

# Bahamas

The Bahamas is a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS) and of the United Nations (UN), and has human rights obligations at both the regional and universal levels.

## Regional: Inter-American System



As a Member of the OAS, the Bahamas is held to the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and its human rights policies and practices are monitored by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The Commission may decide [complaints](#) against the State and may also hold [hearings](#) or issue [reports](#) on the human rights situation there. The Bahamas has not accepted the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Individuals and groups have submitted complaints of human rights violations committed by the Bahamas to the [Inter-American human rights system](#). For example, in *Michael Edwards*, the Commission found that the mandatory death sentences imposed on the condemned individuals violated their rights because the sentences did not allow for any consideration of their individual circumstances and because the individuals were not provided the opportunity to challenge their sentences through an effective form of judicial review. See IACHR, Report No. 48/01, Case 12.067, [Michael Edwards](#) (Bahamas), April 4, 2001. In *Peter Cash* the Commission found, among other violations, that the State's failure to provide Mr. Cash with the opportunity to apply for amnesty, pardon, or for his sentence to be commuted violated his rights. See IACHR, Report No. 12/14, Case 12.231, [Peter Cash](#) (Bahamas), April 2, 2014.

Additionally, the Commission has issued [precautionary measures](#) to protect people in urgent situations of risk in the Bahamas.

The Bahamas has ratified the following **regional human rights treaty**:

- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (“Convention of Belem do Pará”)



## United Nations System

As a UN Member State, the Bahamas is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, the Bahamas' policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has not accepted the complaints procedure of any treaty bodies.

The Bahamas has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD)

The Bahamas has submitted a reservation, declaration or understanding that modifies its obligations under the following treaties: [ICCPR](#), [ICESCR](#), and [CEDAW](#).

The Bahamas has ratified the optional protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. The Bahamas has a duty to submit **State reports** to each UN treaty body that is associated with the relevant treaty the Bahamas has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis, and describe the steps the Bahamas has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

The Bahamas has not authorized individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of any UN human treaties. While certain UN treaties include **inquiry procedures**, which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations, the Bahamas has not accepted these inquiry procedures.

On June 6, 2013, the Bahamas extended a [standing invitation](#) to UN special procedures, which means they are welcome to conduct visits in the Bahamas. For example, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, went on a mission to the Bahamas in December 2013 and published a [report](#) in June 2014.

For more information on the Bahamas' engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/LACRegion/Pages/BSIndex.aspx>.

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