



# Working with ECOSOC



# A NGOs Guide to Consultative Status

Working  
with  
**ECOSOC**

an NGOs Guide to  
**Consultative  
Status**



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## 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 for 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 and in General Assembly resolution 68/1 on strengthening of ECOSOC. The importance of a revitalized Global Partnership to implement the internationally agreed development goals was further stressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the Sustainable Development Summit in 2015.

From the beginning, 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 over 4,900 organizations in 2018.



## ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies

The Economic and Social Council is the central mechanism for coordination of the activities of the United Nations system and its specialized agencies and supervision of subsidiary bodies in the economic, social, environmental and related fields. It lies at the heart of the UN system with the goal to achieve a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. It is the principal body for the coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for implementation of the international development goals agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Sustainable development Goals.

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 segments and meetings, including preparatory meetings, round tables and panel discussions with members of civil society throughout the year. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/1, the programme of work of the Council has been adjusted to a July-to-July cycle with an issued based approach (annual theme) to guide its subsidiary bodies in policy setting and coordination. The substantive session of the Council, spread throughout the July-to-July cycle, includes:

- *an Operational Activities for Development Segment held immediately following the first regular session of the executive boards of the funds and programmes of the United Nations system late February-early March;*
- *a Humanitarian Affairs Segment held in June;*
- *a High-level Segment held in July that includes the three-day ministerial meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF);*
- *the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) held every other year;*
- *the Forum on Financing for Development (FfD Forum) held annually in April-May;*
- *dedicated coordination and management meetings held regularly to perform the functions of the coordination and general segments;*
- *the Integration Segment held in May;*

- *an informal Youth Forum held in January; and*
- *an informal Partnership Forum in April.*

The Council holds the regular meetings of its substantive sessions in New York and the Humanitarian Affairs Segment alternates between New York and Geneva.

### **High-level Segment**

Held on an annual basis, the High-level Segment represents the culmination of ECOSOC's annual cycle of work and convenes a diverse group of high-level representatives from Government, the private sector, civil society and academia for policy dialogue, review and recommendations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals.

Each year, ECOSOC structures its work around an annual theme of global importance to sustainable



development. This ensures focused attention among ECOSOC's array of partners and throughout the UN development system. The theme of the 2017 session of ECOSOC was: *Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges*. The themes for the 2018 and 2019 sessions are: *"From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities"* and *"One world for all: empowering people to build equal and inclusive societies"*.

Every year, the High-level Segment also includes the ministerial meeting of the **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/290, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development has become the main United Nations platform on sustainable development. The HLPF is convened annually by the President of the Council for a period of

eight days and includes a three-day ministerial segment to be held in the framework of the substantive session of the Council. The HLPF, building on and replacing the Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR), conducts regular reviews on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Other Forums**

**The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)**, 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. It generates

key messages and concrete policy guidance on development cooperation, in the context of the global sustainable development agenda. The DCF is held every other year in New York.

An annual Forum on **Financing for Development (FfD Forum)** was established to review implementation of financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, following the Third International Conference on Financing for Development held in 2015 in Addis Ababa. The second FfD Forum was convened in 2017 in New York. It brings together governments, international financial institutions, international organizations, as well as civil society organizations, the business sector and local authorities. The intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations feed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda during the HLPF.

As requested by the General Assembly resolution 70/1 on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the President of ECOSOC convenes the meetings of the **Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs** once a year to discuss science, technology and innovation cooperation around thematic areas for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Forum is held in May in New York. The summary of the discussions are used as an input to the meetings of the HLPF.

### **Other meetings**

During the **Integration Segment**, policy makers from national ministries exchange experiences and discuss strategies to advance integration of the three pillars of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental. The sessions collect and share inputs from Member States, ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, other



UN organizations and relevant stakeholders, including NGOs, with an emphasis on cutting-edge issues of global concern. Key findings inform action-oriented recommendations for follow up.

The **Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS)** has been an essential platform for discussing the activities and issues related to strengthening the coordination of the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. The HAS provides a key opportunity for Member States, United Nations entities, humanitarian and development partners, the private sector and affected communities to discuss emerging and pressing humanitarian issues.

