NEWSLETTER

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CIL
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW
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# Developments at the United Nations

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With a focus on international law · July – September 2026

## INTRODUCTION

The Centre for International Law at the National University of Singapore is pleased to launch the third issue of its 2026 volume of newsletters highlighting developments at the United Nations, with a focus on international law. This edition explores a number of thematic areas such as peace and security, human rights and humanitarian affairs, global health, artificial intelligence, climate change, sustainable development, activities at the International Court of Justice and other institutional developments.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Highlights** | 2 |
| Week of 1 July 2026 | 4 |
| Week of 6 July 2026 | 5 |
| Week of 13 July 2026 | 9 |
| Week of 20 July 2026 | 10 |
| Week of 27 July 2026 | 12 |
| Week of 3 August 2026 | 14 |
| Week of 10 August 2026 | 15 |
| Week of 17 August 2026 | 15 |
| Week of 24 August 2026 | 15 |
| Week of 31 August 2026 | 16 |
| Week of 7 September 2026 | 18 |
| Week of 14 September 2026 | 18 |
| Week of 21 September 2026 | 19 |
| Week of 28 September 2026 | 20 |

# Highlights

01 **Peace and security developments focused on instability across the Middle East.** The Security Council addressed escalating tensions between the United States and Iran, including attacks in the Strait of Hormuz and on Bahrain and Kuwait, as well as unauthorised Iranian flights into Yemen and the implementation of Resolution 2231 concerning Iran's nuclear programme. It also extended reporting on Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, renewed sanctions measures on Sudan and the Central African Republic and extended the mandate of the Haiti Gang Suppression Force. Its annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence took place, and the General Assembly adopted the ninth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

02 **Human rights and humanitarian law concerns remained prominent.** The Human Rights Council adopted 28 resolutions at its 62nd session and held an urgent debate on violence in and around El Obeid, Sudan. The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan found the distinct markers of genocide in the Rapid Support Forces' actions in El Fasher. The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran found that gross human rights violations amounting to crimes against humanity are likely being committed by the Iranian government, and that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the United States' attack on Lamerd amounts to a war crime. UN bodies also raised concerns about human rights and humanitarian conditions in Myanmar, South Sudan, Ukraine, Syria, Nicaragua and the West Bank.

03 **Global health and humanitarian issues remained a major concern.** UN agencies reported that an estimated 645 million people faced hunger in 2025, while funding cuts affected women-led humanitarian organisations and HIV prevention programmes. The WHO continued reporting on the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and UN agencies warned about the need for food assistance and logistics. The WHO also reported that the world was off track to meet 2030 targets for HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections.

04 The developments in the **International Court of Justice** included the hearings on Germany's preliminary objections in the case concerning *Alleged Breaches of Certain International Obligations in respect of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Nicaragua v. Germany)*. The Court received a case filed by Vanuatu against France over sovereignty over two islands and the establishment of maritime boundaries. Separately, Colombia withdrew its declaration of intervention in the case concerning *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*.

05 **The International Law Commission**

The General Assembly adopted the UN Declaration on Sea Level Rise, and proclaimed 2028 the Year of International Law.

06 **Artificial intelligence and sustainable development featured in major UN initiatives.** The Independent International Scientific Panel on AI warned that existing safeguards are not keeping pace with AI capabilities, as the inaugural Global Dialogue on AI Governance convened. The General Assembly designated 31 August as the International Day of Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence. The High-Level Political Forum adopted a ministerial declaration reaffirming the 2030 Agenda, and the General Assembly adopted a range of sustainable development initiatives, including on road safety, assistive technologies, water action and the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

07 **Climate, trade and tax developments also featured.** The Secretary-General warned that an intensifying El Niño will cause unprecedented heat through October 2026, and UNEP examined just transition through an environmental rule-of-law lens. UNCITRAL's fifty-ninth session addressed investor-State dispute settlement reform and international arbitration, UNCTAD reported a 6% rise in global foreign direct investment in 2025, and negotiations continued on a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.

