
OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGO ENGAGEMENT

November 2011 – March 2012

COUNTRY EXAMINATIONS AND REVIEWS

For more detailed and up-to-date information, please consult the relevant treaty body pages at <http://bit.ly/feFwjo> or the UPR website at <http://bit.ly/ea8LRG>. For an overview of the UN treaty body system and its functions, you can download a free copy of ISHR's *Simple Guide to the UN Treaty Bodies* at <http://bit.ly/dB7B73>.

COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE

What's coming up?

The Committee against Torture will hold its 47th session from 31 October to 25 November in Geneva. It will consider the reports of Belarus, Bulgaria, Djibouti, Germany, Greece, Madagascar, Morocco, Paraguay, and Sri Lanka.

The Committee will hold its 48th session from 7 May to 1 June 2012, when it will review Albania, Armenia, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, Mexico, the Russian Federation, and Rwanda. For more information see <http://bit.ly/eknkCG>.

What can you do?

If you are working on the issue of torture, you can submit information to the Committee at any time, but preferably six weeks before the session.

Information on the States to be reviewed at the 48th session is due by 20 April 2012. Information should be sent in electronic Microsoft Word format to registry@ohchr.org, jnataf@ohchr.org, and bcorvalan@ohchr.org, and will be posted on the Internet.

COMMITTEE ON ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

What's coming up?

The Committee on Enforced Disappearances will hold its first meeting from 8 to 11 November 2011 in Geneva. At this first session the Committee will focus on adopting its methods of work, rules of procedure, and reporting guidelines for States, and many of the sessions will be closed to the public. A meeting of the Committee with NGOs is provisionally scheduled for 15h00 on 11 November. A provisional agenda can be found at <http://bit.ly/rtGxPj> and the finalised programme of work will be made available at <http://bit.ly/oJf6dn>. NGOs that want to attend the meeting must confirm their participation by 1 November, by emailing the Committee Secretariat at ced@ohchr.org. There will also be a side event, with the International Coalition against Enforced Disappearances, 13h00 - 15h00 on 9 November.

What can you do?

NGOs who wish to attend the first session of the Committee should contact the Committee's Secretariat, at ced@ohchr.org for accreditation and for more information as to the space available for NGO engagement with the Committee in the programme of work. The final programme of work will be published on the Committee's webpage: <http://bit.ly/oJf6dn>.

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

What's coming up?

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will hold its 47th session from 14 November to 2 December in Geneva. It will examine the reports of Argentina, Cameroon, Estonia, Israel, and Turkmenistan.

At its pre-session working group, from 5 to 9 December, the Committee will prepare the lists of questions for Bulgaria, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Mauritania, and the United Republic of Tanzania, which will be reviewed at a later session.

What can you do?

NGOs may participate in parts of both the 47th session and the pre-session working group following it. See <http://bit.ly/njgtxS> for more information.

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

What's coming up?

The Committee on the Rights of the Child will hold its 59th official session from 16 January to 3 February 2012 in Geneva. It will examine the reports of Azerbaijan, Cook Islands, Madagascar, Myanmar, Niue Islands, Thailand, Togo, and Vietnam. It will also review Azerbaijan, Thailand, and Togo under the *Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*, and Azerbaijan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Thailand under the *Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict*.

What can you do?

If you would like to submit information for upcoming examinations, you can contact the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child for advice: www.childrightsnet.org. Information on NGO participation can be found in *A Guide for Non-Governmental Organisations Reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child*, which is available at <http://bit.ly/gNbare>. Additional information on the 59th official session and how to submit information to the Committee is available at <http://bit.ly/pYKtg4>.

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

What's coming up?

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will hold its 51st session from 13 February to 2 March 2012 in Geneva. It will examine the reports of Algeria, Brazil, Grenada, Jordan, Norway, the Republic of Congo, and Zimbabwe. For more information see <http://bit.ly/nAM47v>.

What can you do?

If you are working on discrimination against women in any of the countries under review, you can submit information to the Committee in Microsoft Word format to bsmith@ohchr.org, indicating whether the materials may be published on the Committee's website; and also in hard copy to CEDAW Secretariat, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Palais Wilson, 52 rue des Paquis, CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland; e-mail: cedaw@ohchr.org.

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

What's coming up?

From 13 February to 9 March 2012, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will hold its 80th session. It will examine the reports of Canada, Italy, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Laos, Mexico, Portugal, Qatar, Senegal, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam. An information note for NGOs will be published on <http://bit.ly/pVnmGX>.

What can you do?

The deadline for submissions has not yet been published; it will be included in the information note mentioned above. Information on NGO participation with the Committee can be found in *A Guide for Civil Society Actors*, which is available at <http://bit.ly/u01iBY>.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

What's coming up?

The Human Rights Committee will hold its 104th session from 12 to 30 March 2012 in New York. It will examine the reports of the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Turkmenistan, Yemen, and Mozambique (in the absence of a report). Lists of issues will be prepared on the Philippines, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paraguay, and Portugal.

What can you do?

