

AGENDA

II International Seminar on Exchange of Experiences among National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up of International Recommendations on Human Rights

Date: Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th, May 2024

Venue: Hotel Crowne Plaza Asuncion. Asunción, Paraguay

Wednesday 8th, May

MORNING SESSION

08:30 – 09:00	Participants registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p>OPENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening remarks by authorities of Paraguay, Morocco and Portugal. - Video statement by the President of the Human Rights Council - Statement by the Director of the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division (OHCHR) - Statement by United Nations Resident Coordinator in Paraguay
09:30 – 09:45	Official photo
09:45 – 10:40	<p>PLENARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-up to Marrakech Declaration (DIDH, Morocco) - Follow-up to initiatives within the framework of HRC resolution 51/33: Virtual Hub and Seminar in Geneva (OHCHR) - Role of the United Nations Country Teams in supporting of National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (OHCHR - ROSA; UNFPA - Paraguay; UNDP - Paraguay) - Discussion (statements, comments and questions from the floor)
10:40 – 11:10	Coffee break
11:10 – 12:10	<p>PANELS DISCUSSION FOR EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES</p> <p>Cluster 1: Participation of Civil Society and National Human Rights Institutions</p> <p>Moderator: Paraguay</p> <p>Panelists: Uruguay, Costa Rica, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Universal Rights Group, Santiago Fiorio – CESCR Member</p> <p>Discussion (statements, comments and questions from the floor)</p>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch



AFTERNOON SESSION

	PANELS DISCUSSION FOR EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES (CONT.)
14:00 – 15:00	<p>Cluster 2: Involvement of local governments</p> <p>Moderator: Paraguay</p> <p>Panelists: Morocco, United Arab Emirates, Brasil, Rosa María Ortíz – Former CRC Member</p> <p>Discussion (statements, comments and questions from the floor)</p>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 16:30	<p>Cluster 3: Involvement of parliaments</p> <p>Moderator: Portugal</p> <p>Panelists: Guatemala, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Tania Abdo – CCPR President</p> <p>Discussion (statements, comments and questions from the floor)</p>
	Dinner on own

Thursday 09th, May

MORNING SESSION

09:00 – 10:30	<p>PLENARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentations on information management systems and tools of various types of NMIRFs - Identification of cooperation and technical assistance opportunities for exchange of experiences <p>Moderator: Paraguay</p> <p>Panelists: Portugal, México, Paraguay, Geneva Academy, OHCHR</p> <p>Discussion (statements, comments and questions from the floor)</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:10	<p>PLENARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the International Network of NMIRFs <p>Facilitators: Paraguay, Morocco and Portugal</p>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch on own



AFTERNOON SESSION

14:00 – 16:00	<p>PLENARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Network of NMIRFs: conformation of the Executive Committee and discussion on the Plan of Action <p>Facilitators: Paraguay, Morocco and Portugal</p> <p>Statements and comments from the floor</p> <p>Closing statements – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice of Paraguay</p>
17:00	Closing cocktail

II INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON NATIONAL ON NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Asunción, May 8 and 9, 2024

Concept Note

I. Background

The international community has led to the approval of a wide variety of legally binding human rights instruments, assuming voluntarily the triple responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. These instruments have given rise to the same variety of mechanisms that are responsible for monitoring compliance of commitments and obligations, evaluating reports that must be presented by the States, and issuing recommendations that serve as guidelines for promote progresses in human rights.

The increase in commitments and obligations emanating from international human rights system over the years, has given rise to States experience a common difficulty regarding follow-up and implementation of these commitments and obligations, and the adequate and timely presentation of reports to Treaty Bodies and other mechanisms.

One of the most important advances to address this problem has been the National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF), which are state structures in charge of coordinating the preparation of reports to international human right mechanisms and promote the national follow-up and implementation of commitments, obligations and recommendations in matters of human rights.