**The Youth Forum**, held annually by ECOSOC since 2012, brings youth into discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals. It offers a unique opportunity for youth to voice their opinions, share ideas, and think together about what they can do to achieve sustainable development.

At **the Partnership Forum**, some of the most influential leaders from government, the private sector and civil society come together and share the latest innovations on how partnerships can best advance international development. It broadens the range of people engaging with ECOSOC and promotes concrete measures for different groups to work together to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Subsidiary bodies**

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**

- *Commission on the Status of Women*
- *Commission for Social Development*
- *Commission on Population and Development*
- *Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*
- *Commission on Narcotic Drugs*
- *Commission on Science and Technology for Development*
- *Statistical Commission*
- *United Nations Forum on Forests*

### **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*
- *Sessional and standing committees*
- *Expert, ad hoc and related bodies*

*For an exhaustive list of the subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC, please visit ECOSOC's website:  
([www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/subsidiary-bodies-ecosoc](http://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/subsidiary-bodies-ecosoc))*

## 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 the empowerment 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 empowerment 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.

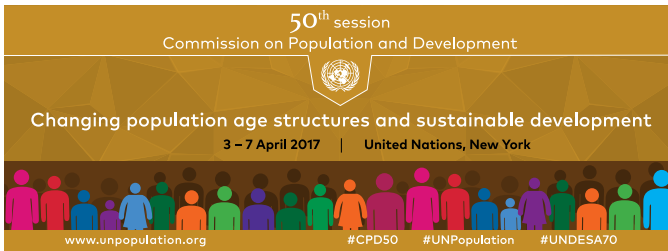


Strategies for eradicating poverty  
to achieve sustainable development for all

## 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 meets annually, usually in the beginning of April. Each session is dedicated to a certain theme. The most recent session in 2017 focused on the theme of “*Changing population age structures and sustainable development*”.



## 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 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 transnational 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; and*

- *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 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; and*
- *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; and*
- *Promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally.*

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





## 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 seventeenth session in 2017 was “*Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration*”.



## United Nations Forum on Forests

The main objectives of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) are to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. After having been organized in two-year cycles from 2007 to 2017, the Forum now holds annual sessions for a period of five days in New York. Each session of the Forum is based on its central theme.

For more information about ECOSOC’s subsidiary bodies, please visit ECOSOC’s website.



**United Nations  
FORUM ON  
FORESTS**



## ECOSOC

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### 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, a 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; and*
- *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.

**A 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; and*
- *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. Each NGO can request up to a maximum of 7 annual passes for its representatives in New York (and 7 for Geneva and 7 for Vienna). Out of these 7, two are reserved for the President/Chief Executive Officer and Chief Administrative Officer. Please note that the President/Chief Executive Officer or Chief Administrative Officer must be nominated in each location for any request for passes to be approved. Failure to nominate at least one of them will prevent approval of any request for passes. All requests for passes must be made online. Short-term passes for one day and/or for up to three months are also available for specific events for a maximum of nine temporary passes at a time.

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 Branch<sup>1</sup> home page** (<http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=14>)*
- *Under the "Consultative status" tab, go to "Designations"*
- *Click on "**New York**" to pre-register the representatives you wish to designate.*

Once you receive the email confirmation, to collect your pass, print both the official letter and the security form by clicking on the "**print**" icon next to your name and bring both documents and a valid photo ID with you to the UN Pass and ID Office at 320 East 45th Street, between 1st and 2nd Avenue, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. NGOs must also notify the

<sup>1</sup> *The NGO Branch is part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN Secretariat in New York.*

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 sessions/meetings of ECOSOC, its functional commissions and its other subsidiary bodies.

### **At these events, NGO 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; and*
- *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.