NGO reports should be submitted by 31 December 2011. Information and dates on when and how to submit NGO reports for the future sessions are available on www.ccprcentre.org/next-sessions.

If you would like to submit information for upcoming examinations, you can contact the Centre for Civil and Political Rights by email to info@ccprcentre.org.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW**What's coming up?**

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) will hold its 13th session from 21 May to 1 June 2012 in Geneva. The countries under review are Bahrain, Ecuador, Tunisia, Morocco, Indonesia, Finland, the United Kingdom, India, Brazil, Philippines, Algeria, Poland, the Netherlands, and South Africa. The 13th session will be the first session of the second cycle of the UPR.

What can you do?

The deadlines for submissions of information to the 13th session are:

- 21 November: Bahrain, Ecuador, Tunisia, Morocco, Indonesia, Finland, and the United Kingdom.
- 28 November: India, Brazil, the Philippines, Algeria, Poland, the Netherlands, and South Africa.

If you would like to submit information on any of the countries to be examined in June 2012, when the 2nd cycle starts, please follow the guidelines found at <http://bit.ly/d07u3s>. Your submission should be sent to uprsubmissions@ohchr.org following the above-mentioned guidelines. For a tentative calendar of the second cycle see: <http://bit.ly/rmjTHC>.

MEETINGS**GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S THIRD COMMITTEE****What's coming up?**

The General Assembly's Third Committee is holding its 66th session from 3 October to 22 November in New York.

What can you do?

If you work with an ECOSOC accredited NGO you may attend the Third Committee. You may also organise parallel events at premises outside the UN, such as in the Church Center to the UN, or at UN headquarters (in conjunction with a State or UN Secretariat). NGOs cannot deliver oral statements to the General Assembly's Third Committee. Information on the Third Committee is available at <http://bit.ly/pdbqgg>. ISHR's email news alert on the General Assembly (available at www.ishr.ch/subscribe) also provides information on the key issues and themes expected during the session.

WORKING GROUP ON ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES**What's coming up?**

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances will hold its 95th session in Geneva from 1 to 11 November. The Working Group meets with NGOs and family members of the disappeared during the first three days of each session, and with representatives of governments to exchange views and information on the issue of enforced disappearances.

What can you do?

The deadline for making an appointment to meet with the Committee during its 95th session has already passed, but it may still be possible to make an appointment by emailing the Secretariat at wgeid@ohchr.org. For more information on how NGOs can engage with the working group see <http://bit.ly/poqfoc>.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

What's coming up?

The UN Intergovernmental open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development will hold its 12th session in from 14 to 18 November, in room XVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva. The Working Group will consider views of member States and other stakeholders on the work of the high-level task force on the implementation of the right to development and the way forward in implementation of this right.

What can you do?

The date for contributions has passed, but information and reports can be read on <http://bit.ly/oAliqx>.

FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES

What's coming up?

The UN Forum on Minority Issues will hold its 4th session on 29 and 30 November, in Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva. The theme for this session of the Forum will be 'Guaranteeing the rights of minority women'. Key documentation for the Forum, including the provisional agenda and the concept note on the theme that will be discussed in this session, is available on <http://bit.ly/readHL>.

What can you do?

The Forum will seek to formulate concrete thematic recommendations from a broad array of experts. The 'Draft Recommendations aimed at guaranteeing the rights of minority women' will be made available to all participants, and will constitute the basis for discussion. The discussion will be aimed to provide guidance for those governments seeking to guarantee full respect of human rights for women belonging to any national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority. The recommendations will be reported to the Human Rights Council in the annual report of the Independent Expert on minority issues.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

What's coming up?

The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee will hold its 8th session from 20 to 25 February 2012, immediately prior to the 19th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. Exact dates have not yet been made public. At this session the working group established to produce a report on traditional values and human rights will present a draft to the Committee. Other studies currently being prepared by the Committee can be found here: <http://bit.ly/aRwX2l>.

What can you do?

NGOs can submit information to the Committee on any of the studies being prepared by the Committee. Information can be submitted to the Committee Secretariat, by emailing hrcadvisorycommittee@ohchr.org, who will ensure it reaches the relevant Committee members. NGOs may also attend the session itself and make oral statements. Written statements can be submitted two weeks in advance of the opening of the session to hrcngo@ohchr.org. More information about NGO engagement with the Committee can be found here: <http://bit.ly/9UJoyG>.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

What's coming up?

The 19th session of the Human Rights Council will take place from 27 February to 23 March 2012 in Geneva. For an overview of key thematic and country issues see the Council's annual programme of work here: <http://bit.ly/uAGDsV>.

What can you do?

If you work with an ECOSOC accredited NGO you may attend all sessions of the Council. You may also submit written statements and request rooms to organise parallel events. You may also register to deliver oral statements under all agenda items. Registration will usually take place online from 14h00 Geneva time on 24 February 2012. More information about the

Council and NGO participation (deadlines for written statements and room requests) is available at <http://bit.ly/dSkbHC> and www.ishr.ch/council.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

What's coming up?

The 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at UN headquarters in New York from 27 February to 9 March 2012. The priority theme is the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges. The review theme is financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women (agreed conclusions from the 52nd session).

