



UNITED NATIONS

Working with **ECOSOC**



**an NGOs Guide to
Consultative
Status**

Working
with
ECOSOC

an NGOs Guide to
**Consultative
Status**



United Nations
New York, 2011

Table of contents

The United Nations and NGOs.....	1	
ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies	3	
ECOSOC consultative status	6	
UN grounds pass	8	
Events participation	11	
Commission on Sustainable Development	11	
Commission on the Status of Women	12	
Commission for Social Development.....	12	
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues	13	
Commission on Population and Development.	13	
United Nations Forum on Forests.....	14	
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	14	
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	15	
Commission on Science and Technology for Development.....	15	
Statistical Commission.....	16	

Human Rights Council.....	17	
Written statements	19	
Oral statements	22	
Organize your own event at the United Nations ..	24	
The application process.....	26	
1. Creating a profile for your NGO	27	
2. Submitting your online application	29	
3. Screening your application	32	
4. Review of your application by the Committee on NGOs.....	33	
5. The Committee makes a recommendation ..	34	
6. Final decision by ECOSOC	36	
Quadrennial reports	38	
Contact information and useful links.....	41	



The United Nations and NGOs

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been actively engaged with the United Nations (UN) since its inception in 1945. They work with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in various ways, including in consultation with Member States. NGOs contribute to a number of activities including information dissemination, awareness raising, development education, policy advocacy, joint operational projects, participation in intergovernmental processes and in the contribution of services and technical expertise.

Article 71 of the United Nations Charter, which established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), states the following:

The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned

with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organizations and, where appropriate, with national organizations after consultation with the Member of the United Nations concerned.

— *United Nations Charter,
Chapter X, Article 71*

Article 71 of the UN Charter opened the door to provide suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations. The consultative relationship with ECOSOC is governed today by ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, which outlines the eligibility requirements for consultative status, rights and obligations of NGOs in consultative status, procedures for the withdrawal or suspension of consultative status, the role and functions of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, and the responsibilities of the UN Secretariat in supporting the consultative relationship.

The United Nations has been working to strengthen cooperation with NGOs across the entire United Nations system and in all areas of its work. As a result, United Nations entities are identifying new modalities to promote increased and more strategic participation of NGOs.

The necessity of strengthening UN/NGOs relations has been underlined in various documents, in particular in the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. The commitment of Member States to provide greater opportunity to NGOs was reaffirmed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

From the beginning, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has been the main entry point into the UN system for NGOs. ECOSOC remains the only main UN body with a formal framework for NGO participation. In 1946, 41 NGOs were granted consultative status by the council; by 1992 more than 700 NGOs had attained consultative status and the number has been steadily increasing ever since to more than 3,400 organizations today.



ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies

The Economic and Social Council is the principal organ that coordinates the economic, social and related work of the 14 United Nations specialized agencies, functional commissions and five regional commissions. It serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system.

ECOSOC consists of 54 Member States elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms. Seats on the Council are allotted based on geographical representation with 14 allocated to African States, 11 to Asian States, 6 to Eastern European States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean States, and 13 to Western European and other States.

The work of the Council is conducted through several sessions and preparatory meetings, round tables

and panel discussions with members of civil society throughout the year. Once a year, it meets for a four-week substantive session in July, alternating between New York and Geneva. The annual session is organized in five segments and include: (i) the High-level segment; (ii) the Coordination segment; (iii) the Operational Activities segment; (iv) the Humanitarian Affairs segment; and (v) the General segment.

The Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), launched in 2007 and held during the annual High-level segment of ECOSOC, assesses progress made towards the United Nations Development Agenda (UNDA). It also serves as a global high-level forum with broad-based participation to exchange lessons learned and highlight successful practices.

The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), also launched in 2007, is mandated to enhance the

implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and promote dialogue to find effective ways to support it. It is the focal point within the United Nations system and a principal forum for global dialogue and policy review on the effectiveness and coherence of international development cooperation. The DCF is held every other year within the framework of the High-level segment of the Council.

There are a number of subsidiary bodies under the ECOSOC umbrella which help to achieve the goals of the Council. ECOSOC provides policy coherence and coordinates the overlapping functions of all its subsidiary bodies. Once NGOs gain consultative status, they can actively participate in the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies.

ECOSOC functional commissions

- » *Statistical Commission*
- » *Commission on Population and Development*
- » *Commission for Social Development*
- » *Commission on the Status of Women*

- » *Commission on Narcotic Drugs*
- » *Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*
- » *Commission on Science and Technology for Development*
- » *Commission on Sustainable Development*

ECOSOC regional commissions

- » *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)*
- » *Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)*
- » *Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)*
- » *Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)*
- » *Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)*

Other bodies

- » *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*
- » *United Nations Forum on Forests*
- » *Sessional and standing committees*
- » *Expert, ad hoc and related bodies*





ECOSOC consultative status

ECOSOC remains the only main UN body with a formal framework for NGO participation.

This accreditation framework benefits both the United Nations and the NGOs. As stated by resolution 1996/31 on the “Consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations,”

“... Consultative arrangements are to be made, on the one hand, for the purpose of enabling the Council or one of its bodies to secure expert information or advice from organizations having special competence in the subjects for which consultative arrangements are made, and, on the other hand, to enable international, regional, sub-regional and national organizations that represent important elements of public opinion to express their views.”

