



E– Bulletin for NGOs on the Durban Review Conference

This new series of E-bulletins is issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide regular updates and guidance for NGOs in the lead up to the Durban Review Conference, which is scheduled to be held in Geneva from 20 to 24 April 2009.

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In 2001, the United Nations organized the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa. The conference was attended by more than 10,000 people from all regions of the world and led to the adoption by consensus of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, which to date is the most important framework in the combat against racism and racial discrimination. In 2006, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 61/49, decided to convene in 2009 a Review Conference on the Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and requested the Human Rights Council to undertake preparation for the Conference.

PREPARING FOR THE DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE

Where to find relevant information

Extranet

Documents relating to the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process, including the latest unofficial version of the Draft Outcome Document, may be found at the dedicated Extranet, which may be accessed at: <http://portal.ohchr.org>

username: **hrc durban**
password: **ohchr123**

Webpage

The dedicated webpage in all official UN languages is accessible through the OHCHR's main webpage, where official information and documentation regarding the Preparatory Committee, its Intersessional Open-ended Working Group, and the Durban Review Conference is available. This is accessible via: <http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/index.shtml>

Webcast

A Webcast service, containing the archives of past Preparatory Committee sessions, as well as live broadcast of the session in progress, is also available through: www.un.org/durbanreview2009/webcast

The Secretariat strongly encourages NGOs to regularly consult the relevant Durban Review Conference webpage, which will be updated as new information becomes available: www.un.org/durbanreview2009

Organization of side events during the Durban Review Conference

The Secretariat continues to encourage the broadest participation of all stakeholders in the Durban Review Conference and invites all accredited participants to the Conference to make use of the meeting rooms and public spaces that will be made available to organize side events, cultural events and exhibitions.

Events shall be held daily from 0900h-1800h from 20-24 April 2009 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Organizers should consult the relevant Guidance Note and complete the relevant inscription form **no later than 14 April 2009**. The inscription forms and Guidance Notes may be accessed at the Durban Review Conference web site at: <http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/story11.shtml>.

Keeping in mind the goals and objectives of the Durban Review Conference, side events should focus on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. They should provide an opportunity to review progress made in the combat against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the actual implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels since 2001, as well as the sharing of best practices.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will compile and review all received requests to ensure the broadest participation of stakeholders and a diverse range of themes and issues relating to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. When organizing side events, organizers are encouraged to coordinate their efforts to avoid duplication of events. Where duplicate requests are received, the Secretariat shall endeavour to ensure a coordination of efforts and to encourage the co-sponsorship of

events. Where there is clear duplication, the Secretariat reserves the right to facilitate the holding of the event to that which is most closely associated to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Organizers shall only be afforded space should their proposal be clearly in line with these criteria. Should the request be confirmed, the Conference Secretariat shall be in contact with the organizers concerning the next steps to take including possible time slots, rooms and services available.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will also host side events relating to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Information on these side events is available on the Durban Review Conference website at: <http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/story11.shtml>.

Any additional queries on side events should be sent by email to: reviewconferenceevent@ohchr.org or by fax to: + 41 22 928 9050.

Important: Visa arrangements for Switzerland

NGOs are strongly advised to contact the competent Swiss Representation in their country **urgently** to inquire about documentation requirements and the time needed to process visa requests. For general information, please refer to the Website of the Federal Office of Migration:

http://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt_einreise.html

NGOs may also access details on the new procedures on the website of the UNOG's Central Support Services: <http://sca.unog.un.org/Visa/Default.aspx>. In addition, NGOs are encouraged to seek specific information and guidance at the Swiss diplomatic representation in their country well in advance.

Accreditation to the Durban Review Process

NGOs must be accredited in order to take part in the Review Conference and its Preparatory Process. Accredited NGOs can participate in the process as observers. Kindly note that the deadline for acceptance of new accreditation requests has now passed. Applications received between the October 2008 session of the PrepCom and the February 10 deadline will be considered at the next session of the PrepCom, from April 15-17.

Automatic accreditation

NGOs are automatically accredited to the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process if they are in consultative status with the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**.

NGOs that were accredited to take part in the 2001 World Conference against Racism

(WCAR) are also automatically accredited *unless* questions were raised by Member States in the Review Conference Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) about their participation in the Review Process. These NGOs were asked to provide further information to the PrepCom, which then took a decision on their accreditation. The **decisions** can be found in the reports of two substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee.

NGOs that do not fall into either of the two above categories were able to apply to the PrepCom for new accreditation. However, the deadline for new accreditation applications from NGOs (February 10, 2009) has passed. Therefore, NGOs that are not in consultative status with ECOSOC, who are not accredited based on their WCAR accreditation or who did not apply for accreditation before February 10 will not be able to participate in the Review Conference and its preparatory process.

Registration

All participants at the Durban Review Conference are required to register in advance of the Durban Review Conference. Registration for the third substantive session of the Preparatory Committee (15 – 17 April 2009) automatically implies registration to the Durban Review Conference and vice versa.

