Guidelines for Oral and Written Statements

How can NGOs Participate?

In accordance with ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 and at the recommendation of the ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and with approval of the ECOSOC, organizations in general and special consultative status are encouraged to make oral presentations to the Council. In addition, ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 also includes a provision for NGOs in general, special, or roster consultative status to submit written statements relevant to the work of ECOSOC on subjects in which the organization has a special competence.

2020 ECOSOC High Level Segment

The ECOSOC High Level Segment (HLS) will be held from 14 to 17 July 2020 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This is a unique opportunity for organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC to be heard at ECOSOC deliberations, as well as to contribute to issues of critical concern to the 2020 Agenda on Sustainable Development. It will also provide a platform to specifically address ways to accelerate actions for the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Guidelines for Written Statements

NGOs in general, special, or roster consultative status are encouraged to submit written statements on the theme of the 2020 High Level Segment. Due to the high number of submissions, we highly encourage NGOs to make joint statements with other NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. NGOs submitting written statements must adhere to the following guidelines:

- NGOs may submit one individual statement per organization, or may sign on to one joint statement;
- A written statement must be submitted in either English or French;
- A written statement submitted by an NGO in general consultative status must not exceed 2,000 words, and a written statement submitted by an NGO in special or roster status must not exceed 500 words. Please note that this word allowance includes the cover page which is automatically added by the system and generally takes up 100 words. Therefore, as you prepare your statement text, please take into account that you do not need to include a cover page and that your text should have no more than 1,900 words for general consultative status, and 400 words for special or roster consultative status;
- Written statement should address the priority theme of the 2020 ECOSOC High Level Segment, which is also the theme of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable
The written statements should present ideas and solutions and/or showcase innovative initiatives and actions to accelerate the SDGs’ implementation.

NGOs wishing to submit joint written statements must also adhere to the following guidelines:

- If an organization submits a joint statement with another organization, it cannot co-sign other statements or submit an individual statement;
- NGOs submitting joint statements with other organizations must have the agreement of all co-signers. The Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development will seek approval of all co-signers before including their name in the written statement submitted. Therefore, please make sure to have all co-signers' approval before submitting a written statement;
- Joint submissions word limit will depend on the consultative status of individual NGOs. I.e. If one or more NGOs are in general consultative status the word limit will be 2,000 words (including cover page, approximately 100 words). If all NGOs are in special or roster consultative status then the word limit will be 500 (including cover page, approximately 100 words);
- All organizations co-signing a joint statement must be in consultative status with ECOSOC.

NGOs must also adhere to the following formatting guidelines:

- New paragraphs should begin after a double line break; paragraphs should not be numbered;
- Do not use footnotes and endnotes. Please incorporate all information into the body of the statement;
- Please ensure that the name of your organization (and of other NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC) is referenced as contained in the official list of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;
- Please avoid using abbreviations and acronyms. (For a list of permissible acronyms, please consult the UN Editorial Manual. The acronyms on this list can be used if spelled out in the first instance). All others acronyms, including the acronym for your organization are not allowed in written statements;
- Please avoid writing in all capital letters;
- Please ensure to use correct names of Member States and United Nations terminology when referring to countries and territories. For additional information please visit the following website at: https://www.un.org/en/member-states/ or, https://unterm.un.org/unterm/portal/welcome;
- Please ensure to use correct dates and titles of United Nations events and conferences.
We recommend NGOs to follow the suggested structure:

- Title of the statement and name of NGO submitting (acronym in parentheses);
- Short Introduction (objective and purpose of statement);
- Overview of the issue as it relates to the work of the NGO;
- A way forward (expectations, specific policy recommendations).

Please note that written statements submitted to this event are displayed in the ECOSOC HLS and the HLPF pages only after they are processed by the NGO Branch. The written statements will be issued in the language they were received (English or French) and will not be translated. At that moment every NGO will be notified about whether its written statement was accepted or not.

The deadline for written statements is April 27, 2020 - Late submissions will not be accepted.

Guidelines for Oral Statements

NGOs in general and special consultative can request to to be heard at the 2020 ECOSOC HLS. Please note that due to the high volume of organizations requesting to speak at the event, we are unable to guarantee your participation on the day of the event. The authority to decide on the list of speakers will be vested in the President of ECOSOC.

NGOs wishing to make an oral statement must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Only NGOs in **general** and **special** consultative status with ECOSOC that have been recommended by the Committee on NGOs at its 2020 resumed session and approved by ECOSOC may make oral statements;
- Inclusion of NGO presenters on the list of speakers is made on a “first-come-first served” basis, and is dependent on the time available. There are no guarantees that all oral statements will be made during the general debate of the ECOSOC HLS. We therefore encourage joint oral statements with other NGOs in consultative status approved by the Committee to deliver an oral statement at the ECOSOC HLS;
- The general debate is common to the High-level segment and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
- Only one oral statement or joint statement can be made by an NGO;
- Only NGOs attending in person can make statements during the general debate. A statement cannot be delivered by a representative from another NGO, unless it is a joint statement;
- Oral statements should be based on the priority theme of the HLS as mentioned above;
• Due to time constraints, a maximum time allocated at the HLS will be 2 minutes with microphone cut off.

When preparing an oral statement, please keep in mind the suggested guidelines:

• In English, the word count should be no more than about 130 words per minute; too many words per minute may be too much for a speaker to read at a reasonable pace without risking overtime (and having the microphone switched off), and without being inconsiderate to the interpreters and to those listening through interpreters. This means no more than 260-270 words for a 2-minute statement;
• Avoid repetition. Keep statements brief, clear, simple and to the point;
• Avoid the use of quotations;
• Identify key ideas that you would like to address; introduce these ideas in the first sentence or paragraph of your statement;
• To make reading effortless, organize material by applying the principle of one thought per paragraph;
• Conclude your statement by highlighting key recommendations to accelerate action and delivery for sustainable development.

The deadline for requests for oral statements is April 27, 2020 - Late submissions will not be accepted. Please note that this is only a request to speak and not the submission of the oral presentation itself.

IMPORTANT UPDATE - PLEASE READ

In light of the current concerns regarding coronavirus disease (COVID-19), please note that oral statements might be collected and/or presented virtually.

Please note that the United Nations will not make travel or visa arrangements or pay for any expenses in connection with the participation of NGO representatives at the event. Such arrangements and costs are the exclusive responsibility of participants.