

Expert Workshop to review the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Concept Note

Background

The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was established by the Human Rights Council in 2007 under resolution 6/36 as a subsidiary body to provide the Council with thematic expertise on the rights of indigenous peoples in the manner and form requested by the Council. The thematic expertise focuses mainly on studies and research-based advice and the mechanism may suggest proposals to the Council for its consideration and approval, within the scope of its work as set out by the Council.

In the Outcome Document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (General Assembly Resolution 69/2, September 2014), the General Assembly invited the Human Rights Council, taking into account the views of indigenous peoples, to review the mandates of its existing mechanisms, in particular the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with a view to modifying and improving the Expert Mechanism so that it can more effectively promote respect for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including by better assisting Member States to monitor, evaluate and improve the achievement of the ends of the Declaration.

In September 2015, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 30/11, which requested the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to convene a two-day expert workshop open to the participation of States, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders, including by inviting the submission of written contributions, no later than the first four months of 2016, to review the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to propose recommendations on how it can more effectively promote respect for the Declaration, including by better assisting Member States to monitor, evaluate and improve the achievement of the ends of the Declaration, as outlined in paragraph 28 of the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, and invited indigenous peoples to participate fully and effectively in this process. The resolution also requested OHCHR to prepare a report on the workshop, including the recommendations made, to be submitted to the Human Rights Council prior to its thirty-second session.

Tentative dates and venue

The workshop is tentatively scheduled to take place on 4 and 5 April 2016 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Objectives

In order to implement resolution 30/11, OHCHR is organizing a two day expert workshop with the following objectives:

- To propose recommendations on how the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples can more effectively promote respect for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including by better assisting Member States to monitor, evaluate and improve the achievement of the ends of the Declaration.
- To assess of the work of the Expert Mechanism since its establishment, including good practices, challenges, gaps and lessons learned.
- To collect, discuss and propose recommendations by various stakeholders regarding the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism.

Participants

The workshop will be open to the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including representatives of Member States, indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions, academic institutions and NGOs (along the lines of paragraph 9 of Human Rights Council Resolution 6/36 establishing the Expert Mechanism). Accreditation procedures will begin in February 2016.

In addition, twelve experts will be invited by OHCHR to make introductory presentations on various topics of the workshop, taking into consideration gender balance, geographical diversity and expertise in both indigenous peoples' rights and the United Nations human rights system in general. These experts will participate in their individual capacity.

Structure of the Workshop

The workshop will be organized into four three-hour sessions, each of which will address a specific aspect or question relating to EMRIP's mandate, taking into account also the need to reflect on lessons learned and to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication with other relevant mandates. The sessions will be facilitated by a moderator and they will begin with presentations from three experts, followed by an exchange of views in which all those present can participate. The detailed agenda for the workshop will be made available in early March 2016.

OHCHR will prepare a report on the workshop, including the recommendations made, to be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its 32nd session.

Languages

The workshop will have interpretation in the six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish). However, written documentation will only be provided in the language in which it was received.

Written submissions

Written submissions from States, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders will be requested in order to ensure broad input to the review of EMRIP's mandate. OHCHR will send a brief questionnaire to all stakeholders in December 2015, requesting written inputs by early March 2016. Subject to approval from the authors, OHCHR will also post all submissions on its website. Subject to resources, OHCHR will prepare a summary of written contributions prior to the workshop.

For further information and inquiries, please contact expertmechanism@ohchr.org.