— ECOSOC resolution 1996/31,
part II, paragraph 20

While ECOSOC has the opportunity to avail itself of valuable and expert advice from NGOs, the NGOs in turn also have the opportunity of expressing their views and influencing the work of the Council. NGOs have specialized competence, hands-on experience and flexibility that is of great value to the UN. For instance, by having consultative status, an NGO could:

- » *Provide expert analysis on issues directly from its experience in the field;*
- » *Serve as an early warning agent;*
- » *Help monitor and implement international agreements;*
- » *Help raise public awareness of relevant issues;*
- » *Play a major role in advancing United Nations goals and objectives;*
- » *Contribute with essential information at organization events.*

On the other hand, ECOSOC provides NGOs the opportunity to be heard by a truly global audience and

contribute to its agenda. An NGO with consultative status can:

- » *Attend international conferences and events;*
- » *Make written and oral statements at these events;*
- » *Organize side events;*
- » *Enter United Nations premises;*
- » *Have opportunities to network and lobby.*

Please note that ECOSOC does not provide funding or financial support of any kind to any organization with which it partners. However, social networking at ECOSOC events allows organizations to expand their contacts and knowledge base to explore possible partnerships and joint ventures with various stakeholders.

United Nations grounds pass

Each NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC can designate representatives to obtain annual passes granting them access to UN premises, which are valid until 31 December of each year. A maximum of five such passes for each NGO can be issued for New York, five for Geneva and five for Vienna, in addition to passes for the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and the President or Chief Executive of each NGO, for a total of seven passes. Short-term passes for one day and/or for up to three months are also available for specific events.

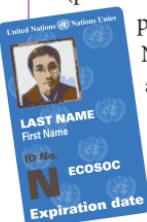
To apply for an annual pass to the UN Headquarters in New York, the following steps need to be followed:

- » First, log in to your organization's page (at the NGO Branch¹ home page [see Contact information and useful links])

¹ The NGO Branch is part of the Department of Social and Economic Affairs of the UN Secretariat in New York

- » Under the "Consultative status" tab, go to "Designations"
- » Click on "New York" to pre-register the representatives you wish to designate.

Once you have pre-registered, each of your representatives can collect his/her grounds pass at the NGO Branch office (see under Contacts) with a picture ID and a signed letter on the official letterhead of the organization from your Chief Executive/President, designating a maximum of five representatives for annual passes (plus two more for the CAO and Chief Executive). Any



passes that you no longer use must be returned. NGOs must also notify the NGO Branch when any one of their designated representatives is no longer employed by the organization so that an updated list of official representatives can always be maintained and new passes can be issued, as needed.





Events participation

NGOs that are accredited with ECOSOC can participate in a number of events, including, but not limited to, the regular sessions of ECOSOC, its functional commissions and its other subsidiary bodies. At these sessions, which usually take place once a year, NGOs may:

- » *Attend official meetings;*
- » *Submit written statements prior to sessions;*
- » *Make oral statements;*
- » *Meet official government delegations and other NGO representatives;*
- » *Organize and attend parallel events that take place during the session;*
- » *Participate in debates, interactive dialogues, panel discussions and informal meetings.*

Different bodies have different modalities for NGO participation, but common to all of them is that only NGOs that are accredited to and in good standing with ECOSOC are allowed to participate in their sessions.

Commission on Sustainable Development

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED — also known as the Earth Summit), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where world leaders signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change



and the Convention on Biological Diversity; endorsed the Rio Declaration and the Forest Principles; and adopted Agenda 21, a 300-page plan for achieving sustainable development in the twenty-first century.

The CSD meets annually (end of April — beginning of May) in New York, in two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on clusters of specific thematic and cross-sectoral issues. The CSD encourages broad NGO participation.

Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global policymaking body dedicated to gender equality and advancement of women. The Commission meets annually for a period of 10 working days (late February — early March) in New



York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

The active participation of NGOs is a critical element in the work of the CSW. NGOs have been influential in shaping the current global policy framework on women's empowerment and gender equality — the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They continue to play an important role in holding international and national leaders accountable for the commitments they made in the Platform for Action.

Commission for Social Development

Since the convening of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, the Commission for Social Development (CSocD)



has been the key UN body in charge of the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. It meets once a year in New York, usually in February. Each year since 1995, the Commission has taken up key social development themes as part of its follow-up to the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit. The work is organized in a series of two-year cycles, which include a review and a policy segment.

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is an advisory body to ECOSOC, with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.



It meets for 10 days each year, usually in May, in New York. Each session has thematically focused on a specific issue. For example, the theme of the ninth session in 2010 was “Indigenous peoples: development with culture and identity; articles 3 and 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”.

Commission on Population and Development

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) assists and advises ECOSOC on population issues and trends, population and development strategies, policies and programmes, and provides population assistance to developing countries.

The CPD used to meet every two or three years until 1994, after which it began to meet once a year, usually in the beginning of April. Each session is dedicated to a certain theme, with the most recent session in

2011 focusing on the theme of “Fertility, reproductive health and development”.

United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) has as its main objective the promotion of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end.

Since 2007, the Forum has been organized in two-year cycles for up to two weeks. Each session of the Forum is based on its central theme.



Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) is the central body within the United Nations system providing policy guidance on crime prevention and criminal justice. The Commission formulates international policies and recommendations on criminal justice issues, including trafficking in persons, transnational crime and aspects of terrorism prevention.

