

**Note by the Chair of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations**  
**on Consultations of the Committee with NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC**  
**regarding the evolving relationship between the NGOs and the United Nations**

(as of 17 January 2018)

**Mandate**

In paragraph 61 (a) of its resolution 1996/31 on the consultative relations between the United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Economic and Social Council stated that the Committee on NGOs would be responsible for regular monitoring of the evolving relationship between NGOs and the United Nations. It further decided that with a view to fulfilling this responsibility, the Committee shall hold, before each of its sessions, and at any other times as necessary, consultations with organizations in consultative status to discuss questions of interest to the Committee or to the organizations relating to the relationship between the NGOs and the United Nations, and that a report on such consultations shall be transmitted to the Council for appropriate action.

**Holding of consultations before the 2018 resumed session of the Committee**

The adoption by the United Nations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has given a new impetus for a mobilization of a wide range of actors in support of this global, wide range programme containing 17 quantifiable Goals. In this context, mechanisms to review and improve the relations between the UN and civil society have become even more important.

Discussions at the 2017 regular and resumed sessions of the Committee have stressed the need to create a space for discussions on the relationships between NGOs and the UN and how to improve them. Paragraph 61 (a) of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 provides the platform for such interaction of the Committee with NGOs.

**Focus of the discussions**

The consultations will address a wide range of issues related to the consultative relations between the UN and NGOs. NGOs are invited to consider the following questions and to prepare contributions for the discussions around them:

- How can the process of applying for consultative status be facilitated and improved? How can it be made more open and transparent?
  
- How can we increase the participation of NGOs from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in UN's work? How can the UN, the Committee on NGOs and civil society at large join forces to ensure, as agreed in resolution 1996/31, a wider dissemination of the work of the UN and that organizations are encouraged to apply for status?

- Once the consultative status is granted to organizations, how best can ECOSOC and its subsidiary mechanisms, the Committee on NGOs, the UN Secretariat and civil society itself facilitate the process of familiarization with and access to the opportunities given to NGOs to take part in UN processes?
- How can the contributions of NGOs to the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies be best used? What are the most efficient modalities for NGOs to contribute to policy-making, be recognized and be influential in these processes?

The meeting will take the form of hearings of representatives of NGOs in consultative status by the Committee.

The NGOs will be invited to present individual or collective views of the organizations involved and will interact with Committee members. To prepare their contribution, the questions contained in the previous section of this note will be sent to all NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.

The meeting will provide space for members of the Committee to react to the observations made by the NGOs represented and to engage a discussion.

### **Timing**

The consultations will take the form of a half-day meeting, to be held between the 2018 regular session and the 2018 resumed session of the NGO Committee.

### **Outcome**

A summary of the discussions will be prepared by the Chair of the Committee on NGOs and will be presented for adoption to the Committee. The adopted report will be transmitted to the President of the Economic and Social Council.