



Lebanese Republic
National Human Rights Commission
including the Committee
for the Prevention of Torture
NHRC-CPT

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Briefing Note for the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions

Country Visit to Lebanon , 29 September to 10 October 2025

Part I: Executive Summary

1. Purpose of the Briefing

The National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (NHRC-CPT), submits this briefing to support the country visit of Dr Morris Tidball-Binz, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. The note provides an independent, evidence-based account of the situation of the right to life in Lebanon between 2021 and 2025, focusing on patterns of unlawful killings, custodial deaths, torture, and systemic impunity that obstruct justice for victims.

The NHRC-CPT has drawn this briefing from its statutory monitoring, documentation missions, field investigations, and reports.¹

The objectives of this submission are to:

1. Inform the Special Rapporteur's findings on patterns of extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions and the State's response;
2. Highlight legislative and institutional shortcomings affecting the prevention, investigation, and accountability for such violations; and
3. Recommend concrete measures to strengthen Lebanon's compliance with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention against Torture (CAT), and the Minnesota Protocol (2016) on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Deaths.

2. Institutional Context

Lebanon's **National Human Rights Commission** was created by **Law No. 62/2016** as the country's independent **National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)**, incorporating within it the **National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)** against torture. Despite its legal establishment and appointment of members in 2018–2019, the Commission remains partially non-operational because the Government has failed to adopt five essential decrees, covering internal and financial regulations, compensation of members, and contracting procedures.

The absence of these instruments has deprived the NHRC-CPT of budgetary autonomy, staffing capacity, and premises, limiting its ability to fully discharge its monitoring mandate. Nonetheless, through donor support and voluntary commitment of its members, the Commission has maintained its investigative and advisory activities and continues to act as Lebanon's principal independent body monitoring violations of **international human rights law (IHRL)** and **international humanitarian law (IHL)** during armed conflict.

3. Overview of Key Findings (2021 – 2025)

a. Conflict-Related Killings and Violations of IHL

The NHRC-CPT documented grave breaches of IHL and IHRL during the **Israeli military campaign against Lebanon (October 2023 – November 2024)**, which continued under the codename *Operation Northern Arrows*.

¹National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, <https://nhrc.lb.org/en/archives/category/publications-en>

- Over **14,775 attacks** were recorded, resulting in approximately **4,047 deaths**, including **1,106 women and children**, and **16,638 injuries**.
- Violations included the deliberate targeting of civilians, journalists, healthcare personnel, UNIFIL sites, and cultural heritage locations; and the use of **white phosphorus munitions** in populated areas, acts amounting to **war crimes** under the Rome Statute.
- The Lebanese authorities' response to the crisis was fragmented, slow, and marked by discrimination in the protection of displaced populations, particularly women, children, refugees, and migrant workers.

b. Deaths in Custody and Torture

Between 2023 and 2025, the Commission carried out **more than 200 visits** to detention facilities nationwide. Conditions documented include overcrowding, unsanitary environments, lack of medical care, and pervasive corruption practices such as payment of bribes for basic rights. These conditions directly contributed to preventable deaths in custody.

The NHRC-CPT's investigations identified repeated instances of torture and ill-treatment, notably the case of **M.H. (victim of torture at Baabda Judicial Detachment, December 2021)**, which became the first to reach a civilian court (Case No. 1707/2022) but remains pending after three years.

NHRC-CPT has launched an **independent investigation** into the reported suicide of the 14-year-old minor (M.A.) at the **Warwar Juvenile Rehabilitation Center on 29 September 2025**. The investigation will cover all circumstances surrounding the incident and assess potential violations of the child's right to life and protection from ill-treatment while in custody. A multidisciplinary team, comprising a lawyer, forensic expert, criminologists, and human rights investigator, has begun **collecting and analyzing physical and testimonial evidence**. The NHRC-CPT's inquiry aims to determine whether the procedures followed by the Internal Security Forces and the center's administration met national and international standards, and to ensure that the truth is fully established and accountability is upheld in accordance with Lebanon's obligations under the **Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)**.

c. Excessive Use of Force and Summary Killings by State Actors

Security forces continued to use lethal force to disperse protests and during counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism operations, resulting in unlawful deaths that have not been investigated impartially. Investigations remain under the control of the same agencies involved, contradicting the principles of independence and impartiality enshrined in the Minnesota Protocol.

d. Political Assassinations and Impunity

From 2021 onwards, a series of targeted killings of political activists, municipal officials, and journalists has gone unpunished. The continuing failure to deliver justice for the

Beirut Port Explosion (2020) victims symbolizes the collapse of accountability mechanisms and the erosion of public trust in the judiciary.

4. Structural and Legislative Challenges

The Commission's findings reveal a **systemic culture of impunity** sustained by:

- **Judicial inertia** and political interference that undermine the independence of courts;
- **Inadequate legislative frameworks**, notably Law No. 65/2017 on the Punishment of Torture, which contains limitations contrary to the CAT;
- The continued trial of civilians before **Military Courts** under Law No. 24/1968; and
- Absence of a functional National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF) since 2021, paralyzing Lebanon's engagement with UN treaty bodies and special procedures.

The Commission stresses that extrajudicial or arbitrary killings cannot be addressed without a comprehensive strategy that combines criminal accountability, judicial reform, forensic capacity-building, and protection of witnesses and human-rights defenders.

5. Key Recommendations

The NHRC-CPT urges the Special Rapporteur to consider the following priority recommendations in his mission report:

1. **Establish Accountability for Conflict-Related Killings**
 - Advocate for an *independent international investigative mechanism* to examine violations of IHL and IHRL in Lebanon since October 2023.
 - Encourage the Government of Lebanon to reaffirm acceptance of the **ICC's jurisdiction under Article 12(3)** of the Rome Statute.
2. **Ensure Prompt and Independent Investigation of Custodial Deaths**
 - Adopt a national protocol on death investigation consistent with the Minnesota Guidelines (2016).
 - Guarantee immediate access of NHRC-CPT inspectors to all places of detention without prior authorization.
3. **Reform Legislation and Justice Institutions**
 - Amend Law No. 65/2017 to remove statute of limitations and military jurisdiction over torture cases.

- Adopt the long-pending law on the independence of the judiciary.
- Restrict the competence of Military Courts to strictly military offenses.

4. **Protect the Right to Life amid Socio-Economic Collapse**

- Integrate public-health, food-security, and environmental risks into the State's right-to-life framework.
- Prioritize the protection of persons with disabilities, women, and children in emergency planning.

5. **Strengthen Cooperation with OHCHR and Special Procedures**

- Re-activate the NMIRF and institutionalize regular consultations between the NHRC-CPT, civil society, and UN mechanisms.

Lebanon's recurring crises, constitutional paralysis, economic collapse, and armed aggression, have gravely undermined the protection of the right to life. The persistence of extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions is both a symptom and a driver of institutional erosion.

The NHRC-CPT stands ready to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur, to facilitate access to official records and detention sites, and to support the implementation of his recommendations in the spirit of the UN Charter and the Paris Principles.

Part II: Mandate and Institutional Context

1. The National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (NHRC-CPT)

The **National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (NHRC-CPT)**, was created by **Law No. 62/2016** of the Lebanese Parliament as an **independent national institution** charged with the protection and promotion of all human rights in accordance with the **Constitution of Lebanon**, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, and Lebanon's obligations under international treaties. The law also designated the Commission as the **National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)** pursuant to the **Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)**, to which Lebanon acceded through **Law No. 12/2008**.

The Commission's dual character, as both NHRI and NPM, confers a comprehensive mandate to monitor compliance with **international human rights law (IHRL)** and **international humanitarian law (IHL)**, document violations, and advocate for accountability and redress. It is also authorized to visit all places of deprivation of liberty, investigate alleged cases of torture, ill-treatment, or death in custody, and issue recommendations to the competent judicial and administrative authorities.

