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2014



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Contact

UPR Info is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland. It aims to raise awareness of the UPR process and to provide capacity-building tools to interested actors, such as UN Member States, NGOs, NHRIs, media, academics and civil society.

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Introduction



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2014 was an exciting year for *UPR Info*. Through our continued engagement, and new approaches, we strengthened our development, expanded our network and increased our visibility. To sum up 2014, we published a landmark report, launched a new project, reinforced one of our programmes, wrapped up another, and strengthened our organisation.

■ Our achievements in 2014: CSOs are better equipped with the tools and knowledge to engage in the UPR

The highlight of the year was the publication of an analysis of the implementation of 11,527 recommendations. As the pinnacle of our four-year Follow-up Programme, *Beyond Promises* represented a breakthrough in the history of international human rights mechanism monitoring. For the very first time, a study provided responses regarding the concrete impact of a UN human rights mechanism only seven years after its inception. Presented before a full room at the United Nations, the analysis showcased that one out of two UPR recommendations had triggered action by Governments after three years. Combining quantitative and

qualitative data, with best practices, *Beyond Promises* was a landmark publication and attracted the attention of all stakeholders.

In order to better support States' engagement in the UPR, we held the very first seminar for recommending States. Recommending States are key actors in the UPR process – they contribute tremendously to the success of the mechanism and bear great responsibility in the implementation phase – but, they are often overlooked. The seminar aimed to better engage these actors and support their future work. More than 40 Permanent Missions attended the seminar.

In 2014, the Pre-sessions became an integral part of the UPR process. CSOs have incorporated their participation in the Pre-sessions as a decisive step in their UPR engagement. On average, 28 diplomats were present at each meeting, with 40 attending the Pre-session on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Since its inception, the Programme has enabled around 500 CSO representatives to participate, making it de facto the most important human rights lobbying platform in the world.

After four years of operation, The Follow-up Programme recently came to an end. *Beyond Promises* concluded the collection of information on 165 countries and 11,527 UPR recommendations. In keeping with our commitment to bring Geneva to the ground and ensuring the UPR has a meaningful impact on people's lives, 2015 will see a new project building on the outcomes of the previous one. This programme will strengthen our presence outside Geneva and will enable us to respond to requests for technical assistance from all actors.



I appreciate the opportunity that you and your organisation offered us to engage in issues that are dear to the people of Kenya.

M. Dominic Rono
National Human Rights
Commission of Kenya



On the organisational side, *UPR Info* underwent important changes in response to an increasing amount of work. Two programme managers joined our team, bringing the staff to four permanent members. Financially, fundraising was made a priority to secure the sustainability of the organisation for the next two years.

With robust programmes and financial stability in place, *UPR Info* is fully equipped to positively influence the second half of the second cycle of the UPR and strongly engage in the third one.



Roland Chauville
Executive Director

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
Our website was visited 265,000 times

1. A year at the UPR



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The UPR process underwent numerous debates and challenges over the course of 2014. For the very first time, and long after repeated calls from *UPR Info*, States spoke about the “lack of implementation of UPR recommendations” and the necessity to address this issue. In a statement read by Macedonia FYR on 22 September 2014, 39 countries called on the Human Rights Council (HRC) to react to the lack of implementation of UPR recommendations. Noting that the human rights situation in certain countries was “deteriorating and in some others [...] stagnating in implementation of the supported UPR recommendations”, the statement encouraged the HRC to “explore the existing documents” to determine how to react. Though a small step, it was an important one.

Throughout the year, special attention was brought to mid-term reporting. In a statement at the HRC in June, *UPR Info* underlined that the number of mid-term reports submitted had dramatically increased: approximately half of all mid-term reports had been published during the preceding 20-month period. In September, a side event was hosted by the Governments of Morocco and the United Kingdom, with our participation. Mid-term reports were valued as a very interesting tool by the panellists as they were considered to be a good way to evaluate the work that has been done thus far, learn from it and allow the process to move forward.

