

Terms of Reference of the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation

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Introduction and purposes of this document:

This Terms of Reference (ToR) document is intended to inform—in conjunction with the *Call for Nominations*—non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their representatives considering applying for a seat on the NGO Delegation of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB). The *Call for Nominations* and subsequent selection of NGO Delegates is undertaken by the current NGO Delegation to the PCB (see *L. in this document under heading “The selection process”*). This document specifies the term of office, qualifications and commitments required to serve on the NGO Delegation.

This document is also intended to be used as an operations reference tool for the current NGO Delegation.

This document was produced as a result of decision 9.1 taken at the 20th Meeting (June 2007) of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board arising from the 2006 *Review of NGO and Civil Society participation in the Programme Coordinating Board*.¹ This document was updated in October 2012.² Subsequent updates were done by the NGO Delegation through the years, as the mandate, scope of responsibilities, and ways of working evolved. The last update was done in 2020.

NOTE: The *UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Vision, Mission, Principles and Code of Conduct* must also be considered and agreed to by NGOs and their representatives applying for a seat on the NGO Delegation.

A. Definitions for the purposes of this document:

The definitions below are *not* intended to be exhaustive technical definitions, but rather they are intended to be brief, user-friendly definitions to clarify and streamline the terminology used in this document.

NOTE: Terms in **bold** used within the definitions in this section are defined in subsequent definitions within this section.

1. **UNAIDS**

UNAIDS (the *Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS*) is the United Nations (UN) body that coordinates the HIV-related work of its eleven **Cosponsors** and provides global leadership on HIV policies and issues.

2. **Programme Coordinating Board (PCB)**

The Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) is the governing body (effectively, the Board of Directors) of UNAIDS that guides, reviews and makes decisions about the policies, priorities, long range plans, and budgets of UNAIDS.

There are 38 seats on the PCB: **22 Member States**, **11 Cosponsors**, and **5 NGOs**.

3. **Member States**

Member States (i.e. governments) hold 22 seats on the PCB: Western European and Others Group (7 seats); Africa (5 seats); Asia and Pacific (5 seats); Latin America and the Caribbean (3 seats); Eastern European/Commonwealth of Independent States (2 seats). The Member States are selected from among the UN Member States. They serve on the PCB for a term of 3 years on a rotation basis. Only the Member States have the right to vote on the PCB.

4. **Cosponsoring Organizations (Cosponsors)**

¹ This document was contracted and funded by the UNAIDS Secretariat. It was written, based in part upon an existing Terms of Reference, in 2007/2008 by T. Richard Corcoran, consultant and former PCB NGO Delegate (2004-06), with input and support from a steering committee (consisting of PCB NGO Delegates and a representative of the UNAIDS Secretariat) and reviewed by advisors outside the NGO Delegation who were selected by the steering committee. Additions and changes to UNAIDS and Delegation processes and policies were revised in this document in October 2012 by the NGO Delegation and CCF.

² For further details, see the *Consolidated Guidance Note, 2010: UNAIDS Division of Labour*: http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2063_DivisionOfLabour_en.pdf.

The 11 UN Cosponsoring Organizations (Cosponsors) of UNAIDS are: UNHCR; UNICEF; WFP; UNDP; UNFPA; UNODC; ILO; UNESCO; WHO; the World Bank; and (as of 2012) UN Women. Each holds a continuous seat on the PCB. The Cosponsors do not have voting rights on the PCB. Cosponsor support for UNAIDS is focused on 15 areas based on the UNAIDS outcome framework for 2009–2011. Each area has one or two convening agencies (with relevant mandates and technical expertise) to both facilitate the contributions of broader UNAIDS family partners and ensure the quality of overall results in the respective area.³

5. Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs)

NOTE: This is specifically *not* a definition of the general term *Nongovernmental Organization*, but one relative to the role of NGOs on the PCB.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) hold five (5) seats on the PCB. Eligible NGOs include local, national, regional and international NGOs, networks of people living with HIV (PLHIV Networks), AIDS service organizations (ASOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), AIDS activist organizations, faith-based organizations (FBOs) and networks or coalitions of AIDS organizations. Collectively these are referred to as NGOs. NGOs are further defined as not-for-profit and working *primarily* and actively in the field of HIV (i.e. the main purpose or one of the main purposes of the NGO, association or network is its work in the HIV field).