In order to expedite the process of issuing security passes at the Durban Review Conference, all participants are required to register prior to the Conference. This should be done by sending a letter listing the names of the representatives to the Secretariat to NGODurbanRevConf@ohchr.org or Fax: + 41 (0)22 928 90 50. The subject line should be REGISTRATION and the name of your NGO. The deadline for registration is **30 March 2009**.

The registration letter must comply with the following requirements:

- It should be submitted on the official letterhead of the organization;
- It should clearly state the name of the organization that wishes to attend, e.g. "Name of NGO, in consultative status with ECOSOC / accredited to take part in the 2001 WCAR / newly accredited by the Preparatory Committee, wishes to send the following members to attend the (insert Preparatory Committee and/or Durban Review Conference. Although registration for one implies registration for both, this information is important for compilation of lists of participants);
- The letter should be signed by the President or the Main Representative of the organization;
- The letter should also indicate the full name/s (first name and family name) of the person/s who will represent the organization at the Preparatory Committee and/or the Durban Review Conference:
 - Names of persons must appear exactly as they appear in the ID document;
 - Family Name(s) must be capitalized.

Upon arrival, participants should proceed to the Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations to complete the formalities to receive the badge. Participants are advised to ensure they have a valid identification document with them in order to facilitate issuing of the badge.

NGO attestations

NGOs that are accredited to the Review Process may need formal letters of attestation for their visa applications to the Swiss authorities. Depending on whether or not the NGOs are in consultative status with ECOSOC, the process for acquiring letters of attestation is different:

Attestation for NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC

Representatives of NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council who have registered for a meeting in the context of the Review Process and who need attestations for the purpose of visas, can request one, at least 10 days in advance of submitting their request for visa to Swiss authorities in their country, by contacting the NGO Liaison Office of the United Nations Office at Geneva:

NGO Liaison Office
Office of the Director-General
Room 153
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10
Tel: + 41 (0)22 917 1304
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 05 83
Email: ungeneva.ngoliaison@unog.ch

In order to avoid delays in issuing letter/s of attestations, NGOs must provide the name of the person(s) who will be applying for the visa in their request for attestation.

Attestation for accredited NGOs not in consultative status with ECOSOC

Representatives of accredited NGOs who are not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and who need attestations for the purpose of visas can request one by contacting: NGODurbanRevConf@ohchr.org They must provide the name of the person who will be applying for the visa as well as the name and address of the organization that the person will be representing at the Durban Review Conference. Participants are requested to note “Attestation” in the subject line of any email communication requesting a letter for attestation.

It is strongly advised to contact the competent Swiss Representation in your country well in advance to inquire about documentation requirements and the time needed to process visa requests. For general information, please refer to the website of the Federal Office of Migration: <http://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/en/home.html>.

Any questions regarding the attestations or registration process should be directed to ngodurbanrevconf@ohchr.org with ATTESTATIONS or REGISTRATION as the subject line and name of NGO.

Travel support for NGOs to attend the Durban Review Conference

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights invited applications from NGOs for travel support to attend the Durban Review Conference in Geneva. The response of NGOs seeking travel support has been over whelming. The applications received were reviewed in light of the **eligibility criteria which are summarized below:**

- **The NGO must be accredited to the Durban Review process.**
- **The NGO must represent victim groups identified in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA).**
- **The NGO must be able to show how it has followed-up upon the implementation of the DDPA.**
- **Only applications which were fully completed were eligible.**

NGOs that fulfilled the above listed criteria have been informed by letter in February 2009 outlining further steps and actions involved to proceed with travel arrangements. NGOs which have not been contacted by the OHCHR fell short of fulfilling the eligibility criteria and their applications were declared unsuccessful. The OHCHR expresses its deep appreciation to all the NGOs for their interest in the travel support process to attend the Durban Review Conference. The OHCHR regrets that a number of applications were unsuccessful, however, hopes that such NGOs would continue to extend their support for the Durban Review process. A list of NGOs which received travel support will be made available on the Extranet.

Electronic Bulletins for NGOs

OHCHR issues regular **electronic bulletins of updated information for NGOs** on the Durban Review Conference and its preparatory process.

Practical information

Accommodation

The following link with Mandat International provides practical information to facilitate visits to Geneva, including advice on reasonably-priced accommodation: <http://www.welcomedesk.org>. OHCHR regrets that it is unable to provide direct assistance in this regard.

Additional Information

1. OHCHR will provide updated information regarding room availability, IT support, additional information and NGO briefings in due course.

All queries should be addressed to the Durban Review Conference Secretariat:

Email: NGODurbanRevConf@ohchr.org

Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 11

2. Next briefing by Mr. Ibrahim Salama, Coordinator of the Durban Review Conference, is scheduled for 20 March 2009 at 14:00 to 15:00 in Room XXI, Palais des Nations.

3. *Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme - A Handbook for Civil Society* has been released and is available online in Arabic and English languages:

For English: <http://www.ohchr.org/civilsocietyhandbook/>

For Arabic: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ngohandbook_ar.pdf