

GUIDELINES FOR “RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS”¹ WISHING TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

[as of 19 December 2007]

1. These suggested guidelines aim at complementing the information note for Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which is available on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) website at the following link:

http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/upr/noteNGO_041007.htm

2. These guidelines have been developed by the OHCHR Civil Society Unit, in cooperation with the Human Rights Council Secretariat, on an interim basis; they are being suggested to assist NGOs in contributing to the UPR mechanism. They are to be considered as an evolving and indicative tool; NGOs are encouraged to provide suggestions and feedback to the OHCHR Civil Society Unit to further improve such guidelines.

3. As stated in General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, the UPR mechanism shall complement and not duplicate the work of Treaty Bodies (article 5 (e)).

I. UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW AS A PROCESS

4. The UPR is to be seen as a process, composed of several steps. The participation of all relevant stakeholders, including NGOs, is encouraged throughout all relevant steps of such a process.

5. Kindly note that according to the Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007:

(a) States are encouraged to prepare the information they submit “through a broad consultation process at the national level with all relevant stakeholders” (paragraph 15 (a)), which include NGOs;

NGOs may wish to ensure that they are included in the broad consultation process at the national level organised by the State for the purpose of the preparation of the information to be submitted to the UPR by the State.

(b) Other relevant stakeholders, which includes NGOs, may submit additional, credible and reliable information to the universal periodic review. Input received from stakeholders will be summarized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in a summary which shall not exceed 10 pages (paragraph 15 (c));

(c) Other relevant stakeholders, which includes NGOs, may attend the review in the working group (paragraph. 18 (c));

(d) Before the adoption of the outcome by the plenary of the Council, the State concerned should be offered the opportunity to present replies to questions or issues; Other relevant stakeholders will have the opportunity to make general comments before the adoption of the outcome by the plenary (paragraphs 29 and 31);

(e) The outcome of the universal periodic review, as a cooperative mechanism, should be implemented primarily by the State concerned and, as appropriate, by other relevant stakeholders, which includes NGOs (paragraph 33).

II. WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

A. Format and structure of written submissions to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' summary of stakeholders' input

6. NGOs are strongly encouraged to provide the OHCHR with submissions that:

(a) Follow the structure of the general guidelines for the preparation of information under the UPR, adopted by the Human Rights Council at its sixth session (decision 6/102, available on the OHCHR website at:

http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/sdpage_e.aspx?b=10&se=69&t=3);

(b) Highlight the main issues of concern and express a sense of priority thereof. Facts and details to support the priority issues, as well as possible recommendations to be made to the country under review, may be annexed for reference to the submission;

(c) Are specifically tailored for the UPR;

(d) Take the format of a five-page document, to which a more detailed and factual report may be attached for reference;

(e) Are written in United Nations official languages only, preferably in English, French or Spanish; and

(f) Cover a maximum four-year time period.

B. Content of written submissions

7. Thus, NGOs, drawing from the above-mentioned general guidelines, may wish to provide information on:

(a) The methodology and the broad consultation process followed nationally for the preparation of information provided to the UPR by the country under review;

(b) The current normative and institutional framework of the country under review for the promotion and protection of human rights: constitution, legislation, policy measures such as national action plans, national jurisprudence, human rights infrastructure including national human rights institutions ...;

(c) The implementation and efficiency of the normative and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of human rights as described at subparagraph (b) above. This includes information on the implementation of the country's human rights obligations and commitments at the national and the international levels (for example information on the implementation of commitments made by the country under review at international conferences and other United Nations fora; of constitutional and legal reforms aimed at protecting human rights, of national action plans, of mechanisms and remedies aimed at improving human rights); on the activities of national human rights institutions; on human rights education and public awareness;

(d) Cooperation of the country under review with human rights mechanisms, and with national human rights institutions, NGOs, rights holders, human rights defenders, and other relevant national human rights stakeholders, both at the national, regional and international levels;

(e) Achievements made by the country under review, best practices which have emerged, and challenges and constraints faced by the country under review;

(f) Key national priorities as identified by NGOs, initiatives and commitments that the State concerned should undertake, in the view of NGOs, to overcome these challenges and constraints and improve human rights situations on the ground. This includes, for example, national strategies, areas where further progress is required, steps regarding implementation and follow-up to recommendations made by human rights mechanisms, commitments for future cooperation with OHCHR and human rights mechanisms and agencies, etc.;

(g) Expectations in terms of capacity-building and technical assistance provided and/or recommended by NGOs through bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

8. NGOs are encouraged, while drafting their contribution, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 (paragraph 1), to take into consideration all human rights obligations and commitments, including those set out in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights instruments to which the country under review is a party, voluntary pledges and commitments made by that country, as well as applicable international humanitarian law.

9. NGOs may also, if they so wish, suggest recommendations and/or draw attention to specific conclusions and recommendations made by international and regional human rights mechanisms, which they believe are of utmost importance.