Its mandated priority areas are:

- » *International action to combat national and trans-national crime, including organized crime, economic crime and money laundering;*
- » *Promoting the role of criminal law in protecting the environment;*
- » *Crime prevention in urban areas, including juvenile crime and violence;*
- » *Improving the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice administration systems.*

Aspects of these principal themes are selected for discussion at each annual session held around April/May in Vienna.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Established in 1946, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) is the central policymaking body of the United Nations in drug-related matters. The Commission analyses the world drug situation and develops proposals to strengthen the international drug control system to combat the drug problem worldwide.

It assists ECOSOC in supervising the application of international conventions and agreements dealing with narcotic drugs. It also advises the Council on all matters pertaining to the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and their precursors.

The Commission meets annually in Geneva for a period not exceeding eight working days, usually in March.

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), established in 1992 to advise the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, acts as a forum for:

- » *The examination of science and technology questions and their implications for development;*
- » *The advancement of understanding on science and technology policies, particularly with respect to developing countries;*
- » *The formulation of recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system.*

The Commission meets annually for a period of one week in Geneva in May.

Statistical Commission

The United Nations Statistical Commission (UN StatCom), established in 1947, assists ECOSOC in:

- » *Promoting the development of national statistics and the improvement of their comparability;*
- » *The coordination of the statistical work of specialized agencies;*
- » *The development of the central statistical services of the UN Secretariat;*
- » *Advising the organs of the United Nations on general questions relating to the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information;*
- » *Promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally.*

The Commission meets annually in New York for four days, at the end of February.





Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is the principal United Nations intergovernmental body responsible for human rights. It is composed of 47 Member States, and meets for at least three sessions each year in Geneva, Switzerland.



Its role includes addressing violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, the promotion of respect for human rights for all, and effective coordination and mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system.

During a given session (regular sessions) the Council considers the activities of its subsidiary human rights procedures and mechanisms, and may organize

panel discussions and special events to enhance dialogue and mutual understanding on specific issues.

Outside its normal sessions, the Council may also hold special sessions related to country-specific or thematic issues.

Even though this body is not subsidiary of ECOSOC, only NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council can be accredited to participate in the Human Rights Council's sessions as observers.

As observers, NGOs are able, among other things, to:

- » *Attend and observe all proceedings of the Council with the exception of the Council deliberations under the Complaints Procedure;*
- » *Submit written statements to the Human Rights Council;*
- » *Make oral interventions to the Human Rights Council;*
- » *Participate in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 United Nations Member States once every four years;*

» *Participate in debates, interactive dialogues, panel discussions and informal meetings;*

» *Organize "parallel events" on issues relevant to the work of the Human Rights Council.*

An NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC that wishes to attend a session of the Human Rights Council must send a letter of request for accreditation to its Secretariat in Geneva, well in advance of the relevant session.

The web page of the Human Rights Council provides extensive information on NGO participation.

"One cannot overestimate the contribution that civil society has made towards the development of international human rights standards. [...] Today, civil society's views, practical knowledge and scholarship are as crucial to the human rights movement as ever in the pursuit of justice and equality for all."

— Navanethem Pillay,
United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights (2008).

Written statements

ECOSOC needs and wants expert opinions, ideas and suggestions from civil society. For this reason NGOs are often encouraged to submit written statements to address subjects under the different areas of work of the Council. Resolution 1996/31 states the following about written statements:

"Written statements relevant to the work of the Council may be submitted by organizations in general consultative status and special consultative status on subjects in which these organizations have a special competence. Such statements shall be circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the members of the Council ..."

— ECOSOC resolution 1996/31,
part IV, paragraph 30

Written statements can be submitted online at the CSONet website (see under Contacts). Please be sure to read the information very carefully before drafting and submitting the statements since some events may require different procedures for written statements.

For written statements to ECOSOC, the number of words for submission depends on the type of consultative status the NGO has. According to resolution 1996/31, the word count for statements is limited to the following:

- » *For those in general consultative status: a maximum of 2,000 words*
- » *For those in special consultative status: a maximum of 500 words*

Only one written statement is allowed for each organization.

Organizations with roster consultative status may only submit a written statement if invited to do so by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of ECOSOC or its Committee on NGOs.

Written statements by NGOs with general or special consultative status can also be submitted to ECOSOC commissions and subsidiary bodies, including the functional committees, on subjects in which the NGOs have specialized knowledge. The word count for statements is limited to the following:

- » *General consultative status: a maximum of 2,000 words*
- » *Special consultative status: a maximum of 1,500 words*