08 **Other institutional developments** were the opening of the 81st session of the General Assembly and the High-level Week, during which the Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, in his final address to the general debate, observed that power is being reshaped among States and called for a stronger multilateral system, stating that "the power of law must prevail over the law of power". The period also saw the merger of the United Nations System Staff College into the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, a General Assembly debate for candidates for the next Secretary-General, and the reappointment of Volker Türk as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

WEEK OF

# 1 July 2026

■ PEACE AND SECURITY

The Security Council holds an emergency session to address the resurgence of confrontations between the United States and Iran, as well as attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait and in the Strait of Hormuz. **Read more here and here.**

The General Assembly adopts the ninth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, structured around four pillars: addressing conditions conducive to terrorism; preventing and combating terrorism; building States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthening the role of the United Nations system in this regard; measures that ensure human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of counter-terrorism. **Read more here.**

■ HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Human Rights Council holds an urgent debate on the human rights situation in and around El Obeid in Sudan. The High Commissioner for Human Rights details the violence being committed against civilians, and calls for compliance with international law, an end to arms supplies, extension of the Darfur arms embargo to the whole of Sudan, and restraint in the use of the veto. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF 1 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

The Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence publishes its Preliminary Report on "Evidence-based assessment of opportunities, risks and impacts of AI," focused on several domains, including security, environments, science, human rights, information and democracy, and governance and reliability. The report will serve as the scientific starting point for discussion at the inaugural Global Dialogue on AI Governance. It concludes that the existing safeguards cannot keep pace with the growth of AI capabilities. **Read more here.**

**TRADE, INVESTMENT AND TAX**

The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law opens its fifty-ninth session, sitting from 29 June to 10 July 2026. The key outcomes from this session concerned investor-State dispute settlement reform and international arbitration. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF

# 6 July 2026

**PEACE AND SECURITY**

The Security Council holds its annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence, under the theme "Honouring the promise of international law to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence". **Read more here.**

The Security Council holds a briefing on the implementation of Resolution 2231 (2015) endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. A central point of contention is whether Resolution 2231 has been terminated, and its implications for the triggering of "snapback sanctions" on Iran by France, Germany and the UK. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 6 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

■ HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly adopts a resolution maintaining the Human Rights Council's status as a subsidiary body of the Assembly. **Read more here.**

UN Women publishes a report on "Beyond the breaking point: The continuing impact of funding cuts on women's organisations in humanitarian settings", stating that humanitarian funding cuts are affecting women-led and women's rights organisations and leaving one million women and girls without access to critical support. **Read more here.**

The Human Rights Council, during its 62nd regular session, adopts 28 resolutions on several issues including, but not limited to, the situations in and around El Obeid (Sudan) and Eritrea; of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar; business and human rights; the rights of persons with disabilities; the rights to education; climate change; extreme poverty; protection of healthcare in armed conflict; neglected tropical diseases; forced marriage; the rights of women and girls; the elimination of all forms of discrimination; freedom of opinion and expression; and extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. **Read more here.**

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan issues a paper supplementing its report "Sudan: hallmarks of genocide in El Fasher", concluding that mass killings, abductions of women and girls, mass gang rape, detention, torture, ransom-taking and enforced disappearances carried out by the Rapid Support Forces in El Fasher constitute distinct markers of genocide. The Mission simultaneously announces the launch of the urgent inquiry into El Obeid. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 6 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic concludes a country visit. It notes progress in the development of a transitional justice law and the commencement of trials for Assad-era violations, while stressing that fair trial guarantees and revisions to the criminal code to align with international standards remain essential. They raise concern over the thousands detained without judicial review and the approximately 800 persons missing following the January 2026 hostilities. **Read more here.**

Five special procedures mandate holders demand the immediate release of Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, detained by Israel since December 2024. The experts decry the arbitrary detention as reflecting "Israel's systematic targeting of Palestinian health workers and the continuing decimation of the health care system in Gaza in order to inflict conditions to bring about the mental and physical destruction of Palestinians." They raise concerns over the compatibility of Israel's Unlawful Combatants' Law with international humanitarian and human rights law. **Read more here.**

The UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples convenes for its 19th session, with an agenda featuring discussions on the rights of Indigenous Peoples in conflict situations, as well as the effects of artificial intelligence. **Read more here.**