C. How to submit information?

10. Submissions of information for the UPR review should be sent to the following address: UPRsubmissions@ohchr.org. Detailed and technical guidance on modalities for stakeholders' submissions is included in the information box contained in these guidelines.
11. Submissions should be sent by **14 January 2008** in relation to countries scheduled to be reviewed at the second session of the UPR.
12. Please note that the summary of other stakeholders' input prepared by OHCHR will reference the list of relevant sources, which will be made available on-line.
13. NGOs are encouraged to consult with one another at the national level, as well as with national human rights institutions, for the preparation of the UPR submissions. Submissions on behalf of a large number of stakeholders are welcome. Please clearly indicate the name(s) of the submitting organizations.

III. PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

14. Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 allows for an active engagement of NGOs in the UPR mechanism. The UPR shall "ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, as well as any decisions that the Council may take in this regard"(paragraph 3 (m));
15. NGOs may attend the UPR review in the working group (paragraph 18 (c));
16. NGOs will have the opportunity to make general comments before the adoption of the final outcome by the plenary of the Human Rights Council (paragraph 31).

IV. OUTCOME OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

17. The UPR review will be conducted in one working group composed of the 47 member States of the Human Rights Council. The working group is to adopt a report. The final outcome will be adopted by the plenary of the Council, and will take the format of a report consisting of a summary of the proceedings, conclusions and/or recommendations, and the voluntary commitments of the State concerned.
18. Therefore, the outcome relating to countries scheduled to be reviewed at the first two UPR sessions (7 to 18 April 2008 and 5 to 16 May 2008) will be considered by the Human Rights Council at its plenary meeting to be held in Geneva from 2 to 18 June.

V. FOLLOW-UP TO THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

19. NGOs may wish to be directly involved in the follow-up to the outcome of the UPR process, to the extent that this is appropriate:

(a) Follow-up action could be undertaken in cooperation with the State entities, to whom the recommendations are addressed; and

(b) Follow-up action could also be undertaken in cooperation with other actors of the national human rights protection system, such as national human rights institutions, Parliament, civil society, academia, media, etc.

20. NGOs may disseminate the outcome of the UPR at the national level and draw up an action plan or strategy to contribute to the implementation of the various recommendations.

21. NGOs may actively monitor the implementation of the UPR recommendations, so that next submissions of information may include main observations in this regard.

22. NGOs are encouraged to further distribute these guidelines and raise awareness on the UPR at the national and regional level.

23. For further details, please contact:

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Note

¹ Stakeholders, which are referred to in resolution 5/1, include, *inter alia*, NGOs, national human rights institutions, human rights defenders, academic institutions and research institutes, regional organizations, as well as civil society representatives.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

Technical guidelines for the submission of stakeholders' information

Where to submit?

Written information for the UPR review should be sent to the following address: uprsubmissions@ohchr.org. Please avoid sending information to other OHCHR electronic addresses. Please note (a) the OHCHR secretariat will confirm electronically receipt of your message and submission; and (b) while stakeholders are not encouraged to fax or mail a hardcopy of their submission to the OHCHR secretariat, they may in the case of technical difficulties with electronic mail fax their submission to +41 22 917 90 11.

Format of the submission

Each electronic submission and relevant e-mail message should concern **one country only**. In the **e-mail message** accompanying the submitted documents kindly include:

(a) In the title of the e-mail message: the name of the (main) stakeholder/NGO submitting the contribution, the kind of contribution (individual and/or joint), the name of the reviewed country and indicate the month and year of relevant UPR session, e.g., "*Women's coalition – joint UPR submission – Brazil – April 2008*";

(b) In the text of the e-mail message accompanying the submission, kindly indicate the contact details of the reference person in your organization;

(c) A paragraph describing the main activities of the submitting organization/coalition, as well as date of establishment, especially for those organizations which interrelate for the first time with the United Nations, would be also welcomed.

Content of the written submission

(a) Stakeholders' submissions should not be longer than five pages, to which a more detailed and factual report maybe attached;

(b) Submission documents should be saved as a Word document only, i.e. not as PDF file;

(c) Written contributions should be submitted in United Nations official languages only, preferably in English, French or Spanish;

(d) Kindly submit the final version of your text as revised versions might be difficult to

be accepted at a later stage;

(e) Paragraphs and pages of each submission should be numbered;

(f) Submissions may include an introduction paragraph summarizing the main points contained therein;

(g) As a way of introduction, stakeholders are also encouraged to indicate key words in relation to their submission (e.g., domestic violence); and

(h) Stakeholders should refrain from annexing reports from other organizations;

Please note also:

(a) Submissions substantially in excess of the agreed page and/or time limit will not be considered;

(b) Submissions containing language manifestly abusive (i.e., incitement to violence, inherently racial language, etc.) will not be considered.