Beyond torture prevention, the NHRC-CPT is empowered to:

- Monitor and report on the overall human-rights situation;
- Investigate patterns of extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions;
- Issue public and confidential reports to national and international bodies; and
- Engage directly with the **United Nations human-rights mechanisms**, including treaty bodies and special procedures.

The Commission's members were appointed by **Decree No. 3267 (19 June 2018)**, and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture by **Decree No. 5147 (5 July 2019)**. Both decrees became effective following a competitive selection process supervised by the Council of Ministers.

2. Independence and Operational Constraints

Despite its legal establishment, the NHRC-CPT remains **partially non-functional** due to persistent administrative obstruction by the executive branch. The **Council of Ministers** has failed to adopt five essential regulatory decrees required under Law No. 62/2016:

1. The **Internal Regulations**;
2. The **Financial Regulations**;
3. The **Code of Ethics**;
4. The **Decree on Members' Compensation**; and
5. The **Decree on Contracting and Staffing Procedures**.

The absence of these instruments has deprived the Commission of the legal and administrative framework necessary for its full independence. In the absence of official premises and staff, the NHRC-CPT has operated from a temporary location, relying on the voluntary efforts of its members and donor-funded technical assistance.

Although a budget line, **No. 1073 "Protection and Promotion of Human Rights"**, was introduced in the national budget in 2023 following sustained advocacy, the amounts allocated remain insufficient to sustain operations. Furthermore, the Ministry of Finance's delay in transferring appropriated funds has left the Commission financially vulnerable and dependent on external support.

The **Ministry of Justice** has compounded the impasse by refusing to transmit to the Council of Ministers the revised drafts of the internal and financial regulations, even though all observations raised by the **State Council** in Opinion No. 7/2021–2022 were

fully incorporated by the Commission. This continuing administrative paralysis threatens Lebanon's compliance with its obligations under Article 17 of the OPCAT, which requires States to ensure the functional independence and adequate resourcing of their National Preventive Mechanisms.

3. Scope of Mandate under International and Domestic Law

The NHRC-CPT's mandate covers **all persons within Lebanese jurisdiction**, regardless of nationality or status, and extends to both peacetime and armed-conflict situations. Its functions include:

- **Monitoring and documentation:** systematic collection and verification of information on violations of the right to life, torture, enforced disappearance, and other grave abuses of human rights and humanitarian law.
- **Investigation:** conducting on-site visits, interviews, and forensic assessments, including unannounced inspections of prisons, police stations, and detention centers operated by the military or security agencies.
- **Reporting:** submission of annual, thematic, and urgent reports to Parliament, the Council of Ministers, and international mechanisms.
- **Education and awareness:** promotion of human-rights culture through cooperation with universities, professional orders, and civil society organizations.
- **Advisory role:** review of draft laws and administrative practices to ensure compatibility with human-rights obligations, including the **ICCPR**, **CAT**, **CEDAW**, **CRC**, and **CRPD**.

The Commission also established a specialized **International Humanitarian Law Committee** mandated to monitor compliance with the Geneva Conventions during armed conflict, liaise with humanitarian organizations, and recommend measures to end impunity for grave breaches of IHL.

4. Relationship with the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms

Lebanon extended a **standing invitation to all UN special procedures** on 17 March 2011. The NHRC-CPT serves as the principal national interlocutor with these mechanisms and routinely communicates findings, urgent appeals, and shadow reports to relevant mandates, including the Special Rapporteurs on Torture, on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and on Freedom of Expression.

However, Lebanon's **National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up (NMIRF)**, the body meant to coordinate State engagement with UN mechanisms, has been inactive since 2021. This institutional vacuum has delayed or blocked Lebanon's reporting to the **Committee against Torture, Human Rights**

Committee, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and Committee on the Rights of the Child, and has prevented the government from systematizing responses to recommendations from the UPR and special procedures.

5. Cooperation with National Stakeholders

The Commission works closely with:

- **Parliamentary Human Rights Committee**, providing technical advice on draft laws such as the amendment to Law No. 65/2017 on the Punishment of Torture and the draft law on the independence of the judiciary;
- **Judiciary and security agencies**, through confidential communications regarding cases of alleged extrajudicial killings or custodial deaths;
- **Civil-society organizations**, particularly those engaged in prison reform, refugee protection, and documentation of conflict-related abuses; and
- **International partners**, including **UNDP, OHCHR, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**, for capacity-building and monitoring exercises.

Notwithstanding these collaborations, the absence of formal recognition by the executive branch and the continued non-adoption of its regulations have hampered the Commission's ability to function as a fully independent body in accordance with the **Paris Principles**.

6. Legal and Policy Environment Affecting the Right to Life

Lebanon's human-rights landscape between 2021 and 2025 has been marked by overlapping crises: the collapse of state institutions, severe economic deterioration, and recurrent armed hostilities along the southern border. These conditions have eroded the State's capacity to guarantee the right to life as enshrined in **Article 6 of the ICCPR**.

Key structural obstacles include:

- **Absence of a coherent national policy on the right to life**, encompassing law-enforcement accountability, custodial oversight, and conflict-related protection of civilians;
- **Fragmentation of oversight institutions**, with overlapping mandates and limited coordination among ministries, security agencies, and the judiciary;

- **Chronic under-funding of forensic medicine and legal-aid systems**, leading to deficient investigations into suspicious deaths; and
- **Lack of a witness-protection framework** discourages victims' families from pursuing complaints.

These factors have produced a climate of impunity in which extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions often go unpunished.

7. The NHRC-CPT's Monitoring Methodology

The Commission employs a rigorous methodology consistent with the **Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death (2016)** and the **Istanbul Protocol (2022)** on the effective investigation and documentation of torture. The process involves:

1. **Information intake** from victims, families, and civil society;
2. **On-site verification** and interviews with witnesses;
3. **Forensic assessment** conducted by independent medical experts.
4. **Legal analysis** of compliance with international standards; and
5. **Follow up** with judicial authorities and public reports when appropriate.

Between 2021 and 2025, the Commission conducted **more than 300 field visits**, including 200 to detention facilities, 45 to conflict-affected areas.

8. Institutional Achievements Despite Constraints

Despite severe limitations, the NHRC-CPT has:

- Published three **annual human-rights reports (2022–2024)** and two **special reports** on detention conditions and war-related violations;
- Documented several **cases of alleged torture and custodial deaths** referred to the judiciary;

These accomplishments underscore the Commission's resilience and commitment to fulfilling its statutory mandate despite the absence of adequate institutional support.

The NHRC-CPT represents Lebanon's principal independent mechanism for protecting the right to life and preventing extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions. Yet its

effectiveness remains hampered by administrative obstruction, financial insecurity, and political indifference.

Full operationalization of the Commission is essential for the implementation of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations and for Lebanon's compliance with its international obligations. The Commission reiterates that the independence of national human-rights institutions is not a privilege but a **legal requirement under the Paris Principles** and a **prerequisite for credible accountability**.

Part III: Patterns of Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions (2021 – 2025)

1. General Overview

During the reporting period, Lebanon has experienced a multidimensional crisis encompassing economic collapse, political paralysis, and prolonged armed hostilities along its southern border. Within this unstable environment, the NHRC-CPT has documented **widespread violations of the right to life**, ranging from conflict-related killings to deaths in custody and law-enforcement operations.

These patterns demonstrate not isolated incidents but **a systemic failure of State institutions** to prevent, investigate, and punish arbitrary deprivations of life, in breach of **Article 6 of the ICCPR** and the **Minnesota Protocol (2016)**.

The Commission classifies such violations into four principal categories:

1. Conflict-related killings during the 2023–2025 Israeli aggression;
2. Deaths resulting from excessive or unlawful use of force by Lebanese security agencies;
3. Deaths in custody linked to torture, neglect, or denial of medical care; and
4. Targeted political killings and continued impunity for past assassinations.

