

Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal  
Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information  
UN Headquarters  
New York, NY 10017 USA  
Fax: 1 (212) 963 4879

22 May 2014

Dear Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal,

The 12 undersigned non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are writing to express our concern regarding the decision by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) to discontinue meeting coverage of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. This development is concerning as the availability and accessibility of public information on the Committee's meetings is essential to ensure the transparency and accountability of the Committee, and of the process of review of NGOs seeking consultative status to the UN. Transparency in the Committee is particularly important given that NGOs have criticized the Committee in the past for lack of transparency, fairness and due process in its work.

The meeting coverage provided by DPI is essential so civil society can accurately follow Committee proceedings, and be aware of decisions that affect them. The coverage is particularly vital for NGOs that are not based in New York, including national and regional organizations working across the globe, which do not have resources to attend the meetings of the Committee.

As you are aware, ECOSOC Resolution E/1996/31, which is the legal framework governing the work of the Committee on NGOs, calls on the Secretary-General to provide "wide and timely dissemination of information on meetings" and "distribution of documentation" in order to facilitate the broad-based participation of civil society. NGOs are clearly entitled to have access to information about the consideration of their applications for consultative status or the review of their status by the Committee. We therefore respectfully request that DPI reinstate consistent meeting coverage of the Committee on NGOs immediately.

Yours sincerely,



Michelle Evans  
Head of New York Office  
International Service for Human Rights

On behalf of:

- Amnesty International
- ARC International

- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
- Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
- Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
- CIVICUS
- Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)
- Conectas Direitos Humanos
- Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
- Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF)
- Human Rights Watch (HRW)