CONFERENCE REPORT
REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA
ISTANBUL 2016
28 - 29 NOVEMBER 2016
Regional Consultations of the National Human Rights Institutions of Central Asia
ABBREVIATIONS

APF – Asia Pacific Forum

CA – Capacity Assessment

CSO – Civil society organization

ENNHRI – European Network of National Human Rights Institutions

EU – European Union

GANHRI – Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

NAPHR – National Human Rights Action Plan

NGO – Non-governmental organization

NHRIs – National Human Rights Institutions

OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

SCA – GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation

SDGs – Sustainable Development

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UPR – Universal Periodic Review
CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES AND PARTICIPANTS

The conference was a regional consultation for National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) from Central Asia, with the overall objective to foster the building of partnerships and peer-to-peer support and exchange of expertise. It was the first time that all NHRIs from Central Asia have met. As such, the conference provided a forum for the NHRIs to discuss amongst themselves, as well as with representatives from A-status NHRIs from other countries in Asia and Europe, about the Paris Principles and the process and requirements for achieving A status. The conference focused on the role of NHRIs vis-à-vis the government and other partners in the country and vis-à-vis international human rights mechanisms, and the NHRIs’ role in fragile contexts and with regard to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Participants included representatives of NHRIs and government officials, members of parliaments and civil society representatives from the five Central Asian countries (ie, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), representatives of A status NHRIs from other countries in Europe and Asia (ie, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Mongolia and Serbia), experts from the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI), the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) of National Human Rights institutions, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), the EU, UNDP and OHCHR.

BACKGROUND

NHRIs or similar bodies currently exist in all five countries of Central Asia with diverse mandates and varying levels of capacity and financial resources. In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Ombuds Institutions were established one or two decades ago. In Turkmenistan, the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights has been fulfilling some functions of an NHRI, although it is a government led institution. A new legislative framework for the establishment of an Ombuds Institution in Turkmenistan has been recently approved by the Turkmen parliament and signed into force by the President. The NHRIs in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan were accredited with B status by GANHRI, based on their compliance with the Paris Principles.

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1 The Institute of the Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for human rights (Ombudsman) was established in 1995, Commissioner for human rights (Kazakhstan Ombudsman) and the first Ombudsman in the Kyrgyz Republic were elected in 2002, Institution of human rights ombudsman in Tajikistan in 2009.
Central Asian countries have undertaken efforts to align their legislation and policies with the international human rights standards. Several have developed or are in the process of developing National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs)² to streamline these efforts and facilitate the implementation of recommendations received by international human rights mechanisms. However, considerable efforts remain to be undertaken to implement the recommendations received, including through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)³.

In this context, NHRIs play a crucial role. NHRIs can issue recommendations, opinions and proposals including related to legislative and administrative provisions, related to cases of human right violations, and regarding the overall human rights situation and thematic matters. NHRIs are also tasked to combat all forms of discrimination, to contribute to State reports submitted to International Human Rights Mechanisms ⁴ international human rights mechanisms, and more. NHRIs therefore also have a crucial role to play in the context of supporting the drafting of NHRAPs and in terms of monitoring their implementation.

NHRIs are well suited to act as a bridge among state actors, civil society and the most marginalized groups, supporting their participation in aforementioned processes. Moreover, the role of NHRIs as conveners can be instrumental in promoting the implementation of the SDGs – specifically SDG 16, “Building peaceful and inclusive societies” SDG 10, “reducing inequality” and SDG 5 “gender equality”. The recently adopted Kiev Declaration provides an additional insight into the mandate of NHRIs, in preventing conflicts and ensuring respect for human rights and their protection in conflict and post-conflict situations.

However, to increase NHRIs’ effectiveness and impact in Central Asia, they require further support in developing their independence, efficiency and capacity in compliance with the Paris Principles. Furthermore, their awareness and understanding of their roles in promoting the new SDGs need to be strengthened.

² National Programmes/Action Plans on Human Right (NHRAPs) exist in Turkmenistan (2016) and Uzbekistan (2014). An NHRAP plan is presently being drafted in Kyrgyzstan. Tajikistan has recently accepted the UPR recommendation on developing an NHRAP. Kazakhstan had also expressed interest in developing a comprehensive NHRAP 2020.
³ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan underwent the second cycle of the UPR in 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan were reviewed by UPR first cycle in 2013.
⁴ More specifically, NHRIs cad advise governments on what a report should cover and encourage governments to meet the reporting time-frame. They should be consulted and invited to comment on State reports and most importantly, they should be submitting separately in their own right at least to identify priority issues and advise the International Human Rights Mechanisms on what should be their recommendations.
RATIONALE FOR THE SUB-REGIONAL APPROACH IN SUPPORT TO NHRIS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Promoting the sub-regional approach in addressing issues of human rights prevalent in countries of Central Asia has several advantages. Although all five countries of the region are currently at various degrees of progress in promoting and protecting human rights, they share very similar context stemming from their geographical proximity, cultural and historical common legacy. According to the recommendations of the human rights mechanisms, they also share common human rights challenges, including: prevailing incidents of torture, violations of the right to freedom of expression and association, abuses in the area of administration of justice, forced labor, and violations of the rights of ethnic minorities and LGBTI people.

The cooperation and peer-to-peer support among NHRIs in the region can greatly enhance their independence, knowledge and professionalism, and ultimately leverage their impact in national policy decision-making compliant with international human rights standards. Secondly, through sub-regional and regional partnerships, anchored with the tri-partite partnership of UNDP, OHCHR and GANHRI, Central Asian NHRIs can become more exposed to the global and UN agenda on human rights, and build their capacity to promote human rights at national and regional levels. Finally, the sub-regional approach will help countries come up with better solutions to the existing human rights challenges, through exchanging best practices and lessons learnt in similar environments. For example, one of the areas of cooperation that require immediate support is the capacity building of NHRIs in their contribution to monitoring and implementation of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda has received strong support and commitment from the national governments in Central Asia, and this support can be translated into practical solutions that more effectively safeguard human rights.
MoU between Ombuds Institutions of Turkey and the Kyrgyz Republic

One concrete outcome of the conference was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ombuds Institutions of Turkey and the Kyrgyz Republic on cooperation in protecting and promoting human rights. The agreement was initiated by the Kyrgyz Ombudsman Mr. Kubat Otorbaev to protect the rights of Kyrgyz communities and migrants living in Turkey, including their most urgent concerns, such as their access to legal residence permission, employment, healthcare, and protection from human trafficking. Mr. Otorbaev and Mr. Mehmet Elkatmış, Ombudsman of Turkey, signed the MoU, which is expected to facilitate mutual assistance in the promotion and protection of rights and freedoms of Kyrgyz and Turkish citizens, and will also foster exchange of experience and best practices through joint events and training workshops. UNDP has been instrumental in establishing the cooperation between the Ombuds Institutions of both countries to conclude the agreement.

