HIGH-LEVEL BRIEFING ON THE PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT TO NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
– A complementary approach to working across the UN Charter for Agenda 2030

27 February 2017

Room XXIV, Palais des Nations, Geneva
National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are central to strengthening national human rights systems. In international human rights fora NHRIs bring the vital national perspective to human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures mechanisms including the Universal Periodic Review, and the Treaty Body system. In addition, NHRIs also carry forward the themes of the discourse on peaceful, just and inclusive societies espoused by Member States in the Agenda 2030 and on the conflict prevention and sustaining peace agenda. Supporting NHRIs to be more effective at both the national and global levels is vital.

2015 General Assembly resolution 70/163 and 2016 Human Rights Council resolution 33/15 both welcomed the partnership to support NHRIs and also emphasized the importance of the participation of NHRIs in global mechanisms and fora.

NHRIs are at the core of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Strategic Plans. The Global Alliance of National Institutions (GANHRI), UNDP and OHCHR have enjoyed a strategic tri-partite partnership since 2011 in support of NHRIs. Each partner brings a specific value proposition and complementary expertise to the partnership bringing additional opportunities to leverage and complement respective mandates, expertise and operations to support NHRIs around the world, including joint prioritization in planning and carrying out activities around capacity-building for NHRIs.

During the past years, UNDP, OHCHR and GANHRI have been working together and creating synergies to strengthen capacity of NHRIs in different regions.

The high-level presentation on the partnership to support National Human Rights Institutions aims to:

- Raise awareness and demonstrate the complementary value-added of the strategic Partnership between GANHRI, the UNDP and the OHCHR in support of NHRIs
- Provide an overview of recent global developments on National Human Rights Institutions and highlight priority areas of engagement in UN system support to NHRIs including contributing to the Sustaining Peace Agenda by preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of violent conflict and for peaceful, just and inclusive societies – Agenda 2030.
# AGENDA

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The GANHRI – UNDP – OHCHR strategic partnership has brought opportunities to leverage the respective mandates, expertise and operations of the different partners to support NHRIs around the world, including, inter alia, joint prioritization in planning and activities around building capacity of NHRIs, thematic priorities including business and human rights, NHRIs as early warning mechanisms and under threat and knowledge management for effectiveness. Furthermore, the partnership is manifesting itself at the regional and increasingly at the country level encouraging collaboration to support NHRIs on a demand-driven basis.

This strategic partnership enabled the UN system to provide more efficient and effective support to NHRIs, which has been recognized by the UN Secretary General and the General Assembly as a good practice on the way the development pillar can work with the human rights pillar and advance efforts toward peace and security.
**COMPLEMENTARITY IN WORKING TOGETHER**

**OHCHR** has the normative and protection mandate to support the establishment and strengthening of NHRI s and works closely with NHRI s to support them in the implementation of their broad mandates to promote and protect human rights.

**OHCHR** provides secretariat support to the GANHRI, its Sub-Committee on Accreditation and its Bureau.

**UNDP** has supported NHRI s in over 90 countries since 2008 and this support is a specific output in UNDP’s Strategic Plan. UNDP and OHCHR work jointly in operationalising support to NHRI s in many countries and with GANHRI and regional networks on capacity assessments of NHRI s.

**UNDP** is mandated to facilitate country-level follow-up and support to implementation of the 2030 Agenda with UNDP’s key role within the UN Development Group.

**GANHRI** is the coordinating body of NHRI s which represents NHRI s in global fora including inter-governmental processes and facilitates NHRI s engagement with the UN system.

**GANHRI** encourages cooperation and has a role both sharing information and acting as a knowledge broker.
Capacity Assessments: GANHRI, UNDP, and OHCHR jointly carry out Capacity Assessments at the request of NHRI in more than 30 NHRI in all regions (most recently in Timor-Leste, Honduras, Costa Rica and upcoming in Bahrain, Panama and Djibouti). The capacity assessments aim to identify the way NHRI can strengthen the effective implementation of their mandate, and often result in and contribute to strategies and capacity development programmes supported by the Partnership. In 2016, OHCHR, UNDP and GANHRI collaborated in a review of capacity assessment methodologies and approaches to identify Global Principles for Capacity Assessments of NHRI.