2. Conflict-Related Killings (2023 – 2025)

a. Scale and Impact of the Israeli Aggression

Between **8 October 2023** and **27 November 2024**, Israel conducted an extensive military campaign under the code name *Operation Northern Arrows*, marked by deliberate and disproportionate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Based on data verified jointly with the **Lebanese Ministry of Public Health, Civil Defence**, and **independent monitors**, the Commission documented:

- **14,775 attacks** recorded across southern and eastern Lebanon;
- **4,047 fatalities**, including **1,106 women and children**;
- **16,638 injured** persons, many suffering permanent disabilities; and
- **1.4 million civilians displaced**

The Commission's field teams observed **indiscriminate bombardment of populated areas**, including the use of air-burst **white phosphorus munitions** in southern Lebanon, causing extensive fires, destruction of farmland, and civilian casualties. These acts contravene the **principle of distinction** and the **prohibition of indiscriminate attacks** under **Articles 51 and 57 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions**.

b. Direct Targeting of Protected Persons and Objects

Evidence gathered by the NHRC-CPT, corroborated by open-source verification and partner NGOs, demonstrates a consistent pattern of **direct targeting** of categories protected by international humanitarian law:

- **Journalists:** The Israeli Defence Forces fired precision tank rounds at a group of reporters in *Alma al-Shaab* on 13 October 2023, killing Reuters photo-journalist **Issam Abdallah** and injuring six others. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch concluded that the attack was deliberate and therefore constitutes a **war crime**.
- **Medical Personnel:** At least **163 health workers** were killed, and **158 ambulances, 55 hospitals, and 201 aid centres** were damaged by Israeli strikes
NHRI HR Violations during the W...
,violations of the Geneva Conventions I and IV.
- **UN Facilities:** More than 30 attacks were recorded against UNIFIL positions, some resulting in casualties among peacekeepers.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Air raids struck archaeological sites in Baalbek, Niha, and Nabatieh, destroying structures protected under the 1954 Hague Convention.

c. Absence of Accountability

The Lebanese Government's response to these violations has been fragmented and inconsistent. Although the Council of Ministers initially accepted the jurisdiction of the **International Criminal Court** on 26 April 2024 for crimes committed since 7 October 2023, it subsequently revoked that decision following political pressure. To date, no

domestic judicial investigations have been opened into alleged war crimes or attacks on civilians.

The NHRC-CPT reiterates that the **State has a non-derogable obligation to investigate every potentially unlawful death**, even in times of armed conflict, and that failure to do so may engage its international responsibility.

3. Excessive Use of Force by Lebanese Security Agencies

a. Lethal Force in Law-Enforcement Operations

From 2021 to 2024, the Commission recorded numerous incidents in which members of the **Internal Security Forces (ISF)** and the **Lebanese Army** used lethal force in circumstances not meeting the criteria of necessity and proportionality. These include:

- The shooting of protesters during anti-austerity demonstrations in Tripoli (January 2021), which resulted in at least two deaths.
- The fatal shooting of a civilian in Baalbek (May 2022) during an anti-drug raid; and
- Several unexplained deaths of suspects in military custody occurred between 2022 and 2024.

Investigations into these cases were either conducted by the same agencies involved or referred to the **Military Court**, which lacks independence and transparency. No security official has been convicted for unlawful killings since 2019.

b. Legal Framework and Gaps

Lebanon's domestic law does not fully incorporate the **UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (1990)**. Internal regulations of the ISF and Army provide broad discretion to use firearms to "repel attacks on public or private property," a standard that fails to meet the requirement that lethal force be used only when strictly unavoidable to protect life.

The Commission recommends amendments to domestic legislation to clearly define "necessity," "proportionality," and "imminent threat to life" in accordance with international standards.

c. Accountability and Impunity

The absence of independent oversight mechanisms for law-enforcement operations has allowed a pattern of uninvestigated killings to persist. Families who attempt to file complaints face threats and retaliation.

4. Deaths in Custody

a. Overview and Statistics

Between January 2021 and July 2025, the NHRC-CPT recorded **at least 24 confirmed deaths in custody**, mostly within facilities operated by the ISF and the Army. Causes of death include untreated medical conditions, suicide, and physical abuse. The Commission believes the actual number to be significantly higher due to systematic under-reporting and lack of transparency in official records.

b. Conditions of Detention

Inspections of over 200 facilities revealed conditions that constitute **cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment**: overcrowding exceeding 300 percent capacity, unsanitary facilities, absence of ventilation, and corruption in the form of bribes for access to food or medical care. Such conditions have directly contributed to preventable deaths and pose a grave risk to life and health

c. Case Study – The M.H. Torture Case

On 9 December 2021, the NHRC-CPT received a complaint from citizen *M.H.* alleging torture during interrogation by officers of the Baabda Judicial Detachment. The Commission's investigation included a forensic medical examination and legal follow-up before the First Investigative Judge of Mount Lebanon. Despite sufficient evidence and international attention, the case remains pending as of September 2025, highlighting the slow judicial response and lack of effective remedy.

d. Systemic Failures in Investigation

Deaths in custody rarely trigger prompt judicial inquiries. Post-mortem examinations are performed by forensic doctors under the authority of the Ministry of Interior rather than independent forensic institutes, raising questions of impartiality. Families are often not informed of the circumstances of death or allowed to obtain independent autopsies.

The Commission urges the adoption of a **National Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths in Custody** aligned with the Minnesota Protocol, including requirements for immediate notification, scene preservation, independent forensic autopsy, and judicial oversight.

5. Targeted Killings and Political Assassinations

From 2021 through 2025, Lebanon has witnessed multiple instances of targeted killings and political assassinations, reflecting both domestic political fissures and regional conflict spillovers.

The 2021 murder of activist Lokman Slim remains unresolved and emblematic of the entrenched impunity in politically sensitive cases, with investigations hampered by obstructions and delays.

Politically sensitive domestic cases in 2024, such as the abduction and killing of Pascal Suleiman, further underscore the pervasive climate of lethality.

These incidents illustrate a pattern in which state and nonstate actors deploy lethal force in contested political arenas, while domestic legal and security structures frequently fail to deliver accountability, thus reinforcing public distrust in the rule of law.

The Commission recalls that **failure to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, and punish such killings engages State responsibility** under Articles 2 and 6 of the ICCPR.

Summary of Trends

The analysis of documented cases reveals the following common features:

- **Lack of independent investigations** into killings committed by state agents or during military operations;
- **Use of military jurisdiction** to shield security officials from civilian accountability;
- **Absence of effective forensic capacity** to establish cause and manner of death;
- **Intimidation of victims' families and witnesses**; and
- **Political interference** in the appointment and dismissal of investigating judges.

These patterns have eroded public confidence in the State's ability to protect life and deliver justice, and have deepened Lebanon's human-rights crisis.

6. Legacy Cases and Continuing Impunity

Lebanon remains burdened by a legacy of unresolved political assassinations dating back to the civil war and its aftermath. The absence of effective mechanisms to address past crimes has created a culture of impunity that encourages new violations. Particularly emblematic is the failure to deliver justice for the **Beirut Port Explosion (2020)**, which killed over 200 people and injured thousands. Repeated suspension of the investigating judge and political interference have undermined the credibility of the judicial process.

The NHRC-CPT considers the persistent obstruction of justice in such high-profile cases to constitute a continuing violation of the right to an effective remedy and a denial of truth for victims and their families.

7. Israeli / Cross-Border Strikes & High-Level Militants (2023–2025)

Because much of the recent targeted killings in Lebanon are part of military conflict dynamics, the line between “political assassination” and warfare is blurred.

Nonetheless, these events matter in the broader view of extrajudicial killings and sovereignty.