In 2014, numerous recommending States, which are important actors in the process, demonstrated positive signs of engagement by strengthening the cyclical nature of the UPR. In order to ensure that States under Review were reminded of their previous commitments, and that accountability was



UN PHOTO / JEAN-MARC FERRÉ

ensured, those recommending States added the phrase “as previously recommended” at the end of the recommendations that were repeated from the last UPR. However, much remains to be done regarding the recommending States’ overall quality of engagement. As denounced by 19 CSOs in March, under the initiative of *UPR Info*, recommendations in the second cycle are less specific. The overall number of recommendations made has increased, but the quality has decreased. Another negative trend was the attempt by Costa Rica to make joint recommendations. Costa Rica convinced Botswana and Uruguay to associate Costa Rica with the recommendations they made to New Zealand and Chile, respectively. However, in a decisive move, the HRC President ruled out joint statements and joint recommendations at the UPR. Basing this clarification on the “institution building package” and the “practice established during the first and second cycle”, the President recalled to States that statements and recom-



I would like to give a special mention to the NGO *UPR Info* because it is the only specialised NGO in the follow-up of the UPR and, through its activities, it gives a great visibility to this exercise and raises awareness

M. Ignacio Ybanez
Secretary of State for Foreign
Affairs of Spain

recommendations were “exclusively bilateral” and invited all delegations “to continue respecting those practices”.

2014 was the year of the Parliamentarians at the UPR. A new resolution adopted by the HRC in June called on States to involve Parliaments in the preparation of the national report and in the implementation of recommendations, acknowledging the crucial role that parliaments play in translating international commitments into national policies and laws. The resolution also encouraged “cooperation between national parliaments and national human rights institutions and civil society”. The Inter-Parliamentary Union held a series of regional seminars on the role of Parliamentarians at the HRC and the UPR. In February 2014, *UPR Info* participated in such a seminar in Romania to underline the role of CSOs and their cooperation with Parliamentarians.

■ Our achievements in 2014:
We worked to ensure that stronger recommendations are being made at the UPR

Civil society space in Geneva came under attack during China’s UPR report adoption. The State under Review prevented a NGO from being able to “observe a moment of silence” in memory of Cao Shunli, a Chinese human rights defender who died following the lack of medical treatment while held in detention. This triggered a discussion among States in which Algeria, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, the Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Venezuela, and Viet Nam disputed the right of CSOs to use their two-minute statements freely while Austria, Canada, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece on behalf of the European Union, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States defended the space of CSOs.

In a joint response to this negative move, 54 States came together to reaffirm the important role that CSOs play at the UPR. The statement acknowledged the “positive contribution” and “constructive participation” of civil society in the process, notably at national consultations and emphasised “the need for all States to ensure a safe and enabling environment” in which human rights defenders can work “free from insecurity”. It also called on States to “refrain from or prevent, and prosecute as needed, any act of intimidation or reprisals against those who cooperate” with the UN.

As we reflect back on 2014, it appears that the UPR is an evolving mechanism. Every review, every actor, shapes the mechanism in its own way. This pluralism nourishes the mechanism and makes it organic. As underlined in our publication, *Beyond promises*, 48% of UPR recommendations trigger action after three years. This encouraging note should give us all the strength to continue shaping the mechanism in the right way.

2. Supporting CSO participation at the UPR

As key actors of the UPR process, we make it one of our main priorities to support a meaningful participation of CSOs throughout the UPR process. This support takes three forms: reaching out to CSOs, strengthening their capacities and keeping them engaged.

2.1 Reaching out to CSOs

In order to ensure CSO participation, it is first necessary to inform them about the UPR, its modalities and functioning. Online means of communication enable us to reach out to CSOs all over the world to share the Geneva process. Our website is our most pre-eminent tool. It was visited 265,000 times in 2014. Over the year, we published a total of 59 news articles and sent 8 newsletters. Our presence and visibility on social media has also been strengthened: the number of followers on Facebook and Twitter increased respectively by 37% and 52% throughout the year.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
We increased our visibility on social media by 45%

2.2 Strengthening CSOs' capacities

In 2014, the transmission of our expertise on the UPR to CSOs remained our highest priority. A total of over 30 presentations and training workshops were carried out by our staff throughout the year. In addition to these activities, we met individually with human rights defenders, resulting in weekly interactions and sharing of our experience. Some of the key events included presentations at the Second World Forum on Human Rights in Morocco, the Fourth Francophone Seminar on the Implementation of UPR Recommenda-



tions by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie in Moldova, the Inter-Parliamentary Union Regional Seminar for parliaments from Central and Eastern Europe in Romania, and the 27th Annual Meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of the National Human Rights Institutions in Geneva.