There is one seat for each of the following five regions: Africa; Asia/Pacific; Europe, Latin America/Caribbean; and North America. These seats are occupied by the five **Main Delegates**. Additionally there are five **Alternate Delegates** (one from each of the same five regions) that participate in **the Delegation**.

Though technically, it is the NGO (the *organization*, and not the *person* representing the organization) that holds the seat on the PCB, a specific representative of the NGO applies to fill the seat. Due to the challenges and steep learning curve of serving as an NGO Delegate to the PCB, it is intended that this single representative serve for the full term of service. However, if this individual cannot fulfill any part of their commitment, the NGO may be asked to provide another qualified representative as a replacement for the remainder of the Delegate’s term, subject to approval of the NGO Delegation.

Though technically NGOs do not have “the right to take part in the formal decision-making process”⁴ of the PCB, in practice, NGOs fully participate and are essential, respected stakeholders in decision-making processes. They do not, however, have voting rights.

NGOs normally serve on the PCB for a term of two years but may be extended to a maximum term of three years. The term of office is further defined below (see *E. of this document under heading “Term of office”*).

- **NGO Main Delegates (Main Delegates)**

As noted above, the five NGO seats on the PCB are held by the *organizations*. The *person* actually sitting in the seat is the person “delegated” to represent that organization and is known as an NGO Delegate. At formal meetings, the five seats are identified as “NGO Africa”, “NGO Asia/Pacific”, “NGO Europe”, “NGO Latin America/Caribbean”, and “NGO North America”, a further acknowledgement that the seat is held by the NGO (*organization*) and not the *person*.

By default at formal PCB meetings, the five NGO seats are occupied by the NGO Main Delegates (Main Delegates) from their respective regions. However, the **Alternate Delegate** from that region may occupy the seat when the Main Delegate is absent or whenever it is deemed appropriate by both Delegates from the region or by **the Delegation** to do so (for strategic, logistic or any other reason).

Although officially there are only five seats held by the five Main Delegates, in practice and for ease throughout this document, both “Main Delegate” and “Alternate Delegate” are referred to as “Delegate” unless a distinction is required. Except as otherwise noted, there are no distinctions in practice between the Main and Alternate Delegates in regard to their qualifications, commitments and participation in all aspects of **the Delegation** and the PCB.

³ Economic and Social Council, Resolution 1995/2

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- **NGO Alternate Delegates (Alternate Delegates)**

Though there are only five formal NGO seats on the PCB, there are 10 Delegates appointed to **the Delegation**: five NGO Main Delegates and five NGO Alternate Delegates (Alternate Delegates). This is to provide enough capacity to carry out the Mission and business of **the Delegation** and to provide overlapping terms of office of the Main and Alternate Delegates from each region in order to ensure the transfer of skills and a smooth transition from Alternate to Main Delegate. It also helps to provide institutional memory for **the Delegation**.

An **incoming Delegate** is usually designated as the Alternate Delegate for their region when their term begins and the existing Delegate becomes the Main Delegate for the region. When the Main Delegate's term is completed, the Alternate Delegate usually becomes the Main Delegate.

- **Incoming NGO Delegates (incoming Delegates)**

Incoming NGO Delegates (incoming Delegates) are persons that have submitted a successful application to participate in the Delegation (by mutual agreement between the Delegation and the applicant) but have not yet begun their term of office, which is approved at the subsequent board meeting after their appointment. This is not a "formal" designation. (See *K. of this document under heading "Requirements and requests of the incoming Delegate".*)

- **Observer NGOs (Observers)**

In addition to **the Delegation**, Observer NGOs (Observers) attend the formal PCB meetings. Any individual or representative from an organization or network may register to attend but they must incur their own costs and will need to be vetted and approved by the UNAIDS Secretariat. They may speak in plenary after all PCB members (Member States, Cosponsors and **the Delegation**) have done so. During the board meeting, the Delegation invites the Observers to attend a pre-meeting and daily briefings to share information, collaborate and strategize.

