

UPR Submission
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United States of America



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About Abshar Atefaha Charity Institute

1. Abshar Atefeha Charity Institute is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-political organization in Special Consultative Status to ECOSOC since 2019. Abshar Atefeha was established in 2001 in Mashad (Islamic Republic of Iran (I.R.Iran)) and has been active in the field of humanitarian activities.

2. Abshar Atefeha's main activities are:

- Eliminating Poverty;
- Paying pension to disadvantaged people;
- Paying the treatment's costs of patients;
- Employment and job creation through providing individuals with financial assistance;
- Paying the costs of renting or buying a residential unit;
- Providing dowry and paying the cost of marriage for disadvantaged couples.

3. Abshar Atefeha is submitting the following report on the human rights situation in United States of America (USA) to contribute to the improvement of human rights in this country. To this end, we have focused on challenges in 7 different areas, based on recommendations received by country during last UPR cycle:

- Economic Inequality and Widespread Poverty
- Violation of Freedom of Expression and the Press
- Discrimination Against Women
- Police Violence and Racial Discrimination
- Limited Access to Healthcare
- Adverse Conditions of Single Mothers

- Violation of Migrants' and Asylum Seekers' Rights

Finally, the present report concludes by offering some recommendations to USA.

A) Economic Inequality and Widespread Poverty

4. Economic inequality in the United States constitutes one of the most significant human rights challenges, affecting millions of individuals. According to data, in 2023, approximately 37.9 million people in the U.S. lived below the poverty line, equivalent to 11.5% of the total population. This rate is considerably higher among minority groups, such as Black Americans (17.1%) and Latinos (16.8%). This disparity has been exacerbated by tax policies favoring the wealthy and the reduction of social support programs. Widespread poverty restricts access to basic necessities such as housing, food, and healthcare, resulting in a violation of the right to a decent standard of living, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

5. Children are particularly vulnerable in these circumstances; approximately 16% of American children (over 11 million) live in poverty. This situation adversely affects their education, health, and future opportunities. Reports indicate that the income gap between the top 1% and the rest of society has widened dramatically in recent decades; in 2022, the wealthiest 1% accounted for 22.2% of the nation's total income. This inequality is compounded by structural discrimination that disproportionately impacts minorities and women. The absence of effective policies to bridge this gap, including an

inadequate minimum wage (fixed at \$7.25 per hour since 2009), has contributed to the escalation of this crisis. In 2018, the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights criticized the United States for "extreme poverty and inequality," deeming it a violation of human rights.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2023"; United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, 2018.

B) Violation of Freedom of Expression and the Press

6. Although the United States claims to uphold freedom of expression, the 2023 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders ranked the country 42nd, describing its situation as "problematic." Journalists face threats, arrests, and government surveillance; in 2022, at least 15 journalists were detained, Two-thirds occurred at protests.

7. The suppression of whistleblowers is also prevalent; individuals such as Julian Assange and Edward Snowden face prosecution for exposing government misconduct. The Espionage Act of 1917 is employed to silence critics, constituting a violation of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (freedom of expression). Amnesty International has identified these actions as a threat to democracy.

Source: Reporters Without Borders, "World Press Freedom Index, 2023"; Amnesty International, 2022. <https://pressfreedomtracker.us/>

c) Discrimination Against Women

8. Women in the United States continue to face discrimination across various domains, violating gender equality as stipulated in Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 2023, the gender pay gap revealed that women earned only 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. This disparity is more pronounced for Black women (63 cents) and Latina women (55 cents). Domestic violence remains widespread; in 2022, over 20 million women experienced domestic violence, affecting one in four women.

9. Access to reproductive healthcare has also been curtailed. These restrictions disproportionately impact low-income women and have increased maternal mortality rates (21 deaths per 100,000 births in 2021). The United Nations has deemed these limitations a violation of women's rights.

Source: National Women's Law Center, "Gender Pay Gap, 2023"; Guttmacher Institute, "Abortion Access, 2023".

D) Police Violence and Racial Discrimination

10. Police violence in the United States represents a prominent human rights violation, particularly targeting Black individuals and other minorities. In 2023, police killed 1,176 people, the highest recorded number to date. Black Americans, comprising only 13% of the population, accounted for 26% of these victims—2.5 times more likely than white individuals—highlighting systemic discrimination in law enforcement.

11. The killing of George Floyd in 2020 exemplifies this violence, sparking widespread protests. Such acts frequently go unpunished; between 2005 and 2020, only 1.1% of officers involved in killings were convicted, largely due to legal protections like "qualified immunity." Amnesty International's 2021 report identified this pattern as a violation of the right to life and personal security, guaranteed under Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Excessive use of force, including tear gas and rubber bullets during protests, has also been criticized as a breach of the right to peaceful assembly. This issue stems from inadequate police training and a militarized culture, necessitating structural reform.

Source: Mapping Police Violence, 2023; Amnesty International, "USA: Police Violence and Accountability," 2021.