UPRInfo was also solicited to give two in-depth training workshops in Honduras and Armenia. In the former, *UPR Info* was invited by PEN International to provide a training workshop to human rights defenders in preparation for the review of Honduras in 2015. The two-day workshop aimed to empower the participants with practical knowledge on how to effectively engage with the UPR, how to cooperate with the different actors engaged in the process,



how to work with the recommendations made and how to follow up in the country. A large section of the training workshop was dedicated to how to write a UPR submission and how to successfully engage in advocacy activities.

**■ Our achievements in 2014:
We provided over 30 trainings and presentations**

In November of 2014, *UPR Info* was invited to Armenia by Open Society Foundations-Armenia to provide two training workshops to human rights defenders on the opportunities for engagement in the UPR in preparation for the Pre-session and the UPR of Armenia. The first workshop featured a presentation, in Russian, of the UPR mechanism, advocacy and the follow-up while the second workshop was provided in English and included an advanced training for selected CSO participants, with a special focus on advocacy. In total, approximately 30 human rights activists attended the training workshops in Yerevan.

2.3 Keeping CSOs engaged

Because the UPR requires constant engagement and because the momentum of Geneva quickly gives way to other priorities at the national level, it is of utmost importance to regularly remind CSOs about the UPR and the upcoming deadlines. In order to facilitate CSOs' engagement in the process, we developed an interactive timeline on our new website. On each country's webpage, a tailored timeline indicates the deadlines for national consultations, NGO submissions, advocacy, follow-up and mid-term reporting. This tool provides clear and concrete information about the timeframe to ensure meaningful engagement in the process. In 2014, we also directly solicited CSOs at four different stages of the UPR process: one year before the review, three months before the review, a few months after the review and two years after the review.

**■ Our achievements in 2014:
We increased the number of
CSOs aware and knowledgeable
of the UPR**

3. Strengthening the UPR



Our mandate is to ensure that the UPR is an effective mechanism to promote and protect human rights. To do this, we need to make sure the UPR runs smoothly and to guarantee robust modalities. Our mandate, thus, includes monitoring, analysing and reporting on the process.

3.1 Monitoring the UPR

Due to its State-driven nature, the broad modalities and the great leeway given to States to shape the UPR, constant monitoring of the process in Geneva needs to be undertaken. As in previous years, the UPR faced many issues in 2014, including an attempt of some States to produce joint recommendations, noting of recommendations that were previously accepted, an attack on NGO's speaking right during UPR report adoptions, and the weakening of UPR recommendations. Our presence in Geneva and our connection to all actors enable us to react quickly and draw attention to such threats. We notably gave a statement at the HRC on behalf of 19 NGOs to call on States to improve the quality and specificity of UPR recommendations. We also reported on Cambodia's decision to note recommendations that they had previously accepted, the attempt by Costa Rica to articu-

late joint recommendations with other States and the efforts by China to prevent a moment of silence from NGOs during the adoption of China's UPR report following the death in custody of Cao Shunli. We also engaged in pushing recommending States to reference previously made recommendations when taking the floor. As a best practice, we encouraged recommending States to use the phrase "as previously recommended" at the end of their recommendations to emphasise that a particular recommendation had been made at the previous UPR but had not been implemented. It is important to clearly indicate such recommendations in order to increase accountability of the SuR in the process and ensure that each review builds on the previous one.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
We drew the attention of the Human Rights Council on the lack of specific recommendations

