

Avenues for Advocacy
in the
U.N. Human Rights Council

A Pax Christi International
Advisory Package

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Introduction to the United Nations Human Rights Council

You Have a Voice at the Human Rights Council

Pax Christi International encourages its member organizations to bring their reports, findings, and firsthand experience with human rights to the intergovernmental level at the U.N.. As an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Security Council (ECOSOC), Pax Christi International is available to facilitate and enhance your access to the UN Human Rights Council.

This packet outlines the several avenues for human rights advocacy in the Council. From formal petitions and mechanisms to informal appeals, there are many different forums available. This working document will offer you a brief introduction to each of these forums and the process of using each of them. While some methods are informal allow you to participate directly, we encourage you to make use of Pax Christi International's consultative status to access the more formal procedures. We can facilitate your exposure in the U.N..

The forums for advocacy included in this packet include:

1. Submission of general human rights complaints
3. Presence and submissions at the Council's special and regular sessions
4. Contact with mandate holders / special rapporteurs
5. Submissions to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism
6. Urgent Actions and other informal advocacy

Other Information

The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council have made much of this information available online. Key supplementary documents and graphics, including a graphic of the Council's structure and a more comprehensive table of the roles civil society can play in the Council, are in the appendixes. Please see the bibliography and internet guide for more detailed information about the Council and its procedures.

Please note that the information provided in this package is not original. It is a compilation of key information publicly available through U.N. documents and websites.

Contact Us

Pax Christi International has compiled this guide to assist its member organizations in recognizing and selecting between the many options for human rights advocacy in the Council. While some of these mechanisms are available directly to member organizations, many require Pax Christi International to act as an intermediary with its Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC. Please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance:

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www.paxchristi.net

Origins

The United Nations Human Rights Council (Council) is the new forum intended to replace the U.N. Human Rights Commission. The U.N. General Assembly adopted the Council on 15 March 2006 and the Council held its first session on 19 June 2006. The former body, the U.N. Human Rights Commission was dissolved just before this first session, on 16 June 2006. The Council reports directly to the U.N. General Assembly.

The Council is intended to strengthen U.N. human rights efforts and address certain inadequacies of the U.N. Human Rights Commission. The Council enacts more transparent methods of selecting member states and attempts to lessen double-standards with the process of universal periodic review (UPR), under which each U.N. member state will be examined once every four years. Additionally, the Council will meet more often than its predecessor: “no fewer than three sessions per year (including a main session) for a total period of no less than ten weeks.”

Member states serve on the Council for a limited time and are elected by a vote in the U.N. General Assembly. Since this body changes frequently, it is best to check the Council’s website for the most current list of member states. General information from the *Handbook for Civil Society* is pasted here.

Membership

Membership of the Council consists of 47 States elected directly and individually by secret ballot by the majority of the members of the General Assembly. The human rights records and voluntary human rights pledges and commitments of candidate States are to be taken into account when electing member States. The Council’s member States serve for three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms.

If a member State of the Council commits gross and systematic violations of human rights, the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, may suspend its rights of membership in the Council.

NGO Liaison Office

The Council Secretariat creates an NGO Liaison Office during both general and special sessions. Information on this resource should be available online during and near to the Council’s sessions. This office helps to facilitate NGO participation in the sessions and, in the event of questions or confusion concerning NGO submissions, presence, or other problems, Pax Christi International can contact the NGO Liaison Office:

United Nations Office at Geneva
NGO Liaison Office
Office of the Director-General
Room 153
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10

Tel: + 41 (0)22 917 21 27
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 05 83
Email: ungeneva.ngoliation@unog.ch

General Human Rights Complaints

There are several mechanisms available for general human rights complaints: individual complaints under international human rights treaties, communications under special procedures, and the Human Rights Council’s complaint procedure. These procedures allow individuals and organizations to file general human rights complaints to which they have been a witness.

These general complaints may not require Pax Christi International to act as an intermediary, although we still encourage contact for assistance. Because these procedures are very specific and oriented towards immediate human rights concerns, they should be considered in depth alongside each other. Please consult section VIII of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights’ guide, *Working With the United Nations Programme: A Handbook for Civil Society*, referenced in the bibliography of this document.

Accrediting Representatives to Attend Sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Council

As was the case with the sessions of the preceding U.N. Human Rights Commission, NGO's that hold consultative status with the U.N. ECOSOC may accredit representatives to attend both general and special sessions of the Council. Pax Christi International holds special consultative status.

Interested individuals should look online for more specific information about the deadlines and procedures for specific sessions. The general procedures from the Council's website are included below, but accreditation for representatives of Pax Christi International must be done through the Pax Christi International Secretariat.

Accreditation to HRC specific sessions

Accreditation to HRC sessions, for which the HRC Secretariat is responsible, is encouraged in advance of HRC sessions. Information on accreditation for specific sessions will be made available in the lead-up to each session as a link on the webpage of the relevant session.

