
Summary of Recommendations

This section presents a collection of best practices and suggestions compiled from contributors' articles, as well as from the Secretariat's Human Rights Unit's work during the first year of the UPR.

For states

General approach to the UPR

- States should undertake a genuine assessment of their human rights situation, discuss challenges with peers during the UPR and be willing to initiate steps to improve the human rights situation in-country.
- Approaching the UPR process with positive political will can help facilitate opportunities for follow-up discussion and encourage offers of assistance.
- Given the commonalities in institutional and administrative systems, Commonwealth governments could work together to streamline internal processes governing the UPR and also evolve Commonwealth best practices.

Towards preparing for the review in Geneva

- Consultation with stakeholders (NHRIs and CSOs) in the preparation of the national report, as stipulated in Resolution 5/1, is a key component of success.
- It is important to disseminate information to the NHRI (where one exists) and CSOs in order to ensure their better understanding of the UPR process.
- Follow and publish a timeline for a transparent and inclusive consultative process. It would be helpful to hold consultations before the stakeholder's own UPR submission deadline.
- Forego a narrative style of reporting; instead evaluate achievements and challenges.
- If applicable, make contact with the diplomatic mission based in Geneva. The mission may be able to provide information regarding useful trends at the HRC.
- For states that have no office in Geneva, it would prove useful to work and communicate with other missions to gather such information.
- Keep an updated directory containing contact details of government officials and departments in charge of UPR processes and elements.

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- Developing states could consider the need for financial help from the voluntary trust fund to facilitate participation in the UPR.

After Geneva

- Disseminate widely to the public information about the UPR experience and the recommendations accepted.
- Continue the consultative process with stakeholders when implementing the accepted recommendations.
- Developing states could make enquiries regarding the voluntary fund for financial and technical assistance for help with implementing recommendations. Third party countries/organisations may be willing to offer similar assistance. The HRU is available to offer expertise.

For stakeholders (NHRIs and CSOs)

Towards preparing for the review in Geneva

- Participate in any pre-UPR consultations held by the government to ensure relevant input is given.
- As the UPR process upholds the principles of co-operation and non-confrontation, stakeholder reports could focus on proposing constructive solutions to each challenge raised.
- Observe the UPR working session, either in Geneva or on the webcast.
- For CSOs:
 - Consider whether to submit one stakeholder report representing the views of a single organisation or whether to submit a joint consolidated report with other CSOs.
 - Partake in advocacy by suggesting questions and recommendations to other states for them to address to the state under review during the interactive dialogue.

After Geneva

- Increase public awareness and publish the recommendations and commitments accepted by the government, for example in an annual report or press release.
- Encourage the government's adherence to recommendations accepted and assess the extent to which the government has implemented its pledges.

This can be done through organising post-UPR consultations with government to establish a timeline and plan of action for implementation.

- Align work plan and activities with the outcomes of the UPR.

Notes

- 1 See Annex 1.
- 2 See Annex 2.
- 3 Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative – for further information on its experiences as a NGO in the UPR process, see p. 18.
- 4 Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth Model National Plan of Action on Human Rights* (London, 2007).
- 5 For example, Nico Schrijver, 'UN Human Rights Council: A New "Society of the Committed" or Just Old Wine in New Bottles?', *Leiden Journal of International Law*, 20 (2007), pp. 809–23; Balakrishnan Rajagopal, 'Lipstick on a Caterpillar? Assessing the New UN Human Rights Council through Historical Reflection', *Buffalo Human Rights Law Review*, 13; Helen Upton, 'The Human Rights Council: First Impression and Future Challenges', *Human Rights Law Review*, 7(1), pp. 29–39; Claire Callejon, 'Developments at the Human Rights Council in 2007: A Reflection of its Ambivalence', *Human Rights Law Review*, 8(2), pp. 323–42.
- 6 Principles relating to the status and functioning of National Institutions for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights ('the Paris Principles'), UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/48/134 of 20 December 1993.
- 7 Available at the OHCHR's website at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/TechnicalGuideEN.pdf>
- 8 The homepage for the HRC webcast site can be found at: www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/index.asp. The site will show live webcasts during each UPR Working Session. Following the sessions, each country's UPR webcast is archived on the website.
- 9 The Regional NHRI Coordinating Committees which can be accredited to speak before the HRC are: African Network of National Human Rights Institutions, Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, European Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions and Inter-American Federation of National Human Rights Institutions.
- 10 For more information, please consult the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NgosNhris.aspx>
- 11 See Annex 1.
- 12 See Annex 5.
- 13 There were ten ratifications in the Commonwealth in 2007.
- 14 Bangladesh, Cameroon, Canada, Ghana, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, UK and Zambia.
- 15 All UPR documents are made available on the OHCHR website, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Documentation.aspx>