

Treaty Body Reform: The Intergovernmental Process

11.04.2013

Just as the [Dublin Process](#) was due to culminate in the [report](#) of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the issue of treaty body reform became politically charged when certain Member States in New York launched a rival 'intergovernmental process' in the General Assembly. Human rights defenders in particular suffered a significant setback, as the intergovernmental process did not provide adequately for their participation.

Just as the [Dublin Process](#) was due to culminate in the [report](#) of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the issue of treaty body reform became politically charged when certain Member States in New York launched a rival 'intergovernmental process' in the General Assembly. Human rights defenders in particular suffered a significant setback, as the intergovernmental process did not provide adequately for their participation. See [ISHR's article on the creation of the intergovernmental process](#) for more information and background.

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) launched the process in the spring of 2012 and appointed two co-facilitators to lead: Iceland and Indonesia. A series of State consultations were then held on 2 of July and 16-18 July 2012, followed by a separate NGO hearing in September 2012.

At the close of the 66th session of the General Assembly in September 2012, the co-facilitators presented a non-substantive [progress report to the PGA](#), describing the State and NGO consultations. States then adopted a consensus [resolution extending the intergovernmental process](#).

Looking forward, the timeline for the process is uncertain as the resolution vaguely 'decides to extend the intergovernmental process [...] *with a view to identifying*' concrete and sustainable measures in the next session (emphasis added). See ISHR's article on [the extension of the process](#) in September 2012 and a [review of the process](#) up to that point for more information.

The co-facilitators resumed discussions in early 2013, with State consultations and an NGO hearing in February. Further consultations among States will take place in April and May. The next and an NGO hearing is scheduled for 6 was held on 22 May 2013. Please see our '[How to get involved](#)' page for more information.

Schedule of relevant meetings

- 12 February 2013: Informal meeting
- 19-21 February 2013: Thematic discussions, followed by informal-informals
- 26 February 2013: Informal interactive hearing with civil society
- 12-17 April 2013: Thematic discussions, followed by informal informals
- 6 May 2013: Informal interactive hearing with civil society
- 6-7 May 2013: Thematic discussions, followed by informal-informals
- 22 May 2013: Informal interactive hearing with civil society

Relevant documents

Resolutions

- Resolution 66/254 '[Intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system](#)' (23 February 2012)
- Resolution 66/295 '[Extension of the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system](#)' (17 September 2012)

Background documents

- Report of the Secretary-General '[Measures to improve further the effectiveness, harmonization, and reform of the treaty body system](#)' (7 September 2011)

- [Agenda and background documentation](#) on thematic discussions and Informal consultations, (New York, 16-17 July 2012)
- [Report of the co-facilitators to the President of the General Assembly on the intergovernmental process at the close of the 66th](#) (11 September 2012)
- [Strengthening of the United Nations treaty bodies: Questions and answers](#) (Amnesty International, 19 September 2012)
- [Overview of issues to be discussed during the intergovernmental treaty body strengthening process](#) (February 2013)
- [Agenda and background documentation on thematic discussions and informal consultations](#) (New York, 19-20 February 2013)
- [Agenda and background documentation on thematic discussions and informal consultations](#) (New York, April 11-17 2013)
- [Agenda and background documentation on thematic discussions and informal consultations](#) (New York, May 6-7, 2013)
- The Way Forward (proposals by the co-facilitators) [Part I](#) - May 2013
- The Way Forward (proposals by the co-facilitators) [Part II](#) - May 2013

President of the General Assembly

- [Letter to all Permanent Missions and Permanent Observer Missions announcing the appointment of co-facilitators](#) (11 April 2012)
- [Letter to all Permanent Missions and Permanent Observer Missions convening an informal meeting on 2 July 2012](#) (28 June 2012)
- [Opening remarks at the informal meeting \(2 July 2012\)](#)
- [Opening remarks at the informal meeting \(16 July 2012\)](#)

OHCHR

- [Opening address by the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the informal meeting of States](#) (16 July 2012)
- [Background paper on the master calendar proposal](#) (2 April, 2012)
- [Power Point presentation on the proposed master calendar](#) (2 April 2012)
- [3Comprehensive cost review of the human rights treaty body system](#) (March 2013)

Treaty Body members

- [Guidelines on the independence and impartiality of treaty body members](#) “the Addis Ababa Guidelines” (June 2012)

NHRIs

- [Statement of the Chairperson of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions to the Inter-governmental treaty body strengthening process](#) (July 2012)

NGOs

- [Issues for the Inter-Governmental Process, a Joint NGO Contribution](#), in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#) (12 April 2012)
- [Joint NGO Statement: Four recommendations to ensure the effective participation of NGOs in the Intergovernmental Process](#), in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [French](#) (9 March 2012)
- [Joint NGO preliminary response to the High Commissioner’s report](#) (16 July 2012)
- [ISHR Statement on reprisals, interaction with NGOs, webcasting and videoconferencing, and meetings outside Geneva and New York](#) (4 September 2012)
- [Joint NGO statement on the accessibility and visibility of the treaty body system](#) (26 February 2013)
- [Joint NGO statement on treaty body membership](#) (26 February 2013)
- [Joint NGO statement on the treaty body reporting process and follow-up](#) (26 February 2013)
- [Joint NGO statement on the exclusion of Alkarama from the NGO hearing](#) (26 February 2013)
- [Joint NGO views on issues to be discussed at the 11-17 April meetings of the Treaty Body Strengthening](#)

[Process - Response to "Food for Thought" paper prepared by the Co-facilitators](#) (9 April 2013)

- [Joint NGO statement to meeting of Chairpersons](#), New York (22 May 2013)
- [Joint ISHR-Amnesty statement at NGO hearing on treaty body strengthening](#) (22 May 2013)

ISHR