

# **Rules of Procedure for the Conference of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions**

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## **1. Statement of Purpose**

The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) plenary Conference (the Conference) is the key participatory Conference for all APF member institutions and registered observers in the Asia Pacific region. The aim of the Conference is to bring together national human rights institutions, the United Nations (UN), governments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in a harmonious and practical setting in order to mobilise co-operation for regional human rights initiatives and to facilitate the establishment of new national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles. At the Conference, APF member institutions and registered observers hear and discuss reports from APF member institutions, Asia-Pacific governments and NGOs and discuss human rights issues of regional significance.

## **2. Representation and Attendance**

### **2.1 Attendees**

The Conference may be attended by all APF member institutions (full, candidate and associate), representatives of the OHCHR (and other UN agencies), government and NGO representatives, other relevant institutions and individuals who have been invited to observe or address the Conference.

All invitees should inform the Secretariat of their intention to participate in the Conference in writing at least four weeks in advance and must nominate one spokesperson for their organisation that has been granted powers by a proper authority enabling him or her to represent the organisation at the Conference.

### **2.2 Proxies/representatives**

If an attendee has given notice of their intention to participate but they cannot subsequently be present at the Conference, she/he may nominate, in writing, one representative/proxy to attend instead.

### **3. Conduct of the Conference**

#### **3.1 Working Language.**

The working language of the Conference of the APF shall be English.

#### **3.2 Frequency, time and place of Conference**

The frequency, time and place of the Conference shall be determined by the APF Forum Councillors.

#### **3.3 Notice requirements**

The APF Forum Councillors shall provide notice of the Conference at least 6 weeks prior to the Conference date by electronic mail. Notice will be given to all APF member institutions, representatives of the OHCHR and any other UN agencies invited to address the Conference, government and NGO and other relevant institutions.

#### **3.4 Agenda**

The Chairperson of the Forum Councillors shall approve the provisional agenda prepared by the APF Secretariat.

#### **3.5 Chairing of Conference and Conference sessions**

The Chairperson of the Forum Councillors (Chairperson) shall preside at the Conference and ensure that the Rules of Procedure are adhered to. Any question arising relating to the order of business, procedure or conduct of the Conference must be referred to the Chairperson whose decision is final.

Conference's sessions will be chaired by an APF full member institution (session Chairperson) as determined by the agenda. The session Chairperson will be responsible for the control of the session and for ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are adhered to. The session Chairperson shall endeavour to allow all who wish to make interventions to do so during the allotted time.

### **3.6 Background papers**

Background papers prepared for sessions will be available, where possible, to all participants or can be downloaded from the APF website at [www.asiapacificforum.net](http://www.asiapacificforum.net).

### **3.7 Communications/submissions prior to the Conference**

Any communications, submissions or documents to be tabled at the Conference are to be forwarded to the APF Secretariat by electronic mail at least 14 days prior the date of the Conference.

### **3.8 Order for discussion**

The order for discussion is progression through the agenda.

## **4. Participation**

### **4.1 Participation of APF member institution representatives**

Member institutions of the APF are the principal actors of the Conference and interventions by them will take place before those of other participants.

For each session, APF member representatives may make initial introductory presentations and make subsequent comments. If APF member institutions propose to make introductory presentations they should provide a copy or outline of the presentation to APF Secretariat in electronic format 14 days before the Conference.

The responsibility for finalising the Conference conclusions lies with the Forum Councillors.

### **4.2 Participation of the United Nations**

Representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other specified United Nations agencies may be invited to observe or address the Conference.

United Nations representatives with prepared written statements are requested to provide a copy of these to the APF Secretariat in electronic format 14 days before the Conference.

The session Chairperson should allow an appropriate opportunity for interventions by representatives of the United Nations.

### **4.3 Participation of Government representatives**

Representatives of Government may be invited to observe or address the Conference.

Government representatives with prepared written statements are requested to provide a copy of these to the APF Secretariat in electronic format 14 days before the Conference.

The session Chairperson should allow an appropriate opportunity for interventions by government representatives.

### **4.4 Participation of NGOs**

NGO representatives may be invited to observe or address the Conference.

NGO representatives are encouraged to prepare a collective report and to nominate a single representative to make any oral submissions. A copy of the collective report should be provided to the APF Secretariat in electronic format 14 days before the Conference.

The session Chairperson may allow, if time permits, an opportunity for additional interventions by NGOs.

## **5. Final Conference Statement**

### **5.1 Content of the Final Conference Statement**

The Final Conference Statement may only contain a summary of items discussed during the Conference.

### **5.2 Preparation of the Final Conference Statement**

Only Forum Councillors may draft and adopt the Final Conference Statement and they will do so in closed session(s). Candidate and associate member institutions may observe the session(s).

## **6. The Role of the APF Secretariat**

### **6.1 Role**

The Secretariat shall facilitate the work of the Conference by:

- (i) Providing necessary advice, clarifications, inputs and information;
- (ii) Acting as resource persons – particularly in the preparation of background papers;
- (iii) Assisting the Chairperson and session Chairperson; and
- (iv) Summarising discussions and preparing the final report of the Conference.

### **6.2 Reporting**

The Secretariat will publish the executive summary of the Conference on the APF website within 60 days of the Conference being held.

## **7. Adoption and Amendment of the Rules of Procedure**

### **7.1 Adoption and amendment**

These Rules shall come into force on adoption by the Forum Councillors and may be amended by the Forum Councillors as required.

### **7.2 Matters not covered by the Rules**

Any matter not covered by these rules may be determined by a vote of the Forum Councillors.

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