The establishment of NMIRFs has been the subject of increasing debate in the international system. The Human Rights Council (HRC) has adopted four resolutions on this issue: 30/25 (2015), 36/29 (2017), 42/30 (2019) and 51/33 (2022). Its usefulness as drivers of state actions and positive impacts on the ground has been outstanding in reports of the Secretary General and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). States, for their part, have recognized the importance of the issue and have created a Group of Friends of the NMIRFs.

The last HRC resolution (51/33) seeks to facilitate the exchange of experiences among States with a view to improving their NMIRFs through seminars and the establishment of a virtual knowledge hub. For its part, the Kingdom of Morocco hosted, in December 2022, an international seminar with the aim of exchange experiences on the functions of NMIRFs and discuss about its networking potential with a view to mutual learning and identifying relevant responses to common challenges.

II. Objectives

In this context, Paraguay will host the II Edition of the International Seminar on NMIRFs, with the following objectives:

a. Continue promoting meetings among NMIRFs in order to share experiences, lessons learned and best practices to strengthen their coordination, collaboration, consultation and information management capacities, and optimize their efficiency and impact on design and application of public policies with a human rights perspective.

- b. Strengthen coordination with other initiatives and activities developed in accordance with resolution 51/33, promoted by Paraguay and Brazil in the HRC, such as the seminars in Geneva and the platform that will be launched soon to create a virtual community that will optimize advantages and benefits offered by NMIRFs.
- c. Follow up on the Marrakesh Declaration with regard to holding regular meetings between NMIRFs and institutionalizing cooperation, partnership, dialogue and exchange of knowledge and experiences among them, through the creation of an international network whose final structure and guiding principles will be agreed in this seminar.
- d. Promote cooperation, based on different experiences, lessons learned and best practices obtained from South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and North-South cooperation, as well as further studying the complementary elements and synergies that exist among them.

III. Participants

Since one of the main outcomes of the Seminar will be the establishment of an International Network of NMIRFs, invitations will be sent on a priority basis to representatives of NMIRFs, regardless of its type or administrative or legal structure.

A selection of experts, academics and representatives of international organizations will be also invited in order to enrich discussions on experiences, best practices and challenges in the matter. In order to ensure broad, inclusive and representative participation, the selection of participants will take into account geographical and gender balance.

IV. Date, venue and format

The two-day meeting will take place from May 8 to 9, 2024, in Asuncion, Paraguay. Each day will have two sessions of 2 hours 30 minutes, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., according to the Agenda that constitutes an annex to this document. There will be interpretation in Spanish, English and French.

The discussions will be aimed to share experiences, challenges, lessons learned and best practices for strengthening NMIRFs in terms of their capacities of coordination, collaboration, consultation and information management, and to optimize their efficiency and impact in the design and implementation of public policies with a human rights perspective.

These discussions will be structured on the topics proposed in the Agenda, through plenary sessions and parallel panels discussion for presentation of relevant national experiences, in which will be applied a mixed methodology that include sessions driven through presentations, group discussions, and plenary discussions. For each session will be identified in advance those representatives that can act as moderators or panelists in each segment.

V. Methodology

Day 1 - May 8th, 2024

On the first day, an opening session will be held with statements by high representatives from Paraguay, Morocco, Portugal, the HRC, OHCHR and others, followed by a plenary session on the following topics:

- **Follow-up to Marrakech Declaration**

The [Marrakech Declaration](#) has been one of the main outcomes of the I International Seminar on NMIRFs, held in the Kingdom of Morocco, in December 2022. Through said instrument, a series of conclusions were reached on the need to, among others, ensure the holding of periodic meetings of national mechanisms and the creation of an international network of NMIRFs, in order to promote the strengthening of bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and alliances among them.

During this plenary session, representatives of the Interministerial Delegation for Human Rights of the Kingdom of Morocco will present progresses in follow-up to the main points of the Marrakech Declaration, particularly on the constitution of the International Network of NMIRFs, followed by statements with comments and questions from those that request the floor (speaking time will be defined according to the number of participants).