OPENING REMARKS

During opening remarks, the speakers stressed that the conference was a forum for the NHRIs and other stakeholders from Central Asia to discuss, amongst themselves and with representatives from A status NHRIs from different regions, challenges, share best practices and take stock of achievements and lessons learned in relation to fulfilling their mandate as NHRIs in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Ms. Shelley Inglis, Team Leader, Governance and Peace Building, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, highlighted the role of NHRIs in promoting and protecting human rights, in particular in the complex situation in the world and the region with rising radicalization and violent extremism. She also stressed the key role that NHRIs play in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ms. Bea Ferenci, OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for Central
Asia, underlined the bridging role that NHRIs play between government and civil society, bridging the gap between rights holders and duty bearers, and linking the responsibilities of the state with the rights of its citizens. She also highlighted the NHRIs’ role during the consultations, implementation and monitoring of implementation of National Human Rights Action Plans.

**Professor Alan Miller**, Special Envoy, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), emphasized the role of NHRIs as key actors in protecting and promoting human rights to achieving peace, security and sustainable development. He urged the NHRIs in Central Asia to join a regional NHRI network, highlighting the importance of peer-to-peer exchange and support through regional networks as a means to strengthen the NHRIs work.

**SESSION I: NHRIS IN CENTRAL ASIA – ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

*Moderator:* Ms. Bea Ferenci, OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for Central Asia

*Presenters:*
- Mr. Askar Shakirov, Ombudsman and Human Rights Commissioner of Kazakhstan
- Mr. Kubat Otorbaev, Akiykatchy (Ombudsman) of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Mr. Suhaili Kodirov, Chair of Analytical Centre of Ombudsman Office of Tajikistan
- Ms. Ejebay Charyeva, Head of Department on Citizen’s Complaints and Appeals, National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights of Turkmenistan
- Mr. Murad Atabayev, MP, Member of the Turkmenistan Parliament Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms
- Mr. Ulugbek Mukhammadiev, Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of Uzbekistan

*This session aimed at providing an overview of the situation in the five Central Asian countries, including the NHRIs achievements and the challenges they face.*
Kazakhstan’s NHRI has a B status; it is based on a presidential decree and submits an annual report to the President. The Ombudsperson reviews complaints from citizens on a wide range of allegations of human rights violations. Kazakhstan established a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, since 2014 and has 15 regional groups and 102 members. The Ombudsman has initiated the process of adopting a special law on the NHRI, and has sent a letter regarding this to the Prime Minister, who is the head of the National Commission on Modernization tasked with implementing institutional reforms in the country. Kazakhstan’s NHRI is a member of the Asia Pacific Forum of NHRI, the only one from the region to be a member of a regional network.

Kyrgyzstan has a B status NHRI which provides an annual report to the Parliament, as well as ad hoc reports on specific topics. It also has a coordinating council on human rights, which is led by the Deputy Prime Minister and where the Ombudsperson is also a member. The present Law on the Ombudsperson provides some elements for his/her independence; for example the Ombudsperson cannot be prosecuted for their activities, which are continued even during an emergency and when martial law is enacted. The Law foresees a wide variety of responsibilities and powers of the Ombudsperson, but many parts of the Law are currently not being implemented. Moreover, the Law also provides that the Ombudsperson can be dismissed following the disapproval of his/her report by the Parliament. A new draft law, which would be in line with the Paris Principles and would grant full independence to the Ombudsperson, has been submitted to the Parliament. The Ombuds Institution has recently developed a strategic plan. Kyrgyzstan also has a National Preventive Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. At the time of the conference, Kyrgyzstan was preparing for a referendum on changes to its Constitution, which have been adopted in December 2016.

“It is very important to ensure that NHRI can share experience and expertise, because nobody else fully understands how we have to operate the fine line we have to walk in much of the work we do, in being able to challenge the state but also be an advisor.”

Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Senior Envoy, APF
**Tajikistan** has a B status NHRI, which submits reports to the President. It has set up a working group to monitor and visit detention places, as per the obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. The Ombuds Institution has recently developed a strategy for the period 2016-2020.

In **Turkmenistan**, the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, a government body fulfills some of the functions of an NHRI. It reports and makes proposals to the President. Following the new Constitution adopted in September 2016, which provides for an NHRI, the Turkmen Parliament approved a law establishing an Ombuds institution in November 2016. The Law, which was awaiting the President’s approval at the time of the Conference and has since been signed, provides that the Parliament will elect the Ombudsperson from a pool of three candidates nominated by the President, and guarantees that the Ombudsperson is free from criminal and administrative liability and can be arrested only following the Parliament’s agreement. Turkmenistan approved a National Human Rights Action Plan in 2016.

**Uzbekistan’s** Ombudsman was established based on a legal framework approved by the Parliament (Oliy Majlis) and provides annual reports to the Parliament. The NHRI, which has also regional representatives, has not yet applied for accreditation from GANHRI. Uzbekistan approved a National Human Rights Action Plan in 2014, and is currently drafting a law to establish an Ombudsperson for business entrepreneurs.

**SESSION II: THE ROLE OF NHRIS IN CENTRAL ASIA – DISCUSSIONS ON EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

*Moderator:* Ms. Yuliya Scherbinina, Country Programme Specialist, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

*Presenters:*
- Mr. Assylbek Smagulov, MP, member of the Committee on Legislation and Judicial and Legal Reform of the Mazhilis of the Parliament Kazakhstan
- Mr. Ulugbek Azimov, Public Fund “Legal Prosperity”, Kyrgyzstan
- Mr. Elbek Shukurov, MP, Legislative Chamber of Parliament/Oliy Majlis, Uzbekistan
Kazakhstan’s strategy for development until 2050 states that human rights are one of the main pillars of state development. It has confirmed this commitment also in terms of its external relations. Kazakhstan has welcomed ten special rapporteurs who have visited the country. It made significant contributions while it was a member of the Human Rights Council during 2012 until 2015, and a member of the UN Women executive board from 2012 to 2013. It continues to safeguard women’s rights as a member of the Commission on Status of Women. In regards to NHRI relations with the Parliament, the main obstacle remains the lack of a specific Ombudsperson law. Such a law is currently being reviewed by the National Commission on Modernization tasked to implement institutional reforms.