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC wishing to accredit representatives to sessions of the Human Rights Council should fax a request for accreditation to

The letter requesting accreditation should contain the following elements:

- It should be submitted on the **official letterhead** of the organization;
- It should clearly state **the title and duration of the session** the organization wishes to attend, e.g. "Name of NGO, in consultative status with ECOSOC, wishes to send the following members to attend the [*insert relevant session number*] session of the HRC ([*insert dates of session*])...";
- The letter needs to be **signed by the President or the Main Representative** of the organization;
- It should also **indicate the name/s** (first name and family name) of the person/s who will represent the organization at the HRC session;
- Names of persons must appear **exactly as they appear in the ID document**,
- **Family Name(s) have to be capitalized** .
- Annual or temporary NGO representatives in possession of an identity badge issued by UNOG Security and Safety Section, and valid for the duration of the session, will have unrestricted access to the conference rooms.
- Any other participants without a UNOG identity badge should apply in person to the security entrance at **Pregny Gate** , 8 - 14 Avenue de la Paix; on presentation of an identity document and a copy of the letter of accreditation faxed by the concerned NGO, a photo-badge valid for the duration of the Council session will be issued.

Assistance for requesting travel visas

Upon request, the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) NGO Liaison Office (not the HRC Secretariat) may issue relevant 'attestation of accreditation' for visa application purposes. In order to obtain such an attestation, NGOs enjoying consultative status with ECOSOC should explicitly indicate their need in the accreditation request faxed to the HRC Secretariat. The latter will accordingly transmit the request to the UNOG Liaison Office which will issue the attestation and transmit it to the concerned NGO headquarters.

Written and Oral Submissions to a U.N. Human Rights Council Session

The procedures for submitting written and oral information have changed little in the switch from the U.N. Human Right Commission to the Council. Both procedures have either word or time limits, and the NGO should consult the Council's website for these limits and for the most recent information regarding a given session. There is also a detailed webpage explaining the format and procedures, and supplying the necessary forms for written submissions referenced in the bibliography. There are strict deadlines for submissions; if you work on pertinent issues and would like to make a written and oral submission, please contact Pax Christi International no later than three weeks in advance

Oral statements;

Accredited NGOs may make oral statements under substantive items of the HRC agenda. Modalities for NGO oral interventions are posted on the HRC Extranet page, under the NGO Liaison information page. Copies of the Modalities are also made available at the list of speakers' desk, and at the NGO liaison office during HRC sessions.

The list of speakers' desk is located inside the plenary room. NGOs can only be (pre-) registered by persons holding a badge of the concerned NGO.

In order to facilitate the participation of NGOs not based/represented in Geneva/Switzerland, pre-inscription by electronic mail is allowed as soon as the List of Speakers opens in the plenary room. Pre-inscription forms should be emailed to hrcngo@ohchr.org. All electronic pre-inscriptions and pre-registrations made at the list of speakers' desk, as well as the relevant speaker's name **should be confirmed in person in the 24 hours preceding the relevant meeting at the list of speakers' desk.**

Inscription forms will be made available on the relevant webpage of each session in the lead-up to the session.

Please note that **25 copies of the oral statement are to be provided to the UN Conference Service** at the beginning of the relevant meeting. Conference Service staff can be approached in the middle of the plenary room. Photocopiers are available near the plenary room.

To take the floor, NGO speakers should use the conference-table seat reserved for that purpose.

Additional copies of NGO oral statements may be placed by NGOs **only** on the tables at the back of

the plenary room, after delivery of the relevant statement. **NGOs are not permitted to distribute documents, pamphlets, or any other material in the conference room.** Reserved desks are available **outside** the plenary room for display of documentation, clearly attributable to NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.

NGO written statements;

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC may submit written statements relevant to the work of the Human Rights Council (in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31) ahead of the relevant session.

The HRC Secretariat wishes to draw the attention of NGOs to ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, which authorizes written statements of: a) 2,000 words for NGOs in general consultative status; and b) 1,500 words for NGOs in special consultative status and on the roster.

Please kindly note that a **deadline** for the submission of written statements for a given session is generally set some two weeks before the beginning of the session. The HRC Secretariat will not be able to ensure the timely circulation of written statements late in submission. Specific deadlines are identified in the information note for NGOs issued ahead of each session.

NGO written statements are to be submitted in accordance with the guidelines for the submission of NGO written statements.

NGO Parallel Events

During a Council session, NGO's with consultative status are permitted to hold parallel events. Pax Christi International is able to host these events and encourages its member organizations to contact its office well in advance if interested in organizing a parallel event. These events offer NGO's a forum where they can "engage in dialogue with other NGO's, states, and other stakeholders," addressing issues relevant to the session being held.

NGO parallel events are often held during lunches or time that is otherwise in the periphery of the session. The U.N. provides rooms for parallel events without charge on a first-come first-serve basis. NGO's may invite individuals who are not accredited to attend the larger session into these events, but the Council secretariat and the Pregny security office must receive the list of attendees 48 hours before the event.

NGO's may also co-sponsor parallel events. The request form for co-sponsorship, as well as other information, is located on the Council's website. The Council NGO Liaison Office will be available to help NGO's navigate this process.

Room-bookings/side events

Accredited NGOs may organize parallel events of relevance to the work of the HRC, taking into account availability of rooms.

