

GUIDELINES ON PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS AND SPECIAL EVENTS COINCIDING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Human Rights Council (HRC) meets for at least 10 weeks per year at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), Switzerland, with its regular sessions taking place in March, June and September. The HRC's subsidiary bodies¹ meet for approximately 20 additional weeks each year. Moreover, the HRC can convene special sessions on short notice.

Coinciding with such HRC meetings, States or other international organisations may decide to organise public exhibitions and other special events (exhibitions) that have to be reviewed and approved by the HRC Secretariat in accordance with the below guidelines:

Organisers

Exhibitions may be organised by United Nations (UN) member States through their Permanent Missions, by the UN Secretariat or its staff associations, by a Secretariat department/office or organ/body or by a specialized agency or other UN institution. Any proposal originating from individual artists and non-governmental organisations must be submitted by one of the aforementioned entities.

Eligibility

The HRC Secretariat reviews all exhibitions coinciding with HRC meetings that are on public display. This includes exhibitions in areas outside of designated conference rooms, guided tour routes, hallways or any other space easily accessible by the general public. The HRC Secretariat is not required to review exhibitions that have already been approved as a cultural activity by the UNOG Cultural Service, or that have been approved by other relevant UN entities.

Nature and content

The exhibition must be compatible with the values, purposes and principles of the UN, in both content and presentation and shall not be of a profit-generating or otherwise commercial nature. The content must be of an artistic and/or cultural nature and must not be of a political nature. The content should not single out or refer to any other State without that State's explicit consent, and the content must not be too graphic in nature.

¹ Universal Periodic Review Working Group; Advisory Committee; Complaint Procedure; Expert Mechanism on the rights of Indigenous Peoples; Forum on Minority Issues; Social Forum; Forum on Business and Human Rights; Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law; Working Group on the Right to Development; Intergovernmental Working Group on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; Working Group on an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards; Working Group on the draft UN declaration on Human Rights Education and Training; Working Group on regulatory framework of activities of private military and security companies; Open-ended intergovernmental working group on a draft United Nations declaration on the right to peace; Open-ended intergovernmental working group on a United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; Open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.

The theme(s) of the exhibition must be of relevance to the activities of the HRC. Proposals focusing on or referring to a specific individual, country or non-governmental organization shall be authorized only if the subject has a direct relationship or relevance to the goals or activities of the HRC, and is fully supported by it. The HRC may, at its discretion, reject a proposal in part or in its entirety, or require the elimination or alteration of any part thereof, in particular if it considers the content of the proposal is inconsistent with the above-mentioned criteria.

Exhibitions materials may include, but are not limited to, photos, paintings, posters, films, performances as well as distribution material, such as flyers, booklets, gadgets, and other displayable items and features. Exhibition materials must be reviewed by the HRC Secretariat in its entirety. The HRC Secretariat can request content to be removed from public display that it has not reviewed and approved.

The full responsibility for the content of exhibitions lies with the organiser, even after approval by the HRC Secretariat.

Review process

For a proposal to be considered, it must be submitted in its entirety and final form no later than 30 days prior to the exhibition launch date. Any request made at a later stage will be deemed inadmissible. Content can be submitted via e-mail, in physical copies, or an alternative in consultation with the HRC Secretariat. The review of the content by the HRC Secretariat will be concluded within 10 working days, and shall be transmitted to the organizers via e-mail. The HRC Secretariat deliberates and exercises its authority independently. Its decisions are guided by the relevant rules and procedures governing the use of the premises of UNOG and by the rules and criteria set forth in these guidelines. Decisions by the HRC Secretariat shall be final.

In case of approval and if the organiser so wishes, the HRC Secretariat will put the organiser in contact with persons in charge of space bookings and other technical, logistical and catering services.

In case of the exhibition does not meet all eligibility criteria, the HRC Secretariat may suggest to alternatively organise the event inside a designated meeting room as a side-event in accordance with rules and practices relating to this category of informal meetings. Exhibitions inside meeting rooms do not require approval of content, but may have technical, logistical and space limitations, and are generally limited to two to three hours.

The HRC Secretariat is only responsible for the review of content and does not provide any space booking, logistical or promotional support.

Contact

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