



**GENEVA TRAINING COURSE
TREATY MONITORING BODIES
12 – 23 November 2007
Geneva, Switzerland**

Applications are now being called for the Geneva Training Course on the treaty monitoring bodies to be held in Geneva from 12 to 23 November 2007.

Deadline for applications: 31 August 2007

Background

For the last 20 years the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) has provided practical human rights training to human rights defenders and human rights organisations around the world, assisting to develop their capacity to access and use international human rights procedures, standards and mechanisms. Over 500 human rights defenders from over 110 countries have so far participated in ISHR training.

The main objective of this course is to empower human rights organisations by training their representatives to effectively use the United Nations treaty body system. The course is designed for experienced human rights activists and organisations that have the capacity to use the international human rights systems, in particular the treaty bodies, in their work. Besides providing participants with an introduction to the role and functioning of the treaty bodies, the course will also include lectures on lobbying and advocacy techniques.

Main characteristics of the course

This unique course provides participants with essential knowledge and skills in the use of UN mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights. This course is offered once a year at the time of the November sessions of the Committee against Torture (CAT) and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). The course provides an overview of the UN human rights system, the core human rights treaties, and in-depth training on the roles and functions of the treaty bodies.

The training will focus on the work of the UN treaty bodies with practical exposure to CAT and CESCR. Participants will have the opportunity to attend the sessions, meet with Committee members, other UN officials, diplomats and representatives of relevant international, regional and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The course is based on an experiential education approach and will be very practical, focusing on the use of the treaty bodies. By the end of the course participants will have broad knowledge and competencies in relation to:

- the role and functions of the treaty monitoring bodies
- the obligations of States Parties under the eight human rights treaties
- the reporting process and the opportunities for NGOs and NHRIs to engage with it
- producing an effective NGO report
- strategic advocacy in relation to the implementation of the eight human rights treaties
- the particular procedures of some treaty monitoring bodies, including the individual communications and urgent action procedures
- advocacy action plans for the implementation of recommendations of the treaty bodies at the national level and subsequent follow-up
- the role and functions of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in relation to the treaty bodies
- development and implementation a 12-month treaty body action project
- the use of the network of contacts emanating from the course and treaty body learning networks

Highlights of the course

- Highlights include access to the 39th sessions of the Committee Against Torture and of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and training by international and Geneva based experts.
- The course begins with an overview of the UN system of human rights protection and promotion, and an analysis of the treaty body system. This will include the reporting process, examination in absence of a State report, the role of NGOs and national human rights institutions within the reporting process, developing NGO or NHRI reports, building coalitions to develop reports, and advocacy strategies, including formal and informal meetings with treaty monitoring bodies, briefing sessions and using the media.
- During the two weeks participants will have the opportunity to attend the sessions of the Committees, meet with Committee members and UN officials as well as NGO representatives.

Outcome and follow-up

- At the conclusion of the programme, participants will have broad knowledge and competencies in the procedures of treaty monitoring bodies, producing effective submissions to these bodies, and developing strategic advocacy for the implementation of TMB recommendations at the national level.
- Following the training, our former participants communicate their experiences cross-regionally. Participants learn from each other and establish contacts that they themselves sustain after the course.
- Our organisation maintains close relations with participants and sends them our analytical reports on UN meetings, as well as briefings on forthcoming sessions.

Target groups

The course will consist of not more than 20 participants from around the world. The intended beneficiaries of this course are participants who are expected to:

- Have been actively involved for three or more years in a national or international human rights/development/humanitarian NGO or NHRI;
- Have a basic knowledge of and experience in international human rights law and the regional and/or international human rights system;
- Be working in an organisation with a capacity to use national, regional and international human rights systems, and particularly the treaty monitoring body system;
- Be presently at least in a middle management position in the organisation;
- Be proficient in written and spoken English, as the course will be conducted in English
- Represent organisations that may wish to coordinate with ISHR in the future.

ISHR welcomes applications from all NGO and NHRI representatives. We are particularly interested in receiving applications from representatives working in those countries whose State Party is reporting to the upcoming session of CAT (Australia, Benin, Estonia, Latvia, Norway, Portugal and Uzbekistan) or CESCR (Belgium, Costa Rica, Paraguay, San Marino and Ukraine), whose State Party has appeared before any of the treaty bodies in the past 12 months or whose State Party is due to appear before a treaty body in the coming 12 months (Please refer to the OHCHR website at www.ohchr.org).

Application

Participants should send a letter from their organisation presenting their candidacy, and expressing the commitment of the organisation to using the international or regional human rights systems, together with the application form.

The cost of the course is approximately 6,000 CHF (including accommodation, per-diems, health insurance, and airfare). All participants are responsible for ensuring their own funding for the course, although the International Service for Human Rights will provide support in the participant's fundraising process. Subject to funding, ISHR may be able to offer a limited number of scholarships. In this regard we will consider, among other criteria, the efforts of the candidate towards securing his/her own funding.

Please fill in the application form and send it with the rest of the required documentation *either* by email to courses@ishr.ch or by post to the address below (only submit through one method). Any enquiries can also be addressed to courses@ishr.ch. **The deadline for applications is 31 August 2007.**

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