Reservation forms will be made available on the relevant webpage of each session in the lead-up to the session.

The NGO in charge of organizing the parallel event may invite guests not accredited to the HRC session to be present at their meeting. The concerned NGO is requested to provide the HRC Secretariat, with a complete list of its guests **at least 48 hours prior** to the day of the meeting. Accordingly, "Parallel Event" photo-badges will be issued on the day of the scheduled event, at the "Pregny Gate" security entrance, upon presentation of a valid identification paper.

Please be advised that the Secretariat does not provide interpretation for NGOs' parallel events. NGOs may bring their own interpreters, if they so wish, and inform the HRC Secretariat accordingly ahead of time. It is reminded that the use of cameras/videos during parallel events is not encouraged. Only journalists and camerapeople accredited on a yearly basis with UNOG are allowed to use camera and video equipment

Direct room bookings to the Civil Society Unit.

Contacting Special Rapporteurs

In the Council, there are special rapporteurs who hold responsibility for a particular issue, situation, or geographic area. These mandate-holders are expected to be experts and advisors within their particular field and are a good resource for NGO's wishing to draw attention to an issue or initiate dialogue. More information can be found online, on the Council Extranet, and in the "United Nations Special Procedures: Facts and Figures 2008" publication. A list of special rapporteurs is included in the appendix

To contact a special rapporteur, use the following:

Email: **SPDInfo@ohchr.org** (general inquiries and information)
urgent-action@ohchr.org (individual cases/complaints only)

Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 06

Post: **Quick Response Desk**

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8-14, avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Mechanism

The UPR Mechanism is one of the main features of the new Council. Under UPR, every member state has their human rights record reviewed once every four years. Within the UPR mechanism, NGO's are able to submit their direct and indirect experiences of the human rights situation in any given country

While the UPR process is less restrictive than the format for general complaints, the Council encourages NGO's to submit factual accounts, preferably first-hand experiences or information from experts. NGO's are permitted to submit documents of up to five pages in length that cover a maximum of a four year time period. Joint submissions may be up to ten pages. Directness and brevity are key, as the information from all stakeholders is then summarized in a ten page document.

Several documents explicating the UPR process are available in the appendix. Other information, including preparation of information Guidelines (Decision 6/102), is referenced in the appendix. The most timely and relevant information can be found on the Council's website. Please contact the Pax Christi International office if you have material pertinent to a country under UPR.

Other Formal Avenues

There are a variety of other formal avenues available for advocacy in the Council. Many of these other processes operate in a similar manner to those already addressed in this document. Consult Appendix B for a table comprehensively detailing the Council's mechanisms and opportunity for civil society involvement. Contact Pax Christi International or visit the Council's website for more information

Urgent Actions and Informal Advocacy

Beyond the formal procedures listed above, NGO's have access to many informal and unofficial tools for advocacy. From Urgent Actions—large-scale mailing and telephone aimed at drawing an influential individual's attention to an issue—to personal meetings with officials, public demonstrations, and other events, the scope of an NGO's efforts are only limited by their creativity. Urgent Action campaigns are one of the simplest and easiest forms of unofficial advocacy.

To initiate an Urgent Action campaign, NGO's should identify the individuals who wield the most responsibility and/or influence over the issue at hand. The issue should be very specific, and the NGO should encourage concerned and affected parties to write, call, or contact the influential persons. The letters, calls, and meetings should be courteous, directly and concisely identifying the problem and requesting specific action.

Informal advocacy can offer a flexibility and, sometimes, a greater voice to NGO's wishing to call attention to certain issues that do not receive enough attention through formal submissions. While they require greater creativity and may be harder to implement successfully, the tools of informal advocacy can sometimes be even more effective than official procedures. Pax Christi International encourages its member organizations to explore the many different options for human rights advocacy when addressing an issue or case.

Bibliography and Suggested Reading

Web Guide

Human Rights Bodies of the United Nations: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx>

NGO Participation Human Rights Council Website: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/ngo.htm>

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org>

Session Information (current): <http://portal.ohchr.org/portal/page/portal/HRCExtranet>
(User: hrc extranet, password: 1session)

U.N. Human Rights Council Online: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil>

Other Resources

Decision 6/102: “Organizational and Procedural Matters, Human Rights Bodies and Mechanisms, Universal Periodic Review.” United Nations Human Rights Council. (2007). Available at: http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/6/L.24.