NHRIs and the SDGs: In 2016, UNDP in partnership with ENNHRI and ANNHRI supported a Regional Consultation for Europe and Arab States NHRI on the Role of NHRI in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, with representatives of 23 NHRI, as well as representatives of the ENNHRI, ANNHRI, GANHRI and OHCHR.

NHRIs in conflict and post-conflict settings: In 2015, UNDP and the Ukrainian Parliament’s Commissioner for human Rights co-organized an international conference on the role of NHRI for the protection and promotion of human rights in conflict and post-conflict settings. This conference resulted in the adoption of the Kyiv Declaration on the Role of NHRI in Conflict and Post-Conflict situations, which reaffirms and calls for a stronger role of NHRI in preventing conflict, and ensuring respect for human rights and their protection in conflict-affected and fragile settings.

Sri Lanka: Through the Joint UN Project on Support to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, the Commission received continued support during its transition period in 2015 following the passing of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, which reinstated the Constitutional independence of the Commission.

Nigeria: In 2014 and 2015, OHCHR provided technical assistance to a UNDP project that supported the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria in conducting investigations.
and developing a mechanism for systematic human rights monitoring and reporting. Support was also provided to the Commission to monitor human rights issues in the context of the electoral process.

**Nepal:** the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Nepal Bar Association (NBA), Federation of Nepali Journalist (FNJ) and NGO Federation Nepal (NFN), with the support of the UN have created the Human Rights Mobile Camps. The Camps were an innovative endeavor in the in earthquake affected regions to monitor situation of earthquake victims and disaster management from human rights perspective. The Camps have been playing a vital role to establish networks with various stakeholders that contributed to strengthening the NHRC’s collaboration with a wide range of communities and organizations.

**Zimbabwe:** OHCHR and UNDP co-organized a training workshop for the Human Rights Commission of Zimbabwe on engaging with international human rights mechanisms and monitoring places of detention.

**Fiji:** OHCHR, UNDP and the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions organized a high-level dialogue with the members of the re-established Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission.

**Central Asia:** A sub-regional conference for consultations with NHRI s in Central Asia jointly organized by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub and OHCHR Regional Office Central Asia was held in 2016 to identify sub-regional priorities share common good practices and further the discussions the role of NHRI s in the SDG implementation process. UNDP and OHCHR have provided comprehensive support to NHRI s in Central Asia. From assisting in drafting the new draft laws on the Ombudsman in line with the Paris Principles in Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, supporting the development of the Strategy for the Ombudsman, the assessment of the capacity of the Ombudsman’s Office in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, to building capacity through relevant trainings in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

**Africa:** UNDP in partnership with the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) for the first time completed a report on the state of human rights institutions in Africa. The report analyzes the requirements for the establishment of human rights institutions in the various legal traditions within Africa, highlighting the differences, opportunities and challenges. It also reviewed operational constraints, and the recommendations adopted. The report, which includes both quantitative and qualitative analysis, proposes a harmonized methodology for the establishment and functioning of human rights institutions in Africa to enhance their performance and legitimacy.
JOINT STUDIES AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS


Toolkit for collaboration with National Human Rights Institutions, 2012

Global Principles for the Capacity Assessment of National Human Rights Institutions, 2016
MOVING FORWARD  
Areas of joint support to NHRIs playing a leading role on human rights protection and promotion

- Support to strengthen institutional capacity of GANHRI and the regional networks.
- Improved institutional effectiveness and knowledge service management of GANHRI with the regional networks and NHRIs.
- Strengthen NHRIs in supporting Member States to achieve, monitor and report on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Support provided to NHRIs to play a bridging role with civil society and human rights defenders.
- Contextualized country support and capacity building of NHRIs as early warning mechanisms for conflict prevention and operating in conflict and post-conflict settings.
GANHRI
The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), formerly known as the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC), is the international association of national human rights institutions from all parts of the globe. Established in 1993 as ICC, GANHRI promotes and strengthens national human rights institutions (NHRIs) to be and work in accordance with the Paris Principles, and provides leadership in the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

OHCHR
The mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is to work for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all people; to help empower people to realize their rights and to assist those responsible for upholding such rights in ensuring that they are implemented.

UNDP
Empowered lives. Resilient nations. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

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