E) Limited Access to Healthcare

12. The lack of universal healthcare access in the United States violates the right to health, as outlined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 2023, approximately 28 million people (8.6% of the population) lacked health insurance. High medical costs contributed to 66.5% of personal bankruptcies in 2022 being due to medical debt. Racial disparities are evident; 14.2% of Black Americans and 19.5% of Latinos are uninsured, compared to 7.2% of white Americans.

13. Preventable conditions like diabetes and hypertension lead to premature deaths—approximately 68,000 in 2021—due to lack of treatment. Unlike most developed nations, the U.S. lacks a universal healthcare system, and reliance on private insurance widens this gap. The World Health Organization and the United Nations have deemed this situation a breach of America’s human rights obligations.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, "Health Insurance Coverage, 2023"; World Health Organization, 2022.

F) Adverse Conditions of Single Mothers

14. The rising prevalence of single mothers in the United States has become an urgent social and economic concern, particularly within low-income and minority communities. These single-parent households, predominantly headed by mothers, face a heightened risk of poverty—37% live below the poverty

line—and experience social isolation, exacerbated by low wages, limited employment opportunities, and high childcare costs. Since 2008, when 40.6% of births occurred outside marriage, shifts in marriage patterns, economic instability, and insufficient support resources have driven this trend. Single mothers with only a high school diploma face a poverty rate of 31.7%, illustrating the profound impact of lacking a partner on financial stability.

15. Their children, raised in resource-scarce environments, encounter educational and social challenges, with economic and emotional stress impairing their mental health and academic performance. Heavy dependence on government assistance, such as food stamps and housing subsidies, places significant strain on public systems and traps families in a cycle of poverty. Beyond economic hardships, single mothers contend with loneliness, depression, and stress, worsened by inadequate social support networks. This crisis pressures the education system, as children from these households lack access to quality resources and face elevated dropout risks, threatening their future.

Source: Washington DC Family Advocate, "Status of Single Mothers in the U.S. and Economic-Social Impacts," 2023; *Marriage and Poverty in the U.S.*, "The Impact of Marriage and Education on Poverty," 2023.

G) Violation of Migrants' and Asylum Seekers' Rights

16. U.S. immigration policies have severely violated the human rights of migrants and asylum seekers. Between 2018 and 2019, the "zero tolerance" policy led to the separation of over 5,500 children from their parents at the border, breaching the right to family unity under Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As of 2023, approximately 1,000 children remain un reunited with their families.

17. Immigration detention centers exhibit inhumane conditions; in 2022, over 21,000 migrants were held in these facilities, many without access to medical care or adequate food. Reports document sexual abuse, physical assault, and deaths in these centers, with at least eight fatalities recorded in 2022. The expedited deportation of asylum seekers without proper review of their claims violates the 1951 Refugee Convention, to which the U.S. is a signatory.

Source: Human Rights Watch, "US: Immigration Policy Harms Rights," 2023; American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), 2022.

H) Recommendations

18. Implement progressive taxation and increase the federal minimum wage to ensure equitable wealth distribution and a living wage, in line with Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which guarantees the right to an adequate standard of living. Expand enhanced welfare programs, to reduce poverty and structural disparities. Strengthen anti-discrimination laws and invest in education and job training for marginalized groups to promote economic inclusion and equality.

19. Reform restrictive laws like the Espionage Act to protect whistleblowers and journalists, upholding the right to freedom of expression (UDHR, Article 19). Establish independent oversight mechanisms to prevent government surveillance and ensure accountability for violations against media workers. Promote legal protections for peaceful protests and press coverage, reinforcing the right to freedom of assembly and information access.

20. Enact federal legislation to close the gender pay gap and enforce equal pay for equal work, advancing gender equality (UDHR, Article 2). Ensuring women's right to health. Enhance domestic violence prevention through funding shelters, legal aid, and education, protecting women's right to security (UDHR, Article 3).

21. Mandate comprehensive police training on de-escalation and anti-racism to safeguard the right to life and security (UDHR, Article 3). Establish independent civilian review boards with authority to investigate and discipline officers, addressing systemic racial bias in law enforcement. Allocate federal funds to community-based safety programs and promoting equitable justice.

22. Adopt a universal healthcare system to guarantee the right to health for all (UDHR, Article 25), eliminating disparities in insurance coverage. Subsidize medical costs and expand Medicaid nationwide to prevent debt-related bankruptcies and ensure treatment for preventable conditions. Prioritize healthcare equity by targeting resources to underserved racial and socioeconomic groups, reducing systemic

barriers.

23. Provide subsidized childcare and paid family leave to support single mothers' economic stability and right to work (UDHR, Article 23). Increase direct financial assistance and access to education and vocational training, empowering single mothers to escape poverty and secure their right to an adequate standard of living. Create community support networks and mental health services to combat isolation and stress, upholding their dignity and well-being (UDHR, Article 1).

24. End family separation policies and ensure humane conditions in detention centers, respecting the right to family unity and dignity (UDHR, Articles 16 and 1). Reform immigration processes to guarantee fair asylum hearings in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, protecting the right to seek asylum. Provide legal representation and healthcare to detained migrants, preventing abuse and upholding their fundamental human rights.