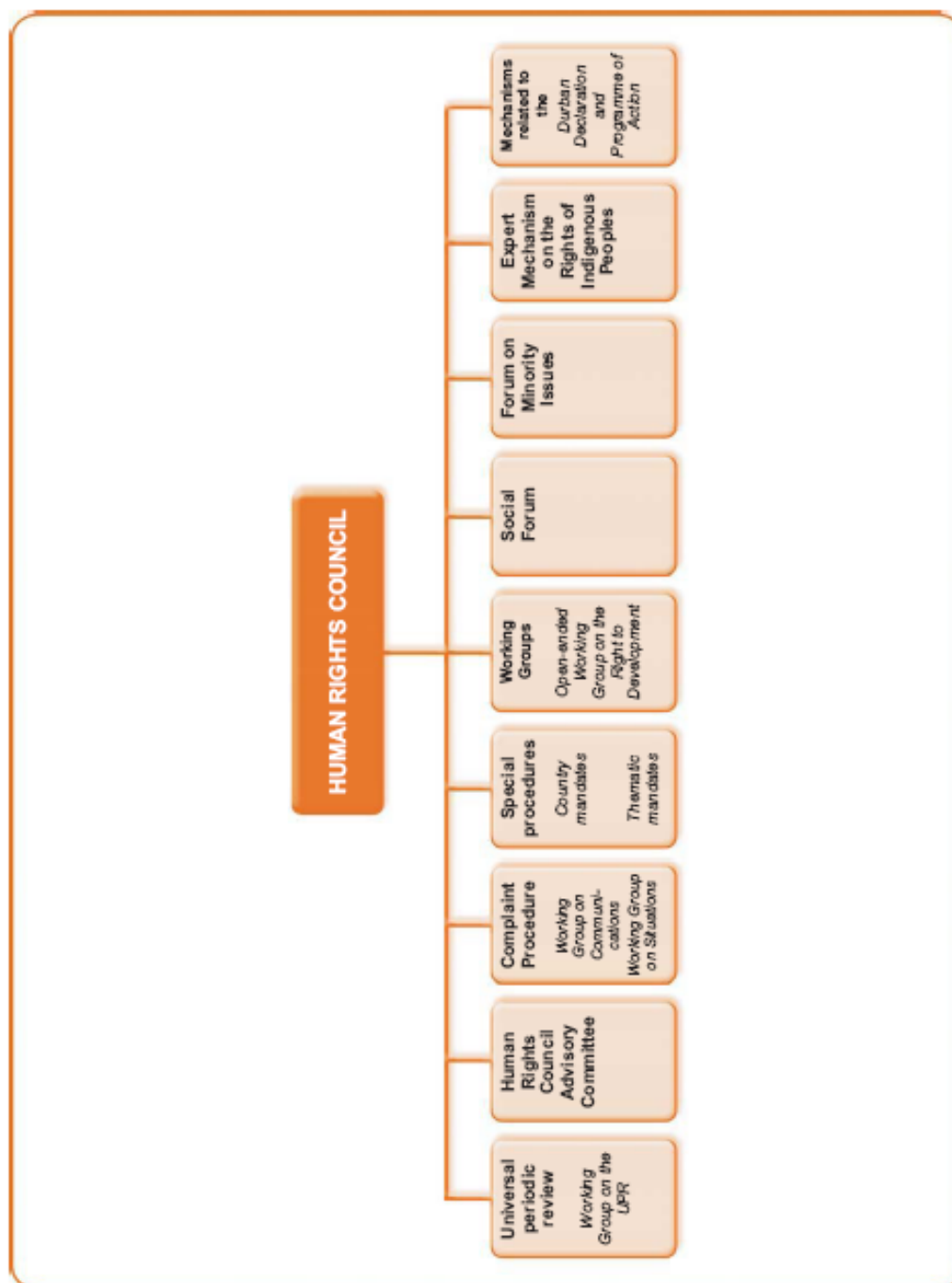
“Guidelines and forms for submission of NGO written statements.” United Nations Human Rights Council. Online: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/guidelines.htm>

“Information and Guidelines for Relevant Stakeholders on the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism.” United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2008). Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/TechnicalGuideEN.pdf>.

“Information Note for NGO’s Regarding the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism.” United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Online: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NoteNGO.aspx>.

United Nations Special Procedures: Facts and Figures 2008. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2008). Available at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/Facts_Figures2008.pdf

Working With the United Nations Programme: A Handbook for Civil Society. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2008). Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/NgoHandbook/ngohandbook.pdf>.



Annex: Accessing and working with the Human Rights Council and its mandates and mechanisms

| MEETING/MECHANISM | Which civil society actors (CSAs) can attend meetings of the mechanism? | How can these CSAs participate in meetings they attend? | Which CSAs can contribute to the work of the mechanism (other than by attending meetings)? | What forms can these contributions take? |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Human Rights Council's regular and special sessions | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, once accredited | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of written statements • Oral statements • Hosting of parallel events | Only NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC can submit written statements to regular/special sessions | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC should consult the guidelines for written statements |
| Universal periodic review | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, once accredited | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting of information sessions • Brief general comments can be made before the adoption of outcome documents at regular sessions of the Human Rights Council | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Governments towards the preparation of national reports • Contributing stakeholders' submissions for potential inclusion in the OHCHR summary • Work on follow-up to UPR outcomes (conclusions, recommendations, voluntary pledges/commitments) |
| Human Rights Council Advisory Committee | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, once accredited | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of written statements • Oral statements | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominating candidates for appointment to the Advisory Committee |
| Complaint procedure | CSAs cannot participate in meetings of the complaint procedure or its working groups; these meetings are private | N/A | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of complaints under the complaint procedure |