## GLOBAL HEALTH

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/289 (2026) concerning sustainable and safe water, sanitation, hygiene, waste and electricity in healthcare facilities. It calls for greater coordination with the WHO and UNICEF, and stronger international cooperation to support developing countries. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly decides that its President, in collaboration with WHO, will convene a one-day high-level meeting on "Universal health coverage: accessible and affordable health for all by 2030" during the general debate of its 82nd session in September 2027. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 6 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, convenes its 2026 session and adopts a ministerial declaration reaffirming its commitment to act with urgency and effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **Read more here and here.**

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

The Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance (AI Dialogue) convenes its inaugural session in Geneva. **Read more here.**

**TRADE, INVESTMENT AND TAX**

United Nations Trade and Development launches the "World Investment Report 2026: International investment in a turbulent era", highlighting a 6% rise in global foreign direct investment in 2025, and including a dedicated chapter on investment policy trends. **Read more here and here.**

**INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION**

The UN Secretary-General, during his visit to the International Law Commission, makes a statement on the importance of the work of the Commission, welcomes the convening of diplomatic conferences on the Commission's work on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity and the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters, and congratulates the Commission for adopting the landmark report on Sea-Level Rise in Relation to International Law. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 13 July 2026

## PEACE AND SECURITY

The Security Council adopts Resolution 2826 (2026), extending the Secretary-General's monthly reporting mandate on Houthi attacks on vessels in the Red Sea until 15 January 2027. **Read more here.**

The Security Council holds an emergency meeting on unauthorised Iranian flights into Yemen, with Member States warning about worsening Yemen's instability while UN officials urge all parties to de-escalate. **Read more here and here.**

The Security Council Sanction Committee on the Democratic Republic of the Congo adds six individuals and two entities to its Sanction Lists. **Read more here.**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo convenes an Arria-formula meeting entitled "The Normative gaps Linking Natural Resources and Peace: Foundations and Perspectives". **Read more here.**

The Security Council receives the semi-annual briefing by the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on the Court's activities concerning Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593 (2005). **Read more here.**

The Russian Federation convenes an Arria-formula meeting around allegations concerning the treatment of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Russian-speaking community, under the title "The Reign of Terror: Crimes of the Kiev Regime in Ukraine and Beyond". **Read more here.**

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel warns the Security Council of the worsening terrorism threat in West Africa and the Sahel. The violence in the region is causing heavy civilian casualties and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis leaving approximately 6.8 million people displaced with around 1.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF 13 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS**

The Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua decries the mass revocation of lawyers' credentials in Nicaragua, warning that it constitutes a severe blow to the protection of human rights and to access to justice and legal representation. **Read more here.**

The United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine publishes its "Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict" report for June 2026, recording at least 293 civilians killed and 1,990 injured during that month as civilian casualties rose significantly during the first half of 2026. **Read more here.**

**INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS**

National groups' nominations are received for the triennial election of five judges of the International Court of Justice for the 2027–2036 term, with the election by the General Assembly and the Security Council scheduled for 3 November 2026. Eight candidates are competing for the five seats. **Read more here.**

**WIDER UN AFFAIRS**

The General Assembly adopts the "Political Declaration to Renew Commitment and Accelerate the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda". **Read more here.**

The United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation jointly organise the 2026 Conference on the theme "Jerusalem: The Frontline of Displacement and Annexation and the Key to Just and Lasting Peace". **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 20 July 2026

**PEACE AND SECURITY**

The Security Council Sanctions Committee on Libya adds one vessel to its Sanctions Lists. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 20 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly reappoints the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk for another 4-year term from 12 October 2026 to 11 October 2030. **Read more here.**

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) publish a report titled "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (2026)". It estimates that 645 million people faced hunger in 2025, indicating slow movement towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal target. **Read more here.**

## WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly hosts a debate for candidates for the position of the next Secretary General. **Read more here.**