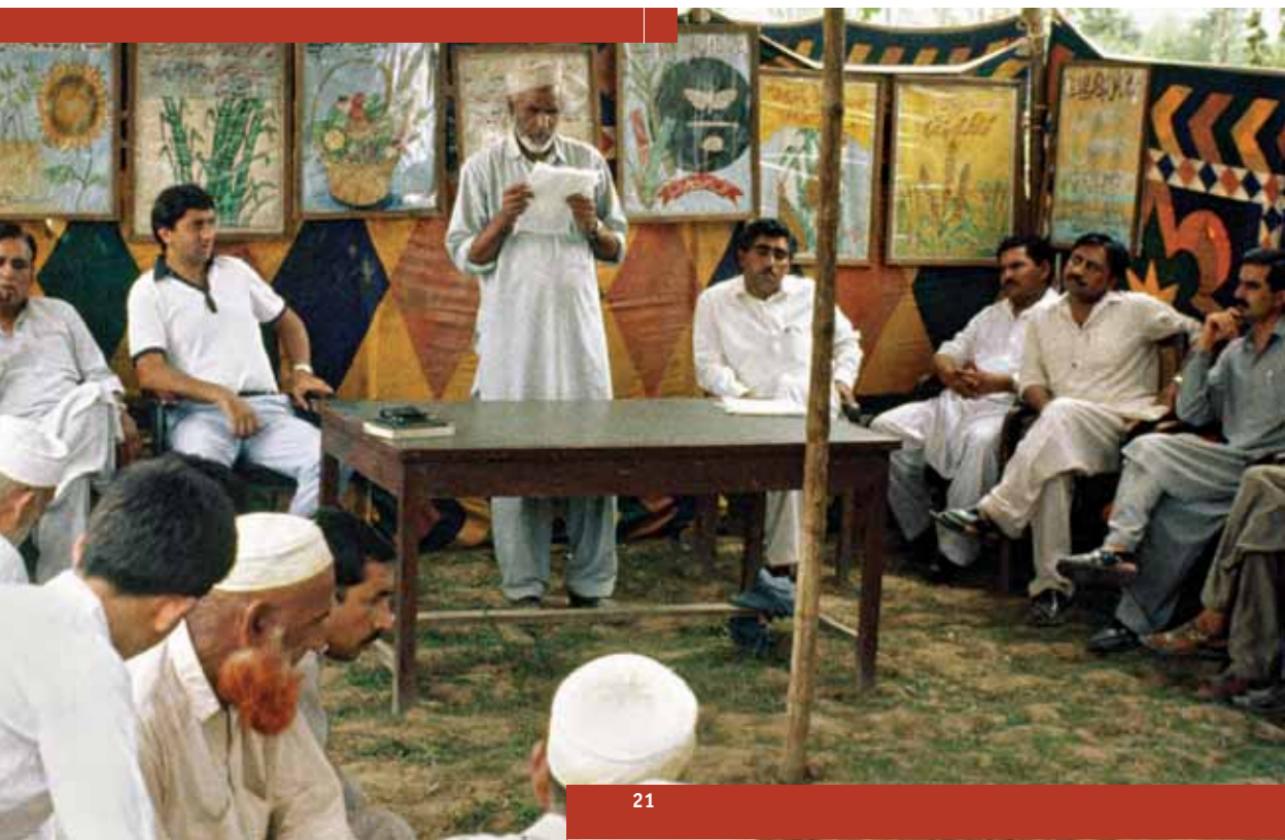
Only one written statement is allowed for each organization.

Please refer to resolution 1996/31 for more information. A list of the functional committees with contact information is provided in the Contacts section.

NGOs may also consider submitting joint statements with other organizations. This can be done at the bottom of the statement submission page under Joint Submission. You can search for the organization you want to partner with and select them before submitting the statement.

The screenshot shows a web interface for the CSO-Net platform. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'Home', 'My Data', 'Stat Stat', 'Search CSO Net', and 'Log Out'. Below the navigation is a banner with the text 'Statement of Intent' and a link 'Click here to start...'. The main area is titled 'Add Statement'. It has several input fields:

- 'Name': A dropdown menu showing 'General' and 'Special'.
- 'Message Text': A large text area containing the text 'CSO-Net (Economic Civil Society Network)'.
- Message text: CSO-Net (Economic Civil Society Network)
- Message text preview: CSO-Net (Economic Civil Society Network)
- 'Attachment': A file input field with the placeholder '(None)'.
- 'File Attachment': A dropdown menu showing 'Image' and 'Text and Data Translation'.
- 'Submit': A button at the bottom right.



Oral statements

As stated in resolution 1996/31, organizations with general or special consultative status have the option of presenting an oral statement at the ECOSOC annual meeting either at the United Nations in New York or the United Nations Office in Geneva, depending on where it is held in a particular year. The Council's annual meetings alternate between these two cities. Only one oral statement is allowed for each organization. Topics for oral statements must relate to the Council's focal theme for the particular year. Presentations can be made directly to the Council or to one of its subsidiary bodies. Organizations on the roster may give statements only if requested by the Secretary-General or ECOSOC and/or its subsidiary bodies.

Past themes of the Annual Ministerial Review:

2011 – Education

2010 – Gender equality and the empowerment of women

2009 – Global public health

2008 – Sustainable development

2007 – Eradication of poverty and hunger

Oral statements may also be made to the functional commissions. Please check with the corresponding secretariat for more information.

The NGO Branch will notify NGOs regarding the deadline for submission of oral statements to ECOSOC. A draft agenda for the Council meeting will also be provided. However, please remember that the President of the Council defines the time arrangements of the meeting, so the NGO Branch cannot guarantee a definite spot for your organization's statement. The final decision on the speakers rests with the President of the Council.

Your organization is also encouraged to consider making joint statements with other NGOs at ECOSOC

if your organization feels that this approach will strengthen your ability and improve your chances of offering expert opinions to ECOSOC.

Oral statements were made by the following NGOs in consultative status at the 2010 High-level Segment in New York

- » *Action Aid (Special, 1991)*
- » *CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation (General, 2004)*
- » *Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) (General, 2002)*
- » *HelpAge International (General, 1995)*
- » *International Alliance of Women (General, 1947)*
- » *International Committee for Arab-Israeli Reconciliation (Special, 2006)*
- » *International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) (General, 1973)*
- » *International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Special, 2000)*
- » *International Trade Union Confederation (General, 2007)*
- » *National Right to Life Educational Trust Fund (Special, 1999)*
- » *Nord-Sud XXI — North-South XXI (Special, 1995)*
- » *Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini (Special, 2006)*
- » *The International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (Special, 2003)*
- » *United Cities and Local Governments (General, 1947)*
- » *World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) (Special, 1971)*

Organize your own event at the United Nations

NGOs frequently have the option of organizing a side event that is related to a main event organized by an ECOSOC functional commission. If you would like to organize a side event, you must contact the organizer of the particular event in the respective ECOSOC functional committee and discuss your idea with them. If selected, you will then be asked to coordinate your event with that office.