| MEETING/MECHANISM | Which civil society actors (CSAs) can attend meetings of the mechanism? | How can these CSAs participate in meetings they attend? | Which CSAs can contribute to the work of the mechanism (other than by attending meetings)? | What forms can these contributions take? |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Special procedures | NGOs and other CSAs may arrange to meet with mandate-holders during select segments of the annual meeting of special procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive dialogue with mandate-holders during select segments of the annual meeting of special procedures NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC can participate in interactive dialogues with mandate-holders at regular sessions of the Human Rights Council | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of urgent appeals/individual cases Providing support for country visits Working to advocate, disseminate, follow up and implement the work of the special procedures Meeting with mandate-holders Nominating candidates as mandate-holders |
| Open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, once accredited, can attend public segments of the Working Group's meetings A wide range of CSAs can attend public sessions of the high-level task force | NGOs attending meetings of the high-level task force have the opportunity to make opening statements. This opportunity does not apply, however, to the Working Group's meetings. | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of statements to the Working Group Engagement with the task force Working to implement Working Group recommendations |
| Social Forum | A wide range of CSAs can attend meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing feedback on the human rights work of international mechanisms at meetings Exchanging best practices at meetings Grass-roots presentations at meetings | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of information to the Social Forum |

| MEETING/MECHANISM | Which civil society actors (CSAs) can attend meetings of the mechanism? | How can these CSAs participate in meetings they attend? | Which CSAs can contribute to the work of the mechanism (other than by attending meetings)? | What forms can these contributions take? |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Forum on Minority Issues | A wide range of CSAs, including NGOs, academics and experts on minority issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral presentations/statements Written statements | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of information to the Forum NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC can nominate candidates for appointment as chairperson of the Forum |
| Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | A wide range of CSAs, including NGOs and indigenous peoples and organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral presentations/statements Written statements | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of information to the Expert Mechanism Nomination of candidates for appointment as independent experts |
| Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action | NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC NGOs accredited to the Durban World Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral presentations Written statements | Only CSAs falling into the categories provided at left may contribute information to the Intergovernmental Working Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of information to the Working Group |
| Group of independent eminent experts | Meetings are, in principle, closed. However, the Group may invite CSAs to exchange views with it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange of views at the invitation of the Group | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of information to the Group |

| MEETING/MECHANISM | Which civil society actors (CSAs) can attend meetings of the mechanism? | How can these CSAs participate in meetings they attend? | Which CSAs can contribute to the work of the mechanism (other than by attending meetings)? | What forms can these contributions take? |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC • NGOs accredited to the Durban World Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentations • Submissions of written statements | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of information to the Working Group • Providing information in situ during country missions of the Working Group • Meeting with its members during country visits |
| Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference Intergovernmental open-ended working group to follow up the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC • NGOs accredited to the Durban World Conference • NGOs (without consultative status and that did not attend the World Conference) can submit applications to participate • Indigenous peoples' representatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral statements • Submission of written statements | Only CSAs falling into the categories provided to the left may contribute information to the Preparatory Committee and the Intersessional open-ended working group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of written statements to the Preparatory Committee and the Intersessional open-ended working group |
| Ad Hoc Committee on the elaboration of complementary standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC • NGOs accredited to the Durban World Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentations • Submission of written statements | Relevant CSAs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of information and studies to the Ad Hoc Committee |

