



GENEVA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Global Training

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Formation Internationale



GANHRI

Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

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THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AT 20

Expanding Participation, Strengthening Implementation: from NHRIs to Indigenous Peoples to LRGs

Draft Agenda

Date: Friday, 19 June 2026

Venue: Villa Rigot, Geneva

Duration: 9:00 -12:00

Convened by: Geneva Human Rights Hub, Global Cities Hub, GANHRI, the Swiss Human Rights Institution, ISHR, UPR Info, Geneva for Human Rights with the Permanent Mission of Colombia (TBC)

Draft Agenda

09:00–09:15 | Welcome

- **Anh-Thu Duong**, *Co-Director, Global Cities Hub*
- **Felix Kirchmeier**, *Director, Geneva Human Rights Hub*
- **Nargiz Arupova**, *Acting Director, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)*

09:15–10:30 | Segment 1

Pathways into the Council: access, recognition and voice

Over its first twenty years, the Human Rights Council has developed different pathways through which actors beyond States can contribute to its work. Some of these pathways are formalized, such as the participation of A-status National Human Rights Institutions. Others are evolving, including discussions around the enhanced participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions. Others remain more informal or emerging, including the engagement of local and regional governments through thematic discussions, UPR-related follow-up, side events, city diplomacy and cooperation with UN mechanisms.

This segment will examine how such pathways emerge, how they become recognized and what principles should guide the participation of actors whose legitimacy derives from independence, representation, expertise or proximity to implementation. It will also consider how the Council can widen participation while preserving the clarity and integrity of its intergovernmental character.

Possible discussion points

- The historical and procedural development of NHRI access, including the role of the Paris Principles and the contribution of early institutional advocates.
- Current discussions on the participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions.
- The emerging visibility of local and regional governments in HRC-related spaces.

- The difference between participation as consultation, participation as representation, and participation as institutional recognition.

Kick-off speakers

- **Tom Pegram**, *Professor of Global Politics and Director of the Global Governance Institute, University College London*
- **Ambassador Gustavo Gallón**, *Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Office in Geneva (TBC)* or **Adrien-Claude Zoller**, *President, Geneva for Human Rights*
- **Jackie Jones**, *Welsh Labour and Cooperative Councillor, Cardiff City*
- **Gabriel Boichat**, *Head of Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to Switzerland*

Moderation: **Virginia Bras Gomes**, *Board Member, Geneva Human Rights Hub*

Guiding question for the segment

How do actors beyond States gain meaningful access, recognition and voice within the Human Rights Council, and what principles should guide this process?

10:30–10:45 | Coffee break

10:45–12:00 | Segment 2

From participation to impact: implementation, follow-up and prevention

The second segment will move from the question of access to the question of impact. It will ask what broader stakeholder engagement contributes to the Council's effectiveness, particularly in relation to implementation, follow-up and prevention.

NHRIs, Indigenous Peoples' institutions and representatives, and local and regional governments each bring different forms of evidence, proximity and institutional knowledge. NHRIs can help connect Council outcomes with national monitoring, reporting and follow-up. Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions bring lived experience, collective rights perspectives and grounded knowledge of implementation gaps. Local and regional governments are often responsible for policies and services that directly affect the enjoyment of rights,

including housing, education, health, policing, urban planning, social inclusion, environmental protection and participation.

In this sense, broader engagement is not only about making the Council more inclusive. It is also about making it more effective. The Council's next phase will require stronger connections between Geneva-based deliberation and implementation on the ground. This includes better use of local data, stronger links with national implementation mechanisms, more systematic follow-up to recommendations, and closer attention to the actors that can prevent violations before they escalate.

Possible discussion points

- How NHRIs support implementation, monitoring and follow-up to HRC outcomes and UPR recommendations.
- How Indigenous Peoples' participation can influence the substance and legitimacy of Council action.
- How local and regional governments can contribute to implementation, prevention and local ownership of human rights commitments, translating international human rights standards into public policy and services.
- Risks and safeguards: avoiding tokenistic participation, ensuring accountability, and preserving the Council's institutional coherence.

Kick-off speakers

- **Mona M'Bikay**, *Executive Director, UPR Info*
- **Rémi Orsier**, *Director, Indigenous Peoples' Centre for Documentation, Research and Information*
- **Ray Koçi**, *Advisor to the Mayor's Office, City of Tirana*
- **Mira Oelmayer**, *Researcher, Swiss Human Rights Institution*

Moderator: Anh-Thu Duong, *Co-Director, Global Cities Hub*

Guiding question for the segment

How can broader engagement with independent, representative and implementation-facing actors make the Human Rights Council more effective in its next twenty years?

12:00 | Closing reflections