3.2 Website

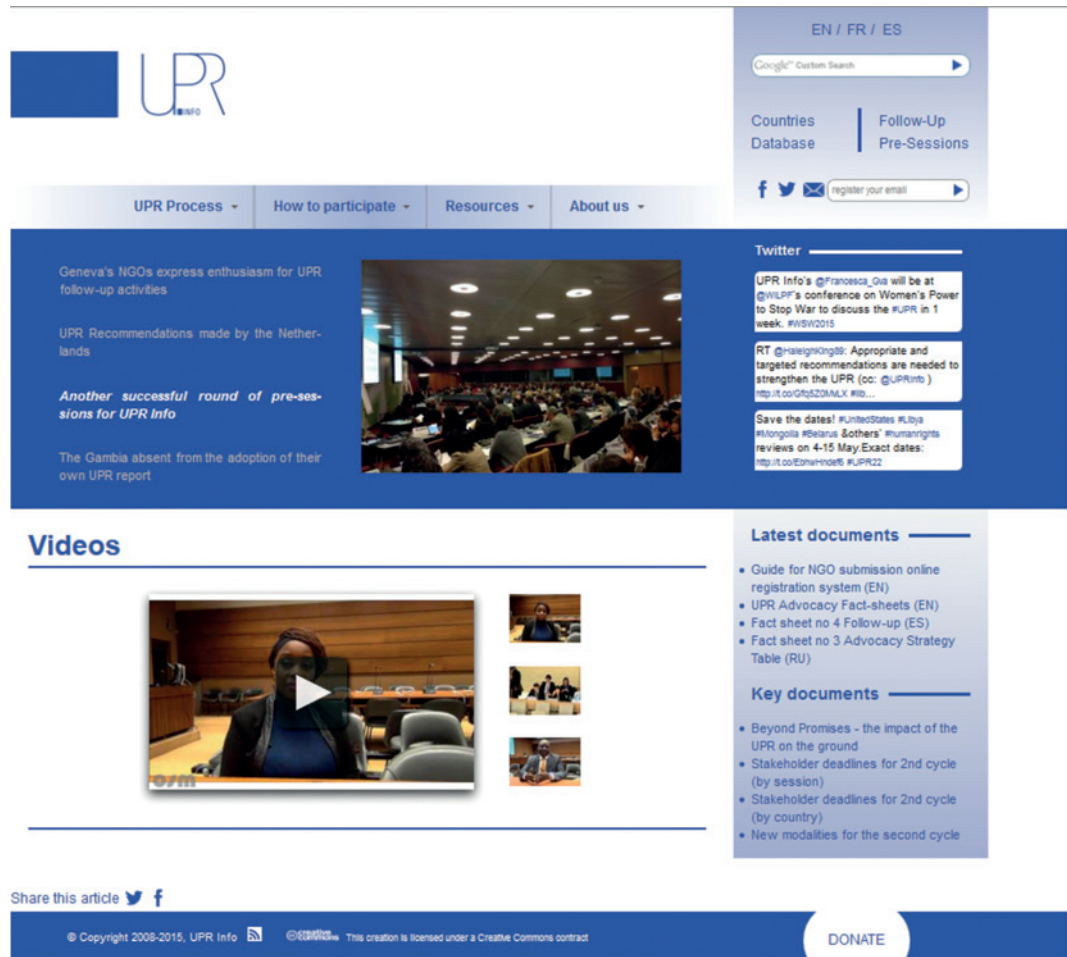
Our website was the first tool developed by *UPR Info* in order to better facilitate stakeholders' access to the UPR. However, after six years of dedication and service, the time for a change had come. We developed a new website in order to present information in a more user friendly format for visitors. The new website features innovative ways to access information and provides tailor-made and up-to-date information to actors of the UPR.

The main challenge in creating a new website was to keep the same amount of information and documentation, while ensuring that it is also user-friendly. In placing emphasis on the



I just wanted to drop your organisation a quick note to say how excellent your website is. It's easy to navigate, [and] contains a wealth of valuable information on the UPR process.

Katy Pullen
Human Rights consultant



design of the website, we elevated the visual experience by adding pictures and videos while maintaining a high level of quality and ensuring that the 16,000+ documents and news from the old website remained easily accessible. We view our website as a historical archive of the UPR and wish to preserve it at all costs.

While the new website maintains many of the old website's features, it also offers new ones, such as: an interactive timeline that indicates key deadlines for stakeholders' engagement; an interactive homepage featuring up-to-date news articles, videos and documents; a simplified menu resulting in easier access

■ Our achievements in 2014:
We entirely re-designed our website

to information for the user; a built-in twitter feed; and an automated display of documents and news articles tailored to the information contained on the given page.

