

First information note for NGOs
(as of 30 January 2009)

The 10th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) is scheduled to be held from 2 to 27 March 2009 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, in Room XX (subject to confirmation).

Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 60/251, the participation of NGOs in the Human Rights Council shall be based on the arrangements and practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

Draft programme of work and other documents:

The draft programme of work of the session has been posted on the HRC extranet (instructions for accessing the HRC extranet are included below). The draft programme of work is expected to be discussed at the organisational meeting of the Human Rights Council to be held on Monday, 16 February 2009. It has been prepared on the basis of the annual programme of work, which is available on the HRC Extranet.

Documents for the Human Rights Council's 10th Session, including the annotated agenda, will be made available on the OHCHR Council webpage shortly.

The Secretariat strongly encourages NGOs to consult the HRC Extranet, as well as the OHCHR Council website on a regular basis, as they are regularly updated as and when documentation becomes available.

The HRC extranet is accessible from the OHCHR Council web page at the following link:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>

Click on the HRC Extranet link on the left hand column of the webpage.

Links

HRC Extranet

When prompted enter

Password: hrc extranet

Username:1 session.

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).

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.

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

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/guidelines.htm>

NGOs may submit their written statements to the Council Secretariat electronically to hrcngo@ohchr.org. Please kindly note that the **deadline** for the submission of written statements is **Friday, 13 February 2009**. The Secretariat will not be able to ensure the timely circulation of written statements submitted late.

Accreditation:

NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC wishing to accredit representatives to the 10th session of the Human Rights Council are invited to fax their letter of accreditation request/s to the Secretariat of the Council **as of Monday 16 February**, to the attention of **Ms. Françoise Kenfack, Accreditation Officer** who can be reached at:

Phone: +41 22 917 96 41

Fax: +41 22 917 90 08

E-mail: fkenfack@ohchr.org

Please note that the Accreditation Officer will be located at Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations during the duration of the session.

The **letter requesting accreditation** should:

- Be submitted on the **official letterhead** of the organization;
- 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*])..."
- Be **signed by the President or the Main Representative** of the organization;
- 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.**

Once in Geneva, participants may then proceed to the accreditation office at the "Pregny Gate" security entrance (8-14 avenue de la Paix). Upon presentation of personal identification and a copy of the accreditation request from the concerned NGO, the accreditation officer will issue a photo-badge granting access to the Palais des Nations. This badge will remain valid for the duration of the session, and will permit the badge-holder unrestricted access to the conference rooms.

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.

Assistance for requesting travel visas

Upon request, the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) NGO Liaison Office (not the Council 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 NGO Liaison Office which will issue the attestation and transmit it to the concerned NGO headquarters. The UNOG NGO Liaison Office may be contacted at the following address:

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.ngoliaison@unog.ch

Access to the public gallery

A limited number of seats in the public gallery, above the conference room, are available for persons wishing to observe the proceedings of the HRC without being accredited as participants (i.e. students, and academics). Individuals or groups who wish to attend are required to fax a letter (24 hours before the desired date) to the Accreditation Officer of the Council Secretariat, (fax: +41 (0) 22 917 90 08), containing the following information:

- (a) Date(s) of the visit;
- (b) Purpose of the visit; and
- (c) Full name(s) of those wishing to attend.

Access to the public gallery will be granted depending on the availability of seating and other circumstances.

NGO parallel events:

As under the arrangements and practices observed by the Council in its former sessions, NGOs duly accredited to the 10th session of the HRC will be able to organize parallel events of relevance to the work of the Human Rights Council, taking into account availability of rooms.

You may make a room booking request as from **Monday 16 February 2009** to the Secretariat, and this will be processed on a first come first serve basis, subject to availability of rooms. All requests should be sent by fax to the **Room Booking Officer, Human Rights Council Secretariat, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:**

Fax: +41 22 917 90 08

Contact information (phone, fax, room number) during the session will be communicated at a later stage.

NOTE: Kindly also be advised that NGOs wishing to co-sponsor an NGO parallel event should fill the relevant 'Co-sponsorship Form' which can be downloaded from the OHCHR Council web page. The Secretariat will rely only on the information contained in the co-sponsorship forms for the preparation of the relevant Bulletin of Informal Meetings annexed to the Order of the Day.

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 camera people accredited on a yearly basis with UNOG are allowed to use camera and video equipment.

Access to relevant information on the Web:

A **live Webcast service** will be available under the Council's webpage, covering the plenary session online, and will be accessible through this link:

<http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/>

OHCHR NGO Liaison Office:

The NGO focal point from the Council Secretariat, together with the Civil Society Unit of OHCHR will be facilitating the participation of NGO representatives in the work of the Council. Kindly note the following contact details:

- Ms. Elena Kountouri Tapiero, Human Rights Officer, Human Rights Council Secretariat, Phone: +41 22 917 96 72, E-mail: ekountouri-tapiero@ohchr.org
- Ms. Constanze Schimmel, Intern, Civil Society Unit, Phone: +41 22 917 97 70, E-mail: erbintern@ohchr.org

Contact information, as well as the NGO liaison office location accessible during the session will be communicated at a later stage.

A further up-dated NGO information note will follow.