For example, during the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in February 2011, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (General consultative status, 1948) and the One Voice Movement, in collaboration with UN-Women and the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN, organized a panel discussion on "Gender, technology and peace-building: bridging the Israel-Palestine divide". Plan International (Roster status, 1981), together with the

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), organized a similar event on "Empowering girls: education and technology".



The application process

Consultative relationships with ECOSOC may be established with international, regional, subregional, and national non-governmental, non-profit, public or voluntary organizations.

Main requirements to determine eligibility for consultative status with ECOSOC, among others, include:

- » *The work of the NGO must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC;*
- » *It must have a transparent and democratic decision-making mechanism and a democratically adopted constitution;*
- » *It must have an established headquarters with an executive officer;*
- » *It must have been in existence for at least 2 years in order to apply;*
- » *It should have the authority to speak for its members;*
- » *It should have a representative structure;*

- » *It must have appropriate mechanisms for accountability;*
- » *It must provide to the Committee financial statements, including contributions and other support, and expenses, direct or indirect.*

NGOs affiliated with an international organization already in consultative status with ECOSOC can be granted consultative status by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs if they demonstrate that their programme of work is of direct relevance to the aims and purpose of the United Nations.

An organization that applies for consultative status should attest that it has been in existence for at least two years as at the date of receipt of the application by the Secretariat.

*— ECOSOC resolution 1996/31,
part IX, paragraph 61(h)*

Six simple steps to obtain consultative status with ECOSOC:

Each step of the application process is described in detail in the following pages. The steps included in the process of your application and subsequent review and approval by ECOSOC are the following:

1. Creating a profile for your organization;
 2. Submitting the online application which includes a questionnaire and supporting documentation;
 3. Initial screening of your application by the NGO Branch to ensure that your application is complete;
 4. Review of your application by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs at its regular session in January or at its resumed session in May every year;
 5. Recommendation by the Committee;
 6. Decision taken by ECOSOC on your application in July every year.

1. Creating a profile for your NGO

- a. Go to the *NGO Branch home page* (see under *Contacts*) and click on “*Apply for consultative status*” in the left hand menu;
 - b. Check if your organization already has a profile in the database by clicking the “*Click here if you are not sure if your organization already has a profile*” link;
 - c. When you know there is no old profile, click “*Add organizational profile*” in the right hand menu;





- d. “*Create new profile*”;
 - e. Fill in the *New profile* form carefully. All items marked with a red asterisk (*) must be filled in. Other fields are optional. Under “*Main objective and login details*”, select “*Applying for consultative status*” as “*Main objective*”. Please ensure that you *do not submit your profile more than once*.

f. Once you have completed this step, and your profile has been approved by the NGO Branch, *you will be notified and will receive your login information* to the website. *After receiving the approval, you may continue to submit an online application for consultative status with ECOSOC.* Please note that the approval of a profile takes a few days.

Make sure that the e-mail address you provide is working and one that you check often since it will be used for all future communication regarding your application.



2. Submitting your online application

Your application for consultative status must be uploaded online *by 1 June of the year before* your organization wishes to be considered by the Committee. The application can be submitted in either English or French, the two working languages of the United Nations. It consists of an online form and supporting documents that must also be uploaded as electronic files, namely:

- » A copy of your organization's constitution/charter and/or statutes/by-laws and amendments to those documents (pursuant to paragraph 10 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31);
 - » A copy of the certificate of registration. According to resolution 1996/31, an organization should attest that it has been in existence for at least two years from the date of receipt of the application by the Secretariat;
 - » A copy of the most recent financial statement and annual report;

- » Examples of publications and recent articles or statements, and an organizational chart, if available.

All required documents submitted, excluding publications, must also be translated into English or French.

To submit your application:

- a. Go to the *NGO Branch home page* and log in by clicking “*Login for the iCSO database*”;
 - b. Click on the “*Consultative status*” tab, scroll down and click “*Submit application*”;





- c. Fill in the application form. Do not leave any fields empty. Try to be brief and to the point. ***Save the information at least every 20 minutes*** to avoid losing your work.
 - d. If something is missing or incorrect in your form, the red text on the screen will highlight it. When

you are certain your application form is complete, click “*Submit*”.

- e. You also need to *upload the required documents*, as mentioned above. This can be done under the “**Documents**” tab. *All documentation must be uploaded online. Otherwise your application will not be processed.*



Checklist for applications:

- Answer all questions.**
Do not leave any question blank; if a question does not apply to your organization, you can write “not applicable”.
- Be clear, brief and to the point.**
- Remember all required documents and their translations.**
Make sure scanned documents are legible.
- Use normal characters, no UPPER CASE text, and no symbols.**
- Use the correct United Nations terminology when referring to countries and territories.**
Please consult the UN terminology website at: <http://unterm.un.org/>.
- If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the NGO Branch**
through its messaging system by clicking the “Contact us” link on the home page.

3. Screening your application

The NGO Branch of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN Secretariat) is responsible for screening applications as an initial step before presenting them for review by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs at its next session.