The new *UPR Info* website is now available on any IT platform (computer and mobile phone) and can adapt its display accordingly.

3.3 Database

The database remains the most used feature of our website. Making the UPR recommendations easily available is a way to guarantee that the main output of the Geneva process, the recommendations, will be used by all stakeholders. During 2014, the 8,037 recommendations made at sessions 17, 18 and 19 were included in the database. The total number of recommendations is now over 38,000. Voluntary pledges from the same sessions were also added.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**

We made available 8,037 recommendations in our database



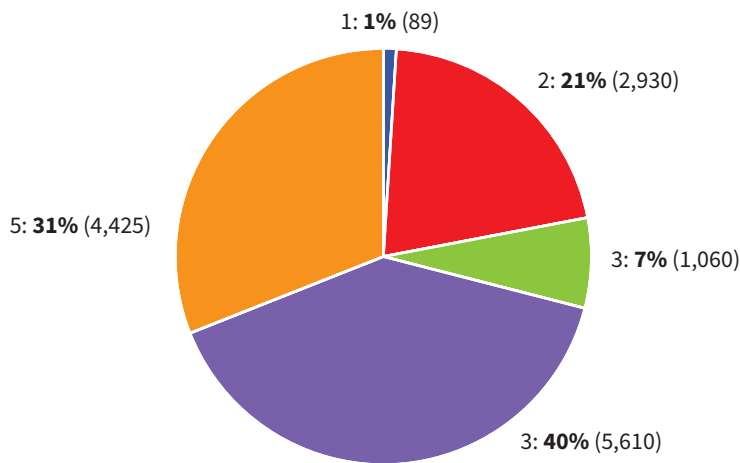
The categories of responses to recommendations were modified. In conformity with resolution A/HRC/RES/5/1 and with the HRC practice, we now use only two types of responses, accepted and noted. All responses to recommendations, including from previous sessions, have been changed accordingly.

The number of specific recommendations (as defined by category 5 in our database) continue to be a concern. While the average of specific recommendations made during session 17

and 19 were above the second cycle average, session 18 had one of the lowest averages. The overall average of specific recommendations of the second cycle (31.9%) is still below the specific recommendation average of the first cycle (34.4%). In 2014, each SuR received an average of 191 recommendations (specific and others) while each recommending State made an average of 2.6 recommendations to each SuR.

FIGURE 1

Specificity of 2nd cycle UPR recommendations



4. Pre-sessions

After three years, the “Pre-sessions” have now become an integral part of the UPR process. CSOs from all over the world have indicated that they see the Pre-sessions as an indispensable platform for sharing information and presenting their concerns and recommendations. Through our Pre-sessions, CSOs have taken advantage of opportunities to engage more deeply in the UPR and to have their voices heard at national and international level.

“ I [...] thank you and your whole team for providing my Mission with such a unique opportunity to have a meaningful and open discussion with relevant stakeholders of the upcoming UPR session.

M. Carlos Zorilla
Permanent Mission of Mexico

The Pre-sessions are influencing the human rights agenda of the participating countries, helping CSOs have a concrete impact on the ground, as well as become actors of change at the international level. CSOs that participate in the Pre-sessions are able to influence the statements made by the recommending States, which results in the making of more specific, relevant and action-oriented recommendations. For example, thanks to the participation of an indigenous peoples’ rights organisation at the Pre-session on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa) and the active advocacy of one of *UPR Info*’s grantees, three States made recommendations on the topic of indigenous rights, an issue that was ignored in the first UPR of the DRC. In another key example, the three grantees from

the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) created a UPR coalition to specifically work on the implementation of the recommendations made to Congo, in the aftermath of the *UPR Info* Pre-session.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
80 Permanent Missions
participated in our 32 pre-sessions

Similarly, through the Pre-sessions, States are able to suggest more specific and action-oriented recommendations that have a real impact and bring real change to the country.

32 *Pre-session* meetings were organised on States to be reviewed at the 19th, 20th and 21st UPR sessions, namely: Albania, Angola, Armenia, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Guinea, Guyana, Iran, Iraq, Italia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Laos, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Norway, Qatar, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. In total, 80 different Permanent Missions attended (on average, 28 at each session), including 7 new Permanent Missions, and 155 CSOs – 103 of which were national organisations – and 5 National Human Rights Institutions participated.

