

To all Permanent Missions in Geneva

Geneva, 11 February 2025

Ref.: Civil society participation during informal consultations on resolutions throughout 2025 (HRC58, HRC59 and HRC60)

Your Excellencies,

During the COVID-19 pandemic and in the period that followed, the Human Rights Council (HRC) and other human rights mechanisms in Geneva set an excellent example for the UN-wide system and strengthened their work through live online interventions and pre-recorded videos, coupled with in-person participation. These remote interventions have improved the diversity and accessibility of civil society, movements, and activists, especially those in the Global South and from underrepresented and marginalised groups. This has been crucial in ensuring the discussions, debates, and decisions of the HRC are informed by and relevant to those whose rights are affected, bringing human rights defenders and victims of violations closer to the UN human rights system.

Since the beginning of 2024, however, we have witnessed the [discontinuation of best practices](#), including the creation of further barriers to civil society participation, such as the requirement of payment for using the WebEx system during side events, as well as growing difficulties in obtaining visas to enter the host country.

We are particularly concerned with the continued implementation of the decision announced in the [Bureau Meeting notes from 30 May, 2024](#), requiring States to pay for the use of WebEx for hybrid informal negotiations on draft resolutions. Throughout 2024, unfortunately, only very few informal consultations have been made available via WebEx, which has greatly compromised the ability of human rights defenders and organisations, particularly those from the Global South, to engage and contribute to the negotiations. **Remote modalities of participation also play an important role in alleviating the heavy workloads**, by allowing multiple stakeholders to engage in discussions and negotiation processes from a distance. This helps reduce disparities between delegations with different levels of resources and allows a broader diversity of actors to engage with the Council meaningfully.

We reiterate that an inclusive approach to participation requires the United Nations to address the limited space for civil society engagement. In this regard, in 2025 **we urge you to ensure that all informal consultations are made available on WebEx to allow for broad and diverse participation from civil society organisations and human rights defenders** who cannot attend the session in person.

Once again, we take this opportunity [to call on States to address the liquidity crisis](#) and its dire consequences on the work of the Human Rights Council and related mechanisms and to prevent the

instrumentalisation of the cash flow crisis to create further restrictions on civil society participation and engagement with the HRC.

States have the opportunity to continue to build on the good practices adopted in the past years and **allow for a broader, more inclusive, effective, and climate-friendly human rights system**, including by providing access to negotiations on human rights resolution that can greatly benefit from the lived experiences of human rights defenders.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Signatories:

1. Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights
2. Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man
3. American Association of Jurists (AAJ)
4. American Civil Liberties Union
5. Amnesty International
6. Article 19
7. Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA)
8. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
9. Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
10. Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT)
11. Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
12. BAGSO - Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Seniorenorganisationen
13. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
14. Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD)
15. Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)
16. Child Rights Connect
17. CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality
18. CIVICUS

19. Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative
20. Conselho Indigenista Missionário - CIMI
21. Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
22. European Network on Statelessness
23. Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit - COC Nederland
24. FIAN International
25. Fondation du Docip
26. Franciscans International
27. Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)
28. Group of Partners for Youth Affairs
29. Human Rights House Foundation (HRRF)
30. Human Rights Watch
31. Humanists International
32. ILGA World (International Lesbian and Gay Association)
33. Initiative de Promotion de l'éducation des Batwa pour le Développement Durable, IPREBAD
34. Instituto Brasileiro de Direitos Humanos - IBDH
35. International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)
36. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
37. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
38. International Federation of ACATs
39. International Longevity Centre Canada
40. International Longevity Centre Global Alliance
41. International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS/MIEC) Pax Romana
42. International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA)
43. International Planned Parenthood Federation

44. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
45. Justiça Global
46. Make Mothers Matter (MMM)
47. Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP)
48. Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa (NAYA)
49. Noor
50. Omega Research Foundation
51. Peace Brigades International
52. Plan International
53. Privacy International
54. Save the Children
55. Sexual Rights Initiative (SRI)
56. Stolen Dreams
57. Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights - RFSL
58. United Against Torture Consortium
59. Walk Free
60. Washington Brazil Office
61. West African Human Rights Defenders' Network
62. Women Deliver
63. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
64. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
65. World Uyghur Congress