

UPR Platform

The UPR Platform is a space for dialogue and discussion between NGOs working with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). This platform, launched by ICCG, aims to promote the joint work of NGOs through providing them with practical tools and logistical support to improve their contribution within the frame of this specific mechanism established by the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). The UPR, as conceived by the HRC, recognizes the significant role of NGOs in monitoring commitments made by Member States during the review. Each cycle occurs every four and a half years. The first cycle concludes with States setting commitments and priorities to complete based on recommendations made. The second cycle of the UPR is expected to strengthen the contribution of NGOs in order to ensure the effectiveness of future UPR cycles.

Background

In December 2011, in light of the conclusion of a first UPR cycle, a group of NGOs met at ICCG to:

(I) Assess the contributions provided by each NGO towards the UPR process by sharing both the difficulties and the successes experienced, and;

(II) Envisage new forms of collaboration in order to facilitate more effective lobbying actions.

The second review cycle will be crucial for ensuring effective follow-up on the commitments made by governments during the first cycle. Thus, participants have set their future priorities and, in order to achieve them, they have agreed on the following actions:

- i. Develop joint reports to be submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the context of UPR sessions;
- ii. In recognition of the crucial role played by local actors, raise awareness among human rights defenders working at the local level to enable them to become more involved in effective monitoring of State policies and actions.
- iii. Foster spaces for reflection and open discussion for NGOs involved in the UPR and organize “pre-session briefings” of States subject to review.

Work Method

Based on the list of States that will be subject to review during the next UPR session, Platform members have identified the States they will be working on and have formed “country groups” within the platform. Each group has appointed a contact person responsible for facilitating and coordinating the work of the group in an effort to write a joint report on the concerned State.

Moreover, the members of the Platform share practical tools they have elaborated to collect information among their own members in the field, as well as practical suggestions for the optimization of resources resulting from their experiences.

Added Value

The UPR platform, as promoted by ICCG, provides a space open for all to understand and learn from each other, in a simple but effective manner. Participants share a common goal: the advancement of human rights everywhere in the world without distinction.