### **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. 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 NGOs in general consultative status:**  
*a maximum of 2,000 words*
- **For NGOs 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 the CSO-Net website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, NEWS, CALENDAR OF EVENTS, LEARNING, and QUESTIONNAIRES. Below this is a sub-navigation bar with tabs for OVERVIEW, REGISTRATION, PARTICIPATION, STATEMENTS, and PHOTOS. The main content area is titled 'Add Statement' and contains a form with the following fields:

Name	Content
Title	ECOSOC 2011 High-Level Segment
Statement Text	
Maximum words allowed	2000
Language	Arabic
Joint Submission	Search and Add Organization

At the bottom of the form, there is a 'SEARCH' button and an 'Add' button. The footer of the page contains copyright information for the United Nations 2010 and links to Terms of Use, Privacy Notice, About CSO Net, and Contact NGO Branch.

## Oral statements

As stated in resolution 1996/31, organizations with general or special consultative status have the option of presenting an oral statement to the Council. Topics for oral statements must relate to the Council's annual theme for the particular year. Presentations can be made directly to the Council or to one of its subsidiary bodies.

### The annual themes for the 2018 and 2019 sessions of the Council are:

➤ **2019**

*One world for all: empowering people to build equal and inclusive societies*

➤ **2018**

*From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities*

**Past themes of the Council's sessions were:**

- **2017:** *Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges*
- **2016:** *Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results*
- **2015:** *Managing the transition from the MDGs to the sustainable development goals: what it will take*

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's 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. Ultimately, the final decision on the speakers' list 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.

The following NGOs in consultative status delivered oral statements during the 2017 High-level Segment in New York:

- *IOGT International (Special, 2011)*
- *IUS PRIMI VIRI International Association (Special, 2004)*
- *International Committee for Peace and Reconciliation (Special, 2006)*
- *International Federation of Medical Students Associations (Special, 2003)*
- *La manif pour tous (Special, 2016)*
- *Legião da Boa Vontade (General, 1999)*

enous



10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY: 2007-2017

UNITED NATIONS  
DECLARATION  
ON THE RIGHTS OF  
INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLES

#WEAREINDIGENOUS





## 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. Please keep in mind that in accordance with the relevant regulations, UN premises can only be used for meetings or events co-sponsored by a Permanent or Observer Mission to the UN, departments or offices of the Secretariat, or organizations or agencies of the UN system. If you would like to organize a side event, you must contact the organizer of the particular event in the respective Office and discuss your idea with them. If selected, you will then be asked to coordinate your event with that office. For example, during the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2017, Oxfam International (General Consultative Status, 2002) organized a side event in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations on “*Addressing inequalities in care work to achieve women’s economic empowerment*”.

## Modalities for participation at the Human Rights Council

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



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; and*
- *Organize “parallel events” on issues relevant to the work of the Human Rights Council.*

A 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 (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>).





## The application process

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

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

- *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; and*
- *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 April (for applications considered at the regular session) and July (for applications considered at the resumed session) every year.

## 1. Creating a profile for your NGO

- a. Go to the *NGO Branch home page* 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;

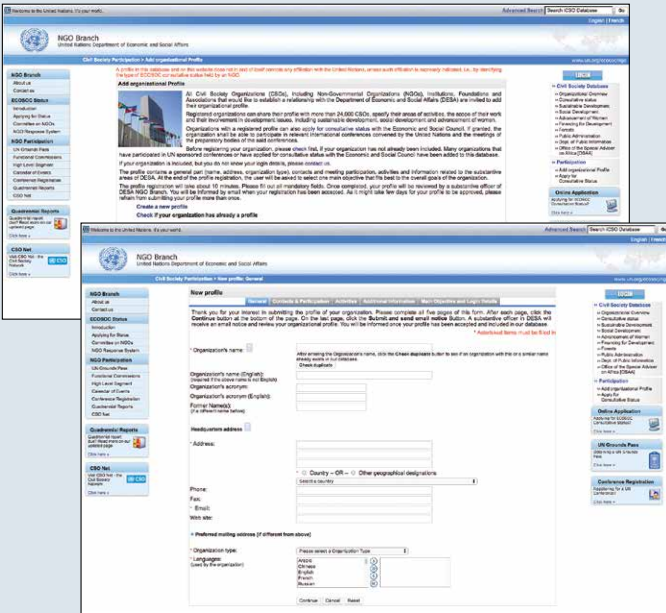
The image displays two screenshots of the NGO Branch website. The top screenshot shows the 'HOME' page with a navigation menu and a sidebar containing a 'HOW TO APPLY' section with links for 'Request UN Credentials', 'Credentials registration', 'Apply for consultative status', 'Submit questionnaire report', 'Change of Name?', and 'Latest DESA NGO News'. The main content area is titled 'NGO Branch' and includes a welcome message and a 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS' logo. The bottom screenshot shows the 'How to Apply for Consultative Status' page, which provides instructions for applicants, including a note that organizations must have a registered profile before starting the application. It lists steps: 1. Profile registration (with sub-steps: Add your organizational profile, Login here with your existing profile, Click here if you are not sure if your organization already has a profile) and 2. Complete the online application. A note at the bottom states that profile registration takes about 10 minutes and will be reviewed by a substantive officer of DESA NGO Branch.