What can you do?

If you work with an ECOSOC accredited NGO you may attend the Commission session, but you must register to do so by 31 December. You can attend open (public) official meetings, submit written statements prior to sessions, organise and attend parallel events that take place during the session, and make oral statements on behalf of caucuses or coalitions during general discussions and interactive events (limited numbers because of time constraints).

NGOs without ECOSOC accreditation can organise and attend parallel events held outside UN premises, for example in the Church Center to the UN. To do so, they should contact the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (www.ngocsw.org), which is a group of New York-based women's NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.

NOTE: Because of space limitations in the North Lawn Building where the next session will take place, the Secretariat has reduced the numbers of attendees from civil society. The limit is 20 representatives per organisation.

PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

What's coming up?

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will hold its 11th session from 7 to 18 May 2012 at UN headquarters in New York. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council, with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health, and human rights. The special theme of the meeting will be the 'The Doctrine of Discovery: its enduring impact on indigenous peoples and the right to redress for past conquests (articles 28 and 37 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)'. A provisional agenda can be found at <http://bit.ly/qH53iG>.

What can you do?

The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Mr James Anaya, will hold individual meetings with representatives of indigenous peoples and organisations. The meetings are an opportunity to raise issues relevant to the Special Rapporteur's mandate. The meetings will be held in May 2012. Requests for a meeting should be sent by April 2012 to indigenous@ohchr.org. Further information is available at <http://bit.ly/fBMUz3>. To meet with the Special Rapporteur you will also need to pre-register for the 11th session. For more information, consult the website here: <http://bit.ly/gQlvKj>.

ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL PROCEDURES MANDATE HOLDERS

What's coming up?

At the September 2011 session, the Human Rights Council established for a period of three years a Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. The Special Rapporteur's objectives will include gathering relevant information and making subsequent recommendations on national situations and violations of international

humanitarian law on the matter of truth and justice. The Special Rapporteur will report annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. The mandate holder will be appointed at the 19th session of the Council, and the deadline for applications to the role is 30 November. To find out more visit <http://bit.ly/6rmxeS>.

Furthermore, the Council established, for three years, a new special procedures mandate: Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order. The mandate includes the objective of identifying possible obstacles to the promotion and protection of a democratic and equitable international order, identifying best practices and working in cooperation with States to foster the adoption of measures at the local, national, regional, and international levels. The mandate holder's first report will be presented to the Council at its 21st session. The mandate holder will be appointed at the 19th session of the Council.

What can you do?

NGOs can nominate candidates. Please check the following link for information on the nomination procedures: <http://bit.ly/6rmxeS>.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES' VISITS

You can stay up-to-date about upcoming visits by the special procedures mandate holders to countries around the world at <http://twitter.com/unrightswire> or join the OHCHR civil society mailing list at <http://conta.cc/c4paEC>. Unfortunately, there is no centralised location online at which to access information regarding special procedures' visits. At the time of writing, information about the following 2011-2012 visits was available:

- The Special Rapporteur on **human rights and countering terrorism**, Mr Ben Emmerson, will visit **Burkina Faso** from 7 to 11 November. See <http://bit.ly/vZKxTn>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **violence against women**, Ms Rashida Manjoo, will visit **Jordan** from 11 to 27 November. See <http://bit.ly/qKi1Ad>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **trafficking in persons, especially in women and children**, Ms Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, will visit **Australia** from 16 to 29 November. See <http://bit.ly/rznyBu>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions**, Mr Christof Heyns, will visit **Mexico** from 21 November to 2 December. See <http://goo.gl/2HpB4>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**, Ms Najat Maalla M'jid will visit **France** from 21 November to 2 December. See <http://bit.ly/s91hx1>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **the right to health**, Mr Arnand Grover will visit **Vietnam** from 25 November to 6 December. See <http://bit.ly/vzxK0o>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **the rights of indigenous peoples**, Mr James Anaya, will visit **Argentina** from 27 November to 7 December. See <http://goo.gl/CFtxb>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **freedom of opinion and expression**, Mr Frank La Rue, will visit **Israel** from 4 to 18 December. See <http://bit.ly/pYS1Gz>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **the human rights of migrants**, Mr François Crépeau will visit **Albania** from 5 to 13 December. See <http://bit.ly/txRles>.
- The Special Rapporteur on **the right to food**, Mr Olivier De Schutter will visit **Venezuela** from 15 to 22 January, and **Canada** from 7 to 15 May, 2012. See www.srfood.org.
- The Special Rapporteur on **water and sanitation**, Ms Catarina de Albuquerque, will visit **Uruguay** from 13 to 17 February, 2012. See <http://bit.ly/o9RTLm>.

ECOSOC accreditation

Some forms of formal participation in the work of the UN require NGOs to hold consultative status with ECOSOC. NGOs may apply for ECOSOC consultative status under Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations and ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31. These accredited organisations may participate in meetings of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, including the functional commissions, in accordance with the rules of procedure of those bodies. For more information visit <http://csonet.org> ■