- On **2 January 2024**, a **drone/airstrike** in Dahieh, Beirut, killed **Saleh al-Aroui** (deputy leader of Hamas) and several others.
- On **30 July 2024**, an Israeli airstrike targeted **Fuad Shukr** (a Hezbollah commander) in Haret Hreik, Beirut. Several civilians also died in the attack.
- **Since September 15, 2024**, the Israeli aggression on Lebanon has dramatically increased, especially when the Israeli party remotely triggered thousands of pagers and hundreds of radios, which are communication devices used by many civilians, on September 17 and 18, 2024. Both waves of indiscriminate targeting killed 32 people, including two kids, and injured 3,250, including many people affiliated with the medical staff. UN experts were quick to classify these attacks as “a terrifying violation of international law.”
- On **27 September 2024**, a major Israeli airstrike targeted Hezbollah’s headquarters in Haret Hreik, reportedly killing **Hassan Nasrallah**, Hezbollah’s Secretary-General.
- On **3 October 2024**, an attack in Dahieh resulted in the death of **Hashem Safieddine**, Hezbollah’s Secretary-General.
- On **27 November 2024**, Lebanon and Israel reached a ceasefire agreement for 60 days, which was later extended on 27 January 2025 for several additional weeks. Despite this, Lebanese authorities documented more than 3,138 Israeli violations, resulting in approximately 245 deaths and at least 609 injuries, as of 14 July 2025, according to official data.

8. Legal Characterization of the Israeli Attacks under International Law

Under international humanitarian law, as codified in the **Geneva Conventions of 1949** and their **Additional Protocols**, as well as under **customary international law**, parties to an armed conflict are required to distinguish at all times between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives. Attacks may only be directed against military objectives. Civilians and civilian objects shall not be the object of attack.

Even if Israel possesses the capacity to identify and strike military positions accurately, this does not exempt it from its obligations under **Article 51(5)(b)** and **Article 57(2)(a)(iii)** of **Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions**, which prohibit attacks that may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, or damage to civilian objects that would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. The deliberate or reckless targeting of civilian infrastructure or civilian persons, including family members of militants, constitutes a **grave breach of the Geneva Conventions** and a **war crime** within the meaning of **Article 8(2)(b)(i)–(iv)** of the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court**.

Furthermore, even where a military objective is present in the vicinity of civilians, this does not confer upon the Israeli armed forces an unrestricted right to choose the means and methods of warfare. Pursuant to **Article 35(1)** and **Article 57(1)** of **Additional Protocol I**, Israel remains bound by the principles of **necessity**, **distinction**,

proportionality, and **precaution**. It must employ weaponry and targeting methods that minimize harm to civilians and civilian property, ensuring that attacks are precisely directed at legitimate military objectives and not conducted in a manner likely to cause excessive collateral damage.

Consequently, the pattern of Israeli military operations in Lebanon, marked by indiscriminate, disproportionate, and excessive strikes resulting in widespread civilian casualties and destruction, meets the constitutive elements of **war crimes** under **Article 8(2)(b)** of the **Rome Statute**. Given the systematic and widespread nature of these attacks against the civilian population, they may also amount to **crimes against humanity** under **Article 7(1)(a) and (k)** of the same Statute, particularly when committed as part of a deliberate state policy targeting civilians.

Such conduct equally contravenes **international human rights law**, including the **right to life** under **Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**, and violates the absolute prohibition of arbitrary deprivation of life. The intentional targeting of civilians, the use of lethal force for political or coercive purposes, and the commission of extrajudicial executions all constitute **serious violations of peremptory norms (jus cogens)** of international law.

The **international community**, in accordance with its obligations under **Common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions**, must ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances. States are under a positive duty to prevent, suppress, and punish grave breaches, including through the exercise of **universal jurisdiction**, the **imposition of arms embargoes**, and the **suspension of all forms of military and intelligence assistance** to Israel that could facilitate the commission of such crimes. Failure to act would not only perpetuate impunity but also amount to **complicity in internationally wrongful acts**, as defined under **Articles 16 and 41 of the International Law Commission's Articles on State Responsibility**.

Part IV: Systemic Impunity and Accountability Failures

1. Overview

The persistence of extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions in Lebanon cannot be understood without examining the structural failures that allow them to occur and to remain unpunished. The NHRC-CPT's investigations between 2021 and 2025 confirm that the State's inability, or unwillingness, to ensure independent investigations, judicial follow-up, and criminal accountability constitutes the **central driver of impunity**.

At the core of this impunity lies a triad of interlocking weaknesses:

1. A paralyzed and politically subordinated judiciary;
2. Defective criminal-law provisions that contradict international norms; and

3. An absence of effective forensic, investigative, and witness-protection mechanisms.

These systemic failures collectively deny victims and their families their rights to truth, justice, and reparation, as guaranteed under Articles 2, 6, and 14 of the ICCPR.

2. Judicial Inertia and Political Interference

a. Erosion of Judicial Independence

Lebanon's judiciary continues to function within a framework that allows extensive political control over appointments, promotions, and disciplinary measures. The Higher Judicial Council (HJC), constitutionally tasked with ensuring independence, remains heavily influenced by the executive branch. Judicial vacancies, including those in the Criminal Court of Cassation and the Investigative Chamber, have remained unfilled for months, halting key human-rights cases.

Since 2021, multiple judges investigating corruption, human-rights abuses, or politically sensitive killings have faced suspensions or retaliatory transfers. The most emblematic example is the repeated obstruction of the **Beirut Port Explosion investigation**, where political actors have filed motions to recuse the investigating judge more than forty times, effectively freezing proceedings for over two years.

The NHRC-CPT notes that such interference constitutes a direct violation of the **UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary (1985)** and undermines public trust in the justice system.

b. Delays and Backlogs

The judicial backlog is chronic. Approximately **60 percent** of Lebanon's prison population consists of pre-trial detainees, many held for several years without judgment. Some individuals have been detained for more than a decade pending investigation. Such delays amount to **de facto arbitrary detention** and create fertile ground for ill-treatment, coerced confessions, and deaths in custody.

c. Military Jurisdiction over Civilians

Military Courts continue to exercise jurisdiction over civilians for broadly defined offenses, including "undermining military prestige" or "defaming the Army." This violates international standards requiring that military courts be restricted to offenses of a purely military nature. The NHRC-CPT recalls the recommendations of the **Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/LBN/CO/3, 2018)** and calls again for the amendment of **Law No. 24/1968** to abolish this practice.

3. Deficiencies in Domestic Legislation

a. Law No. 65/2017 on the Punishment of Torture

While Law No. 65/2017 represents progress in criminalizing torture, it fails to meet the minimum requirements of the **Convention against Torture (CAT)**. Key deficiencies include:

- Limitation of the definition of torture to acts intended to obtain a confession, thereby excluding other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment;
- Retention of statutes of limitation, contrary to Article 29 of the CAT;
- Jurisdiction granted to ordinary criminal courts only upon complaint by the victim, leading to dismissal when victims fear reprisals; and
- Absence of provisions guaranteeing **non-refoulement** and exclusion of evidence obtained under torture.

Amendments were introduced in Parliament in 2020 but never debated. As a result, investigations into torture and deaths in custody remain rare and largely symbolic.

b. Lack of Criminalization of Enforced Disappearances and Extrajudicial Killings

Lebanon has yet to incorporate a specific criminal-law definition of **extrajudicial or arbitrary execution** and has not ratified the **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance**. The existing Penal Code provisions on homicide fail to reflect the aggravated nature of killings perpetrated by state agents or with their acquiescence.

c. Absence of Forensic and Procedural Safeguards

Investigations into suspicious deaths are governed by outdated procedural rules dating back to 1948. The **forensic medical system** lacks independence and relies on part-time doctors contracted by the Ministry of Justice or Interior, often without proper training in the **Minnesota Protocol (2016)**. Chain-of-custody procedures for evidence are rudimentary, resulting in loss or contamination of critical forensic material.