LIST OF MANDATE-HOLDERS

| Mandate | Established in | Mandate-holder |
|---|----------------|--|
| Country mandates | | |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Burundi | 2004 | Mr. Akich Okola (<i>Kenya</i>) |
| Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia | 1993 | Mr. Yash Ghai (<i>Kenya</i>) |
| Independent expert on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo , discontinued in March 2008 | 2004 | Mr. Titinga Frédéric Pacéré (<i>Burkina Faso</i>) until March 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea | 2004 | Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn (<i>Thailand</i>) |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti | 1995 | Mr. Michel Forst (<i>France</i>) since August 2008; Mr. Louis Joinet (<i>France</i>) until July 2008 |
| Independent expert on technical cooperation and advisory services in Liberia , discontinued in September 2008 | 2003 | Ms. Charlotte Abaka (<i>Ghana</i>) until September 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar | 1992 | Mr. Tomas Ojea Quintana (<i>Argentina</i>) since May 2008; Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro (<i>Brazil</i>) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 | 1993 | Mr. Richard Falk (<i>United States of America</i>) since May 2008; Mr. John Dugard (<i>South Africa</i>) until April 2008 |
| Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia | 1993 | Mr. Shamsul Bari (<i>Bangladesh</i>) since May 2008; Mr. Ghanim Alnajjar (<i>Kuwait</i>) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation on human rights in the Sudan | 2005 | Ms. Sima Samar (<i>Afghanistan</i>) |
| Thematic mandates | | |
| Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination in this context | 2000 | Ms. Raquel Rolnik (<i>Brazil</i>) since May 2008; Mr. Miloon Kothari (<i>India</i>) until April 2008 |
| Working Group on people of African descent | 2002 | Mr. Joe Frans (<i>Sweden</i>), Ms. Maya Sahli (<i>Algeria</i>) since August 2008; Mr. Peter L. Kasanda (<i>Zambia</i>) until July 2008, Mr. Ralston Milton Nettleford (<i>Jamaica</i>) since May 2008, Ms. Monorama Biswas (<i>Bangladesh</i>) since November 2008; Mr. George N. Jabbour (<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>) until October 2008, Ms. Mirjana Najcevska (<i>The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i>) since November 2008; Ms. Irina Zlatescu (<i>Romania</i>) until October 2008 |
| Working Group on arbitrary detention | 1991 | Ms. Manuela Carmena Castrillo (<i>Spain</i>) : Chairperson-Rapporteur, Ms. Shaheen Sardar Ali (<i>Pakistan</i>) since August 2008; Mr. Seyyed Mohammad Hashemi (<i>Islamic Republic of Iran</i>) until July 2008, Mr. Malick El Hadji Sow (<i>Senegal</i>) since May 2008; Ms. Leïla Zerrougui (<i>Algeria</i>) until April 2008, Mr. Aslan Abashidze (<i>Russian Federation</i>) since May 2008; Mr. Tamás Bán (<i>Hungary</i>) until April 2008, Mr. Roberto Garretón (<i>Chile</i>) since May 2008; Ms. Soledad Villagra de Biedermann (<i>Paraguay</i>) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography | 1990 | Ms. Najat M'jid Maala (<i>Morocco</i>) since May 2008; Mr. Juan Miguel Petit (<i>Uruguay</i>) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the right to education | 1998 | Mr. Vernor Muñoz Villalobos (<i>Costa Rica</i>) |
| Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances | 1980 | Mr. Santiago Corcuera (<i>Mexico</i>) : Chairperson-Rapporteur, Mr. Darko Göttlicher (<i>Croatia</i>), Mr. Saïed Rajaie Khorasani (<i>Islamic Republic of Iran</i>), Mr. Jeremy Sarkin (<i>South Africa</i>) since May 2008; Mr. J 'Bayo Adekanye (<i>Nigeria</i>) until April 2008, Mr. Olivier de Frouville (<i>France</i>) since November 2008; Mr. Stephen J. Toope (<i>Canada</i>) until October 2008 |

| | | |
|--|------|--|
| Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions | 1982 | Mr. Philip Alston (Australia) |
| Independent Expert on foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights (until April 2008: Independent Expert on the effects of economic reform policies and foreign debt on the enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights) | 2000 | Mr. Cephas Lumina (Zambia) since May 2008; Mr. Bernard Andrew Nyamwaya Mudho (Kenya) until April 2008 |
| Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty | 1998 | Ms. Maria Magdalena Sepulveda (Chile) since May 2008; Mr. Arjun Sengupta (India) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the right to food | 2000 | Mr. Olivier De Schutter (Belgium) since May 2008; Mr. Jean Ziegler (Switzerland) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression | 1993 | Mr. Frank William La Rue Lewy (Guatemala) since August 2008; Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo (Kenya) until July 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief | 1986 | Ms. Asma Jahangir (Pakistan) |
| Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health | 2002 | Mr. Anand Grover (India) since August 2008; Mr. Paul Hunt (New Zealand) until July 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur (until March 2008: Representative of the Secretary-General) on the situation of human rights defenders | 2000 | Ms. Margaret Sekaggya (Uganda) since May 2008; Ms. Hina Jilani (Pakistan) until April 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers | 1994 | Mr. Leandro Despouy (Argentina) |
| Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people | 2001 | Mr. James Anaya (United States of America) since May 2008; Mr. Rodolfo Stavenhagen (Mexico) until 30 April 2008 |
| Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons | 2004 | Mr. Walter Kälin (Switzerland) |
| Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity | 2005 | Mr. Rudi Muhammad Rizki (Indonesia) |
| Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination | 2005 | Mr. Alexander Nikitin (Russian Federation) : Chairperson-Rapporteur, Mr. José Luis Gomez del Prado (Spain), Ms. Najat Al-Hajjaji (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Ms. Amada Benavides de Perez (Colombia), Ms. Shaista Shameem (Fiji) |
| Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants | 1999 | Mr. Jorge A. Bustamante (Mexico) |
| Independent Expert on minority issues | 2005 | Ms. Gay J. McDougall (United States of America) |
| Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance | 1993 | Mr. Githu Muigai (Kenya) since August 2008; Mr. Doudou Diène (Senegal) until July 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences | 2007 | Ms. Gulnara Shahinian (Armenia) since May 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism | 2005 | Mr. Martin Scheinin (Finland) |
| Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment | 1985 | Mr. Manfred Nowak (Austria) |
| Special Rapporteur on the adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights | 1995 | Mr. Okechukwu Ibeanu (Nigeria) |
| Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children | 2004 | Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo (Nigeria) since August 2008; Ms. Sigma Huda (Bangladesh) until July 2008 |
| Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises | 2005 | Mr. John Ruggie (United States of America) |
| Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation | 2008 | Ms. Catarina de Albuquerque (Portugal) since November 2008 |
| Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences | 1994 | Ms. Yakin Ertürk (Turkey) |



Fact Sheet:

Human Rights Council – Universal Periodic Review

"By your first anniversary in June, the wheels of the Council should be in full motion, including the Universal Periodic Review. This mechanism has great potential to promote and protect human rights in the darkest corners of the world." – Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. As one of the main features of the Council, the UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed.