- c. When you know there is no old profile, click **“Add organizational profile”** under the heading **“Profile registration”**;
- d. Click on **“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 Headquarters 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.*



Welcome to the United Nations. It's your world. Advanced Search Search iCSO Database Go

**NGO Branch**  
 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

2012 Society Practitioner's New Profile: Main Objective www.un.org/whoa/king

**NGO Branch**  
 About us  
 Contact us

**ECOSOC Status**  
 Introduction  
 Applying for Status  
 Committee on NGOs

**NGO Response System**  
 UN Grounds Pass  
 Functional Commissions  
 High Level Regime  
 Calendar of Events  
 Conference Registration  
 Quinquennial Reports  
 CSO Net

**Quinquennial Reports**  
 Quinquennial report: don't read more on our spotted page.  
 Click here >

**CSO Net**  
 Visit CSO Net - the Civil Society Network  
 Click here >

**New profile**  
[General](#) [Contacts & Participation](#) [Activities](#) [Additional Information](#) [Main Objective and Login Details](#)

**Profile General** has been saved

Once you have completed this page, please click on the **Submit and send email notice** button. A substantive officer in DESA will receive an email notice and review your organizational profile. You will be informed once your profile has been accepted.

**Main Objective for submitting a profile** \* Asterisked items must be filled in

Please select one main objective why your organization would like to be included in our database. The selection of the main objective will decide which substantive office in DESA will review your profile.

Special Event / Application for Consultative Status with ECOSOC  
 Sustainable Development  
 Social Development  
 Advancement of Women  
 Financing for Development  
 Forests  
 Public Administration  
 Department of Public Information

**Login Details**

Please enter a username and password which must be at least five characters and/or numbers long. Once your profile has been accepted, you will use this username and password to login to your organizational profile.

\* Username:   
 \* Password:   
 \* Re-type Password:

**Online Application**  
 Applying for ECOSOC Consultative Status?   
 Click here >

**UN Grounds Pass**  
 Obtaining a UN Grounds Pass   
 Click here >

**Conference Registration**  
 Registering for a UN Conference?   
 Click here >

>> Civil Society Database  
 >> Organizational Overview  
 >> Consultative Status  
 >> Sustainable Development  
 >> Social Development  
 >> Advancement of Women  
 >> Financing for Development  
 >> Forests  
 >> Public Administration  
 >> Participation  
 >> Add organizational Profile  
 >> Apply for Consultative Status  
 >> Login

## 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.

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

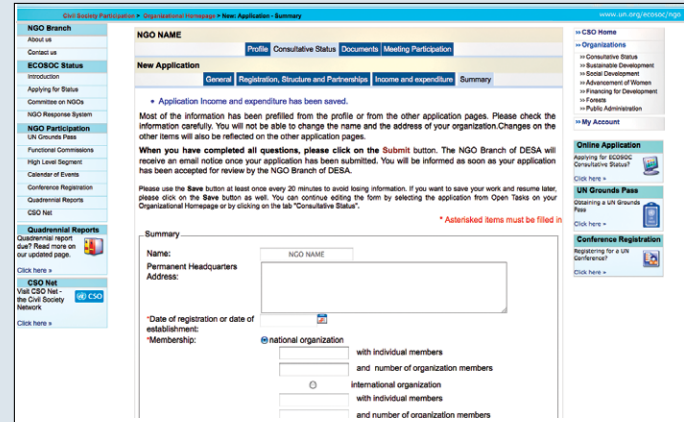
### To submit your application:

- 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.**

The screenshot shows a web form for uploading a new document. The form is titled "New document" and includes a warning: "\* Asterisked items must be filled in". The form fields are as follows:

- Language:** A dropdown menu with "Select a language" as the placeholder.
- Title:** A text input field.
- Authors:** A text input field.
- Description:** A large text area.
- Process:** A dropdown menu with "Select a process" as the placeholder.
- Document type:** A dropdown menu with "Select a document type" as the placeholder.
- Year:** A dropdown menu with "Select a year" as the placeholder.
- Availability:** Radio buttons for "Whole document" and "Cover page only".
- Relationship to other documents:** A text area.
- Upload:** A "Browse..." button and an "Upload the document" checkbox.
- Submission:** "Submit and upload", "Cancel", and "Reset" buttons.

The left sidebar contains navigation links for "NGO Branch", "ECOSOC Status", "NGO Participation", and "Quadrennial Reports". The right sidebar contains links for "CSO Home", "Organizations", "Online Application", "UN Grounds Pass", and "Conference Registration".

## 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 to upload all required documents and their translations.
- Make sure scanned documents are legible.
- Use normal characters, no UPPER CASE text, and no symbols.
- Please refer to the document containing the questionnaire of the application form and hints on how to fill out the form, available on the NGO Branch website, under the "Apply for consultative status" page.
- 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 providing 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, it is 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.

Your organization will be notified as to when your application will be considered by the Committee on NGOs.

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### 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 Asia-Pacific 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 up to 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 sent to the headquarters' e-mail of the NGO with instructions on how to respond as necessary.

The NGO Branch provides a web-based system that enables organizations to submit 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.

This process provides an effective way to communicate with the Secretariat and the Committee members throughout your application's review during the Committee sessions.

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## 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.

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 as part of its Coordination and Management meetings, in April and July every year. Therefore, the organization is considered in consultative status with ECOSOC only after the decision is taken by the Council.

The Committee may recommend consultative status, 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 in iCSO, especially the headquarters' e-mail address, since this is the only way for the NGO to be notified of the questions posed.

There are three types of consultative status for 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.

Over the last years, in practice, the Committee has been granting only special consultative status to organizations applying. General status has been granted upon request for reclassification only.

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*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 about the sessions of the Committee on NGOs are available on Committee's webpage under the heading "Meetings coverage".*

*Additionally, the Committee sessions are now webcast live on UN Web TV: <http://webtv.un.org/> You may search for recordings of previous sessions in the search box at the top right of the page using the search terms "committee on non-governmental organizations", or scroll down to the "Live Now" thumbnails and select the live video of the session.*

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## **6. Final decision by ECOSOC**

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

ECOSOC is responsible for making the final decision, which is the last step in the application process. The recommendations of the Committee on NGOs from its regular and resumed sessions are considered by the Council during its April and July Coordination and Management meetings, respectively. It is only after the decision is made by ECOSOC that the NGO is granted consultative status and 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 Sustainable Development Goals and the work of the United Nations is one of the main purposes of granting consultative status to NGOs.

Once a 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 Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals.

To emphasize the need to abide strictly by this requirement, ECOSOC resolution 2008/4 stipulated measures that the Council has taken to suspend, and subsequently withdraw consultative status of organizations that fail to submit their reports on time.