4. Institutional and Administrative Barriers to Accountability

a. Fragmented Institutional Responsibility

Responsibility for investigating deaths involving security forces is divided among the **Internal Security Forces**, the **Army's Intelligence Directorate**, the **Military Prosecutor**, and the **ordinary judiciary**. This fragmentation leads to jurisdictional conflicts and inconsistent standards. In practice, each agency investigates its own personnel, producing self-exonerating reports.

b. Lack of Transparency and Public Reporting

Neither the Ministries of Interior nor Defence publish statistics on deaths resulting from law-enforcement operations or in custody. This secrecy violates the principle of transparency essential to the protection of the right to life.

c. Absence of Witness-Protection and Victim-Support Mechanisms

Witnesses and relatives of victims often face intimidation and reprisals. Lebanon lacks a national witness-protection programme; existing ad-hoc measures under the Public Prosecutor's Office are insufficient. Families of victims receive no legal aid or psychosocial support, contrary to the obligations under **UN Principles on Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions (1989)**.

5. Forensic and Investigative Deficiencies

a. Absence of Independent Forensic Authority

Lebanon has no autonomous forensic institute. Post-mortem examinations are performed by general physicians appointed on a case-by-case basis by investigative judges, often under pressure from security agencies. The NHRC-CPT documented multiple instances in which forensic doctors failed to record injuries consistent with torture or omitted mention of possible external causes of death.

The Commission recommends the establishment of an **Independent National Forensic Institute** under the Ministry of Justice, but administratively autonomous, mandated to conduct all autopsies in potential unlawful-death cases and to maintain a secure national morgue and DNA database.

b. Failure to Preserve Crime Scenes

Investigations into killings, whether by security forces or during conflict, are frequently compromised by immediate removal of bodies, lack of photography, and destruction of ballistic evidence. In custodial deaths, cells are routinely cleaned or repainted before judicial inspection. Such practices amount to **obstruction of justice**.

c. Absence of Standardized Documentation

The Ministry of Interior's death registers are incomplete and not cross-referenced with judicial records. There is no central database of deaths in custody or police operations. The NHRC-CPT has developed a **pilot unified death-recording template**, but its institutionalization requires ministerial decree and inter-agency cooperation.

6. International Obligations and Non-Compliance

Lebanon is party to the **ICCPR**, **CAT**, **CRC**, **CEDAW**, and the four **Geneva Conventions**. It has also acceded to the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court** but has yet to deposit implementing legislation or establish national procedures for cooperation.

By failing to investigate and prosecute unlawful killings, Lebanon breaches:

- Article 6 (1) ICCPR , Right to Life;
- Article 2 (3) ICCPR , Right to an Effective Remedy;
- Article 12 CAT , Duty to Investigate; and
- Common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions , Obligation to Ensure Respect for IHL.

Furthermore, the revocation of the 2024 Cabinet decision accepting ICC jurisdiction represents a regression inconsistent with Lebanon’s commitment to international justice. The NHRC-CPT urges reinstatement of this acceptance and adoption of domestic implementing legislation.

7. Socio-Economic and Structural Drivers of Impunity

The collapse of Lebanon’s economy since 2019 has devastated the justice and security sectors. Judges’ salaries have lost more than 90 percent of their value, leading to strikes and paralysis of courts. Forensic departments lack basic supplies, fuel, and laboratory capacity. This degradation of institutional functioning contributes to “**structural impunity**,” where the system itself is incapable of delivering justice irrespective of political will.

8. Case Illustrations

a. Death of a Detainee at Roumieh Prison (2023)

A 34-year-old man arrested for petty theft died three days after admission. Authorities attributed the cause to “heart failure.” No autopsy or judicial investigation was opened.

b. Killing during Fuel Queue Dispute (2021)

During the fuel crisis, an off-duty security officer shot two civilians at a gas station in Khaldeh. The case was transferred to the Military Court, which released the officer on bail after two weeks. No further proceedings occurred.

These cases typify the systemic defects described above: lack of prompt investigation, misuse of military jurisdiction, and absence of transparency.

9. Consequences for Victims and Public Trust

The cumulative effect of impunity has been the **normalization of arbitrary deprivation of life**. Families of victims experience protracted psychological trauma, economic hardship, and social marginalization. Civil society organizations that attempt to

document killings face harassment and defamation lawsuits. This environment fosters cynicism and distrust, weakening the social contract and fuelling cycles of violence.

10. Recommendations on Accountability Reform

To break the cycle of impunity, the NHRC-CPT recommends that Lebanon:

1. **Adopt the Law on Judicial Independence**, ensuring transparent appointment, tenure, and disciplinary procedures;
2. **Amend Law No. 65/2017** to align with CAT standards and remove statutes of limitation.
3. **Restrict Military Court jurisdiction** to purely military offenses and transfer all civilian cases to ordinary courts;
4. **Establish an Independent National Forensic Institute** and adopt standardized investigation protocols consistent with the Minnesota Guidelines;
5. **Create a National Database on Deaths in Custody and Police Operations** accessible to oversight bodies;
6. **Enact a Witness-Protection and Victim-Support Law** providing relocation, anonymity, and legal aid; and
7. **Reinstate Lebanon's acceptance of ICC jurisdiction** and cooperate fully with international accountability mechanisms.

Implementation of these measures would mark a decisive step toward restoring public confidence and aligning Lebanon with its international obligations.

Part V: Humanitarian and Socio-Economic Determinants of the Right to Life (Updated 2025)

1. Structural Overview

Lebanon's prolonged financial collapse, combined with the 2023–2025 armed conflict, has transformed the humanitarian situation into a **multi-dimensional threat to life**. The NHRC-CPT's latest monitoring, comprising nationwide prison inspections, workplace-rights missions, and its 2024 Annual Report, shows that deprivation of life increasingly results from **state failure to provide minimum conditions for survival**: access to food, water, health, housing, and safe environments.

Economic deterioration, hyper-inflation, and the collapse of public institutions have created conditions where **preventable deaths** are routine outcomes of neglect rather than isolated tragedies. The Commission frames these as “**structural executions**”, foreseeable losses of life arising from government inaction, corruption, or discriminatory policy.

2. Collapse of Health and Sanitation Systems

a. Public-Health Breakdown

Throughout 2024, hospitals operated at below 40 percent capacity. Electricity blackouts, lack of oxygen, and migration of medical staff produced a cascade of avoidable deaths. The NHRC-CPT documented deaths of chronic-disease patients deprived of dialysis and insulin, and premature infants who perished during generator outages.

Hospital mortality from preventable conditions increased between 2021 and 2024. Widespread medicine shortages compelled families to turn to informal markets, undermining the State’s obligation to ensure equal protection of the right to life under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

b. Prison Health and Hygiene

Visits to **Tripoli and Zahle Prisons (September 2023)** exposed catastrophic sanitary and medical neglect. Cells designed for 20 persons held 60 to 80; water samples contained bacterial contamination above WHO limits.

The NHRC-CPT’s medical team reported untreated dermatological and respiratory infections, lack of psychiatric medication, and denial of hospital transfers. These findings constitute **degrading treatment leading to risk of death**, contravening the *Mandela Rules* §22–27 and the *Istanbul Protocol*.

c. Mental Health Crisis

The Commission recorded a **52 percent increase in suicides** (2021–2024). In prisons, at least 11 suicides occurred during 2023 alone. Experts linked them to solitary confinement, overcrowding, and untreated depression. The NHRC-CPT recommends national suicide-prevention measures and emergency mental-health staffing for all detention facilities.

3. Poverty, Employment Collapse, and Social Inequality

a. Right to a Dignified Standard of Living

The 2024 Annual Report details how inflation exceeding 45 percent and currency depreciation left public-sector salaries covering less than 10 percent of subsistence needs.

Poverty exceeded 80 percent of the population; unemployment surpassed 50 percent. Numerous protests, by civil servants, teachers, retirees, and security personnel, illustrate structural violations of the right to livelihood.

b. Labour-Rights Violations and Industrial Deaths

Since 2022, the NHRC-CPT has received multiple complaints alleging widespread hazardous conditions in factories, construction sites, and agricultural workplaces, including the absence of safety equipment, poorly ventilated workshops, and unpaid wages among migrant workers. At least ten workplace fatalities were reported in connection with unprotected machinery, gas explosions, fires, or partial building collapses. These largely uninvestigated deaths underscore the fatal consequences of systemic deregulation, inadequate enforcement, and corruption within the labour inspection system.

c. Migrant and Refugee Workers

Migrant domestic and construction workers, particularly from Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Sudan, continue to die from overwork, heat stress, and suicide under the *kafala* system. The NHRC-CPT reiterates that the State's tolerance of this system amounts to **institutionalised servitude** and indirect deprivation of life.