The recent strategic plan of the Ombudsperson in Kyrgyzstan provides for creation of a council that would include NGOs, and in this way further facilitate cooperation between human rights NGOs and the Ombuds Institution. A concrete result of previous cooperation between the NHRI and NGOs has been the creation of a joint mechanism to prevent torture in detention centres, which was the foundation for the creation of a national preventive mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. This mechanism incorporates 20 NGOs as well, and they have conducted dozens of joint visits to detention centers. The NHRI in Kyrgyzstan also has regular cooperation with the Parliament, to

- “NHRI is like water: weak, but it can destroy the strongest stone.”

Ms.Yuliya Scherbinina, Country Programme Specialist, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

This session focused on a discussion of the countries relationship with international human rights mechanisms, and on NHRI external relations, mainly with the Parliament and with civil society. Representatives from civil society and Parliaments in Central Asia shared their experiences in relation to their cooperation with NHRI. NHRI representatives from the five countries also elaborated on their collaboration with the respective Parliaments.
which it submits an annual report on the situation in the country in relation to human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also submits to the Parliament ad hoc reports, on specific topics of its choosing. The Parliament hears the report, approves a resolution based on recommendations from the NHRI, and shares the report with relevant bodies that are mentioned in the report as violating human rights. One obstacle in this regard remains the fact that the current law on the NHRI prescribes that the Parliament can dismiss the Ombudsperson if it does not approve the Ombudsperson’s report. This was invoked in the case of two previous Ombudspersons who were subject to early dismissal. Amendments to the law are currently being prepared to ensure its alignment with the Paris Principles.

The Ombudsperson in Tajikistan, vis-à-vis the Parliament, has an equivalent role to that of a member of the government. As such, the Ombudsperson can attend Parliament and Government sessions. Moreover, while the Office of the Ombudsperson is not a Parliament structure and does not report to the Parliament, its annual report is sent out to seven state bodies, including the Parliament.

In Uzbekistan, the main form of cooperation between the NHRI and the Parliament is during the process of election of the Ombudsperson and their deputies, and the review of the NHRI’s annual report. Moreover, the Ombudsperson is a member in both Parliament chambers, provides comments aimed at improving new legislation and participates in disciplinary processes. While the NHRI has its own budget, this is not in the form of a separate budgetary line in the budget approved by the Parliament. The Ombudsperson is advocating to have the law amended to ensure that the NHRI’s budget is a separate budgetary line in the Parliament approved state budget.

In Turkmenistan, the recently adopted legislation on the establishment of an NHRI foresees close cooperation of the NHRI with the Parliament. This includes the right of the Ombudsperson to make legislative proposals, to propose ratification of international treaties, and to report to the Parliament.
SESSION III: THE PARIS PRINCIPLES ON THE STATUS OF THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIS)

Moderator: Ms. Sisi Shahidzadeh, OHCHR Deputy Chief of the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section (NRC), Geneva

Presenters:
- Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI
- Ms. Sisi Shahidzadeh, OHCHR Deputy Chief of NRC Section, Geneva
- Mr. Byambadorj Jamsran, Chief Commissioner, Mongolia NHRI, Chair APF
- Mr. Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia
- Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

This session focused on presenting the Paris Principles, what they are and why they matter, and on sharing experiences and lessons learned of other NHRIs regarding their path to A status accreditation. The presentations in this session were used as basis for the working groups in the Session on Obtaining the A status. During that session, the participants split into three working groups, each asking questions and receiving guidance from representatives of A status NHRIs, as well as representatives of GANHRI, APF and ENNHRI.
What are the Paris Principles?
The Paris Principles are a set of provisions relating to NHRI s that have been adopted by the General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993. They are a set of internationally recognized principles concerning the status, powers and functioning of NHRI s. According to the Paris Principles, an NHRI should be independent from the executive branch, have a broad mandate, and its establishment should be mentioned in the Constitution or in a funding law, which has to regulate its independence and mandate. NHRI s should have the right to visit detention centres, elderly homes, and other total institutions, even without prior notice. The NHRI should have resources available, mainly from the state budget, allocated directly by the Parliament. It has to be pluralistic and representative of all social sectors in a country, be accessible for all, and also have regional offices in case of a vast country. Based on the NHRI s’ compliance with the Paris Principles, GANHRI’s Sub-Committee on Accreditation accredits the NHRI with: A status for being in full compliance with the Paris Principles; B status for not being fully in compliance with the Paris Principles or for not having submitted sufficient documentation to make that determination; or C status for being non-compliant with the Paris Principles. Unless there are serious grounds for reaccreditation, each NHRI receives its status for a period of 5 years, after which time the status is re-evaluated. Status A NHRI s have the right to independently participate at the UN Human Rights Council. While Status B NHRI s cannot do this, they still can interact with UN bodies and submit parallel reports.

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WHY DOES A STATUS MATTER?

A status accreditation proves that an NHRI conducts its work in an independent manner, at high quality in full accordance with the Paris Principles. This international recognition ensures that the NHRI can participate independently in the UN system. Moreover, an A status can serve as protection for the NHRI, lowering the probability of government’s interference in NHRI’s work and position. It also provides the NHRI with a stronger speaking platform not only internationally, but nationally too. A status NHRI’s shared that following their accreditation with status A, their respective Government was more prone to follow their recommendations and proposals, as well as consult them.

Additionally, A status accreditation offers legitimacy also to the state, giving it recognition from its peers that the state is taking its human rights obligations seriously. If the state has ratified UN treaties, than an A status NHRI can be an important partner in participating in the treaty systems.

A status accreditation also means that the NHRI needs to continue working, since the status is not an end in itself but rather a means to be used in promoting and protecting human rights. Status accreditation is re-evaluated regularly.

HOW TO GET A STATUS ACCREDITATION?

The most important issue of the Paris Principles is independence of the NHRI. In law, independence means that it should have a legally guaranteed mandate and resources that allow it to hold the state accountable, ensuring that nothing is beyond the reach of an NHRI. The legal framework should ensure an independent, pluralist and fair appointment and dismissal process. However, the legal framework is not the only element assessed by the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) and independence in practice needs to be proven too. This means that the NHRI should be exercising its role independently, providing the same reports regardless of who is the intended audience of the report. This independence in the work of the NHRI is assessed based on NHRI’s reports, and also reports from civil society organizations.

Another important point for the work of the NHRI’s is cooperation with
civil society, media and international partners. Proof of this cooperation is viewed positively by the SCA, and more importantly, it adds to the effectiveness of NHRI’s work. The NHRI’s do not work in vacuum and do not have binding powers. However, cooperation with civil society and media ensures that the NHRI’s recommendations receive public attention and support, putting pressure on the government to follow them. Nonetheless, NHRI’s must make sure they maintain their integrity and distance even from the crucial partners, to prove that they work based on principles and not allegiances to certain interests.