The NGO Branch services the Committee on NGOs and contributes to the applications review process in order to provide advice and information concerning NGOs to representatives of the United Nations system, Member States and civil society. The work of the NGO Branch ranges from providing oversight to administrative and security procedures in order to facilitate access to the United Nations facilities, to training, information and advice on substantive aspects of the contribution of NGOs to United Nations goals and objectives.

The period between 1 June and the next session of the Committee on NGOs is dedicated to the review of applications by the NGO Branch. When your application is received by the Branch, they are reviewed for completeness and clarity. The purpose is to ensure that NGOs present all necessary information and documentation so that their applications are ready for review by the Committee on NGOs when it meets at its next scheduled session.

Once your application is complete, your organization will receive a letter informing you of the upcoming session of the Committee on NGOs where your application will be presented to the Committee members for their consideration.

4. Review of your application by the Committee on NGOs

The Committee on NGOs is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, comprised of 19 Member States elected on the basis of equitable geographical representation. They include: five members from African States; four members from Asian States; two members from Eastern European States; four members from Latin American and Caribbean States; and four members from Western European and other States.

During the session in which your application is considered for consultative status, you will be allowed to have no more than two representatives from your organization present in the room. Your presence may offer an opportunity for your organization to answer or clarify questions that the Committee on NGOs may have. However, your presence during the Committee's sessions is not a guarantee that your representatives will be called upon to respond to the Committee's questions.

Please also note that the presence of NGO representatives is not mandatory and will not affect the outcome of your application in any way. Questions posed by Committee members are always uploaded onto the paperless system where applicant NGOs can view them and respond as necessary. This system provides an effective way to communicate with the Secretariat and the Committee members in the review of your application during the Committee sessions.

The NGO Branch provides a web-based system that enables organizations to upload their responses directly and quickly. The Secretariat will review the answers from this system and then forward them to the members of the NGO committee. Any information, including questions posed by the Committee to your organization, will be posted in this system. Likewise, your responses will have to be uploaded into the system to facilitate and accelerate the review of your application by the Committee.

5. The Committee makes a recommendation

The Committee on NGOs meets twice a year, once in January and then again in May, in order to consider applications from NGOs applying for consultative status. The Committee's recommendations are then forwarded to the Economic and Social Council for its decision during the ECOSOC High-level Segment in July.

An **official notification** is sent to all NGOs whose applications have been reviewed, informing them of the Committee's recommendation. The recommendations of the NGO Committee are then published in a report which is posted on the NGO Branch website. All relevant press releases regarding your application are also posted there.

Please note that recommendations made by the Committee at each session (in January and May) are forwarded to the Council for its decision when it meets in July every year. Therefore, the organization is

considered in consultative status with ECOSOC only after the conclusion of the annual Council meeting in July.

The Committee may recommend one of three consultative status categories (General, Special or Roster), or decide to defer an application for review until the next session while awaiting clarification or answers. Therefore, it is extremely important for NGOs to respond to questions and requests for clarification promptly when requested to do so. It is also very important to keep all contact information up-to-date in the NGO profile, especially the primary e-mail address, since this is the only way for the NGO to be notified of the questions posed.

The three types of consultative status are granted to NGOs based on the type of organization. They include:

General status, which is given to NGOs that represent large segments of societies in several countries. Their area of work covers most of the

issues on the agenda of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. These tend to be fairly large, well-established international NGOs with a broad geographical reach.

Special status, which is reserved for NGOs that have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by ECOSOC. These NGOs tend to be smaller and more recently established.

Roster status, which is conferred on NGOs that have a more narrow and/or technical focus and make occasional and useful contributions to the work of ECOSOC or its subsidiary bodies.

Press releases keep you up-to-date of the Committee's recommendations and ECOSOC decisions when you are not able to attend to the sessions.

Press Releases

- Feb 4, 2011 **ECOSOC/6460**
Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends Special Consultative Status
- Feb 4, 2011 **ECOSOC/6460 ONG 714**
COMITÉ DES ONG: BATAILLE DE PROCÉDURE AUTOUR DE LA DEMANDE D'ACCREDITATION DE + INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY ASSOCIATION +
- Feb 3, 2011 **ECOSOC/6459**
Continuing 2011 Session, Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends
- Feb 3, 2011 **ECOSOC/6459 ONG 713**
MALGRÉ UNE SÉANCE INTERRUPTION PAR DE NOMBREUX PROBLÈMES TECHNIQUES, LE COMITÉ DES ONG
- Feb 2, 2011 **ECOSOC/6458**
Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations Recommends Special Consultative Status
- Feb 2, 2011 **ECOSOC/6458 ONG 712**
LE COMITÉ ACCORDE LE STATUT CONSULTATIF À 11 ONG ET REPORTE L'EXAMEN DES DEMANDES DE 19 AUTRES DONT + HOMOSEXUELLES INITIATIVE WIEN +
- Feb 1, 2011 **ECOSOC/6457**
Committee on NGOs Grants Consultative Status to 17 Civil Society Groups.
- Feb 1, 2011 **ECOSOC/6457 ONG 711**
LE COMITÉ DES ONG RECOMMANDÉ À L'ECOSOC DROITER LE STATUT CONSULTATIF SPÉCIAL À DIX-SEPT ORGANISATIONS
- Jan 31, 2011 **ECOSOC/6456**
Opening 2011 Session of Committee on NGOs, Officials Hail Unprecedented Surge

6. Final decision by ECOSOC

Consultative relationship with the ECOSOC is governed by the principles contained in resolution 1996/31.