Incoming Delegates in attendance at PCB meetings (See *K. of this document under heading "Requirements and requests of the incoming Delegate"*) are considered Observers.

- **NGO Delegations (the Delegation)**

In reality, it could be argued that there are five NGO Delegations: one from each of the five regions and each comprised of the Main Delegate and the Alternate Delegate from that region. For ease and throughout this document, however, the ten NGO Delegates are collectively referred to as the NGO Delegation (the Delegation).

6. **Civil society (CS)**

Civil society (CS) is defined as the broad array of people working for or with NGOs (as defined above) actively engaged in local, national, regional or global HIV issues. The Delegates represent their respective regional CS on the PCB as its constituency and, more broadly, the Delegation represents CS at large as its constituency.

7. **UNAIDS Secretariat (the Secretariat)**

The UNAIDS Secretariat (the Secretariat) is comprised of the Executive Director and the technical and administrative staff required to carry out the work of UNAIDS and its governing board, the PCB.

Though the Delegation is largely autonomous (see *C. of this document under the heading "Statement of autonomy"*) the work of the Delegation is also supported by and in collaboration with the Secretariat, in particular the Governance and Multilateral Affairs Department, which manages relations with the Board and offers strategic support, and the Community Mobilization team, which engages with civil society.

8. **Communications and Consultation Facility (CCF)**

At its 20th meeting, the PCB recommended "the establishment of an independent communication facility (CF) to strengthen the NGO participation and support effectiveness of NGO

country-level voices in the Programme Coordinating Board policy dialogue.” In 2013, the CF was expanded to include ‘consultation’ in its function, i.e., to facilitate constituency engagement and outreach, as a mandate of the NGO Delegation. Thus, its name was expanded to CCF (Communication and Consultation Facility) The PCB NGO Communication and Consultation Facility is funded by the UNAIDS Secretariat and is independently hosted for two year contracts by recruited NGOs. The implementation of activities, the performance management, and overall responsibility for the achievement of deliverables belong to the Delegation.

The CCF provides the Delegation with a base for independent support and has the main goal to support the Delegation based on an independent position, as well as to help them to have a transparent and fluid communication among themselves and with others. The four main tasks of the CCF are:

- Facilitate fluid communications to and from NGO Delegates with civil society, UNAIDS Co-Sponsors, UNAIDS Secretariat and UNAIDS Member States;
- Support for efficient management of the administrative and logistical needs of the PCB NGO Delegation;
- Ensure a means of communication and appraisal amongst delegates and support to help delegates to communicate among themselves; and
- Help to have a transparent information exchange between all stakeholders.

From 2008-2010, the CCF was hosted at the World AIDS Campaign in Amsterdam, Netherlands. From 2010-2012, the host was ICASO in Toronto, Canada. From 2013-2021, the Asia-Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (APN+) based in Bangkok, Thailand hosted the CCF.

B. Statement of autonomy:

Except as limited by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1995/2, formal PCB decisions—in particular the Modus Operandi of the Programme Coordinating Board of UNAIDS (rev. June 1999)—and any subsequent decisions that may have been or may be taken, the Delegation operates autonomously and is free to refine and redefine these Terms of Reference as necessary.

C. Mission:

The Mission of the Delegation is:

To bring forward the perspectives and expertise of people living with, affected by, most at risk of and vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, as well as civil society, to ensure that UNAIDS is guided by rights-based, equitable and gender-based approach to guarantee access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for all.

NOTE: See the *UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Vision, Mission, Principles and Code* for how the Delegation accomplishes this Mission.

D. Term of office:

The term of office for an NGO is two (2) calendar years.

