



UPR PRE-SESSIONS

Bringing States and Civil Society together before the UPR Working Group Session

17, rue Varembé – CICG
Geneva, Switzerland

UPR Info is organizing a series of meetings on a regular basis in Geneva, Switzerland, entitled *UPR Pre-sessions* aiming at strengthening collaboration between different actors engaged with the UPR process.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the UPR Pre-sessions is to provide a platform for collaboration and information sharing between States and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the human rights situation in the States under Review. They offer permanent delegations the opportunity to receive first-hand information on the actual status of implementation of the recommendations made in the previous review. They also provide space for civil society to engage directly in dialogue with States prior to the review in order to have their concerns and recommendations taken into consideration by lobbying several delegations at once.

FORMAT

UPR Pre-sessions are meetings organized two months prior to the UPR Working Group session bringing together Permanent Missions and Civil Society Organizations to discuss the human rights situation in the forthcoming States under Review. The *Pre-session* for each SuR lasts one hour. Civil Society Organisations are given the floor between 5 to 10 minutes each, to share their assessment of the human rights situation in the country since the previous review and the progress accomplished by the SuR in implementing the recommendations.

With the transparency and universality principles in mind, all Permanent Missions are invited, including the State under Review.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Expected outcome of the *UPR Pre-sessions* is an exchange of information on the human rights situation of the forthcoming SuR.

States will receive up-to-date information, precise questions and recommendations to make at the UPR session. The information given will reflect the reality and will represent the concerns of people on the ground.



“UPR PRE-SESSIONS ”

PREVIOUS UPR PRE-SESSIONS

The previous *UPR Pre-sessions* were held three times in 2012 for States reviewed at the 13th, 14th and 15th session of the UPR Working Group, as well as in March 2013 for the 16th session. 47 “Pre-Session” meetings were organised for the following States: Bahrain, Ecuador, Tunisia, Morocco, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, India, Brazil, Philippines, Algeria, Poland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Argentina, Benin, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Japan, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Ukraine, Zambia, France, Romania, Mali, Botswana, Burundi, Luxembourg, Montenegro, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Serbia, Russia, Canada, Germany, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Colombia, Tuvalu, Cuba. Approximately 250 NGOs participated, of which more than half were national organisations. On average, 20 to 25 state delegations were present at each session.

UPR Info received extensive positive feedback from participants highlighting the importance of the *UPR Pre-Sessions* as a forum for collaboration and information sharing. *Pre-Sessions* filled the expressed need from both State delegations and CSOs to meet prior to the UPR Working Group Session to identify, discuss, and further develop recommendations to ensure focused attention to the most relevant human rights issues during the review.

WHO IS UPR INFO

UPR Info is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Geneva, Switzerland. The organisation aims at both raising awareness and providing capacity-building tools to the different actors of the UPR process, such as United Nations (UN) Member States, NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions and civil society in general. *UPR Info* is the first NGO entirely dedicated to the UPR.

Since the inception of the UPR mechanism in April 2008, the organisation has developed a unique expertise on the process itself. This knowledge is widely recognised by several actors, and notably the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). *UPR Info* is regularly invited to participate in numerous conferences and trainings on the UPR, and manages several programmes in order to strengthen the UPR mechanism.

The website www.upr-info.org is the first source of information on the UPR for various stakeholders, including most of the Geneva-based missions to the UN as well as national and international civil society organisations, providing them with useful tools for their participation.

Created in February 2008, *UPR Info*'s current president is Dr. Bertrand G. Ramcharan, former acting High Commissioner for Human Rights.