The UPR was created through the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution [60/251](#), which established the Human Rights Council itself. It is a cooperative process which, by 2011, will have reviewed the human rights records of every country. Currently, no other universal mechanism of this kind exists. The UPR is one of the key elements of the new Council which reminds States of their responsibility to fully respect and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The ultimate aim of this new mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur.

Objectives...

- To address human rights violations all over the world
- To improve the human rights situation everywhere
- To encourage States to fulfill their human rights obligations and commitments
- To assess positive developments and challenges faced by States
- To enhance the State's capacity to ensure the enjoyment of human rights by all
- To provide technical assistance to States, when requested
- To share best practices between States and other stakeholders

How it works...

- All UN Member States will be reviewed every four years
- 48 States will be reviewed each year
- All Council members will be reviewed during their term of membership
- The reviews are carried out by the UPR Working Group composed of the 47 Council members
- The UPR Working Group will hold three two-week sessions per year
- The Working Group sessions take place at the UN Office at Geneva at the Palais des Nations
- Each review is facilitated by groups of three States, or "troikas", -drawn by lot - who act as rapporteurs

Schedule of review...

- On 21 September 2007, the Human Rights Council adopted a [calendar](#) detailing the order in which the 192 Member States of the United Nations will be considered during the first four-year cycle of the UPR
- The 1st and 2nd sessions of the UPR Working Group took place in April and May 2008, respectively. The 3rd session will take place from 1 to 15 December 2008

Basis of review...

- Three reports serve as a basis for each State review and provide the following information:
 - Information from the State under review ("national report") including information on achievements and best practices, and challenges and constraints, as well as key national priorities in addressing shortcomings
 - Information contained in the reports of the independent human rights experts and groups, known as the [Special Procedures](#), human rights treaty bodies and other UN entities
 - Information from non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and "other stakeholders"

- The review should assess to what extent States respect their human rights obligations contained in:
 - The United Nations Charter
 - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - Human rights instruments (covenants, conventions and other treaties) to which the State is a party
 - Voluntary pledges and commitments made by the State
 - Applicable international humanitarian law

How the review will be conducted...

- An interactive dialogue between the State under review and the Council takes place in the Working Group
- The "troikas" may compile questions submitted in advance by other States to be shared with the State under review to ensure an effective interactive dialogue
- Any of the 192 UN Member States may participate in the reviews, including in the interactive dialogue. Other relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs or national human rights institutions, may attend the reviews in the Working Group
- The duration of the review is three hours for each country in the Working Group. An additional half hour is allocated for the adoption of the report of each country under review in the Working Group
- After the troika presents the report to the UPR Working Group the Working Group adopts the report

The adoption of the outcome...

- Time is allocated during the next regular session of the Human Rights Council following the State review in order to consider the outcome of each review (up to one hour per State)
- Member and observer States, as well as NGOs and other stakeholders, may participate in these plenary meetings to consider the UPR reviews
- The final outcome of the review is adopted by the entire membership of the Human Rights Council at this plenary session

Follow-up to the review...

- The outcome of the UPR should be implemented primarily by the State concerned and, as appropriate, by other stakeholders
- The follow-up review to take place during the 2nd cycle (2012-2015) should focus on the implementation of the recommendations of the previous review
- The international community will assist in implementing the recommendations and conclusions regarding capacity-building and technical assistance in consultation with, and with the consent of, the country concerned
- In considering the outcomes of the UPR, the Council will decide if and when any specific follow-up is necessary

