

recommended that Bolivia expedite its judiciary reforms to ensure autonomy and impartiality and guarantee comprehensive coverage, amongst other things.

Federative Republic of Brazil

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: The return to power of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva as of 1 January 2023 represented a positive development for the protection and promotion of human rights and democracy in Brazil. In addition to the Ministry for Human Rights and Citizenship, President Lula created the first Brazilian Ministry for Indigenous Peoples, led by female indigenous leader Sônia Guajajara, as well as a Ministry for Women and a Ministry for Racial Equality. The government re-introduced a number of social and human rights programmes, re-opened civil society spaces, paid its debts with international organisations and generally adopted a more respectful attitude towards human rights activists. According to the National Federation of Journalists, the number of violent incidents against journalists decreased by 50% during President Lula's first year in government, compared with the previous year. A new law on 'equal pay for equal work' was passed and President Lula signed a Racial Equality Package with initiatives aimed at affirmative action, fighting racism and creating social and cultural programmes. The riots of 8 January 2023 against the executive, legislative and judiciary powers were the most significant attacks against democracy since the end of the country's military dictatorship.

Shortcomings remained in some areas. According to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, police was responsible for 6,296 homicides in 2023. As of June 2023, over 649,000 persons were in prison, exceeding the capacity of Brazilian facilities by 34%. The National Mechanism for the Prevention and Combat of Torture denounced overcrowding, unhealthy conditions, collective punishment, and ill-treatment of adults and children in detention. Discrimination against people of African descent and the LGBTI communities persisted and killings of women went up by 2.6% (to 1,902) in the first half of 2023. Police registered more than one third of them as femicides. Threatened human rights defenders remained at risk in the absence of an effective national protection programme. Environmental crimes persisted in the Amazon region, deteriorating the habitat of indigenous peoples and putting their lives in jeopardy. Brazil scored 36 points out of 100 (placing it on rank 104 out of 180 countries) on the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International.

2. EU action - key focus areas: In 2023, democracy and human rights remained a political priority for the EU and Member States in Brazil. Based on the 2007 Strategic Partnership, the EU and Brazil have continued regular exchanges on human rights, both at bilateral and multilateral levels. Following the adoption of the 2020 EU Gender Action Plan III, the EU prepared a Brazil-level action plan, whose implementation started in 2022. Key priorities include combatting all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and promoting social, political economic and cultural rights of women and girls.

The EU continued to implement the EU Roadmap for the engagement with Civil Society in Brazil, adopted in August 2020. The main priority areas include overcoming social and economic inequalities, promoting an enabling environment for civil society, promoting their human rights protection, strengthening rights related to the environment and climate, as well

as the development of a sustainable economy. The EU remained in constant contact with Brazilian civil society actors, representatives of indigenous peoples and of minority groups, drawing on their knowledge and expertise to build an informed opinion about the human rights situation in the country. This work with civil society has shown to be essential to preserve their space but also to be well positioned with these social movements, which are today part of the new Government.

Together with other Latin American countries, Brazil was a beneficiary of regional programmes such as EUROFRONT (integrated border management, trafficking of human beings and migrant smuggling and COPOLAD III (drug policies).

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU initiated a cooperation with the Superior Tribunal of Justice, with the aim of broadening the dialogue with the European judicial system, notably the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The NGO *Transparência Eleitoral* won the 2023 EU Human Rights Prize on the topic of 'Together for Gender Equality'. The EU continued its dialogue with the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship on business and human rights and organised workshops with business, academia, NGOs and other organisations in São Paulo and Brasília to exchange best practices on the implementation of Human Rights Due Diligence policies and legal frameworks.

4. EU financial engagement: Under the EU-Brazil Dialogue Facility, the EU continued the joint work with the Superior Electoral Tribunal on fight against disinformation. The EU also supported local civil society organisations and media actors in the fight against disinformation and hate speech through the Getulio Vargas Foundation. The second phase of the EU's regional El PACTO programme will both continue its work with security authorities, assisting *inter alia* their further professionalisation, and start a new work strand on the protection of indigenous communities. The EU is funding twelve projects fostering good governance via civil society organisations in the areas of urban development and mobility, socio-economic development, basic sanitation, transparency, public governance and social participation. Five more projects focus on female Human Rights Defenders at risk (indigenous, Afro-descendants, LGBTI, migrants, Roma), fostering the economic inclusion of women, promoting the participation of indigenous women in decision-making processes and strengthening a network of women's organisations. Lastly, six EU projects focusing on policy dialogue on the digital agenda, digital inclusion, digital territorial protection, access to internet, digital government, digital rights and the use of information and communication technologies as well as the fight against disinformation in the professional field, are being implemented.

5. Multilateral context: In October 2023, Brazil was re-elected for its sixth mandate as a member of the UN Human Rights Council. Brazil was last reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in November 2022, when it received 306 recommendations. While the previous government deferred its position on them, the government of President Lula accepted most of them, including on sexual and reproductive health and land rights for indigenous communities. Brazil has ratified all of the core human rights instruments with the exception of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW).

In 2023, the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship paid USD 37 million in compensation for sentences emitted by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, for human rights violations committed by the Brazilian state going back as far as 1982. The Brazilian lawyer Rodrigo Mudrovitsch was nominated new Vice President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Canada

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: The human rights situation in Canada is positive overall and Canada has a steady global reputation as a defender of human rights and democracy. In 2023, one of the most significant steps forward in advancing human rights in Canada was the release of the federal government's action plan for implementing the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIP)**. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal also approved a settlement of CAD 23.4 billion to compensate victims of the First Nations child welfare system. Despite these efforts, several longstanding issues remain, including systemic discrimination and violence against Indigenous people, poor consultation processes on the extraction of natural resources on Indigenous land, chronic under-funding of Indigenous resources and the over-representation of Indigenous peoples amongst prison inmates. According to civil society organisations such as Amnesty International, Canada also crucially lacks a strong monitoring system to ensure systematic respect of human rights across the federal and provincial borders, and levels of government.

Civil society organisations and academics have also pointed to the detention of certain immigrants, including some who are seeking refugee protection in Canada, and to the breaches of environmental human rights, in particular when federal and provincial climate policies impact First Nations, as areas of concern. The direction taken by certain provinces on LGBTI rights, especially towards youth, under the guise of parental rights, is also a source of concern. The UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, urged Canadian authorities to: i) amend Canada's temporary foreign worker programmes, described as "a breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery", and end the closed work permit system and ii) bring forward legislation requiring Canadian companies to implement mandatory human rights due diligence and expand the independence, powers and mandate of the CORE."

On the international stage, Canada has continued to stand up for human rights and democracy and has announced it will be seeking a seat on the UN Human Rights Council for the 2028-2030 term. In 2023 it notably imposed additional sanctions on representatives of the Iranian and Myanmar regimes for gross and systematic violations of human rights. Nevertheless, concerns remain over the poor oversight of Canadian mining companies operating abroad and activists continue to call on the government to expand the powers and mandate of the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE).

2. EU action - key focus areas: Gender equality and the empowerment of women is a shared priority for the EU and Canada and was covered in a number of activities. The subject is also