NHRI’s that undergo the accreditation process receive a list of recommendations from the SCA, which very often refer to the setup of the NHRI. A lesson learned that was shared by a representative of an A status NHRI was to be honest in the presentation to the SCA and acknowledge the various challenges, be they in recruitment, mandate, grounds for dismissal, among others. Talking about obstacles will mean that the SCA will provide recommendations on how to overcome them. These can afterwards be used by the NHRI in its deliberations with the parliament and government, as a back-up that the NHRI’s requests are seen by others too as necessary to have a sustainable, relevant system of human rights protection. As such, the recommendations can be a tool to rally support for amending the legal framework, paving the way towards A status accreditation. When applying for re-accreditation, B status NHRI’s need to document that they have implemented the recommendations of the SCA in order to be accredited A status.

Furthermore, NHRI’s should also invest time and funds in building a strong and capable secretariat, so that it can assist the NHRI.

“NHRI’s are like a house: the ground floor is the Paris Principles; the first floor is where the NHRI operationalizes what is a human rights-based approach and makes the practical application of human rights; the second floor is the NHRI seeing how they can play a progressive role with the state to ensure that the country has a direction of travel that is for the implementation of human rights; and the top floor is the participation in the NHRI networks, the regional networks and GANHRI.”

Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI
SESSION IV: THE ROLE OF NHRIS IN ENGAGING WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS AND IN MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLANS (NHRAPS)

Moderator: Ms. Bea Ferenci, OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for Central Asia

Presenters:
- Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI
- Mr. Mahomed Musa, Executive Director, Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan
- Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

During this session, speakers shared best practices on how to interact with International Human Rights Mechanisms and with regional NHRI networks, and elaborated on the advantages from these interactions. The role of NHRIs in developing and monitoring the implementation of National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs) was also discussed. Following the discussion, the participants split into two groups. One group with participants from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as relevant experts, focused on the implementation and monitoring of the implementation of NHRAPs, as these two countries already have action plans. The other group with participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as relevant experts, focused on the process of advocating for and developing the NHRAP. These three countries have recently either committed to, or expressed interest in developing an NHRAP.
NHRIS INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

NHRIs play a bridging role among civil society, the public and the state, and between the state and the international human rights systems. One of their primary roles is to influence the state to ameliorate the human rights situation in the country. They do this through holding the state constructively to account, pointing out the human rights violations and encouraging the state to ameliorate the situation, but at the same time recognizing the obstacles and the progress made to date. And when not able to influence the state nationally, the NHRI can work with international human rights bodies to increase its effectiveness and influence nationally. The NHRI can use an issue raised by a special rapporteur, in the Human Rights Council, or in another UN treaty body, to gain traction on that issue nationally too. Relying on the discussions in the international forum, the NHRI can raise awareness about the issue nationally and especially in cooperation with local media or with local civil society, build up pressure on local authorities and influence change.

Even if the NHRI is not accredited A status and thus is not able to independently participate at the UN Human Rights Council, it can still interact with UN bodies and submit parallel reports. It can also facilitate the interaction of other actors, specifically through facilitating meetings with and between the Government, the Parliament, CSOs and other relevant actors before and following the state's participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and UN Treaty Body reviews.

Furthermore, the NHRI is also involved with preparing and disseminating advocacy tools on human rights recommendations that the state receives. Moreover, it can be a member of NHRI regional and global networks and can participate in all of the network’s activities and meetings.

The only constraint that NHRIs that are not A status accredited have within the

“NHRI has a unique opportunity to be very influential. Very often it’s as if NHRI is like a conductor of the orchestra. There are different actors and players, but because the NHRI is playing this bridging role, it can bring out the best in all the different players and actors involved for the promotion and protection of human rights.”

Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI
network is that they cannot vote, but all three of the networks present at the conference - GANHRI, APF, and ENNHR - confirmed that voting occurs on rare occasions. In case that the NHRI faces financial difficulties, it can apply for a waiver to the network’s membership fee.

Interacting with the international human rights system and the regional NHRI networks will foster sharing of experiences and expertise with other peers, contributing in this way to the strengthening of the NHRI. Moreover, visibility in NHRI networks and UN bodies could also have a positive influence during the NHRI’s accreditation by the SCA, as it shows that the NHRI is aware of the challenges and happenings at the global level.

GANHRI, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, formerly known as the International Coordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions, is the international association of NHRIs from all parts of the world. Established in 1993, GANHRI promotes and strengthens NHRIs to be and work in accordance with the Paris Principles, and provides leadership in the promotion and protection of human rights. Its Sub Committee on Accreditation (SCA) reviews and accredits national human rights institutions in compliance with Paris Principles. GANHRI may also assist those NHRIs under threat and encourage NHRI statutory legislations’ reforms and the provision of technical assistance, such as education and training opportunities, to strengthen the status and capacities of NHRIs.

GANHRI is made up of four regional networks, two of which could be relevant for NHRIs in Central Asia: ENNHRI and APF.
ENNHRI, the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions, brings together 40 NHRIs across wider Europe. ENNHRI’s goal is to support and strengthen NHRIs to promote and protect human rights across the European region, in line with the Paris Principles. It carries this out through assisting in the establishment and accreditation of NHRIs; coordinating exchange of information and best practice between members; facilitating capacity building and training; engaging with regional mechanisms; and intervening on legal and policy developments at a European level.

APF, the Asia Pacific Form of National Human Rights Institutions, is a coalition of 22 NHRIs from the Asia Pacific region. APF’s goal is to support the establishment of independent NHRIs in the Asia Pacific Region, in line with the Paris Principles, and to strengthen the work of the NHRIs. It carries this out through providing its members with advisory, capacity-building, networking and strategic services, including thematic training programmes and capacity assessments.

NHRIS AND NHRAPS

Uzbekistan approved its National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAP) in 2014, and Turkmenistan adopted it in 2016. An NHRAP is presently being drafted in Kyrgyzstan, while Tajikistan has recently accepted the UPR recommendation on developing an NHRAP. Kazakhstan has also expressed interest in developing a comprehensive NHRAP. NHRIs have an important role to play in the development, implementation and monitoring the implementation of the NHRAP.

As an independent institution, the NHRI is well placed to take up independent assessment, monitoring and evaluation tasks in relation to the NHRAP. In the initial stages of advocating for an NHRAP, it might be useful to refer to action plans of other countries in the region, which have similar cultural context or historical background. Since governments are often more open to hearing what other governments in the region are doing, they might also be willing to duplicate successful NHRAP development process of other countries. Throughout the process, the
SESSION V: ROLE OF NHRIS TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN NATIONAL LEVEL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS (MERIDA DECLARATION)

Moderator: Ms. Shelley Inglis, Team Leader, Governance and Peace Building, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

Presenters:
• Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI
• Mr. Byambadorj Jamsran, Chief Commissioner, Mongolia, Chair APF
• Ms. Nina Panikova, European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)
• Mr. Mahomed Musa, Executive Director, Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan

This session focused on the role of NHRIs in the promotion of human rights-based approach in implementation and measurement of the SDGs, as well as on how NHRIs can use the SDGs to improve their position and strengthen their work.