“ The pre-session was extremely relevant with regard to enhancing NGO participation in the UPR

Sofia Leteipan
Kenya Human Rights Commission



Overall, the pre-sessions have a proven track record of influencing the recommendations made during the UPR. The meetings are a great platform for organisations to raise awareness on the human rights situation in their respective countries and to make recommendations. They are also an invaluable source of information for diplomats who have to gather relevant information on 14 different States under Review for each UPR session.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
We enabled 103 grassroots CSOs to advocate for their rights

5. Follow-up Programme

In 2014, the Follow-up Programme concluded with a publication on the results of all of the data gathered over the period of four years and the programme was reformed. Beginning in 2011, with States reviewed at UPR session 15 (excluding the first two sessions of the second cycle: session 13 and 14), the Follow-up Programme focused on sessions 24, 25 and 26 during 2014. A total of 39 Mid-term Implementation Assessments (MIAs) were published and the mid-term reporting for the first cycle thus finished. A total of 735 CSOs from 39 countries were contacted in addition to 28 NHRIs, and 81 UN agencies.

■ Our achievements in 2014:
We documented the level of implementation of over 11,000 recommendations

5.1 The Mid-term Implementation Assessments

The Mid-term Implementation Assessments (MIAs) were reports that gathered information from all stakeholders: States, CSOs, NHRIs, and UN agencies on the implementation (or lack thereof) of the UPR recommendations received by the given State. The reports were published online, sent to the stakeholders and to Permanent Missions of States that had made recommendations.

States, NGOs, NHRIs, and academics made use of the MIAs as a convenient tool to have all stakeholders' information in one document. Also, since only States' mid-term reports are published on the OHCHR's website, the MIA (and *UPR Info's* website) provided a neutral platform for all stakeholders' reports and comments to appear side-by-side.



Without *UPR Info*, we would not have the concrete proof that the UPR is successful

Amine Chabi
Permanent Mission of Morocco

In 2014, we released 39 Mid-term Implementation Assessments on countries to be reviewed at session 24, 25 and 26.

In 2014, an extra step was added to the Follow-up Programme; namely, the MIA Summaries. A MIA Summary is a compilation of all recommendations that a recommending State had issued for a given UPR session covered by the Follow-up Programme. In total, *UPR Info* sent 323 MIA Summaries during 2014.

■ Our achievements in 2014:
We engaged 735 CSOs in the follow-up of recommendations

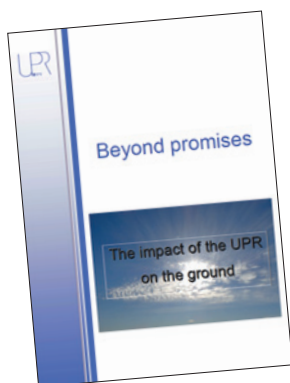
The MIA Summaries were created to encourage and facilitate the recommending State's monitoring of the recommendations that they had made to their peers. As mentioned above, the role of the recommending States is of utter importance in the UPR process. The scrutiny from members of the international community puts pressure on the State under review to take action, as recommending States could raise the very same issue two years later, at the next UPR. This is one of the reasons why some States rush to implement recommendations at the last moment, in time to present their actions at the next UPR.

However, many recommendations require long-term changes and actions in order to be

as comprehensive, effective and as sustainable as possible. Thus, recommending States must remain engaged throughout the implementation period to ensure that their recommendations are actually implemented. The mid-term is one such opportunity. This is why, throughout the Follow-up Programme, we have sent MIAs to all Permanent Missions that made recommendations to the given States.

