



BUREAU DU PRÉSIDENT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

14 February 2024

Excellencies,

I am pleased to inform you that I have appointed the following Co-Facilitators and Focal Points to carry out consultations in follow-up to PRST/OS/16/1 of 8 December 2023:

1. To facilitate discussions and **dialogue on the contribution of Geneva to the General Assembly process to review the status of the Human Rights Council**, the President appointed one Co-facilitator from each regional group:

- H.E. Mr. Yuri STERK (Bulgaria);
- H.E. Mr. Salomon EHETH (Cameroon);
- H.E. Ms. Claudia FUENTES JULIO (Chile);
- H.E. Mr. Jérôme BONNAFONT (France);
- H.E. Ms. Hend Abdulrahman AL-MUFTAH (Qatar).

objectives / expected outcome:

Against the background of the UNGA Review, the co-facilitators will lead open-ended informal brainstormings to take stock of the Council achievements regarding each of the key areas of the mandate of the HRC. Namely, they will consider:

- i. the extent to which the HRC has been able, since 2006, to fulfil the different parts of its mandate, as set by GA resolution 60/251;
- ii. the efficiency, and effectiveness – particularly the on-the-ground impact – of the HRC's mechanisms (UPR, Special Procedures, ...);
- iii. the articulation of the HRC in its wider ecosystem.

Each informal brainstorming will provide a space for States and civil society organizations to share their views, and reflect together, on the degree to which the HRC has been able to fulfil each key part of the body's mandate since 2006. What have been its achievements? Have there been challenges and lessons learned? What are the opportunities to do better in the future?

2. To facilitate **discussions and dialogue on new technologies, artificial intelligence, and the digital divide**, with the view to defining challenges and opportunities from a human rights perspective, the President appointed:

- H.E. Mr. Marc BICHLER (Luxembourg);
- H.E. Mr. Seong deok YUN (Rep. of Korea);
- H.E. Mr. Muhammadou M.O. KAH (The Gambia).

objectives / expected outcome:

Co-facilitators will brainstorm on the impacts of AI as an emerging technology on the enjoyment of human rights. They will:

- i. hold brainstormings with delegations, civil society, and experts (Special Rapporteurs, the HRC Advisory Committee, and the OHCHR) to discuss and exchange views on ways to increase access by all to emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence so that all states can equally benefit from its enormous potential and to bridge the digital divide instead of deepening it;

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- ii. consider the opportunities and challenges presented by emerging technologies including, Artificial Intelligence, for the enjoyment of human rights, and paths forward to ensure that such technologies are placed at the service of human rights;
- iii. consider what role the Council and its mechanisms might play to seize the opportunities and mitigate the risks presented by such technologies regarding the enjoyment of human rights – what is the Council and its mechanisms already doing and what more does it need to do?

In order to identify the main privacy-related risks and to ensure an ethical transparency and accountability, the co-facilitators are also invited to provide legal analysis of risks related to the use of emerging technology and explore way and means to come up with a practical and user-friendly tool intending to reduce the risks of breaching privacy rights obligations.

To this end, cofacilitators will adopt a multi-stakeholder approach, including civil society, the private sector, academia, the technology community, and government representatives to address the above listed issues in an inclusive manner.

3. To consult with delegations on **the rationalization of initiatives and activities created through the Council's decisions for a greater efficiency of the programme of work**, the President appointed:

- H.E. Mr. Febrian RUDDYARD (Vice-President, Indonesia);
- H.E. Mr. Jürg LAUBER (Switzerland).

objectives / expected outcome:

Co-facilitators will further the work of their predecessors by convening open-ended brainstorming sessions with the HRC members and observers on what can be done about the constantly growing programme of work linked to the increasing number of new mandated activities at every session.

In addition, the co-facilitators will support the President in meeting with relevant delegations (i.e., main sponsors) to explore the further biennialisation and triennialisation of initiatives, further reductions in the frequency and/or duration of regular panel debates, the possible merging of similar initiatives, the possible merging of overlapping Special Procedures mandates, etc.

4. To consult with delegations on **making the Council a more efficient and inclusive body through the use of modern technology**, the President appointed:

- H.E. Mr. Darius STANIULIS (Vice-President, Lithuania);
- H.E. Ms. Francisca E. MÉNDEZ ESCOBAR (Mexico).

Objectives / expected outcome:

The co-facilitators will assess the current situation regarding the use of modern technology to support inclusion, transparency, and efficiency at the HRC, and will propose further areas for improvement.

5. To continue discussions on **the efficiency of the UPR process** with a view to best prepare for its 5th cycle, the President appointed:

- H.E. Ms. Heidi SCHRODERUS-FOX (Vice-President, Finland);
- H.E. Mr. Salim BADDOURA (Lebanon).



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Objectives / expected outcome:

The co-facilitators will convene a brainstorming session with state delegations, and OHCHR, to assess the degree to which the UPR process is proceeding efficiently, from the perspective of both States-under-review and reviewing States. Are there opportunities to further improve the UPR process ahead of the 5th cycle?

6. To continue efforts to address challenges faced by delegations from small and developing countries, in particular small island developing states and least developed countries, the President appointed:

- H.E. Ms. Heidi SCHRODERUS-FOX (Vice-President, Finland);
- H.E. Ms. Caroline BWANALI MUSSA (Malawi).

Objectives / expected outcome:

The co-facilitators will convene informal dialogues with LDC and SIDS delegations to understand the degree to which the Council is currently accessible to, and is delivering on the priorities for, LDCs and SIDS, and what additional steps might be considered to encourage LDCs and SIDS to deepen their participation in the HRC's work.

7. With a view towards increasing the participation of women in all Council-related activities and to act as focal point for cases of sexual and gender-based harassment in the Council, the President appointed:

- H.E. Ms. Maira MACDONALD ALVAREZ (Bolivia).

Objectives / expected outcome:

The focal point will consult widely to identify barriers to the increased participation of women in all Council-related activities, and make proposals to the President to overcome those barriers. The co-facilitator will also act as focal point for cases of sexual and gender-based harassment in the Council.

8. For the position of Chair of the Task Force on Accessibility, the President appointed:

- H.E. Mr. Marcelo Eliseo SCAPPINI RICCIARDI (Vice-President, Paraguay).

While indicating that co-facilitators will coordinate their work with a view to ensure proper synergy, benefiting from the support of the HRC Secretariat, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all appointees for their availability and dedication to carrying out these functions in order to achieve a more efficient, effective and inclusive Human Rights Council.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Omar ZNIBER
President of the Human Rights Council