

## **SUMMARY OF IDEAS FROM THE PANEL DISCUSSION ON STRENGTHENING NGO PARTICIPATION AND THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AT THE UN**

The panel discussion yielded a number of concrete proposals to assist in facilitating NGO participation and accreditation at the UN, including to:

1. Encourage greater positive engagement by members of the Committee, observer States and international NGOs in ECOSOC NGO Committee sessions, particularly to support NGO applications through the process.
2. Encourage States supportive of civil society participation in the UN to consider seeking election to the Committee.
3. Share cases of repeated deferral or undue denial of applications, and of suspension or withdrawal of status of accredited NGOs that fail to respect due process, with relevant special procedure mandate holders and mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur on the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, and the Secretary-General in the context of inputs to the annual reprisals report, as appropriate.
4. Widely promote ISHR's Practical Guide to the UN Committee on NGOs amongst States and civil society organisations, and undertake further work on ways to improve mechanisms for civil society participation and engagement in the UN.
5. Seek to expand to all regions support for improving the working methods of the Committee, including by:
  - limiting the length of Committee membership to a fixed term, without the possibility of multiple re-elections;
  - considering and referring all applications for consultative status to ECOSOC for determination within three years of their initial submission.