5.2 Beyond Promises: The impact of the UPR on the ground

To conclude our four-year programme on the follow-up, we published a report on the level of implementation of 11,527 recommendations. With this report, we addressed the



question of the usefulness of the mechanism: is the UPR really worth it? *Beyond promises*¹ highlighted the impact of the UPR mechanism on the ground and gave examples of best practices for States, civil society,

and national and international institutions. The data presented shows that 48 percent of UPR recommendations triggered action by mid-term, meaning that the recommendations were either fully or partially implemented only 2.5 years after the initial review. The regional group that was most successful at mid-term was the Eastern European Group, while some difficulties were perceived in Asia. The initial response of the State under Review to the recommendations, accepted or noted, influenced the implementation of the recommendations in favour of accepted recommendations, with 55 percent of accepted recommendations triggering action by mid-term. However, 19 percent of noted recommendations also triggered action by mid-term, indicating that noted recommendations should not be disregarded in the implementation phase.

¹ Available here : <http://www.upr-info.org/en/file/document/2014beyondpromisespdf>

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
We published the first quantitative and qualitative analysis of the impact of a UN human rights mechanism



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To launch the report, we hosted a side event during the 20th session of the UPR Working Group. The event was an opportunity to discuss how to better implement the UPR recommendations. The panel was comprised of Mr. Roland Chauville (*UPR Info*), Ms. Kira Youdina (*UPR Info*), H.E. Mr. Jamshed Khamidov (Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Tajikistan), Ms. Harriet Berg (Minister-Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Norway), Mr. Alberto Gimenez (First Secretary of the General Human Rights Unit of Paraguay), and two representatives of civil society organisations: Ms. Jennifer Philpot-Nissen (World Vision) and Mr. Vincent Ploton (CCPR Centre).



Attended by more than 100 participants from Permanent Missions, civil society, OHCHR, academics and others, the side event was a success which supported the findings of *Beyond promises*, namely that the UPR does have a promising impact on the ground.

The study has been downloaded over 6,700 times from our website and more than 500 hard copies have been distributed since its launch.

6. Enhancing States' capacities

In order to strengthen our assistance to States and better enhance their capacities to fully engage in the UPR, we held our very first “Seminar on the Role of Recommending States at the UPR”.

This seminar aimed at providing Permanent Missions in Geneva with tools and knowledge on how to successfully engage in the UPR process in order to ensure that the mechanism remains a pre-eminent and efficient human rights mechanism.

The seminar was held on Thursday, 2 October 2014 in the Palais des Nations, in Geneva. It

■ Our achievements in 2014:
We trained 41 Permanent Missions on their role at the UPR

included three sections: firstly, the different technical aspects for recommending states; secondly, the relevance of making specific and precise recommendations; thirdly, their acceptance and implementation and the follow-up of recommendations between the first and the second cycle.



UN PHOTO/JEAN-MARC FERRÉ

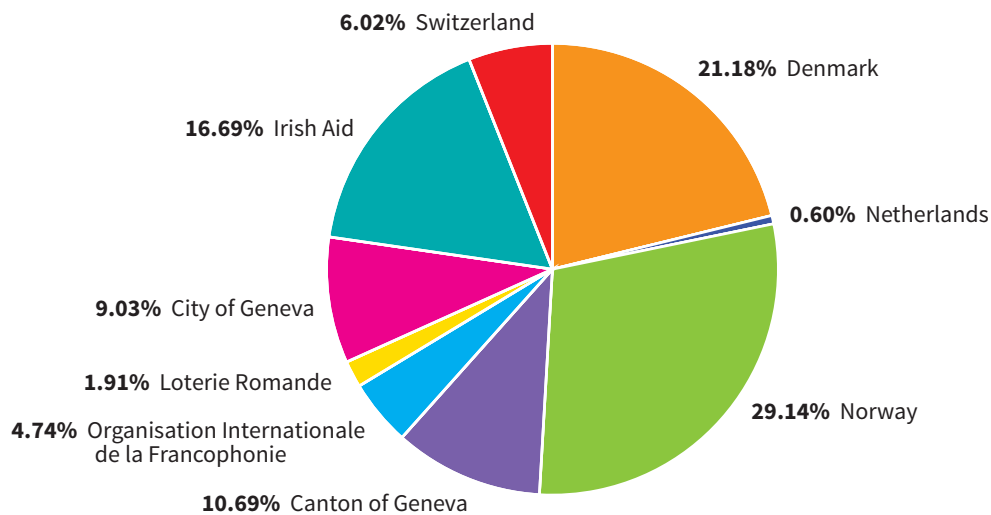
7. Finance

UPR Info was supported by numerous donors. We are very grateful for the trust they have put into our work and would like to warmly thank them for this.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
Our budget increased by 30.2%