In the interest of providing overlapping terms of office of the Main and Alternate Delegate from each region, ensuring institutional memory for the Delegation, and/or ensuring the transfer of skills and a smooth transition from Alternate to Main Delegate for each region, the term of office may be extended for one additional calendar year. This is subject to the availability and agreement of both the Delegate and their NGO, as well as the agreement or decision of the Delegation.

As restricted by the ECOSOC Resolution 1995/2, the term for any Delegate may not exceed three (3) calendar years. An NGO may not serve for more than two (2) terms.

E. Operating language:

Although it may result in an unfortunate exclusivity of much of CS, the operating language of the Delegation is English, and it is therefore a key requirement that Delegates are fully able to communicate well in

both written and spoken English. Native English speakers on the Delegation are requested to remain mindful and considerate of the challenges that Delegates whose native tongue is not English may face.

NOTE: Formal PCB documents are circulated in both English and French. Additionally, the CCF translates certain documents, such as NGO Reports and consultations into Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish and, at the request of the Delegation, into other local languages as needed. At formal PCB meetings, simultaneous interpretation is provided in Plenary (the main meeting room) in the following six official UN languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Other languages may be available.

F. Qualifications of the applying NGO:

Though applications to serve on the Delegation are submitted by individuals representing NGOs, it is the NGO itself that holds the seat on the PCB. Organizations cannot apply for two consecutive terms. However, they can reapply after observing at least one term absence. In order to qualify to hold the seat on the PCB, the applying NGO must:

1. Be actively and principally involved with HIV work in the country and/or region for which the applicant is applying;
2. Maintain a comprehensive understanding of the health, political and social consequences and needs of the HIV epidemic, particularly as it relates to the region;
3. Be strongly connected to and actively liaise with national and regional community and CS networks; and
4. Have extensive experience in national, regional and/or international policy-making and advocacy.

G. Qualifications of the applying Delegate:

In order to qualify to represent its NGO on the PCB, an applicant for the position of Delegate must:

1. Have permanent residency in and be living and working in a country within the region for which they are applying to represent;
2. Have the ability to communicate effectively in written and spoken English;
3. Have adequate skills to analyze relevant policy documents, papers and reports.
4. Have effective writing skills for interventions
5. Be computer literate;
6. Have stable access to the Internet and email;
7. Have a minimum three years' experience in HIV work in their region;
8. Have an ability to collaborate well with a diverse group of people from different cultures from around the world;
9. Have the facility to work strategically in a group;
10. Have diplomacy skills;
11. Have some comfort with public speaking; and
12. Have some experience in national, regional and international advocacy.

H. Commitments of the applying NGO:

It is required that the NGO must state in its letter of recommendation for the applying Delegate that the NGO:

1. Authorizes the applying Delegate to represent the NGO as its Delegate on the PCB;
2. Commits to the *UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Mission, Principles and Code of Conduct*;
3. Will support their Delegate for the term of their office so that they will be able to fulfill the *Commitments of the applying Delegate* (see J. of this document) by confirming that the applicant:
 - Will provide access to adequate office space, equipment, supplies, and communication facilities;
 - Will be freed up from his/her regular duties to be able to dedicate a minimum of 10 hours per work week;
 - Will be additionally freed up from their regular duties in order to travel to attend the formal PCB meetings (including pre-meetings and debriefing meetings) and the NGO orientation meetings;
 - Will have organizational and administrative support;

4. Will ensure the quality and comprehensiveness of the applying Delegate's participation on the PCB; and
5. Will ensure that, if the Delegate is unable to complete his/her term of office, an equally qualified replacement, if available, will be offered by the NGO to finish the term of office. The final decision is adopted by the full delegation.