NHRIs are in a position of providing expertise in the field to the government, which might lack relevant capacities.

Some best practices have already been developed in relation to NHRAPs. A good NHRAP is evidence-based, and responds to the needs of the public, as well as the recommendations from the UPR and UN treaty bodies. Treaty bodies and UPR base their recommendations only on the information that is presented to them, while an NHRAP should reflect the needs of all parts and communities in a country. Thus, it must be developed in an inclusive and collaborative manner. This will ensure also that it is not a wish list, but reflects the capabilities and resources of the state. It must have clear goals, realistic activities, clear timeframes, achievable targets, and adequate human and financial resources set aside for its implementation. Very importantly, it must have a robust plan for monitoring and evaluating its implementation.
NHRIs have a strong role to play in promoting and supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This role is laid out in the Merida Declaration. Adopted in 2015, it encourages NHRIs, in line with their mandates under the Paris Principles, to collaborate in mutual capacity-building and sharing of experiences to contribute to a human rights-based approach to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The human rights agenda is reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and as such the NHRIs can use the SDGs as instruments to aid the realization of human rights. Moreover, considering that one of the indicators of SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions is the existence of independent NHRIs in compliance with the Paris Principles, the SDGs can be a strong tool in strengthening NHRIs positions.

NHRIs are well placed to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda, and in particular the linkages between human rights standards and the SDGs, and to actively contribute to SDG implementation in their respective countries. They should advocate for a development of an action plan for implementation of SDGs, or inclusion of SDGs in the national development strategy. Furthermore, they should ensure that the development of such action plans and/or strategies is inclusive, collaborative and that nobody is left behind in setting the national direction for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition to constructively engaging with the governments, the NHRIs should also hold the government accountable in its allocation of funds and implementation of the SDGs. This can be done through adopting the work that the NHRI already does, such as reports, so as to specifically link to reaching the relevant SDGs. Also, the UN General Assembly recognized that NHRIs have the right to independently participate in the SDG follow up and review processes happening in New York. For example, GANHRI participates at the High Level Political Forum. The network gathers information and evidence from NHRIs in the countries that are reporting at the Forum, in this way providing honesty and accountability to the follow up and review process.

One of the underlying principles of the SDGs is universality of reach, i.e. leaving no one behind. However, sometimes one of the unintended consequences of development is that sections of society can end up being discriminated against. It is up to NHRIs to monitor the development process and step in in cases of discrimination, ensuring that no one is left behind.
SESSION VI: THE NHRIS’ ROLE AS EARLY WARNING AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES, INCLUDING WITH REGARD TO CONFLICT (KIEV DECLARATION) AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Moderator: Ms. Isabelle Tschan, Regional Human Rights and Rule of Law Adviser, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

Presenters:
- Mr. Mahomed Musa, Executive Director, Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan
- Mr. Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia
- Mr. Erlan Alimbaev, Deputy Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic

During this session, participants discussed how NHRIs can act as early warning advocates, how they can take measures to identify early signs of possible conflict and to prevent conflict and violent extremism.
From this, it stems that NHRIs should be actively involved in monitoring and reporting during a conflict too. This includes also monitoring the security sector for its compliance with human rights standards, in conflict and in peace and helping to raise the awareness and build the capacity of security forces for human rights compliant conduct of their work.

Moreover, considering that human rights violations often are the root causes of conflicts, the NHRIs role in protecting human rights is crucial in preventing conflicts, including violent extremism. In this regard, NHRIs have the obligation to monitor the human rights situation and investigate all violations, in order to prevent the reoccurrence and escalation of such abuses in the future.

NHRIs should also investigate all cases of discrimination and hate speech. This might also include taking actions to remove discriminatory content which could lead to hate speech from school textbooks. Human rights education is also very important in preventing conflicts and violent extremism. This means that it is of paramount importance for NHRIs to exercise their role to undertake human rights education and awareness raising, and to advocate for inclusion of human rights curriculum in public education programmes.

“"It is a false idea that security and human rights need to be balanced. No, they are one and the same, two sides of the same coin."”

Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia

NHRIs have an important role to play in fragile contexts, providing early warning and protecting human rights during conflicts, as laid out in the Kiev Declaration. Adopted in 2015, the declaration calls for a stronger role of NHRIs in conflict and post-conflict settings.

In this regard, it is important to dispel the myth that states must choose between security and human rights. NHRIs should work on raising awareness among all involved stakeholders that ensuring security does not come at the expense of respect and protection human rights, and vice versa. Usually, security, which by definition is the state in which people feel that their values are protected, is at the heart of a conflict. Since one of the crucial values are human rights, a society cannot have security without human rights. At the same time, it cannot enjoy human rights if the people are not safe. Thus, security and human rights are very closely interlinked and interdependent.
An important tool in preventing tensions between communities and rising radicalisation is monitoring by NHRIs of public service delivery. NHRIs monitoring of the delivery of public services from a human rights perspective makes states bodies aware that they are being watched by an independent body. This influences state bodies to deliver higher quality public services to all without discrimination, in turn diminishing exclusion or eliminating the citizens’ possible dissatisfaction with the government. This is one of the elements which could contribute to diminish the risks for radicalization and/or tensions between communities.

**Kyrgyzstan’s example of avoiding future abuses through investigating existing ones**

On October 1, 2008, a crowd of young people gathered outside the local government offices in Nookat, to protest against the local authorities’ decision not to organize a celebration for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. Local officials had banned the celebration in the center of the town, and suggested a local stadium as an alternative location. But, when people went to the stadium on October 1, it was closed. The crowd then proceeded to protest in front of the mayor’s office and violent clashes between them and the police ensued. The police arrested over 30 people and they were sentenced as members of a terrorist group, receiving sentences ranging from nine to 20 years in prison.