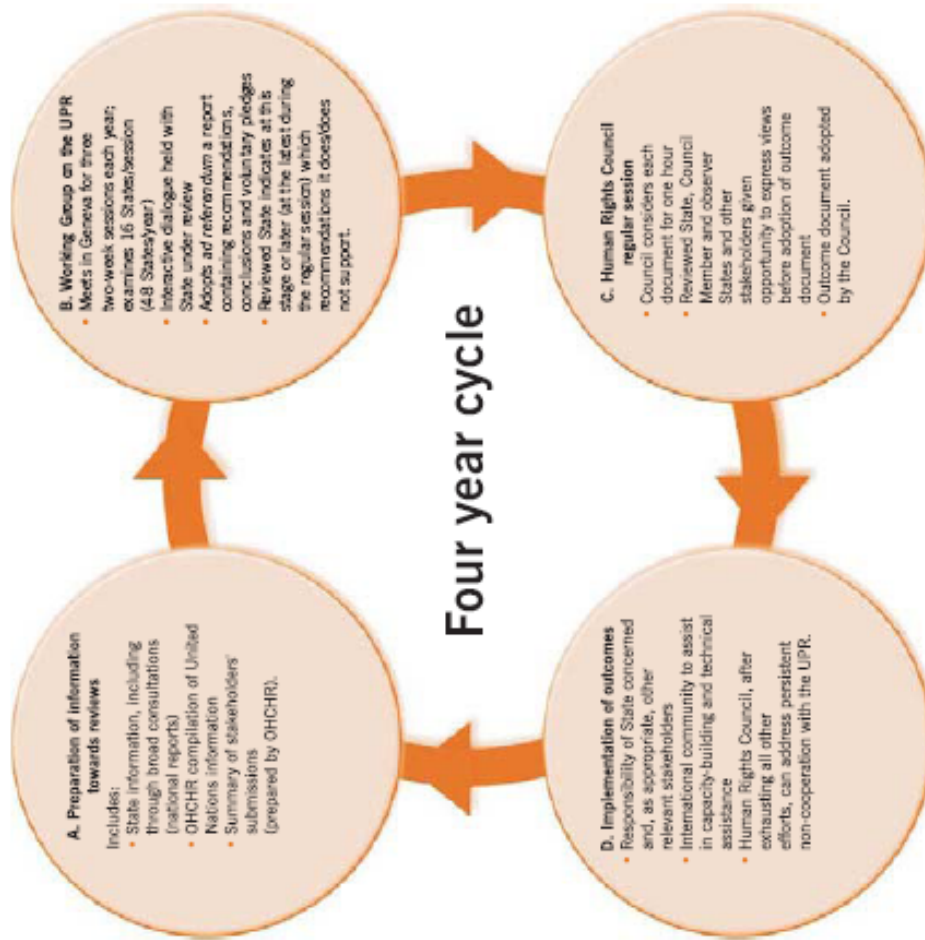
Cooperation with the universal periodic review...

- The Council will address, as appropriate, any cases of persistent non-cooperation with the UPR mechanism after exhausting all efforts to encourage a State to cooperate

* * * * *

OHCHR, November 2008

The UPR process



Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review

| 1st Session (2008) | 2nd Session (2008) | 3rd Session (2008) | 4th Session (2009) | 5th Session (2009) | 6th Session (2009) | 7th Session (2010) | 8th Session (2010) | 9th Session (2010) | 10th Session (2011) | 11th Session (2011) | 12th Session (2011) |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Morocco | Gabon | Botswana | Cameroon | Central African Republic | Côte d'Ivoire | Angola | Guinea | Liberia | Mozambique | Seychelles | Swaziland |
| South Africa | Ghana | Burkina Faso | Djibouti | Chad | Democratic Republic of the Congo | Egypt | Guinea-Bissau | Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | Namibia | Sierra Leone | Togo |
| Tunisia | Mali | Burundi | Mauritius | Comoros | Equatorial Guinea | Madagascar | Kenya | Malawi | Niger | Somalia | Uganda |
| Algeria | Zambia | Cape Verde | Nigeria | Congo | Eritrea | Gambia | Lesotho | Mauritania | Rwanda | Sudan | United Republic of Tanzania |
| Bahrain | Benin | Turkmenistan | Senegal | Vanuatu | Ethiopia | Qatar | Kiribati | Lebanon | Sao Tome and Principe | Palau | Zimbabwe |
| India | Japan | Tuvalu | Bangladesh | Viet Nam | Bhutan | Fiji | Kuwait | Maldives | Myanmar | Papua New Guinea | Syrian Arab Republic |
| Indonesia | Pakistan | United Arab Emirates | China | Yemen | Brunel Darussalam | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | Kyrgyzstan | Marshall Islands | Nauru | Samoa | Tajikistan |
| Philippines | Republic of Korea | Uzbekistan | Jordan | Afghanistan | Cambodia | Iraq | Lao People's Democratic Republic | Micronesia (Federated States of) | Nepal | Singapore | Thailand |
| Argentina | Sri Lanka | Colombia | Malaysia | Uruguay | Cyprus | Kazakhstan | Grenada | Mongolia | Oman | Solomon Islands | Timor Leste |
| Ecuador | Tonga | Bahamas | Saudi Arabia | Belize | Democratic People's Republic of Korea | Bolivia | Guyana | Honduras | Paraguay | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | Trinidad and Tobago |
| Brazil | Guatemala | Barbados | Cuba | Chile | Costa Rica | Nicaragua | Haiti | Jamaica | Saint Kitts and Nevis | Suriname | Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) |
| Netherlands | Peru | Israel | Mexico | Malta | Dominica | El Salvador | Spain | Panama | Saint Lucia | Belgium | Antigua and Barbuda |
| Finland | France | Liechtenstein | Canada | Monaco | Dominican Republic | Italy | Sweden | United States | Australia | Denmark | Iceland |
| United Kingdom | Switzerland | Luxembourg | Germany | New Zealand | Norway | San Marino | Turkey | Andorra | Austria | Greece | Ireland |
| Poland | Romania | Montenegro | Russian Federation | Slovakia | Portugal | Slovenia | Armenia | Bulgaria | Estonia | Hungary | Lithuania |
| Czech Republic | Ukraine | Serbia | Azerbaijan | The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | Albania | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Belarus | Croatia | Georgia | Latvia | Moldova |