

UNCAC Coalition Guide for Governments:

Supporting meaningful civil society participation and contributions around the UNCAC CoSP

This overview provides a set of actions and measures governments can take to facilitate and support meaningful participation of civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in the Conference of the States Parties (CoSP) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

Governments should lead by example, replicate good practice approaches, and demonstrate their support for a truly inclusive UNCAC through their actions and practices.

The UNCAC Coalition stands ready to support and facilitate as needed.

Measures to support civil society participation

Before the CoSP:

- Engage with relevant national civil society organizations (CSOs), ideally through a call or meeting, to raise awareness about the upcoming CoSP, as well as share and discuss respective plans, priorities and what you hope to achieve
- Solicit input and feedback on national priorities from civil society experts
- Use your delegation's CoSP preparations to update national civil society on the status of your UNCAC country review or your follow-up actions to past reviews
- Collaborate with civil society experts on bilateral and multilateral anti-corruption initiatives (advancing specific UNCAC articles or cross-cutting issues, asset recovery cases, strengthening the UNCAC review mechanism, etc.)
- Encourage the in-person participation of national CSOs in the CoSP
- Provide financial support for in-person participation for civil society representatives (from your own country and/or internationally) in the CoSP
- Side events: Organize events jointly with civil society organizations or invite a civil society expert to join the panel of special events at the CoSP that you are involved in
- Offer to include one or several civil experts (possibly nominated by a national CSO coalition) in your country's delegation and utilize CSO expertise during the negotiations of resolutions
- Bring key anti-corruption experts and practitioners to the CoSP as part of your delegation to share good practice approaches and lessons learned and help advance the anti-corruption agenda
- Consult with civil society representatives on the development of draft resolutions you are leading
- Take advantage of the expertise of civil society experts to solicit feedback and input for resolutions during informal negotiations before the CoSP – CSO experts stand ready to provide input, as needed, to inform negotiations and support relevant and meaningful resolutions

- Use diplomatic leverage to defend CSOs which have been objected to receiving observer status and try to resolve the objection bilaterally – in particular, if a CSO from your country has been the target of an objection
- Discuss your priorities and plans with the UNCAC Coalition and explore ideas for possible collaboration

At the CoSP:

- Join the civil society forum on the day before the CoSP begins
- In your CoSP plenary interventions, highlight your support for civil society participation
 - Provide concrete examples of how, in practice, you include civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in anti-corruption efforts in a meaningful manner (including in national UNCAC implementation reviews), and highlight examples of impact of this inclusive approach
- Solicit input and feedback on ongoing negotiations of resolutions with civil society experts present at the CoSP
- Encourage members of your delegation, in particular anti-corruption officials and practitioners, to engage and network with civil society interlocutors (e.g. to discuss cases, explore opportunities for partnerships, etc.)
- If necessary, support a vote to overturn unwarranted, politically motivated objections to the participation of non-governmental organizations in the CoSP
- Attend and engage with civil society-led side events at the CoSP

Meetings of CoSP subsidiary bodies:

- Respond to calls for input from the Secretariat, including by providing concrete examples of good practices, lessons learned, data on implementation and enforcement actions, as well as other relevant evidence and statistics, to strengthen the evidence base for anti-corruption efforts
- Partner with civil society to organize events on the margins of the IRM and working group meetings
- Include CSO experts in your government delegation to enable civil society participation in the IRM and/or working group and expert meetings, from which civil society observers remain excluded
- Suggest civil society and other non-governmental experts as panel speakers for CoSP subsidiary bodies
- Initiate and support efforts to make the UNCAC more inclusive, including by ending the practice of exclusion of all civil society observers from all CoSP subsidiary bodies

Contact us

In case you would like to confidentially discuss any of those approaches, or if the UNCAC Coalition can otherwise help support civil society participation and contributions to the UNCAC CoSP, don't hesitate to get in touch:

Yonatan Yakir

UN Affairs Lead and Program Manager, UNCAC Coalition

yonatan.yakir@uncaccoalition.org

Find more information on the UNCAC Coalition website: <https://uncaccoalition.org/>