Kyrgyzstan’s Ombuds Institution has the possibility to set up special commissions to investigate cases of mass human rights abuses, and it has done so in the case of the 2008 protests in Nookat. It found numerous infringements, in the way the local officials organized the celebration of Eid al-Fitr that led to the protest, in the way the arrested people were detained, and with the trial process. The Commission issued its recommendations, and one of the first decisions of the interim Government was a degree giving amnesty to all who were sentenced for their involvement in the protest. Furthermore, the state has developed a state policy on religious affairs that will be in force until 2020. Conflicts in similar religious celebrations have since been avoided.
Afghanistan’s example of avoiding future abuses through human rights education for security sector

Afghanistan’s Independent Human Rights Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior Affairs and National Security Directorate, the three main bodies involved in Afghanistan’s defense. Based on the MoU, the Commission provides a two-tier education programme to these three bodies in the security sector:

i) The Commission is training young officers at the national academies of these three bodies, teaching them about human rights, Afghanistan’s obligations, existing laws and policies. The Commission is also conducting a training of trainers and providing the academies with the curriculum, so that they can continue teaching on their own;

ii) The Commission is providing education also to graduates of these academies. The officers and soldiers who have graduated are attending workshops and classes of the Commission to learn about and discuss international human rights law and international humanitarian law.
SESSION VII: PRESENTATION OF THE TOOL: CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

Introduction: Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Senior Envoy, APF

Two working groups – experience sharing on capacity assessment

This session focused on sharing with the NHRI’s information on the capacity assessment offered by the Asia Pacific Forum, as a tool for strengthening the NHRI’s. After a short presentation, participants split into working groups sharing experiences, best practices and lessons learned with representatives of A status NHRI’s that have undergone capacity assessments.

Members of the APF can benefit from the capacity assessment (CA) that the Forum offers in partnership with UNDP and OHCHR. The assessment is a participatory and inclusive tool to support the institutional capacity development of the NHRI, by looking at “what skills and processes, or capacities, does the NHRI need to build if it is to be as effective as possible in the future?”\(^5\) It identifies what capacities the NHRI has and what capacities it needs to develop. “It is a self-assessment, undertaken by the NHRI itself...with the assistance and support of a team of CA facilitators.”\(^6\)

“The CA focuses on development issues in the five core capacity areas identified in the UNDP framework:

- policies, procedures and processes, including organizational structure
- leadership
- human resources and knowledge
- financial and other resources
- accountability.

It analyses these five core areas in relation to six functional and technical capacities:

- capacity to plan strategically, and implement plans
- capacity to investigate, manage and handle complaints, and conduct human rights research and analysis
- capacity to advocate, raise awareness and educate
- capacity to engage with stakeholders and create/manage partnerships
- capacity to monitor and evaluate.”\(^7\)

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6 Ibid., p. 9.
7 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
Following the assessment, the Forum issues a final report, which proposes strategies and actions to address the identified challenges and strengthen the NHRI. The NHRI is required to make a formal response to the report. This response should include an implementation plan, strategies and actions to tackle the recommendations arising from the assessment. The CA report can also be useful in advocating for more resources and for donor support in order to implement its recommendations, though mobilizing resources is not its primary objective. The final report is made available only to the NHRI and the involved staff at APF, UNDP and OHCHR, but it is up to the NHRI to decide if it wants to make the report, or parts of it, available to the public. The NHRI may also consult CSOs during the assessment to receive their feedback on its performance.

In terms of resources required for the assessment, APF, together with UNDP and OHCHR may provide the expertise, while NHRI leadership would need to allocate their time and that of the staff to support the assessment, and provide the room / work facilities for the CA team.
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS, BASED ON THE MEETING’S DISCUSSIONS

In order for an NHRI to be accredited A status, it should:

- Be independent in law and in practice, i.e. it should have a legally guaranteed mandate and resources that allow it to hold the state accountable, a legal framework that ensures an independent and fair appointment and dismissal process, pluralist representation of social forces and the ability to exercise its role independently.
- Cooperate with civil society, media and international partners, as this cooperation adds to the effectiveness of NHRI’s work.
- Implement the recommendations it received during the accreditation process from the GANHRI’s Sub-Committee on Accreditation, in case it has undergone the accreditation process in the past.
- Be honest in its presentation to the Sub-Committee on Accreditation and acknowledge the challenges it faces in its work.
- Have a strong and capable secretariat that can properly assist the NHRI in undertaking its functions.

“We, at NHRI, should be honest before ourselves and report on the situation as it is.”

Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia

To engage further with International Human Rights Mechanisms, NHRI should:

- Facilitate the interaction of other actors, specifically through facilitating meetings with and between the Government, the Parliament, CSOs and other relevant actors before and following the state’s participation in the Universal Periodic Review and prior to state reviews by UN Treaty Bodies.
- Submit alternative reports to International Human Rights Mechanisms.
- Use recommendations issued by International Human Rights Mechanisms as advocacy tools for driving reforms.
To support the development, implementation and monitoring of NHRAP, NHRIs should advocate for and ensure that the NHRAP:

- Is evidence based and includes the experiences and needs of the public, in addition to the recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review and UN treaty bodies.
- Is developed in an inclusive and collaborative manner, so as to reflect the needs of the country as well as the capabilities of the state.
- Has clear goals, realistic activities, clear timeframes, achievable targets, and adequate human and financial resources for its implementation.
- Has a robust plan for monitoring and evaluating its implementation.

In relation to NHRAPs, NHRIs should also:

- Refer to action plans of other countries in the region, which have similar cultural context or historical background, as governments are often more open to hearing what other governments in the region are doing and to duplicating that process.
- Provide independent monitoring of the implementation of the NHRAP.

To promote and support the implementation of the SDGs, NHRIs should:

- Adapt their way of work, their monitoring and reporting, to specifically include relevant SDGs and their targets.
- Work on raising awareness of the public and the states about the SDGs and the linkages to human rights.
- Advocate for and support the development of national action plans for implementation of SDGs, or the inclusion of SDGs in national development strategies, and ensure that the plans or strategies and the process of their development are inclusive and leave nobody behind.
- Hold the governments accountable and monitor and report on their implementation of the SDGs.
- For more recommendations on NHRIs work in relation to SDGs, check Annex III with Recommendations from the December 5, 2016 regional consultation of NHRIs in Europe and Arab States on the “Role of National Human Rights Institutions in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.”
The NHRIs should also use the SDGs as tools to:

- Aid the realization of human rights, since the human rights agenda is reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Strengthen own positions as one of the indicators of SDG 16 is the existence of independent NHRIs in compliance with the Paris Principles.