4. Environmental and Infrastructure Hazards

a. Toxic Exposure and Waste Mismanagement

Testing conducted by the NHRC-CPT's team during prison visits found lead-contaminated water and malfunctioning sewage systems. In urban areas, open waste-burning produces toxic dioxins, contributing to spikes in respiratory disease and cancer mortality.

b. Housing and Energy Insecurity

More than 100,000 housing units were destroyed or damaged in the 2023–2024 conflict, displacing 875,000 people. Winter 2024 saw multiple deaths from hypothermia due to a lack of heating. The absence of a **National Disaster-Risk Reduction Plan** constitutes a failure of due diligence to protect life from foreseeable hazards.

5. Displacement and Humanitarian Neglect

NHRC-CPT field missions in the South, Bekaa, and Mount Lebanon documented the humanitarian consequences of mass displacement:

- **Shelters used as schools** lacked sanitation and medical supplies.
- **67 recorded deaths** from exposure, malnutrition, or untreated illness;
- Refugees are subjected to curfews and arbitrary arrests, leading to fatal outcomes.

Research conducted by the NHRC-CPT identified critical gaps in official coordination, inclusion, and fairness in aid distribution. It underscored the need for a comprehensive

response plan activated within the first 72 hours of any crisis, the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in all phases of response and recovery, and the strengthening of accountability and transparency mechanisms across institutions. Key recommendations emerging from national discussions included the establishment of an independent national authority for crisis and disaster management, the creation of a pre-allocated emergency budget, and the adoption of a unified disaster response law to ensure preparedness and equitable aid delivery. This analysis reaffirms that preparedness is not optional but a moral and institutional obligation essential to safeguarding life and human dignity.

The Commission underscores that **withholding assistance or allowing discriminatory treatment in aid distribution** violates the non-discrimination principle of Article 2 ICCPR.

6. Gender and Vulnerability

a. Femicide and Domestic Violence

Civil society organizations verified **78 cases of femicide (2021–2024)**, often preceded by ignored protection orders. The rate of femicide in Lebanon in 2023 increased by 300%. The Commission attributes these killings to the State's failure to enforce Law 293/2014 and to societal impunity for gender-based violence.

b. Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons

The 2024 Annual Report highlights the exclusion of persons with disabilities from emergency shelters and medical triage, resulting in preventable deaths. At least 32 elderly persons died alone during the winter of 2024 from hunger or cold. The absence of an ageing-policy framework violates Article 10 CRPD and the right to life with dignity.

7. Detention and Conditions of Life in Prisons

The 2023 inspections of **Tripoli and Zahle Men's Prisons** concluded that overcrowding, infectious-disease exposure, and infrastructural decay create conditions tantamount to **slow-motion death sentences**. The water-quality annexes confirmed high contamination and bacterial counts, posing direct risks to inmates' lives. NHRC-CPT's team found severe malnutrition, untreated chronic illness, and inadequate ventilation. Such conditions constitute violations of **Rule 24 of the Nelson Mandela Rules** and **Article 6 ICCPR**.

8. Positive Obligations and Preventive Framework

To meet its obligations under Article 6 ICCPR, Lebanon must implement preventive structural reforms:

1. **Health-System Recovery Plan** ensuring equitable access to medicines and hospital care;

2. **National Nutrition and Food Security Programme** targeting extreme poverty;
3. **Emergency Rehabilitation of Prisons** (water, sanitation, medical units);
4. **Independent Labour Inspectorate** with authority to investigate occupational fatalities;
5. **Comprehensive Social-Protection Floor** guaranteeing income and housing security;
6. **Environmental Accountability Mechanism** to prosecute officials for toxic negligence; and
7. **Integration of Right-to-Life Indicators** in all government policy assessments.

The NHRC-CPT concludes that **Lebanon's humanitarian, economic, and environmental collapse has institutionalised preventable death**. Life expectancy, public health, and social stability have deteriorated in tandem. The Commission calls upon the Special Rapporteur to treat these structural deprivations as *de facto* violations of the right to life and to recommend a **national accountability framework for preventable mortality**, encompassing health, environment, and detention oversight.

Part VI: NHRC-CPT Monitoring, Case Studies and Data (Updated 2025)

1. Mandate, Coverage, and Methodology

Between **January 2021 and September 2025**, the NHRC-CPT conducted an unprecedented **412 monitoring missions**, covering **several detention facilities**, and **12 displacement and conflict-affected sites**. These missions were executed under the Commission's legal authority pursuant to **Law No. 62/2016** and in accordance with the **Minnesota Protocol (2016)** and the **Istanbul Protocol (2022)**.

Monitoring objectives included:

- Verification of **conditions of detention** and documentation of custodial deaths;
- Documentation of **conflict-related civilian casualties**; and
- Evaluation of **State responses** to humanitarian crises and socio-economic threats to life.

Each mission employed multidisciplinary teams, legal experts, social workers, and engineers.

2. Prison Conditions

Field Observations from Tripoli and Zahlé Prisons (2023)

The NHRC-CPT's inspection documented:

- **Occupancy rates** exceeded 400 percent; in Zahlé, 85 detainees were held in cells built for 25.
- **Potable-water tests** showing *E. coli* levels five times above WHO standards.
- **Medical vacancies**, no doctor on site after 17:00 hours.
- **Infectious-disease outbreaks** (scabies, tuberculosis) are unreported to health authorities.

3. Gender-Based Killings and Vulnerable Groups

The Commission confirmed **78 cases of femicide** (2021–2024), with five convictions to date. Patterns include police failure to enforce restraining orders and the absence of specialized prosecutors.

4. Analytical Findings

- **Persistent Impunity:** No effective judicial outcome for any custodial death or law-enforcement killing since 2019.
- **Institutional Weakness:** Absence of an independent forensic institute and a central death registry.
- **Data Deficiency:** Government ministries do not publish mortality statistics.
- **Vulnerability Concentration:** Women, refugees, and migrant workers bear disproportionate risk.
- **Preventive Potential:** Where the Commission intervened early (e.g., M.H. torture case), judicial progress was achieved, demonstrating that timely

independent oversight saves lives.

5. Digital Right-to-Life Database and Next Steps

In 2026, the NHRC-CPT is planning to launch a prototype of its Right-to-Life Monitoring Dashboard, integrating geospatial mapping of killings and custodial deaths by governorate. A second-phase upgrade (2027) will link forensic autopsy records and labour-inspection data to enable predictive risk analysis.

The Commission seeks OHCHR technical support to:

1. Secure interoperability with the UN Human Rights Case Database;
2. Train national forensic doctors in digital chain-of-custody standards; and
3. Develop a public-facing annual “Lebanon Right-to-Life Barometer.”

Part VII: Key Findings and Legal Analysis

1. Overview

Drawing on field investigations, and data from 2021–2025, the NHRC-CPT concludes that **arbitrary deprivation of life in Lebanon has become structural**, rooted not only in direct acts of violence but in the sustained failure of State institutions to safeguard life through effective governance, law enforcement, and social protection.

The Commission finds that the Lebanese State bears **dual responsibility**:

- *Direct responsibility* for deaths caused by State agents (security forces, prison staff, intelligence services); and
- *Indirect responsibility* for foreseeable and preventable deaths arising from corruption, negligence, and systemic collapse of health, labour, and environmental governance.

2. Nature and Scope of State Responsibility

a. Attribution and Due Diligence

Under **Articles 2 and 6 of the ICCPR**, States must not only refrain from unlawful killings but also **exercise due diligence** to prevent foreseeable threats to life.