I. Commitments of the applying Delegate:

In order to participate as an NGO Delegate to the PCB, it is required that the applying Delegate must commit to:

1. The *UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Mission, Principles and Code of Conduct*;
2. Spending a minimum of 10 hours per week performing the duties of Delegate;
3. Broadly and in collaboration with the CCF, consulting with, seeking input from, learning about the relevant issues of, and reporting to their national and regional CS;
4. Attending and actively participating in key meetings including but not limited to:
 - Biannual PCB meetings (5 to 6 days each) typically in Geneva, Switzerland, in late June to early July and early to mid-December. These meetings include an NGO Delegation strategy pre-meeting (1 day), NGO Delegation pre-meetings with Board members and other relevant stakeholders (1 day), the PCB meeting (3 days) and NGO Delegation debriefing meeting (1 day). The December meeting usually includes an extra day of induction for incoming Delegates;
5. Attending, actively participating in and either participating with or representing (and reporting back to) the Delegation at other meetings and consultations as necessary and when possible. Some examples are: high-level meetings (HLM) of the UN General Assembly in New York; regional consultations; PCB consultations on developing policies; the PCB Bureau; etc.;
6. Actively participating in full Delegation conference calls (average 1 per month), usually held at 15:00 Geneva time and lasting for 1-2 hours.
7. Maintaining timely communications with the Delegation and other PCB bodies via email, instant messaging applications, e.g. Telegram or Whatsapp;
8. Reading, absorbing and being prepared to engage in the issues of all relevant PCB documents in a timely manner;
9. Actively participating and strategizing with the Delegation in the review and planning processes of the PCB and UNAIDS;
10. Actively participating in and chairing a fair share of Working Groups (WG) as needed. Some examples are: NGO Report WG; PCB Thematic Session WG; Orientation, Accountability and Recruitment WG; etc.. Teleconference calls are generally required for these and can be held once or twice a month (or as needed) usually lasting for an hour.
11. Working in collaboration with the Secretariat; and
12. Coordinating communicating and working with the CCF in a timely manner.

J. Requirements and requests of the incoming Delegates:

Dependent upon the current calendar, the incoming Delegates *may be required* to:

1. Dependent on funding and availability, attend an NGO Orientation in December or before the meeting of approval for the incoming Delegate; and/or
2. Participate in physical or online/virtual orientation process.
3. Participate in PCB NGO conference calls after being selected.

Though not strictly *required*, in the interest of the further orientation of incoming Delegates, in advance of the beginning of the term of office, the incoming Delegates may be invited to:

1. Dependent on funding and availability, attend the June and/or December PCB meetings as an Observer; and
2. Participate in PCB NGO conference calls.

NOTE: A virtual, online orientation process has been developed to assist in interim turnover of representatives for delegated NGOs and to replace an in-person orientation due to limited funds provided by the UNAIDS Secretariat.

K. The selection process:

Incoming Delegates are selected through the following process:

1. Each year, a *Call for Nominations* for the upcoming regional openings is broadly circulated electronically via mailing lists worldwide usually in mid-year;
2. The current Delegation—facilitated by the CCF—autonomously conducts the selection process;
3. Applications are rated and discussed based upon a number of criteria including sub-regional representation and balance of the Delegation (see *M.* of this document). Regional Delegates' ratings are carefully considered for applicants from their respective regions;
4. Telephone interviews are conducted with 2 to 4 short-listed candidates for each regional opening, inviting other members of CS (not on the current NGO Delegation) to participate in the interview;
5. Once a selection is made, successful applicants are notified via email;
6. Applicant confirms his/her availability, accepts the appointment, and becomes an incoming Delegate; and
7. As required by ECOSOC resolution, incoming NGOs are submitted and formally approved pro forma by the PCB at its next meeting in June or December. Requirements *and requests of the incoming Delegates* (see *K.* of this document) may be made in advance of this formal approval.

L. Regional representation and balance considerations:

As *representatives* of civil society, one of the great challenges of the Delegation is to effect changes and improvements to the policies and programs of UNAIDS so that they meet the needs of the people they represent. However, it is unrealistic to expect that any ten individuals can fully represent the full range of civil society involved in HIV work worldwide or that any two Delegates can fully represent their entire region. The Delegation, however, must try to do so to the best of its ability.