To prevent conflicts and violent extremism and protect human rights during conflicts, NHRIs should:

- Raise awareness among all involved stakeholders that ensuring security does not come at the expense of human rights, and vice versa.
- Closely monitor and report on human rights violations, so as to influence a decrease in such violations that are often root causes of a conflict.
- Take actions to eliminate hate speech through monitoring cases of hate speech from various outlets and thoroughly reviewing textbooks for discriminatory content which could lead to hate speech.
- Collaborate closely with security forces, including through raising the awareness and build the capacity of security forces for human rights compliant conduct of their work.
- Monitor the delivery of public services, in this way positively affecting the way citizens are treated and in turn diminishing or eliminating their possible dissatisfaction with the government, which could lead to exclusion and possible conflict.
### ANNEX I: AGENDA

**DAY 1, 28 November, Monday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:45- 9:00</td>
<td>Registration and welcoming coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00- 9:45</td>
<td><strong>Opening remarks</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Ms. Shelley Inglis, Team Leader, Governance and Peace Building, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub&lt;br&gt;• Mr. Ryszard Komenda, OHCHR Regional Representative for Central Asia&lt;br&gt;• Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)</td>
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<td>9:45- 11:00</td>
<td><strong>SESSION I - NHRIs in Central Asia – Achievements and Challenges</strong>&lt;br&gt;Objective: Introductory speeches from country delegations and brief updates from the region – achievements and challenges&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Mr. Ryszard Komenda, OHCHR Regional Representative for Central Asia&lt;br&gt;• Mr. Askar Shakirov, Ombudsman and Human Rights Commissioner of Kazakhstan&lt;br&gt;• Mr. Kubat Otorbaev, Akiykatchy (Ombudsman) of the Kyrgyz Republic&lt;br&gt;• Mr. Zarif Alizoda, Ombudsman of Tajikistan&lt;br&gt;• Representative of National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights of Turkmenistan&lt;br&gt;• Mr. Ulugbek Mukhammadiev, Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of Uzbekistan&lt;br&gt;Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>11:00- 11:15</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>11:15- 13:00</td>
<td><strong>SESSION II - The Paris Principles - on the status of the national human rights institutions (NHRIs)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Objective: Presentation of Paris Principles by GANHRI. A-Status NHRIs from other regions share their experience regarding their path to become A-Status organisation and share their work in promoting and protecting human rights (monitoring, reporting, complaints handling and advisory mandate). Presentation of the mandates and institutional set-ups of NHRIs in line with Paris Principles.</td>
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<td>13:00-14:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>14:00-15:30</td>
<td>SESSION III – The role of NHRIs in Central Asia – discussions on external relations</td>
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<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Provide an opportunity to state institutions (the Parliament, Government, Judiciary) and Civil Society Institutions to share their view and support of NHRIs and their collaboration and to implementation of recommendations by NHRIs. Presentation on good practices.</td>
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<td>15:30-15:45</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>15:45-17:00</td>
<td><strong>SESSION IV - Obtaining the status A</strong></td>
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<td>Objective: Discussion on how to overcome the challenges to fulfil the Paris Principles (after the experiences of session II)</td>
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<td>Moderator: Mr. Ryszard Komenda, OHCHR Regional Representative for Central Asia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participants will be split in four Working Groups</td>
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<td>17:00– 17:30</td>
<td>Report back in Plenary- Closure of day 1</td>
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<td>19:00</td>
<td>Dinner – Restaurant Sur Balik, Cihangir (Transfer by bus)</td>
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Presenters:
- Mr. Assylbek Smagulov, MP, member of the Committee on Legislation and Judicial and Legal Reform of the Mazhilis of the Parliament, Kazakhstan
- Mr. Ulugbek Azimov, Public Fund “Legal Prosperity”, Kyrgyzstan
- Ms. Nigina Bahrieva, Public Foundation “Nota Bene”, Republic of Tajikistan
- Mr. Kakajan Abayev, Parliament representative, Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms or Mr. Murad Atabayev, Turkmenistan (tbc)
- Ms. Gulmira Avazkhanova, Head of sector of the department of the Committee on Constitutional Legislation, State Order and Judicial-legal issues of Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of Kyrgyzstan
- Representative of Parliament of Uzbekistan (tbc)
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<tr>
<td>9:00– 09:15</td>
<td>Recap of the Day 1 – Ms. Bea Ferenci, OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for Central Asia</td>
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| 9:15– 10:30  | **SESSION V - The role of NHRIs in engaging with International Human Rights Mechanisms and in monitoring of implementation of National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs)**  
Objective: Provide good example for engagement with International Human Rights Mechanisms (including through submitting information). The role of NHRIs in monitoring of implementation of NHRAPs, their cooperation/coordination with National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up.  
Moderator: Ms. Beatrix Ferenci, OHCHR Deputy Regional Representative for Central Asia  
Presenter:  
• Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy, GANHRI  
• Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)  
Two working groups:  
1) Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (countries that have NHRAPs)  
2) Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan (countries that are preparing NHRAPs)  
Q&A from participants |
| 10:30- 11:45 | **SESSION VI - Role of NHRIs in the SDG process to promote transparency and accountability in national level efforts to achieve the SDGs (Merida Declaration):**  
Objective: Awareness raising on Merida Declaration, NHRIs role in SDG implementation, promotion of human rights-based approach in implementation and measurement of the SDGs, including by assessing the impact of laws, policies, programmes, national development plans, administrative practices and budgets on the realization of all human rights for all. |
### SESSION VII - The NHRIs’ role as early warning and human rights advocates, including with regard to conflict (Kiev Declaration) and violent extremism

**Objective:** The session will allow to discuss how NHRIs can act as early warning advocates, how they take measures to identify early signs of possible conflict and steps to prevent conflict, and violent extremism, including through addressing violations of human rights (root causes) and ensuring a human rights compliant response by state actors to both.

**Moderator:** Ms. Isabelle Tschan, Regional Human Rights and Rule of Law Adviser, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

**Presenters:**
- Mr. Musa Mahmodi, Executive Director, AIHRC Afghanistan
- Mr. Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia
- Mr. Yerlan Alimbaev, Deputy Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic

**Q&A from participants**

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<tr>
<td>11:45–12:00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00–13:00</td>
<td>SESSION VII - The NHRIs’ role as early warning and human rights advocates, including with regard to conflict (Kiev Declaration) and violent extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00–14:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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**SESSION VIII - Presentation of the tools: Capacity Assessment, Strategic Planning and Communication Strategies**

Objective: The session will allow to inform NHRIs of the various policy tools existing for NHRIs, including on capacity assessments, complaints handling and investigations.

