

Universal Periodic Review

What is Universal Periodic Review?

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a new United Nations human rights mechanism that started in 2008. It will examine the human rights records of all 192 UN member states once every four years. It is an intergovernmental process where countries sitting on the Human Rights Council (HRC) assess the human rights record of each country in turn. This is a new approach, and a departure from the assessments made by the UN human rights treaty bodies, which are made up of independent experts.

The ultimate aim of the review is to improve the realisation of human rights for people of all countries through the support and encouragement of their governments in the implementation of agreed recommendations on human rights.

On what is the review based?

The HRC reviews the human rights record of each country according to three sources: a report prepared by the country under review; a compilation of information derived from the UN human rights system; and a summary of information given by other stakeholders such as NGOs and NHRIs.

What is the output of UPR?

The output of the review is a document containing (a) conclusions and recommendations made by the countries in

the Human Rights Council and (b) voluntary commitments made by the country under review.

Following the UPR...

Following the review, each country has a duty to implement the recommendations contained in the final document adopted by the Human Rights Council. During the subsequent review, four years later, each country's progress against these recommendations will be considered.

How many Commonwealth countries have undergone their review?

In total 35 Commonwealth countries have already completed their review. In 2011 the following countries will undergo their review:

10th Session: Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Nauru, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, Australia

11th Session: Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St Vincent and the Grenadines

12th Session: Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda.

At the time this publication went to print review dates for the 2nd cycle had not yet been announced.