While there may be a number of applicants who meet the qualifications and requirements to serve as a Delegate, in the effort to compose the best representation, the Delegation must factor in a number of other representational and balance considerations before making their selections from among the qualified applicants:

1. Sub-regional representation

Within regions, and even within some sub-regions, there is a great diversity of civil society involved in HIV work in terms of language, culture, and needs. The Delegation makes every effort to ensure that, *whenever possible*, unless no acceptable candidate is nominated during recruitment, the Main and Alternate Delegates from the same region meet sub-regional representational balance considerations:

- **Africa:** One Anglophone Delegate and one Francophone Delegate and/or no two Delegates from the same sub-region (Southern Africa, Northern Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa);
- **Asia & Pacific:** No two Delegates from the same sub-region (Indian sub-continent, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Middle East, Pacific Island countries and territories [PICTs]);
- **Europe:** No two Delegates from the same sub-region (Western/Central Europe and Eastern Europe/Central Asia);
- **Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC):** One Latin/Central America Delegate and one Caribbean Delegate; and
- **North America:** No two Delegates from the same country.

2. HIV status, gender, constituency and organization balance

Among the ten Delegates, the Delegation makes every effort to ensure that, unless impossible or not the best candidate is nominated during recruitment, the entire Delegation meets these overall representational balance considerations in priority order:

- **PLHIV:** In support of the 1994 Paris Declaration and the greater (and meaningful) involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) principle, preference is given to qualified openly declared PLHIV applicants. As a rule, there should be a minimum of 3 PLHIV Delegates;
- **Constituency:** A balance among Delegates who possess the expertise to represent and advocate for specific key constituencies including: gay men and men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender and non-binary people, people who use drugs, sex workers, women and young people;
- **Gender:** A balance of male and female Delegates is also taken into account, including gender non-conforming/non-binary people; and
- **Organizations:** A balance among the Delegates' organization types: networks of PLHIV and PLHIV organizations, key population networks (global or regional), community-based organizations, human rights organizations, and AIDS service organizations, among others. Preference will be given to PLHIV and key population networks.

M. Financial support:

1. Unpaid appointment

There is no payment for participating as a Delegate.

2. Support to attend key meetings

Although there is no payment for participation, the costs for Delegates and, when invited, incoming Delegates, to attend key meetings—specifically PCB meetings (including Delegation pre-meeting and debriefing meeting) and Delegation Orientations—are covered as follows:

- **Airfare:** UNAIDS Secretariat facilitates the flight bookings of NGO Delegates using the most direct economy flight from their airport of origin to Geneva. Delegates who wish to undertake their own flight reservations and subsequent bookings can do so after receiving a travel authorization (TA) from the Secretariat. Any necessary visas are the responsibility of the Delegate; and
- **Per diem/daily subsistence allowance:** Delegates are provided by UNAIDS—either in advance of travel date or soon after arrival—with a daily subsistence allowance in accordance with the WHO rate to adequately cover the cost of meals and hotel accommodation (lodging) for an approved number of meeting days. Hotel bookings are the responsibility of the Delegate.

3. Support to attend other meetings

If Delegates are invited and available to attend other meetings (as outlined in *J.5 in this document "Commitments of the applying Delegate"*), the costs to attend are covered as outlined in 2.

Early termination of term:

The Delegation may terminate an NGO's and/or a Delegate's term early if:

- The qualifications of the NGO or the Delegate as outlined above have been misrepresented;
- The Delegation determines that the commitments of the NGO or the Delegate—as outlined above and as tracked by the Delegation's Accountability Mechanism—are not being adequately kept; or
- A conflict of interest (as spelled out in the *UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation Mission, Principles and Code*) is evidenced or declared on the part of the NGO or the Delegate;
- The NGO ceases its principal involvement in HIV work or it ceases to exist; or
- The Delegate ceases their association with the NGO. Another qualified representative of the NGO may be presented and, if approved by the Delegation, serve as Delegate for the remainder of the term of office; or
- The Delegate does not fulfill the requirements of commitments established by the Delegation.