Introduction by Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Senior Envoy, APF

Two working groups – experience sharing on capacity assessment

Presenter in Working Group 1 - Mr. Musa Mahmodi, Executive Director, AIHRC Afghanistan

Presenter in Working Group 2 - Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and/or Mr. Byambadorj Jamsran, Chief Commissioner, Mongolia, Chair APF

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<tr>
<td>14:00-15:00</td>
<td><strong>SESSION VIII - Presentation of the tools: Capacity Assessment, Strategic Planning and Communication Strategies</strong>&lt;br&gt;Objective: The session will allow to inform NHRIs of the various policy tools existing for NHRIs, including on capacity assessments, complaints handling and investigations.&lt;br&gt;Introduction by Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Senior Envoy, APF&lt;br&gt;Two working groups – experience sharing on capacity assessment&lt;br&gt;Presenter in Working Group 1 - Mr. Musa Mahmodi, Executive Director, AIHRC Afghanistan&lt;br&gt;Presenter in Working Group 2 - Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and/or Mr. Byambadorj Jamsran, Chief Commissioner, Mongolia, Chair APF</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00-15:15</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>15:15-16:45</td>
<td><strong>Discussion in working groups on sub-regional collaboration: opportunities and recommendations for way forward</strong>&lt;br&gt;Report back from working groups&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Ms. Shelley Inglis, UNDP &amp; Ryszard Komenda, OHCHR</td>
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<td>16:45-17:00</td>
<td><strong>Closure</strong>&lt;br&gt;Mr. Rastislav Vrbensky, Manager of UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub &amp; Mr. Ryszard Komenda, Regional Representative of OHCHR in Central Asia</td>
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## ANNEX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Republic of Kazakhstan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mr. Askar Shakirov, Ombudsperson, Human Rights Commissioner</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Mr. Assylbek Smagulov, MP, member of the Committee on Legislation and Judicial and Legal Reform of the Mazhilis of the Parliament</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ms. Markhabat Kuzhekenova, Consultant, State and Legal Division of the President’s Executive Office</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mr. Rakhmet Moukashev, chairperson, Kazakhstan’s Union of Jurists</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kyrgyz Republic</strong></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Mr. Kubat Otorbaev, Akiykatchy (Ombudsman) of the Kyrgyz Republic</td>
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<td>Mr. Erlan Alimbaev, Deputy Ombudsman</td>
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<td>Ms. Gulmira Avazkhanova, head of sector of the department of the Committee on Constitutional Legislation, State Order and Judicial-legal issues of Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of the Kyrgyz Republic</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mr. Ulugbek Azimov, Public Fund Legal Prosperity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republic of Tajikistan</strong></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mr. Suhaili Kodirov, Chair of Analytical Centre of Ombudsman Office</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republic of Turkmenistan</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ms. Ejebay Charyeva, Head of Department on Citizen’s Complaints and Appeals, National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mr. Kakajan Abayev, MP, Member of the Parliament Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Mr. Murad Atabayev, MP, Member of the Parliament Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Ms. Guldjamal Annayeva, Chief Specialist, Department of Constitutional Law, Ministry of Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republic of Uzbekistan</strong></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Mr. Ulugbek Mukhammadiev, Authorized Representative of Parliament/OliyMajlis, Ombudsperson of Uzbekistan</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Mr. Elbek Shukurov, MP, Legislative Chamber of Parliament/OliyMajlis</td>
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<td>Name and Position</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ms. Dilnoza Muratova, Head of Department on International Cooperation, National Human Rights Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mr. Anvar Yashnarbekov, Senior Executive Assistant, Office of Ombudsperson</td>
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</table>

**Development partners**

| 18 | Ms. Audrone Perkauskiene, Deputy Head of the Central Asia Division, European Union External Action Service (EEAS) |

**Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)**

| 19 | Professor Alan Miller, Special Envoy |

**European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)**

| 20 | Ms. Nina Panikova, Project Assistant, Permanent Secretariat |

**Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF)**

| 21 | Mr. Byambadorj Jamsran, Chairperson of APF and Chief Commissioner, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia |
| 22 | Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Senior Envoy of APF |

**Representatives of NHRIs from other regions**

| 23 | Ms. Nurul Hasanah Ahamed Hassain Malim, Deputy Secretary of the Policy, Law and Complaints Group (PLCG), Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) |
| 24 | Mr. Mohammad Musa Mahmodi, Executive Director, Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan |
| 25 | Mr. Saša Janković, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Serbia |
| 26 | Mr. Mehmet Elkatmiş, Ombudsman of Turkey |
| 27 | Mr. Ibrahim Yücel Apiş, Expert, Ombudsman Institution of Turkey |
| 28 | Mr. Aydın Bingöl, Acting President, Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey |
| 29 | Ms. Habibe Kara, Assistant Expert, Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey |
### Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

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<td>Ms. Bea Ferenci, Deputy Regional Representative in Central Asia</td>
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### United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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<td>Ms. Shelley Inglis, Team Leader, Governance and Peace building, Istanbul Hub</td>
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<td>Mr. Saidahmad Ikromov, Rule of Law Programme Manager, Tajikistan</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Ms. Zeynep Temel, Intern, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub</td>
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ANNEX III:
Recommendations from the December 5, 2016 regional consultation of NHRIs in Europe and Arab States on the “Role of National Human Rights Institutions in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.”

To support the implementation of SDGs in a human rights compliant way, NHRIs should:

- Explicitly integrate the SDGs in their action plans, reports and other documents. This could lead to greater domestication of the 2030 Agenda among other state bodies too;
- Advocate their respective governments to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is implemented internally as well, and not looked at only through the prism of international development and foreign policy;
- Identify who is left furthest behind through human rights monitoring and in this way assist the states in prioritizing the SDGs;
- Engage with regional bodies, which should also have a role in implementation of SDGs;
- Cooperate with civil society in holding the government accountable to achieving the SDGs;
- Exchange experiences with other NHRIs, governments, parliaments, statistical offices, civil society and international partners as a means to raise awareness on SDGs, build capacities and maximize the limited resources.

To use the 2030 Agenda to support their own work, NHRIs should:

- Frame their work within the 2030 Agenda framework. Some states might be more willing to act in a human rights compliant manner if the recommendation is phrased in a SDG context.
To support the monitoring of SDGs’ implementation, NHRIs should:

- Collect information on the implementation of SDGs and provide it to the follow-up and review mechanisms. This would also serve to check the quality and content of government provided data;
- Develop methodologies on how to monitor the implementation of SDGs;
- Develop action plans for monitoring the implementation of SDGs;
- Use the qualitative data they collect to measure the process towards achieving the SDGs, how governments are translating the SDGs in their national contexts;
- Contribute to the development of new, better indicators, since some of the current indicators do not match the target they are supposed to measure.

To support the NHRIs in their role vis-à-vis the 2030 Agenda, international partners and NHRI networks should:

- Support the NHRIs in developing the tools, methodologies and capacities to monitor SDG implementation;
- Develop and disseminate guidance material, elaborating how NHRIs can monitor SDG implementation;
- Develop and disseminate knowledge products showcasing what approaches have been successful;
- Facilitate knowledge sharing among different governments as they might be more prone to listen to their peers;
- Translate the GANHRI, UNDP and OHCHR tripartite partnership into a global program to strengthen the NHRIs;
- Work on GANHRI becoming a member of the global alliance established to bring member states, the private sector and civil society together to advocate for SDGs’ implementation.