

The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, an NGO with Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC

1. *How to strengthen the role of NGOs in the reporting process under ICERD, including in relation to the follow-up procedure as well as the use of the communication system under article 14 and the early warning measures and urgent action procedures.*

**Establishment of Pre-Sessional WG:**

As practiced by some other Treaty Bodies, establishment of Pre-Sessional Working Group (PSWG) consisting of Committee members who are elected as Country Rapporteur and having the aim of preparing list of issues for the Member States, whose report are to be considered in the coming session, would be an opportunity for NGOs to submit information and communicate with Committee i.e. PSWG members at the early stage of the reporting process. In the PSWG NGOs also should be given the opportunity to present oral statements and clarify questions raised by the PSWG members regarding information provided.

**Early selection i.e. planning of the state reports to be considered at the coming sessions:**

It is indeed very helpful for NGOs to prepare and timely submit information to the Committee, if the information, which state reports are to be considered at which session, is published well in advance, e.g. one year. This will also help NGOs wishing to go to Geneva in their planning e.g. visa application, fund raising, booking etc. that is not always easy for us, but often time-consuming.

**Call for declaration by the State Parties under Article 14:**

Regarding the individual communication, declaration on the competence of the Committee under Article 14 should be made by more Member States, ideally by the all. Against this backdrop such action can be more strongly recommended by the Committee and also promoted through cooperation with the other UN organs such as HRC or relevant Special Rapporteurs.

2. *Modalities of participation of NGOs in the Committee's session.*

**Development of a regular meeting to discuss NGOs interaction with CERD:**

Regular (informal) meeting with CERD members e.g. at the beginning of each session to discuss about modality, possibility and future development of NGO participation will be very helpful for NGOs to exploit existing possibilities and to further develop interaction among NGOs and the Committee.

**Meeting possibility in addition to lunch break briefing to submit information and clarify questions regarding consideration of state reports:**

Creation of a time slot for a public informal meeting with NGOs in the CERD's agenda (e.g. on the first day of each week) to make oral presentations, answer additional questions of the Committee members as well as exchange their views (in addition to the lunch break briefing) will definitely contribute to more effective interaction between the Committee and NGOs.

**Possible time slot to submit additional information after the interactive dialogue with Member States:**

A time slot for NGOs to state their views on and/or present additional information after the interactive dialogue between CERD and the Member State concerned can be an opportunity for all, through which information can be submitted to clarify questions and relevant issues. Even 15 to 30 minutes will help.

**Possibility of CERD "session" report:**

It is very helpful for NGOs to effectively follow the CERD's work, if information on progress, happenings and new developments during a given session is published as soon as possible e.g. through the form of a report on the session. Such "session" report can be a part of the annual report but be published significantly earlier than the annual report.

The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, an NGO with Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC

### *3. Experiences and best practices of NGOs submissions to the Committee.*

#### **Experience of IMADR in relation to the consideration of the report of Japan by the Committee:**

##### Before the session:

IMADR and other local NGOs got together and created a nationwide network, "ERD Net", to prepare for the consideration of Japan's report by the CERD in February 2010. Based on discussions on how to more effectively contribute to the process, we provided the CERD with the proposal for the List of Issues in the summer of 2009. We raised as many relevant questions as possible in our proposal to the CERD. After the list of issues was sent to the Japanese government we made our own answers to questions contained in the List of Issues and their compilation was sent to the CERD prior to the session concerned. As various types of minority communities, NGOs and supporting organizations rally under the ERD Net, it was quite easy for us to decide on which group deals with which issue, for example, the question of migrants by the Migrant Net, the question of indigenous peoples by Ainu Association and Okinawan group, the issue of descent by Buraku Liberation League, etc.

##### During the session:

We sent a delegation to Geneva to observe the consideration of Japan's report during the 76<sup>th</sup> session. We carefully planned and organized a lunch time NGO briefing in order to maximize the outcome of this one-hour time slot given to us. Several members of the delegation arrived Geneva one week before the day of consideration for the purpose of preparation, lobbying and information gathering together with the IMADR staff in Geneva. This also contributed to better organisation, coordination and cooperation among NGO members that led to effective submission of information to the Committee.

##### After the session:

Under the ERD Net, we continue our concerted efforts by approaching to the government and parliament members as a part of our follow-up and monitoring work in relation to the recommendations included in the Concluding Observations. We will work in the same manner for the follow-up procedures and the preparation of the next periodic report.

### *4. How the work of the Committee could better impact the work of NGOs at local level.*

#### **Possibility of "Field Visit" by e.g. Country Rapporteur or follow-up Facilitator:**

Not only for the purpose of submitting information for any state report consideration, but also for an effective follow-up, promotion of the Convention as well as to create possibility for local NGOs that cannot go to Geneva to meet and interact with CERD member, any possibility of field visit by CERD member can be developed and promoted.

#### **Installation/introduction of "webcast":**

Due to logistical and financial reasons it is not always feasible for NGOs, and for many local grass-roots NGOs indeed, to attend CERD session in Geneva. In this context installation i.e. introduction of webcast system would be very helpful, to at least follow the progress of state report consideration, for those who cannot come to Geneva. In the same vein, introduction of any other technologies such as video conference, e.g. in the meeting with NGOs if it takes place regularly, would also enhance representation i.e. participation of civil society actors from different region.