with human rights standards and implementation of human rights on the ground.

The High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan 2010-2011 lists six main priorities:

1) Countering discrimination
2) Combating impunity and strengthening states' accountability, the rule of law and democratic society
3) Pursuing economic, social and cultural rights and combating inequalities and poverty
4) Protecting human rights in the context of migration
5) Protecting human rights in situations of armed conflict, violence and insecurity
6) Strengthening human rights mechanisms and the progressive development of international human rights law

OHCHR's work in Colombia
OHCHR established a country office in Bogota in 1997. Human rights violations are a serious, daily occurrence in Colombia. Extrajudicial executions and disappearances pose a major problem. OHCHR's efforts in Colombia in 2009 contributed to the adoption of a law making it easier to trace and identify victims of enforced disappearance. OHCHR also helped the authorities to take a first step towards reforming the intelligence services. The main purpose of this reform was to permit internal investigations, and an attempt has been made to separate police functions from intelligence activities. OHCHR was also instrumental in the defence authorities' introduction of measures to prevent enforced disappearances.

Results achieved in 2009

OHCHR's Annual Report for 2010 was not available at the time of writing, and reference is therefore made to results presented in OHCHR's annual report for 2009.

OHCHR has assisted in and helped inform the content of 61 legislative processes in 38 countries, thereby contributing to increased alignment of national laws and programmes with international human rights standards. OHCHR also helped ensure that more countries are complying to a greater degree with their obligations under the UN's monitoring system. This is apparent in the increase in the number of country reports received by UN treaty bodies on countries' compliance with their obligations. Since 2004, correspondence with and documentation submitted to treaty bodies has almost doubled in volume. Furthermore, a growing number of countries are cooperating with the UN special rapporteurs. A total of 66 countries have now issued a standing, open invitation to UN special rapporteurs, compared with 63 in 2008 and 59 in 2007.

Another result to which OHCHR's work has contributed is the growing number of ratifications of international human rights treaties. A total of 87 new ratifications were recorded in 2009, compared with 63 in 2007.

OHCHR made a positive contribution to efforts to combat impunity for serious human rights violations, among other things by helping to establish more mechanisms at the national level to investigate human rights violations and hold perpetrators accountable. This type of mechanism has been established in a total of 42 countries in which OHCHR is represented.

OHCHR has also been instrumental in increasing the access of vulnerable and marginalised groups to basic services and justice. In 2009, measures to this end were introduced in 44 countries where OHCHR was engaged.

Within the UN system, OHCHR's activities have resulted in the greater integration of a human rights perspective in UN activities, funds and programmes. Human rights are mainstreamed in a total of 16 major strategy documents adopted by the UN, compared with 2008 when the corresponding figure was 10.

2. Assessments: Results, effectiveness and monitoring

OHCHR has a results framework in the form of a two-year Strategic Management Plan (SMP). The SMP is prepared by OHCHR and is not the object of intergovernmental negotiations, as OHCHR is part of the UN Secretariat. Offices within the Secretariat structure do not have their own Boards. However, the SMP must lie within the scope of Programme 19 (on human rights) of the UN Secretary-General's Strategic Framework, which is approved by the UN General Assembly. OHCHR's SMP includes goals for the impact of planned efforts. Each department and unit in OHCHR draws up annual plans based on the SMP.

OHCHR has developed qualitative and quantitative measurement indicators to document the results of its efforts. The Office also has a system for aggregating data from country level to global level.

OHCHR prepares annual reports that present results at country and global levels. The Office is able to document results and progress in a number of fields. However, OHCHR can improve its efforts to link the reported results more clearly to the goals originally formulated.

OHCHR has reaped praise for taking important steps to strengthen its results monitoring, but has also admitted that there is room for improvement. The results-based culture in OHCHR needs to be reinforced. There is also potential for improving OHCHR's documentation of results at country level. OHCHR has pointed out that as an agency working to promote normative standards, often in a highly sensitive political context, it faces special challenges in documenting measurable results.

As far as the mainstreaming of relevant cross-cutting issues is concerned, OHCHR is considered to cooperate well with other UN offices and UN agencies on promoting gender equality and a gender perspective. OHCHR is considered to give a satisfactory account of the gender perspective in its annual reports and activity reports. However, several surveys (the 2008 Swedish assessment of multilateral organisations and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID)'s 2011 review of multilateral organisations) identify weaknesses with regard to OHCHR's integration of gender issues in its operational activities. Poverty reduction is another important cross-cutting issue in OHCHR's activities. The High Commission recognises poverty as one of the underlying causes of the lack of adherence to human rights standards. OHCHR has contributed to ensuring that human rights are mainstreamed in UN programmes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Several studies (the Swedish and British reviews and the 2009 evaluation carried out by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) point out that OHCHR has made

significant progress. The Office has helped to increase the visibility of and international focus on human rights issues. Most of the countries that have accepted OHCHR's presence consider that the Office fulfils a strategically important role. OHCHR is particularly actively engaged in efforts relating to national legislative processes in the field of human rights and national capacity-building. The Office is considered to have made especially valuable contributions to building capacity in national human rights institutions. Furthermore, OHCHR works closely with civil society in the countries in which it is represented.

Progress has been made in terms of ensuring that human rights issues are integrated into UN development work. This requires that human rights efforts are underpinned by the heads of the UN's country teams. OHCHR also plays an important role in supporting this work. In partnership with agencies like the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in the past few years, OHCHR has developed new mechanisms for mainstreaming human rights in UN activities, funds and programmes.

Moreover, OHCHR has developed guidelines for its engagement in fragile states, which are considered to be effective. DFID's review describes OHCHR's contribution to peacebuilding and the reconstruction of states emerging from conflict as very good. The office has also increased its operational flexibility, thereby enhancing its ability to respond to acute human rights situations, such as in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011.

OHCHR is subject to the UN Secretariat's control mechanisms. This means that OHCHR is subject to external audits by the UN Board of Auditors and internal reviews by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). OIOS is part of the UN Secretariat, but is operationally independent and can carry out evaluations on its own initiative. The UN General Assembly can also request special evaluations. OIOS reports to the Secretary-General, who has formal responsibility for ensuring that the OIOS's recommendations are implemented. The Secretary-General informs the UN General Assembly of the measures that have been carried out. Formal oversight responsibility for OHCHR lies with the General Assembly.

OIOS's evaluation of OHCHR's effectiveness, carried out in 2009, points out that, as a result of OHCHR's broad mandate, there is a risk of the agency spreading itself too thin, which could weaken its impact. OHCHR was therefore recommended to sharpen its strategic focus. OHCHR has made targeted efforts to implement the recommendations and apply a more strategic approach in its planning processes.

OHCHR also initiates regular evaluations of its activities of its own accord, also within specific thematic areas. These evalu-