

OHCHR Information Note
for UN Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams, and UN entities
regarding the Universal Periodic Review (Third Cycle)
of the Human Rights Council
(12 September 2017)

**Information and guidelines for UN contributions
to the Compilation of UN information reports**

I. Background

1. The basis, principles and objectives of the universal periodic review were set forth in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and reaffirmed in resolution 16/21. The objective is the improvement of the human rights situation on the ground.
2. Resolution 16/21 (12 April 2011) further provides clarification on the focus and documentation to be used during the reviews:
 - a) The reviews will be based on three documents identified in paragraph 15 of the annex to Council resolution 5/1, namely:
 - Information prepared by the State concerned, which can take the form of a national report;
 - A compilation prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the information contained in the reports of treaty bodies, special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, and other relevant official United Nations documents;
 - A summary of additional, credible and reliable information provided by other relevant stakeholders to the universal periodic review, which should also be taken into consideration by the Council in the review, with a separate section foreseen for contributions by the national human rights institution of the State under review accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles. Information provided by other national human rights institution will be reflected accordingly, together with information provided by other stakeholders.
 - b) The reviews should focus on, inter alia, the implementation of previous recommendations and the development of the human rights situation in the State under review. As such, UN entities are encouraged to focus their contribution on assessments of implementation of past recommendations and comment on their impact thereon, as well as on developments or relevant issues not addressed during previous reviews.
3. In addition, UN entities should keep in mind that the review is based on:

- a) The Charter of the United Nations;
 - b) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - c) Human rights instruments to which a State is party;
 - d) Voluntary pledges and commitments made by States, including those undertaken when presenting their candidatures for election to the Human Rights Council; and
 - e) Applicable international humanitarian law
4. UNCTs and UN entities are encouraged to engage in the UPR process by, *inter alia*, continuing to provide updated information in the form of written contributions to the UN Compilation reports, to support an effective review of the implementation of the recommendations. At the same time, in line with their respective priorities, UNCTs can inject in the process, including for the purpose of the development of recommendations, their priorities which could subsequently be pursued by supporting the State in implementing the recommendations.
5. For the first cycle of the review, 68 UN entities, including 44 UNCTs, engaged with the UPR, by submitting over 300 reports for 156 countries, that highlighted human rights situations, priority issues and good practices in the countries under consideration. During the second cycle, this has increased to 484 submissions from 107 UN entities, including 94 UNCTs.

II. Written contribution

A. Content

6. UN entities are strongly encouraged to provide written contributions in line with the following:
- a) The contributions should be specifically tailored for the UPR and contain information on the follow-up to the preceding reviews, including an assessment of and comments on the implementation of recommendations. Developments since the last review and any other human rights issues should also be included. A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations has been made available on the OHCHR-UPR country pages:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Documentation.aspx>
 - b) When referring to the implementation of recommendations, the clear identification of each recommendation (HRC report, cycle, paragraph number, recommendation number and recommending country) is encouraged, as it will contribute better to report on the status of implementation and follow-up to the preceding reviews.
 - c) If reference is done to repeated recommendations from the previous cycles, all recommendations by cycle and report number should clearly be identified, also indicating that the recommendation is a repeated one.

- d) Follow-up information and analysis should be given on progress made in the implementation of recommendations, including comments on its impact and on the enjoyment of human rights; regressive actions if any; and the identification of the actions that remain to be taken for full implementation, if any.

In addition to the comments on the implementation of previous recommendations, measuring and reporting on the level of implementation of recommendations - including against indicators that may have been defined by States as part of their follow-up action plans - may also be done by using values (i.e. numbers, percentages, or categories such as “fully implemented”, “partially implemented”, “in the process of implementation” or “not implemented yet”), with relevant explanations. As regards any non-implemented recommendations, challenges or needs of technical cooperation could also be identified.

- e) Relevant UN entities may find it useful to add into the column in the matrix of thematically clustered recommendations (referenced above point 6a) any such values and comments on the implementation of previous recommendations. The matrix may be submitted as an annex to the main contribution (its input would not be added to the word count). The submission of the matrix should not replace the main contribution provided by the UN entity.
- f) The contributions must contain credible and reliable information on the human rights situation in the State under review, highlight main issues of concern, best practices and recommendations; and cover the period elapsed since the last review.

7. Contributions must not contain abusive language, must comply with the word count limits and must be presented within the established deadline.

8. Practical suggestions

- a) First-hand information should be given priority, as well as UN entities’ own views, findings and conclusions. Second-hand information should be referenced and referred to in endnotes, and included only if necessary.
- b) UN entities should consider, to the extent possible, not listing all treaties ratification or copying concluding observations of the human rights treaty bodies and recommendations of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, as the latter will already be reflected in the Compilation by OHCHR. UN entities should therefore focus on providing information on the status of implementation of concluding observations and recommendations.

As the preparation of the UN compilation reports is a responsibility of OHCHR, OHCHR also conducts its own review of flagship and other reports made public by mechanisms, bodies, agencies and other entities belonging to the UN system for relevant information that may be included in those reports.