Evidence from the Commission’s 2023–2025 investigations shows consistent failures in both respects:

- Unlawful use of force by law-enforcement officials with no subsequent prosecution;
- Absence of preventive measures to protect detainees, workers, and refugees from life-threatening conditions;
- Structural neglect amounts to *constructive deprivation of life*.

The NHRC-CPT notes that such omissions satisfy the threshold of **state responsibility for failure to protect**, as articulated in *Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 36 (2018)* and *Velásquez Rodríguez v. Honduras (IACtHR, 1988)*.

3. Procedural Violations under the Minnesota Protocol

In none of the confirmed custodial deaths or occupational fatalities did authorities meet the four procedural benchmarks of the **Minnesota Protocol**:

Criterion	State Practice (2021–2025)	Assessment
Promptness	Investigations often initiated weeks or months after death	Non-compliant
Independence	Same agency conducts internal review	Non-compliant
Thoroughness	Lack of forensic documentation and autopsy photography	Non-compliant
Public scrutiny	Families excluded; no publication of results	Non-compliant

These failings cumulatively amount to systemic procedural violations of the right to life, reinforcing impunity and denying victims’ families their right to truth.

4. Thematic Legal Findings

a. Deaths in Custody and Detention Conditions

Prison visits to **Tripoli and Zahlé** in 2023 demonstrated lethal neglect: overcrowding of 400%, contaminated water, and lack of medical care. Under the **Mandela Rules (24–27)** and **Article 10 ICCPR**, the State must guarantee humane treatment and access to health. The failure to do so transforms foreseeable health-related deaths into **arbitrary deprivations of life**.

b. Torture Leading to Death

At least 6 detainees died following torture or excessive use of force by security forces and Military Intelligence. Despite forensic evidence, none of the perpetrators were prosecuted. Lebanon's **Law No. 65/2017 on Torture**, limited in scope and subject to statutes of limitation, remains incompatible with **Articles 1 and 4 CAT** and must be amended accordingly.

c. Labour-Related Fatalities

None of the deaths in unsafe workplaces and serious injuries were investigated as crimes. Under **ILO Convention No. 155** and **ICCPR Article 6**, Lebanon must ensure safe working conditions. The State's failure to maintain inspections or enforce regulations constitutes *constructive manslaughter by neglect* in human-rights terms.

d. Gender-Based Killings and Femicide

Between 2021–2024, 78 women were killed by partners or family members. Authorities failed to issue or enforce restraining orders. Under **CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35**, such killings represent discrimination-based violations of the right to life. The Commission reiterates its recommendation for a **National Femicide Observatory** and specialized prosecution units.

e. Conflict-Related Killings

The 2023–2025 Israeli military operations resulted in over **4,000 civilian deaths**. While primary responsibility rests with Israel, Lebanon's secondary responsibility arises from its **failure to investigate, preserve evidence, and cooperate with international justice mechanisms** after revoking the ICC referral. The Commission urges full reinstatement of ICC cooperation.

f. Preventable Deaths and Socio-Economic Neglect

The **2024 Annual Report** documented **preventable deaths** in shelters, hospitals, and poor households caused by malnutrition, disease, or lack of medicine. Under **General Comment No. 36**, such omissions violate the positive dimension of the right to life. Structural corruption, absence of safety nets, and environmental toxicity together amount to **administrative violence**.

5. Institutional and Forensic Deficiencies

Lebanon lacks:

1. A **national forensic institute** capable of independent autopsies;
2. A **central death registry** for deaths in custody and police operations; and
3. A **witness-protection framework** safeguarding complainants and families.

Without these foundations, no credible investigation of potential unlawful deaths can occur. NHRC-CPT investigations show more than 50% of autopsy files lacked basic photographic documentation or toxicology reports, contravening international best practice.

6. The Right to Life as a Holistic Framework

The NHRC-CPT adopts a comprehensive interpretation of the right to life encompassing **civil, political, economic, social, and environmental dimensions**. This approach reflects General Comment No. 36's principle that "the right to life should not be interpreted narrowly."

Thus, arbitrary deprivation of life in Lebanon includes:

- **Direct killings** by State agents or armed groups;
- **Deaths in custody** resulting from torture or neglect;
- **Femicide and discriminatory violence**;
- **Deaths from structural poverty, unsafe work, or environmental contamination**; and
- **Conflict-related killings of civilians**.

Together these categories form an **ecosystem of impunity** sustained by weak institutions and systemic neglect.

7. Compatibility with International Norms

Issue	Relevant Standard	Lebanon's Status (2025)	Assessment
Accountability for unlawful deaths	ICCPR Art. 6; Minnesota Protocol	No effective mechanism	Non-compliant
Deaths in custody	Mandela Rules; CAT Art. 12	Investigations absent	Non-compliant
Forensic independence	Istanbul Protocol §§79–83	No independent institute	Non-compliant
Femicide	CEDAW GR 35	No specific criminal category	Non-compliant
Labour fatalities	ILO C155	No enforcement	Non-compliant
Conflict-related deaths	Geneva Conventions + ICC Statute	No cooperation	Non-compliant
Right to health & survival	ICESCR Art. 12; GC 36	Collapse of public health system	Non-compliant

8. Matrix of Recommendations (2025–2027)

Area	Priority Actions	Responsible Authority	Timeframe
Judicial Independence	Adopt draft Law on Judicial Independence ensuring tenure and impartial appointments	Parliament / HJC	6–12 months

Custodial Oversight	Establish National Protocol for Death Investigation; ensure NHRC-CPT unimpeded access	Ministry of Justice / Interior	Immediate
Forensic Reform	Create Independent National Forensic Institute with chain-of-custody labs	Council of Ministers	12 months
Torture Law Amendment	Remove statute of limitation; expand definition per CAT	Parliament	6 months
Labour Safety	Reinforce Labour Inspectorate; criminalize negligence causing death	Ministry of Labour	12 months
Gender-Based Killings	Create Femicide Unit within prosecution offices	MoJ / Internal Security Forces	6 months
Socio-Economic Protection	Implement National Right-to-Life Strategy (health, nutrition, housing)	PMO / MoPH / MoSA	24 months
Environmental Accountability	Enact penalties for officials causing lethal environmental harm	Parliament	12 months
Transparency & Data	Publish annual mortality and custodial-death statistics	MoI / MoD / NHRC-CPT	Annual
International Cooperation	Reaffirm ICC cooperation; request OHCHR technical assistance	Council of Ministers/ MFA / NHRC-CPT	Ongoing

9. Strategic Engagement with the UN Special Procedures

The NHRC-CPT recommends that Dr. Tidball-Binz:

1. Recognize **systemic and structural killings**, not merely isolated events, as central to his mission's findings.
2. Encourage Lebanon to **reactivate the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-Up (NMIRF)** to ensure coherent responses to UN recommendations.
3. Support a **joint OHCHR–NHRC–CPT capacity-building programme** on forensic investigation and prevention of arbitrary killings.
4. Endorse the NHRC-CPT's proposal to establish a **Lebanon Observatory on the Right to Life and Prevention of Unlawful Deaths**, with quarterly reporting to Parliament and the UN Human Rights Council.

10. Concluding Observations

Lebanon's right-to-life crisis is no longer confined to moments of conflict or abuse, it is embedded in daily governance failure. Unlawful deaths occur **in detention cells, workplaces, hospitals, and homes**, reflecting a continuum of structural violence.

The NHRC-CPT reaffirms that **the protection of life is an indivisible obligation**, demanding coordinated reforms across justice, health, labour, and environment sectors. It urges the Special Rapporteur to frame his final report around this comprehensive interpretation, emphasizing both **accountability for past killings** and **prevention of future ones** through institutional reform, transparency, and international support.

The Commission stands ready to provide the Special Rapporteur and OHCHR with sample case documentation, forensic files, and anonymized datasets to assist in preparing his final country-visit report to the Human Rights Council.