ECOSOC consists of 54 Member States elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms. Seats on the Council are allotted based on geographical representation with 14 allocated to African States, 11 to Asian States, 6 to Eastern European States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean States, and 13 to Western European and other States. ECOSOC is responsible for making the final decision, which is the last step in the application process.

After the Committee on NGOs makes its recommendation, ECOSOC reviews it at its next meeting, usually in July of the same year. During the meeting, ECOSOC takes note of the reports of the two sessions from the Committee on NGOs and makes the final decision. It is only after the decision is made by ECOSOC that the NGO is granted consultative status; a letter is then sent to the NGO.





Quadrennial reports

Organizations in general consultative status and special consultative status shall submit to the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations through the Secretary-General every fourth year a brief report of their activities, specifically as regards the support they have given to the work of the United Nations.

— ECOSOC resolution 1996/31,
part IX, paragraph 61(c)

Contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the work of the United Nations is one of the main purposes of granting consultative status to NGOs.

Once an NGO has obtained consultative status, the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs monitors the contributions made by the NGOs to the work of ECOSOC. A major requirement for NGOs in status is the submission

of a report to the Committee, through the NGO Branch, every four years that includes a brief description of the organization's activities, particularly highlighting their contribution to the work of the United Nations, including the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals.

Guidelines for formatting and content of the quadrennial report can be found at www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/quadreports. To submit the report there are two options:

- » **Option 1 (recommended):** *Submit the report online through the NGO Branch website. Go to NGO Branch home page and log in by clicking Login for the ICSO database. Once there, click on the Consultative status tab, then click on Quadrennial reports, followed by Update reports, and fill in the appropriate boxes.*
- » **Option 2:** *E-mail the report to the NGO Branch at quadreports@un.org and attach the report as a Word document.*

Six months prior to the due date of your quadrennial report, the NGO Branch will send you a reminder

informing you of the expected due date of your report, as well as the penalties for failing to submit the report within the deadline.

Please ensure that your organization's contact information is current by logging on to your account and updating your contact information under the Profile tab.

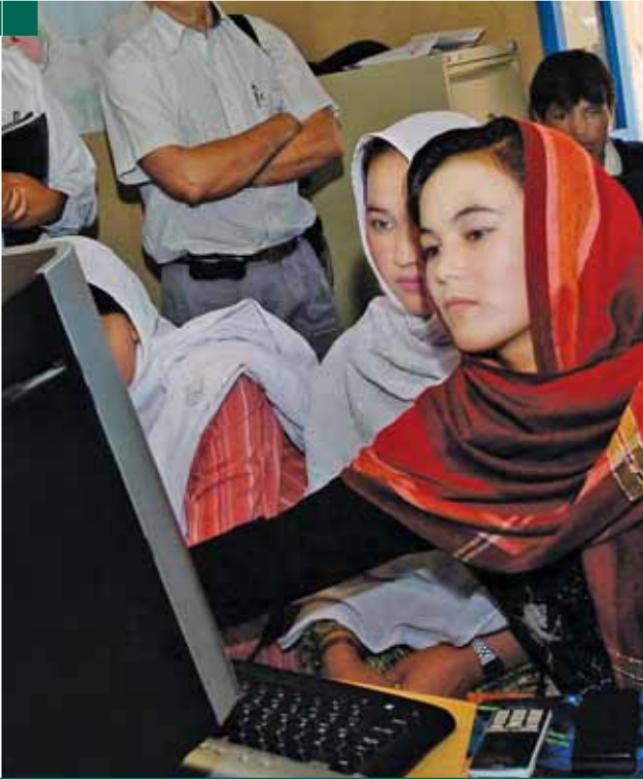
What are the consequences if I do not submit my report?

Under "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures" in ECOSOC resolution 2008/4, specific measures are outlined for action if an NGO fails to submit a report on time. They are as follows:

- » *One month after the due date of your report, the NGO Branch will send you a notification requesting your overdue report by 1 January of the following year.*
- » *If no report is received by 1 January, the NGO Branch will send a final letter requesting that the report be submitted by 1 May. If the report is still not received by this date, the Committee on NGOs will recommend*

immediate suspension of consultative status for your organization for one year.

- » *If the Council decides to suspend your consultative status, you will be notified, along with a request to receive the quadrennial report by 1 May of the following year.*
- » *If within that period the report has still not been submitted to the NGO Branch by your organization, it will result in the recommendation for withdrawal of your consultative status by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs.*





Contact information and useful links

NGO Branch

Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations

Address: One United Nations Plaza,
Room DC1-1480, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 1-212-963-8652
Fax: 1-212-963-9248

Messages to the NGO Branch:

Click the link "Contact us" on the home page.

Website: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo>

Links:

- CSO net: www.un.org/ecosoc/csonet
- Quadrennial reports: www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/quadreports
- UN ground passes: www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/passes
- Civil society database: <http://esango.un.org/civilsociety>
- Functional commissions: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/commissions>

ECOSOC Committee on NGOs

Address: One United Nations Plaza,
Room DC1-1480,
New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 1-212-963-8652
Fax: 1-212-963-9248

Messages to the Committee: *Click the link "Contact us" on the NGO Branch home page (see above).*

Website: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/committee>

Commission on Sustainable Development

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-2220,
New York, NY 10017 USA

Fax: 1-212-963-4260

Messages to the CSD: *Click the link "Contact us" on the home page.*

Website: [\(CSD home page\)](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_index.shtml)

[\(NGO participation\)](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_faqs_mg.shtml)

Commission on the Status of Women

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-1250,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Fax: 1-212-963-3463

Messages to the CSW: Click the link "Contact us" on the home page.