- **Follow-up to initiatives within the framework of HRC resolution 51/33: Virtual Hub and Seminar in Geneva**

In October 2022, the HRC adopted resolution [A/HRC/RES/51/33](#) which requested OHCHR to organize a one-day seminar in 2023 and another in 2024 in Geneva, to facilitate exchanging of experiences with a view to strengthening NMIRFs. The resolution also requested the creation of a Virtual Hub to allow NMIRFs to share promising practices and facilitate the creation of an online community, following up on one of the recommendations resulting from the regional consultations held in 2021 and included in the report of the OHCHR of June 2022.

The first Seminar was held in June 2023, while the date for the second scheduled for 2024 has not yet been defined. The process of creating the Virtual Hub has experienced important progresses in terms of development and design. In the follow-up segment of these initiatives, representatives of OHCHR will present a summary with the latest updates in this regard, followed by statements with comments and questions from those who request the floor (speaking time will be defined according to number of participants).

- **Thematic panels**

Following, thematic panels will be developed in which, with the facilitation of a moderator, representatives of NMIRFs and other stakeholders previously identified as panelists (tentative details in the program), will share their experiences, lessons learned, best practices and challenges regarding each topic, followed by statements with comments and questions from those that request the floor in the plenary (speaking time will be defined according the number of participants).

The topics of discussion, as well as their foundations and background, are detailed below:

- **Participation of Civil Society and National Human Rights Institutions**

The [Study](#) and [Practical Guide](#) published by OHCHR on NMIRFs coincide that their efficiency lies in their ability to promote and direct consultations with the participation of national human rights institutions and civil society. Likewise, the regional consultations on NMIRFs held in 2021 highlighted the importance of establishing, within the scope of action of NMIRFs, means of consultation with non-governmental stakeholders and various civil society actors ([A/HRC/50/64](#)).

- **Involvement of local governments**

The OHCHR Study and Practical Guide highlight the importance to develop intragovernmental coordination capacity of NMIRFs to ensure the involvement of authorities from different levels of Government, including local and subnational governments (provincial or state, district, municipal), in follow-up and report preparation processes, and particularly, in the implementation of recommendations on the ground. The regional consultations on NMIRFs held in 2021 identified that the establishment of institutionalized mechanisms for engagement with said entities or local authorities is increasingly common.

- **Involvement of parliaments**

The linkage between national mechanisms and legislative bodies is of utmost importance. Parliaments are essential to ensure that recommendations of human rights mechanisms are translated into law and implemented at the national level. For this reason, a permanent mechanism for interaction with parliament in implementation, reporting and follow-up processes is essential.

Day 2 - May 9th, 2024

On the **second day**, a plenary session will be held with presentations on information management systems and tools of the various types and structures of participating NMIRFs, with the aim of identifying possible opportunities for cooperation and exchange of experiences. Representatives of NMIRFs and other stakeholders previously identified as panelists (tentative details in the program) will share their experiences, best practices and lessons learned, followed by interventions with comments and questions from those that request the floor in plenary (speaking time will be defined according to number of participants).

The plenary will continue with a discussion on the constitution of the International Network of NMIRFs, in accordance with the Marrakesh Declaration, and on guidelines for a future Action Plan of the International Network, with the facilitation of a task force composed of representatives from Paraguay, Morocco and Portugal, who will present the proposals, followed by statements and comments from those who request the floor in the plenary (speaking time will be defined according to the number of participants).

The seminar is expected to conclude with the adoption of the Declaration of Asunción by which the International Network of NMIRF will be established. The preparation process of the Declaration will be led by the task force, through consultations during the months prior to the seminar. A report of the event will be prepared to document the experiences, lessons learned and best national practices, as well as to highlight the challenges and serve as support for future follow-up actions.