- Support CSO participation in the UPR: The Permanent Mission of Denmark, the Loterie Romande and Irish Aid
- Pre-sessions: The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, the Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and Irish Aid
- Follow-up Programme: The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway
- Enhancing States' capacities: The Permanent Mission of the Netherlands

FIGURE 2
2014 Donors breakdown



8. Organisation

The year 2014 has seen some important changes in both the Executive and Advisory Board. A long-time supporter, Waqas Ali Saqib, left the Executive Board. He has been replaced by Kamelia Kemileva, the Executive Manager of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

On the Advisory Board, we were pleased to welcome three new members: Rita Itzsák, Special Rapporteur on minority issues; Martine Anstett, Deputy Director in charge of human rights at the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie; and Phil Lynch, director of the International Service for Human Rights.

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
Special Rapporteur on Minorities, Rita Itzsák, joined our Advisory Board

We moved once again into a new office. Located in the same building, the new office is twice the size of the previous one and includes a meeting room.

Executive Board

- Bertrand G. Ramcharan (Guyana) – President
- Saida Manieva (Kyrgyzstan) – Treasurer
- Waqas Ali Saqib (Pakistan) – Secretary – until March 2014
- Kamelia Kemileva (Switzerland) – Secretary – from March 2014

Advisory Board

- Martine Anstett (France) – OIF
- Rita Itzsák (Hungary) – Special Rapporteur on minority issues
- Marc Limon (United Kingdom) – Universal Rights Group
- Phil Lynch (Australia) – International Service for Human Rights
- Professor Edward R. McMahon (United States) – University of Vermont
- Rasvan Rotundu (Romania) – Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations in Geneva

9. Looking Forward: 2015

2015 will be another exciting year for *UPR Info*. The organisation is set to develop in a considerable way: we will open two regional offices located in Thailand and Kenya. For our organisation, the opening of two regional offices represents a significant step forward. The staff will grow from four to six, which will allow us to better respond to requests for technical assistance from States and CSOs. We will be able to bring our Geneva expertise to the ground and participate fully in the results of the UPR at national level. In a total of six countries, we will support both civil society and governments to collaborate to ensure a real improvement of human rights on the ground.

We will also launch a guide for States at the UPR. The publication will share practical information on how to engage in the process as well as best practices in terms of drafting specific and action-oriented recommendations and following-up the implementation from one cycle to another. It will also provide diplomats with useful tools and resources to ensure an effective engagement at all stages of the UPR process. This guide will be aimed at all Permanent Missions in Geneva, as well as embassies and Ministries of Foreign Affairs.



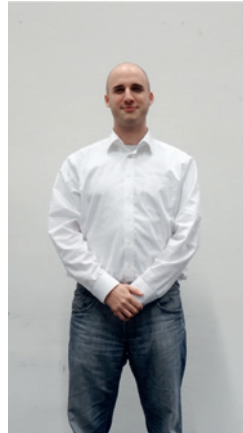
10. Secretariat

Two Programme Managers joined *UPR Info's* Secretariat in 2014. Francesca Piccin has been in charge of the Pre-sessions and Kira Youdina of the Follow-up. They brought years of experience to the organisation in a wide range of areas such as communication, training, and project management on issues such as journalism, peace and rights of the child.

Secretariat



Roland Chauville
Executive Director



Jean-Claude Vignoli
Programmes Director



Francesca Piccin
Programme Manager



Kira Youdina
Programme Manager

■ **Our achievements in 2014:**
The size of the staff increased by 33%

In 2014, seven students participated in *UPR Info's* internship programme. For 2–3 months, interns assisted *UPR Info's* Secretariat in monitoring the UPR sessions, managing communications, writing and editing, maintaining the database and website, and carrying out research. Our work would not have been possible without the help of the following individuals:

- James Ayre (United Kingdom)
- Sarah Buss (Germany)
- Shyam Das (Australia)
- Farris Faris (Australia)
- Jasper Gwasira (Zimbabwe)
- Noémie Lock (Madagascar)
- Monica Lopez (Spain)

