

## [Give the UN a hand in defining how best to support and protect defenders](#)

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The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is inviting civil society globally to assist them in defining guidelines on how the UN can best contribute to promoting and safeguarding civil society space. The aim is to define guidelines to encourage an effective and consistent approach across UN agencies and inform the methods of work of mechanisms.

This initiative was given a boost by the UN Secretary General who, in [a recent audit of the work of the UN](#) in regard to human rights defenders, called for the development of 'a system-wide approach to strengthen civil society space' and 'guidance on United Nations engagement with and support for human rights defenders.'

The consultation process will be held online from the 13-24 January 2020 on the [Global Dev Hub](#) platform.

'This is a moment for all civil society players who see the value of greater and more effective engagement with UN agencies and bodies, to provide input on how best this should be done,' said ISHR's Eleanor Openshaw.

'There are no national-level consultations being held to our knowledge, but a full week of online consultations will, hopefully, provide many of us with the opportunity to participate,' she added.

The UN is seeking thoughts on a series of questions related to three key areas: partnership and participation, the protection of civil society actors, and the promotion of and advocacy for civic space.

For further information and the key questions, see the UN consultation invitations in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Chinese](#), [Russian](#).

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