Guidelines for formatting and content of the quadrennial report can be found at the NGO Branch website (<http://csonet.org>). To submit the report, please take the following steps:

- *Go to the **NGO Branch home page** and log in by clicking "**Login for the iCSO database**".*
- *Use your organization's login information and password to connect to your organization's profile.*



- *Once there, place your mouse over the “**Consultative status**” tab, then click on “**Quadrennial reports**” from the drop down menu.*
- *This page allows you to look at your reports submitted for previous periods as well as reports that are due for submission.*
- *To submit a new report, click on “**Submit Report**”. A screen will appear with eight text fields for you to complete. You will be required to complete all the fields in order to complete your report.*
- *Once you have satisfactorily completed the online reporting form, you must save it by clicking on the “**Save**” button at the bottom of the page and then click on the “**Submit**” button.*

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 a 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 Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for  
Sustainable Development  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs United Nations**

*Address:* United Nations Secretariat  
405 E 42nd Street  
S-2540, New York, NY 10017, USA

*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://csonet.org>

- Links:*
- » CSO net: <http://csonet.org>
  - » Applications for consultative status:  
<http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=83>
  - » Quadrennial reports:  
<http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=85>
  - » UN grounds passes:  
<http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=86>
  - » Civil society database:  
<http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/newLogin.do>

## ECOSOC Committee on NGOs

*Address:* United Nations Secretariat  
405 E 42nd Street  
S-2540, New York, NY 10017, USA

*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://csonet.org/index.php?menu=80>

## Commission on the Status of Women

*Address:* UN Women  
220 East 42nd street  
New York, NY 10017, USA

*Telephone:* 1-646-781-4400  
*Fax:* 1-646-781-4444

*Messages to the CSW:*  
**Click the link “Contact us” on the home page.**

*Website:* » [www.unwomen.org/en](http://www.unwomen.org/en)  
» <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>  
(CSW home page)  
» <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/ngo-participation> (NGO participation)

## Commission for Social Development

*Address:* Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD)  
DESA  
United Nations Secretariat  
405 E 42nd Street, 29th floor  
New York, NY 10017, USA

*Email:* [social@un.org](mailto:social@un.org)

*Messages to the CSocD:*  
**Click the link “Contact us” on the home page.**

*Website:* » <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csocd-social-policy-and-development-division.html> (CSocD home page)  
» <https://www.un.org/development/desa/civil-society/> (NGO participation)

## United Nations Forum on Forests

*Address:* 2 United Nations Plaza  
Room DC2-2301, New York, NY 10017, USA

*Telephone:* 1-212-963-3401  
*Fax:* 1-917-367-3186

*E-mail:* [unff@un.org](mailto:unff@un.org)

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

### Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

*Address:* Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD)  
DESA  
United Nations Secretariat S-2954  
405 E 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10017, USA

*Telephone:* 1-917-367-5100

*Fax:* 1-917-367-5102

*E-mail:* ***indigenous\_un@un.org***

*Website:* ***<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/>***

### Commission on Population and Development

*Address:* Population Division United Nations  
2 United Nations Plaza Rm. DC2-1950  
New York, NY 10017 USA

*Telephone:* 1-212-963-3029

*Fax:* 1-212-963-2147

*Email:* ***population@un.org***

*Website:* ***<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/index.shtml>***

### 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

*Fax:* *(UNODC) Vienna Office:* 43 (1) 26060-76955

*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

*Fax:* *(UNODC) Vienna Office:* 43 (1) 26060-76955

*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

*Website:* <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/CSTD.aspx>

## Statistical Commission

*Address:* 2 United Nations Plaza  
Room DC2-1612, New York, NY 10017, USA

*Telephone:* 1-212-963-4297

*Fax:* 1-212-963-4569

*E-mail:* [statcom@un.org](mailto: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 9656 (NGO Liaison Officer)

*E-mail:* [civilsociety@ohchr.org](mailto:civilsociety@ohchr.org)

*Website:* » <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>

» <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NgoNhriInfo.aspx> (NGO participation)



## What is ECOSOC?

The Economic and Social Council is the principal organ that coordinates the economic, social, environmental 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 and environmental 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;
- » Make written and oral statements at these events;
- » Organize side events;
- » Enter United Nations premises; and
- » Have opportunities to network and lobby.