

**Intersessional Seminar on the role of good governance  
in the promotion and protection of human rights and best practices for implementing  
the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16 in this regard**

Concept note

- Date and venue:** Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 10:00-13:00, conference room V, Palais des Nations, Geneva.
- Objectives:** The seminar aims to:
- Discuss the importance of good governance for the realization of human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16
  - Identify governance challenges faced by countries in realizing human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16
  - Share best practices, including international cooperation, in support of good governance
  - Identify challenges and share best practices for measuring good governance
  - Recommend actions that might be taken by the United Nations-system, including the Human Rights Council, to support States in their efforts to strengthen good governance
- Opening remarks on behalf of OHCHR:** **Mr. Bat-Erdene Ayush**, Chief, Right to Development Section
- Chair:** **H.E. Ambassador Zbigniew Czech**, Permanent Representative of Poland
- Moderator:** **Mr. Changrok Soh**, Member of the HRC Advisory Committee
- Panellists:** **Mr. Louis Meuleman**, Bureau Member and Rapporteur of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration  
*Principles of responsive and effective governance for sustainable development*
- Ms. Maria Luisa Silva**, Director of the UNDP Office in Geneva  
*UNDP's experience in building capacity in support of good governance.*
- Ms. Carina Lindberg**, Policy Advisor in the Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Unit of the OECD Directorate for Public Governance  
*The governance challenges of implementing the SDGs and identifying governance mechanisms to address them*
- Mr. Dzidek Kedzia**, Member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
*The view of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on good governance, the SDGs and the realization of economic, social and cultural rights*
- Participants:** Experts from Member States, non-Member States and other entities with observer status, United Nations-system organizations, accredited national human rights institutions and civil society organizations with ECOSOC consultative status.
- Outcome:** A summary report of the discussion will be prepared by OHCHR and submitted to the Council at its forty-third session (March 2020).

**Mandate:** The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 37/6 of 19 March 2018, requested the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to convene, before the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council (June 2019), a half-day intersessional seminar on the role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights, and on sharing best practices in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 16 in this regard. Furthermore, the Council requested the Office to invite States, the special procedures and other relevant stakeholders from diverse regions, including experts and civil society organizations, and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other international organizations to participate in the seminar.

**Format:** The opening statements and presentations by the panellists will be followed by an interactive discussion divided into two parts, guided by the Moderator.

Each round of interventions (45 minutes) will be followed by responses from the panellists (15 minutes). The Moderator will sum-up the discussions at the end of the workshop.

There will be no list of speakers. The floor will be given to those raising their name plate in chronological order. All participants are encouraged to make concise statements. Depending on the number of participants wishing to speak, a time limit may be imposed by the Chair. The Chair will close the meeting.

Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

**Background:** Without good governance at all levels, it will not be possible to fully realize human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 16 is particularly relevant in this regard, as it enshrines the commitment to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Measuring progress in the implementation of this goal will therefore be crucial, also for achieving the other goals.

The Human Rights Council and its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights, have been adopting resolutions on the role of good governance in the promotion of human rights since 2000. In these resolutions, the following elements are highlighted:

- Transparent, responsible, accountable, open and participatory governance, responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people is the foundation on which good governance rests. Such a foundation is one of the indispensable conditions for the full realization of human rights, including the right to development.
- Good governance principles include impartiality, the rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, inclusivity and combating corruption.
- Meaningful progress towards good governance can better be achieved with appropriate tools or mechanisms to review, measure and assess such progress.
- Good governance and human rights are mutually reinforcing.
- International human rights law provides a set of standards to guide governing processes and to assess performance outcomes.

**Background documents:**

- Human Rights Council resolution 37/6
- Report on practical examples of activities that have been effective in strengthening good governance practices for the promotion of human rights at the national level, including activities in the context of development cooperation between States, for inclusion in a compilation of indicative ideas and practices that could be consulted by interested States when required (E/CN.4/2003/103)
- Report of the Seminar on good governance practices for the promotion of human rights (E/CN.4/2005/97)
- Good Governance Practices for the Protection of Human Rights (HR/PUB/07/4)
- Activities and programmes of the United Nations system contributing to the role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/34/28)