- c) UN entities should consider making recommendations and reiterate previous ones where relevant. These should be S.M.A.R.T.—Specific, Measurable, Achievable,

Result-Oriented and Time-Bound, and linked to the themes addressed in the main contribution.

- d) Only contributions and annexes to the contributions which are used for the Compilation will be uploaded. UN entities are encouraged to make contributions accessible for persons with disabilities.
- e) When available, UN entities may share progress reports (i.e. mid-term evaluation) by including them in an annex.

B. Format

- 9. **Document format** – Use of word documents only – Written (main) contributions should be saved and submitted as a Word document only.
- 10. **Identification** - Written contributions should be clearly identifiable. The cover page of the main contribution should clearly identify the submitting organization(s) (letterhead, name and acronym, logo, webpage, email and postal address, etc.). For joint UNCT contributions, a list of organizations should be added as an endnote in the cover page or as an annex to the document.
- 11. **Length** – Individual written contributions must not exceed 2815 words (additional documentation can be annexed for reference). Joint contributions, e.g. UNCT contribution, must not exceed 5630 words. The cover page, endnotes and annexes will not be counted within the word/page limits of contributions.
- 12. **Use of endnotes** - UN entities should only use endnotes to reference information. Endnotes should not include any substantive information therein as the information in endnotes will not be taken into consideration in the Compilation.
- 13. **Numbering paragraphs and pages** - For ease of reference, paragraphs and pages should be numbered.
- 14. **Language** - Written contributions should be submitted in UN official languages only, preferably in English, French or Spanish.

C. Confidentiality

- 15. The UPR mechanism does not provide for confidentiality and is conducted on the basis of public documents. UN entities should be aware that their contributions will be considered “official United Nations document”, in line with resolution 5/1, and will be publicly made available on OHCHR – UPR country webpages, with the name of the contributing organization(s).
- 16. Reference to individual cases should be made only if the safety and well-being of all relevant individuals concerned will not be jeopardised by such a reference.

17. Addressing acts of intimidation and reprisal against those who seek to cooperate, cooperate or have cooperated with the United Nations in the field of human rights is a priority for OHCHR. Any act of intimidation or reprisal should be promptly reported (reprisals@ohchr.org).

III. When to submit written contributions

18. Deadlines for submissions – Tentative deadlines for UN contributions are the same as those for contributions by other relevant stakeholders, e.g. non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions, etc. They have been announced at the following page of the OHCHR website:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NgosNhris.aspx>
19. These deadlines are also posted at the following webpage of the UN Development Group (UNDG): <https://undg.org/human-rights/>
20. Focal points in the OHCHR-facilitated UN network on UPR are informed of deadlines by email alerts (“UPR Update”).
21. UN entities should note that written contributions to OHCHR should be sent indicatively at least six months before the relevant session of the Working Group on UPR, in order for the Secretariat to be able to complete the documentation ten weeks before the session, so that it can be made available in all UN official languages six weeks before the session.
22. Please note that contributions received after established deadlines will not be considered.
23. Written contributions should be final.

IV. Where and how to submit written contributions

24. UN contributions should be sent only through the “**On-line UPR Submissions Registration System**” for written contributions for the UPR documentation available at the following link: <https://uprdoc.ohchr.org>
25. All contributing UN entities will be requested to open an organizational profile in the system.
26. UN entities may submit one individual contribution and participate in one or more joint contributions, e.g. UNCT contribution, per country (per session). When submitting a joint contribution on behalf of the group, it is advisable to create a separate profile for the group.
27. Should UN entities need to provide more than one joint contributions on behalf of a

number of groups, it is advisable to contact the UPR Submissions Helpdesk (the email address indicated below) to get assistance and avoid duplicating organizational profiles.

28. Contributing organizations can submit: (a) a cover letter/page; (b) one main contribution and (c) a maximum of 10 annexes.
29. Once contributions have been submitted in the system, UN entities will receive an automatic confirmation of their contribution. UN entities can also consult their contribution history in the on-line system at any time. No additional confirmation by the OHCHR Secretariat will be sent.
30. The system does not allow UN entities to add documents for a country after the automatic confirmation of their initial contribution has been received. Additional documents (such as translations of main submissions or cover letters or annexes) should be sent by email to the UPR Submissions Helpdesk: uprsubmissions@ohchr.org
31. Should UN entities encounter technical problems using the on-line system, please contact the UPR Submissions Helpdesk.

V. Further Information

- OHCHR UPR webpage at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx>
- OHCHR Basic Facts about UPR at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BasicFacts.aspx>
- Official UPR country webpages at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Documentation.aspx>
- UPR Midterm reports available at OHCHR UPR webpage:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRImplementation.aspx>
- UNDG Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams at: <https://undg.org/document/undg-guidance-note-on-human-rights-for-resident-coordinators-and-un-country-teams/>
- Strengthening Engagement with the International Human Rights Mechanisms—A web-based Guide (UNDP) at: <https://undg.org/human-rights/strengthening-engagement-with-the-international-human-rights-mechanism/>

Contact us

For further information or assistance, please write to:

uprunentities@ohchr.org