

Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. As one of the main features of the Council, the UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed.

The UPR was created through the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution [60/251](#), which established the Human Rights Council itself. It is a cooperative process which, by 2011, will have reviewed the human rights records of every country. Currently, no other universal mechanism of this kind exists. The UPR is one of the key elements of the new Council which reminds States of their responsibility to fully respect and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The ultimate aim of this new mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur.

What is the goal of the UPR?

The ultimate goal of UPR is the improvement of the human rights situation in every country with significant consequences for people around the globe. The UPR is designed to prompt, support, and expand the promotion and protection of human rights on the ground. To achieve this, the UPR involves assessing States' human rights records and addressing human rights violations wherever they occur. The UPR also aims to provide technical assistance to States and enhance their capacity to deal effectively with human rights challenges and to share best practices in the field of human rights among States and other stakeholders.

When will States have their human rights records reviewed by the UPR?

All UN Member States will be reviewed every four years - with 48 States reviewed each year. Singapore will come up for review before the Working Group comprising Spain, Bahrain and Djibouti on 6 May 2011 from 9.00 to 12.00 in Geneva.

What are the reviews based on?

The documents on which the reviews are based are: 1) information provided by the State under review, which can take the form of a "national report"; 2) information contained in the reports of independent human rights experts and groups, known as the [Special Procedures](#), human rights [treaty bodies](#), and other UN entities; 3) information from other stakeholders including non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions.

As Singapore is governed by the People's Action Party (PAP) since 1959, the review on 6 May 2011 will take into consideration its human rights record since that date. The report submitted by Function

8 on 1 November 2010 set out the PAP's transgressions on human rights under the Internal Security Act since 1959 till today.

How are the reviews conducted?

Reviews take place through an interactive discussion between the State under review and other UN Member States. This takes place during a meeting of the UPR Working Group. During this discussion any UN Member State can pose questions, comments and/or make recommendations to the States under review. The duration of the review will be three hours for each country in the Working Group.

Can non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participate in the UPR process?

Yes. NGOs can submit information which can be added to the "other stakeholders" report which is considered during the review. Information they provide can be referred to by any of the States taking part in the interactive discussion during the review at the Working Group meeting. NGOs can attend the UPR Working Group sessions and can make statements at the regular session of the Human Rights Council when the outcome of the State reviews are considered.

What human rights obligations are addressed?

The UPR will assess the extent to which States respect their human rights obligations set out in: (1) the [UN Charter](#); (2) the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#); (3) human rights instruments to which the State is party (human rights treaties ratified by the State concerned); (4) voluntary pledges and commitments made by the State (e.g. national human rights policies and/or programmes implemented); and, (5) applicable international humanitarian law.

What is the outcome of the review?

Following the State review by the Working Group a report is prepared with the involvement of the State under review and assistance from the OHCHR. This report, referred to as the "outcome report", provides a summary of the actual discussion. It therefore consists of the questions, comments and recommendations made by States to the country under review, as well as the responses by the reviewed State.

How is the review adopted?

During the Working Group session half an hour is allocated to adopt each of the "outcome reports" for the States reviewed that session. These take place no sooner than 48 hours after the country review. The reviewed State has the opportunity to make preliminary comments on the recommendations choosing to either accept or reject them. Both accepted and refused recommendations are included in the report. After the report has been adopted, editorial modifications can be made to the report by States on their own statements, within the following two weeks. The report then has to be adopted at a plenary session of the Human Rights Council. During the plenary session, the State under review can reply to questions and issues that were not sufficiently addressed during the Working Group and respond to recommendations that were raised by States during the review. Time is also allotted to member and observer States who may wish to express their opinion on the outcome of the review and for NGOs and other stakeholders to make general comments.

The report on Singapore will be adopted on **10 May 2011**.

What steps are taken as follow up to the review?

The State has the primary responsibility to implement the recommendations contained in the final outcome. The UPR ensures that all countries are accountable for progress or failure in implementing these recommendations. When it comes time for the second review of a State they must provide information on what they have been doing to implement the recommendations made during the 1st review four year's earlier. The international community will assist in implementing the recommendations and conclusions regarding capacity-building and technical assistance, in consultation with the country concerned. If necessary, the Council will address cases where States are not cooperating.

What happens if a State is not cooperating with the UPR?

The Human Rights Council will decide on the measures it would need to take in case of persistent non-cooperation by a State with the UPR.