

NGO Committee | Let's get civil society through the door of the UN!

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With only a few weeks to go to the next session of the ECOSOC NGO Committee and elections to the Committee on the horizon, now's the time to push for better practice by the Committee and encourage membership that favours NGO participation in UN fora.



The United Nations Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) NGO Committee is the body mandated to consider applications by NGOs for accreditation to the UN and - in some cases - withdrawal of that accreditation. ECOSOC accreditation enables NGOs to engage most fully in UN human rights spaces, particularly at the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In 2018 the NGO Committee will have two sessions to consider both new and deferred applications for accreditation. The first session will be from the 29 January - 7 February 2018.

The NGO Committee is mandated to establish whether the applicant NGO works in line with the UN Charter. However, in some cases the NGO Committee practice can be unfair and politicised, leading to long delays in the process of granting accreditation. This is most evident in the case of human rights applicants.

The following ISHR video outlines what some of the challenges with the practice of the NGO Committee are and what reform is needed.

One change we need to see is in the membership of the Committee. Currently too many States with poor records on protecting civil society space dominate the Committee.

The NGO Committee will hold elections in April 2018 and States are already considering whether to be candidates. Competitive slates are important. Applicants with a good record in regard to safeguarding civil society space need to be encouraged.

Now is the time to encourage States to stand up for civil society and put themselves forward for the NGO Committee!

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Photo: Paulo Filgueiras

Video: ISHR