The Economic and Social Council elects Amar Bendjama from Algeria as its President for the 2026-2027 session. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/292 on "Progress declaration of the high-level meeting on improving global road safety", seeking to scale-up governance, financing and implementation to halve road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/293 to review the implementation of two previous General Assembly Resolutions. The first concerns the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, and the second concerns the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **Read more here and here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/294 and 80/296: "Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace" and "Enhancing the role of parliaments in accelerating social development" respectively. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF 20 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly proclaims 2028 the Year of International Law and encourages Member States, United Nations organisations and other relevant stakeholders to promote respect for international law through educational, capacity-building and public awareness activities. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 27 July 2026

PEACE AND SECURITY

The Security Council adopts Resolution 2827 (2026), extending its measures concerning the supply of arms and other equipment to armed groups and associated individuals in the Central African Republic, as well as travel bans and asset freezes, until 31 July 2027. It also extends the mandate of the Panel Experts until 31 August 2027. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/298 (2026): "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects." **Read more here.**

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The UN emergency food agency appeals for immediate funding to address the growing outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has also diminished food supplies. **Read more here and here.**

WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/297 (2026), concerning the intergovernmental review of the implementation of the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 27 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

## WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/299, deciding to hold a high-level meeting to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts an amendment to the draft decision on the "Participation of non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, relevant medical organisations, academic institutions, the scientific community and the private sector in the high-level meeting on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response". **Read more here.**

UNESCO adds six sites to its List of World Heritage in Danger, including sites in South Sudan, Lebanon and the State of Palestine that are added on an emergency basis. **Read more here.**

## GLOBAL HEALTH

The UNAIDS publishes a special report for the 26th International AIDS Conference, showing that funding cuts could lead to a resurgence of the HIV epidemic. **Read more here.**

The World Health Organization reports that the world is not on track to reach the 2030 targets for HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) reductions. Progress is largely threatened by funding cuts. **Read more here.**

## INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

The International Law Commission resumes its 77th session from 29 June to 30 July, considering the first reports of "Due Diligence in international law" and "Compensation for the damage caused by internationally wrongful acts". It also adopts its annual report at the end of the session and decides to include the topic "Identification and legal consequences of obligation erga omnes in international law" in the programme of work. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF 27 JULY 2026 · CONTINUED

CLIMATE CHANGE

The United Nations Environment Programme releases the report "No Transition Without Justice: Strengthening Environmental Rule of Law for People and Planet", arguing that just transition should be approached through an environmental rule-of-law lens and surveying how courts and legislatures are embedding just-transition requirements in law and policy. **Read more here.**

The Secretary-General delivers remarks on climate change and extreme heat, warning that an intensifying El Niño will cause unprecedented heat through October 2026. He sets out a four-point agenda: heat-health action plans and early warning systems; workplace heat standards; heat-resilient redesign of cities, homes, schools and hospitals; and an end to fossil fuel expansion. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 3 August 2026

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND TAX

The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to draft a United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation meets at United Nations Headquarters from 3 to 13 August 2026. The Committee aims to finalise the Convention and its two early protocols in 2027; its sixth session will be held in Nairobi from 30 November to 10 December 2026. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 10 August 2026

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities opens its 35th session to review reports of Chile, Lithuania, Qatar, Slovakia and Sri Lanka. **Read more here.**

The Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar releases its annual report, covering a period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, reporting "a pattern of deliberate aerial attacks on civilians, arbitrary detentions, torture and sexual violence committed by the Myanmar military". **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 17 August 2026

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan issues an advisory entitled "At the Brink: Preventing Atrocity Crimes and Safeguarding South Sudan's Transition", warning that elections held without essential safeguards and genuine dialogue could fuel renewed conflict and heighten the risk of atrocity crimes. **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF

# 24 August 2026

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights publishes a report on the human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar, finding a sharp deterioration in the human rights situation. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 31 August 2026

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights issues a report raising concerns over forced displacements and destructions of Palestinian refugee camps of Jenin, Nur Shams and Tulkarm in the occupied northern West Bank from December 2024 to January 2026. **Read more here.**

## INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Vanuatu files a case against France before the International Court of Justice concerning a dispute over Vanuatu's sovereignty over Umaenupne (Matthew) and Umaeneg/Leka (Hunter) Islands, and the establishment of maritime boundaries. **Read more here.**

## WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly proclaims 19 December as the International Day of Recognition for Women Searchers of Missing Persons. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly designates 31 August as the International Day of Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence, which is to be observed annually beginning in 2027. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/303, deciding to continue its consideration of possible measures to enhance the participation of Indigenous Peoples in United Nations meetings on issues affecting them. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/304, deciding to convene a UN Conference to adopt a non-binding negotiated outcome document that will serve as the "Dushanbe Water Framework" and provide a basis for advancing water action. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/305, concerning strengthening access to assistive technologies across all domains. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 31 AUGUST 2026 · CONTINUED

## WIDER UN AFFAIRS

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/306, on the "Merger of the United Nations System Staff College into the United Nations Institute for Training and Research". **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/307 on "Correct the map: rebalancing global cartographic representation and promoting equitable representation of the world's regions, particularly Africa". It affirms that the correction will promote recognition, justice and development, and encourages the use of the relevant Equal Earth cartographic projection and equal area map projection methods. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/308, proclaiming 2027–2036 as the International Decade of Culture for Sustainable Development. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/309, recognising 27 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Child, Early and Forced Marriage. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/311 on the "Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia". It endorses its purpose and principles, including provisions for the pacific settlement of regional disputes in order to achieve peace, amity and friendship and to promote regional and international cooperation consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. **Read more here.**

The United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters will meet in Bangkok, Thailand, instead of Manila, from 25 January to 12 February 2027. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 7 September 2026

**PEACE AND SECURITY**

The Security Council adopts Resolution 2828 (2026), renewing the Sudan sanctions regime until 9 October 2026 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 9 November 2026. **Read more here.**

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS**

The Human Rights Council convenes its 63rd session from 7 September to 7 October 2026. **Read more here and here.**

**INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS**

The International Courts of Justice holds public hearings on Germany's preliminary objections in the case concerning Alleged Breaches of Certain International Obligation in respect of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Nicaragua v. Germany). **Read more here and here.**

**WIDER UN AFFAIRS**

The General Assembly convenes its 81st session at United Nations Headquarters in New York starting from 8 September 2026. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 14 September 2026

**INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION**

The International Law Commission publishes its 2026 annual report on the work of its seventy-seventh session. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly's Sixth Committee will meet from 5 October to 20 November 2026 during the 81st session. **Read more here.**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) holds its 70th general conference in Vienna. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 14 SEPTEMBER 2026 · CONTINUED

INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION

The General Assembly decides to allow the participation of the representatives of the State of Palestine in the relevant meetings at the United Nations in New York during the 81st session. **Read more here.**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UN Women and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs publish "Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2026", reporting that gender parity in leadership and decision-making remains far from being achieved. **Read more here.**

WEEK OF

# 21 September 2026

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran finds that gross human rights violations, amounting to crimes against humanity, are being committed against civilians by the Iranian governments. Additionally, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the United States' attack on Lamerd, during its conflict with Iran, amounts to war crime. **Read more here.**

INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Colombia withdraws the Declaration of intervention it filed in 2024 to the International Court of Justice in the case concerning Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel). **Read more here.**

WEEK OF 21 SEPTEMBER 2026 · CONTINUED

WIDER UN AFFAIRS

Other institutional developments were the opening of the 81st session of the General Assembly, under the theme "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All", and the High-level Week. Peace featured prominently in the session. The first of the President's six priority pillars is devoted to peace, security and justice, and the Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his final address opening the general debate on 22 September, identified peace and security as the first great power test of the twenty-first century, described peace as more than the absence of conflict and as the restraint of power by law, and stated that "the power of law must prevail over the law of power". **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts Resolution 80/306 (2026), merging the United Nations System Staff College into the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly convenes a debate for candidates for the next Secretary-General. **Read more here.**

The General Assembly adopts the UN Declaration on Sea Level Rise (2026), which notes the final report of the International Law Commission's Study Group on "Sea-level rise in relation to international law". **Read more here and here.**

WEEK OF

# 28 September 2026

PEACE AND SECURITY

The Security Council extends the mandate of the Haiti Gang Suppression Force (GSF) until 31 March 2027. **Read more here.**