Website: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index.html>
(CSW home page)

www.unwomen.org

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/ngo/index.html>
(NGO participation)

Commission for Social Development

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-1320,
New York, NY 10017 USA

Fax: (DSDP) 1-212-963-3062

Messages to the CSocD: Click the link "Contact us" on the home page.

Website: <http://social.un.org/index/>
[CommissionforSocialDevelopment.aspx](http://social.un.org/index/CommissionforSocialDevelopment.aspx)
(CSocD home page)

<http://social.un.org/index/CivilSociety.aspx>
(NGO participation)

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-1454,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Telephone: 1-917-367-5100

Fax: 1-917-367-5102

E-mail: indigenous_un@un.org

Website: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/index.html>

Commission on Population and Development

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-1950,
New York, NY 10017 USA

Telephone: 1-212-963-3179

Fax: 1-212-963-2147

Website: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/aboutcom.htm>
http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/ngopart_44.htm
(NGO participation)

United Nations Forum on Forests

Address: 1 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC1-1245,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Telephone: 1-212-963-3401 / 1-917-367-4244

Fax: 1-917-367-3186

E-mail: unff@un.org

Website: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Address: Civil Society Team,
UN Office on Drugs and Crime,
Vienna International Centre,
P.O. Box 500, Room D1474,
A-1400 Vienna, Austria

Telephone: (UNODC) Vienna Office: 43-1-26060

Fax: (UNODC) Vienna Office: 43-1-263-3389

E-mail: ngo.unit@unodc.org (Civil society team)

Website: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/>

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Address: Civil Society Team,
UN Office on Drugs and Crime,
Vienna International Centre,
P.O. Box 500, Room D1474,
A-1400 Vienna, Austria

Telephone: (UNODC) Vienna Office: 43-1-26060

Fax: (UNODC) Vienna Office: 43-1-263-3389

E-mail: ngo.unit@unodc.org (Civil society team)

Website: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/>

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Address: Palais des Nations,
8-14, Av. de la Paix,
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Telephone: (UNCTAD) 41-22-917-1234

Fax: (UNCTAD) 41-22-917-0057

E-mail: stdev@unctad.org

Website: <http://www.unctad.org/cstd>

Statistical Commission

Address: 2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-1670,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Telephone: 1-212-963-4849

Fax: 1-212-963-4569

E-mail: statcom@un.org

Website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission.htm>

Human Rights Council

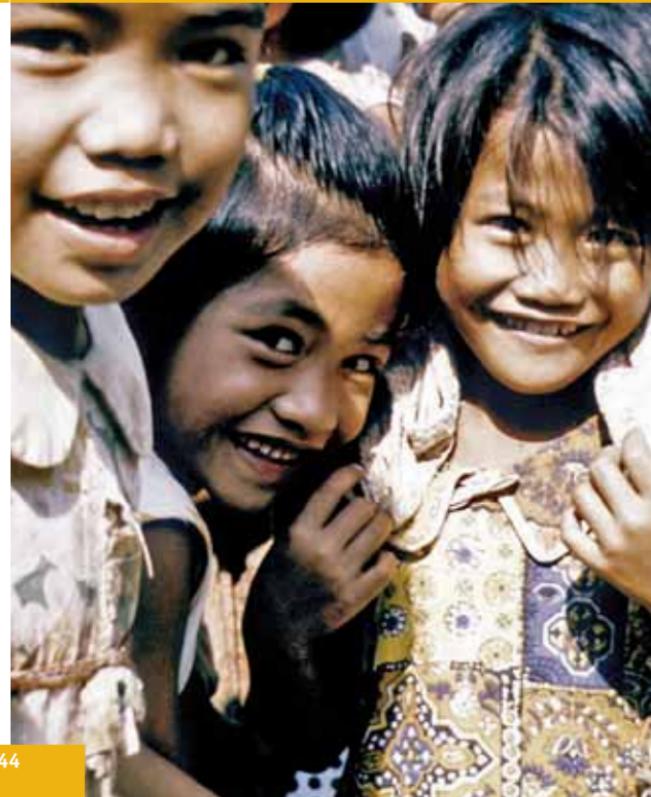
Address: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights,
Palais Wilson,
52 rue des Pâquis,
CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland

Telephone: +41 22 917 965 (NGO Liaison Officer)

E-mail: civilsocietyunit@ohchr.org

Website: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/ngo.htm>
(NGO participation in the Human Rights Council)



What is ECOSOC?

The Economic and Social Council is the principal organ that coordinates the economic, social and related work of the 14 United Nations specialized agencies, functional commissions and five regional commissions. It serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system.

What is consultative status?

Consultative status is an accreditation framework that benefits both the United Nations and the NGOs.

As stated by resolution 1996/31: "... *Consultative arrangements are to be made, on the one hand, for the purpose of enabling the Council or one of its bodies to secure expert information or advice from organizations having special competence in the subjects for which consultative arrangements are made, and, on the other hand, to enable international, regional, sub-regional and national organizations that represent important elements of public opinion to express their views*". — ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, part II, paragraph 20

Why would my NGO want consultative status?

ECOSOC provides NGOs the opportunity to be heard by a truly global audience and contribute to its agenda.

An NGO with consultative status can:

- » Attend international conferences and events;
- » Organize side events;
- » Make written and oral statements
- » Enter United Nations premises;
- at these events;
- » Have opportunities to network and lobby.