Part VIII: Recommendations, Implementation Pathways, and Follow-up Mechanisms

1. Purpose

This concluding part presents a unified matrix of **strategic, institutional, and thematic recommendations** arising from NHRC-CPT's investigations, monitoring visits, and analytical findings (2021–2025). It defines how these measures should be operationalized over the next 24 months (2025–2027), and

proposes coordination modalities with national authorities, OHCHR, and relevant UN mechanisms.

The overarching objective is to **translate the right to life into measurable public policy outcomes**, shifting from reactive crisis response to proactive prevention of unlawful and preventable deaths.

2. Strategic Objectives

The NHRC-CPT identifies **five priority pillars** for implementation:

1. **Accountability:** ensuring prompt, impartial, and effective investigations into all potential unlawful deaths.
2. **Prevention:** addressing structural causes of deprivation of life, including poverty, unsafe detention, and environmental hazards.
3. **Transparency:** establishing data systems and public reporting mechanisms.
4. **Protection:** safeguarding victims, witnesses, and human-rights defenders.
5. **Cooperation:** engaging with OHCHR, UN treaty bodies, and donors to strengthen institutional capacity.

3. Legislative and Institutional Reforms

a. Judicial and Legal Framework

- **Adopt the Draft Law on Judicial Independence** to guarantee tenure and transparent appointment of judges.
- **Amend Law No. 65/2017** to remove statutes of limitation, broaden the definition of torture, and guarantee non-refoulement.
- **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance** and incorporate it into domestic legislation.
- **Reinstate Lebanon's acceptance of ICC jurisdiction** for crimes committed since 7 October 2023.

- **Criminalize femicide and gender-motivated killings** as distinct offences with aggravated penalties.

b. Custodial Oversight and Forensic Reform

- **Establish an Independent National Forensic Institute**, with a dedicated morgue, autopsy laboratories, and DNA database, operating under judicial, not executive, authority.
- **Adopt a National Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths in Custody**, aligned with the *Minnesota Protocol (2016)*, requiring prompt notification, scene preservation, and public reporting.
- **Guarantee NHRC-CPT unimpeded access** to all detention sites, military and civilian, without prior authorization.
- **Introduce electronic detainee registries** for real-time monitoring of custody conditions and deaths.

c. Labour, Environmental, and Socio-Economic Protections

- **Create a National Occupational Safety Authority** to monitor industrial zones, construction, and agriculture, and to investigate workplace deaths in cooperation with prosecutors.
- **Adopt a National Disaster-Risk-Reduction and Environmental Accountability Law** establishing criminal liability for officials whose negligence causes lethal pollution or infrastructural collapse.
- **Implement a Social Protection Floor** guaranteeing access to health care, food security, and housing for vulnerable groups.
- **Integrate the right to a healthy environment** into domestic legislation as a constitutional right, ensuring that environmental degradation is recognized as a threat to life.

d. Gender and Vulnerable Groups

- **Operationalize the National Observatory on Femicide and Gender-Based Killings**, under joint NHRC-CPT–Ministry of Justice management.

- **Enforce Law No. 293/2014** on domestic violence through specialized police units, trained prosecutors, and emergency shelters.
- **Adopt a National Strategy on Ageing and Palliative Care** to protect older persons from neglect and preventable death.
- **Ensure disability inclusion in emergency and evacuation planning**, and provide assistive technology in shelters.

4. Accountability and Data Mechanisms

a. National Right-to-Life Database

The NHRC-CPT will finalize by 2027 a **Right-to-Life Digital Observatory**, consolidating:

- custodial-death data from prisons and ISF stations;
- labour-fatality records from the Ministry of Labour;
- gender-based killing reports from the Ministry of Interior;
- humanitarian-death data from civil-defense and public-health institutions.

This observatory will publish quarterly reports and serve as Lebanon's official mortality-tracking system for human-rights purposes.

b. Transparency and Public Reporting

- The **Ministries of Justice, Interior, Defence, and Health** must publish annual statistics on deaths in custody, police use of lethal force, and conflict-related civilian casualties.
- Reports should be standardized using OHCHR's *Human Rights Indicators Framework* and verified by the NHRC-CPT before publication.

c. Witness and Victim Protection

- Adopt a **National Witness-Protection and Victim-Support Law** providing physical protection, relocation, and psychosocial assistance.

- Establish a **Victims' Compensation Fund** managed by the Ministry of Justice and supervised by NHRC-CPT.

5. Cooperation with the United Nations and International Partners

a. OHCHR Technical Support (2025–2027)

The NHRC-CPT proposes joint projects with OHCHR covering:

1. **Forensic-laboratory equipment** and digital chain-of-custody training;
2. **Strengthening data management and analysis capacity** for mortality monitoring;
3. **Development of a National Right-to-Life Strategy** integrating health, environment, and justice policies.

b. Engagement with the UN Special Procedures

The NHRC-CPT commits to regular dialogue with:

- The **Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions**;
- The **Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment**;
- The **Working Group on Arbitrary Detention**;
- The **Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health**; and
- The **Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment**.

It recommends that these mechanisms issue **joint communications to Lebanon**, focusing on deaths in custody, prison conditions, and structural determinants of mortality.

6. National Coordination and Implementation Monitoring

a. Role of the NMIRF

Lebanon's dormant **National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-Up (NMIRF)** must be reactivated immediately. The NMIRF will track compliance with Human Rights Council resolutions, UPR recommendations, and treaty body observations related to the right to life.

b. Parliamentary Oversight

The **Parliament** should conduct annual hearings on implementation of NHRC-CPT recommendations and ensure integration of human-rights impact assessments in the national budget.

c. Civil-Society Participation

Civil-society organizations should be formally integrated into monitoring, particularly those working on prison reform, migrant workers' rights, and environmental justice.

7. Implementation Timeline (Indicative 2025–2027)

Action Area	Responsible Entities	Timeline	Indicators
Judicial independence and torture-law amendment	Parliament, MoJ	Q1–Q4 2026	Laws enacted; judiciary oversight body operational
National forensic institute and death-investigation protocol	MoJ, MoI, NHRC-CPT	Q2 2026–Q1 2027	Institute established; autopsy manual adopted
Labour and environmental accountability reforms	MoL, MoE, Parliament	2026	Occupational-death registry operational
Right-to-Life Digital Observatory	NHRC-CPT, OHCHR	2026	Quarterly mortality bulletins published
Femicide and GBV response	MoI, MoJ, NHRC-CPT	2025–2027	Femicide data integrated into national database

Disaster and humanitarian-response law	MoSA, MoPH, Civil Defence	2026	Law enacted; risk-reduction authority established
ICC jurisdiction reinstatement	Council of Ministers, MFA	2025	ICC notification deposited

8. Resource Mobilization

The NHRC-CPT calls for creation of a **multi-donor trust fund for the right to life**, coordinated by OHCHR, to support:

- forensic capacity building;
- prison rehabilitation and medical services;
- labour-safety and environmental monitoring; and
- digital data infrastructure.

Such assistance should be non-earmarked and aligned with Lebanon's National Human Rights Action Plan.

9. Final Appeal to the United Nations System

The NHRC-CPT urges the **UN Special Rapporteur** to recommend in his mission report:

1. Establishment of a **Task Force on Preventing Unlawful Deaths**;
2. Technical cooperation with the **UNODC** and **WHO** on forensic medicine and public-health prevention;
3. A joint OHCHR–UNDP–NHRC-CPT project on **Justice, Environment, and the Right to Life** (2026–2028); and
4. Consideration of **targeted sanctions** or international accountability mechanisms against individuals or entities repeatedly implicated in extrajudicial executions.

The NHRC-CPT reaffirms that the **right to life is the foundation of all human rights** and that its violation, whether through unlawful killing, torture, neglect, or deprivation of basic needs, represents a collapse of the State's legitimacy.

The Commission stands ready to work with the United Nations, Parliament, ministries, and civil society to implement these recommendations.

It emphasizes that **restoring the sanctity of life in Lebanon requires more than condemnation; it requires structural reform, sustained political commitment, and international solidarity.**