



**IDDDH** | Instituto de  
Desenvolvimento  
e Direitos Humanos



E-BOOK

# CIVIL SOCIETY AND HUMAN RIGHTS:

PRACTICAL GUIDE ON THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)

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In order to strengthen democracy and the implementation of Human Rights, the dialogue between civil society and government is essential.

**Considering this scenario, the Institute for Development and Human Rights (IDDH) decided to write this e-book as a means of providing practical guidelines on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**

We hope that these guidelines promote greater participation of the civil society during the UPR process, ensuring the transparency of its information.





# WHAT IS **UPR?**



The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a mechanism developed by the Human Rights Council of the United Nations (UN).

**It aims to verify the fulfillment of international obligations stated over the signed human rights treaties and documents assumed by the 193 UN member countries.**

The main objective of UPR is to improve the human rights situation around the world. But it also serves as an international instrument that shares good practices for the implementation and monitoring of human rights among states and other stakeholders.

**In the UPR, each of the UN member states report the human rights situation within its country, receives recommendations from other countries and can make recommendations to the other countries.**

These recommendations are suggestions that the other states offer to the one under review when it is verified the implementation of human rights obligations established in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other ratified human rights instruments by the State.



# These recommendations are issued on the basis of three main documents:

1

## National Report

The state under review explains its internal human rights situation.

2

## Compilation of UN information

A document containing information from experts, independent groups, human rights bodies and other UN entities on the human rights situation of the state under review.

3

## Summary of Stakeholder's information

A summary of reports and information provided by civil society such as national human rights organizations and non-governmental organizations about the human rights situation in the State under review.

**Following the submission of recommendations, the state under review has the option of accepting or rejecting them.** When a recommendation is accepted, the state assumes responsibility for implementing it at the national level.

1



1st STAGE

## Elaboration of the documents

- National Report
- Compilation of UN information
- Summary of Stakeholder's information

2



2nd STAGE

## Interactive Dialogue

At a Human Rights Council Session held in UN Headquarters, the 47 member states of the UN Human Rights Council and other interested states gather together to discuss with the state under review.

This dialogue serves to question the State under review on the fulfillment of the recommendations of the previous cycles, as well as to dialogue on issues not yet treated, to recognize good practices or to make suggestions, among others.

As a result, all recommendations made by the other UN countries to the revised country are compiled.

3



3rd STAGE

## Advocacy

After the Council Session, the state under review has a deadline to review the recommendations and to elaborate the Addendum.

The Addendum must inform which recommendations the state accepts and which, if any, it rejects.

4



4th STAGE

## Implementation of the recommendations/ monitoring

During this period, which lasts until the next cycle of the UPR, the state must implement the accepted recommendations.

The states can submit a quarterly report to account for what has already been or is being implemented and what is still missing.



For more information about UPR visit:

[nacoesunidas.org/revisao-periodica-universal-perguntas-e-respostas](https://nacoesunidas.org/revisao-periodica-universal-perguntas-e-respostas)





# BRAZIL IN THE **UPR**

Brazil has already gone through three cycles of the UPR. In the third, in 2017, numerous civil society entities sent Summary of Stakeholder's information to the United Nations Human Rights Council, pointing out violations and seeking to monitor the recommendations accepted in the previous cycle.

**The number of recommendations made to Brazil has increased considerably throughout the cycles.** This happened because the UPR is a recent mechanism (created in 2006) and member states are gradually learning to use it in the best possible way.

## 2008

In the first cycle, in 2008, Brazil received **15 recommendations and accepted all of them.** They dealt with (i) police Abuse and the prison system, (ii) indigenous peoples and the environment, and (iii) the justice system and the rule of law.

## 2012

In the second cycle, in 2012, Brazil received 170 recommendations on: (i) police Abuse and prison system, (ii) justice system and rule of law, (iii) women, (iv) children and adolescents (v) indigenous peoples and the environment, (vi) social and economic rights, and (vii) migrants and refugees. It rejected only one recommendation (from Denmark, which suggested the demilitarization / unification of the police).

## 2017

In the third cycle, in 2017, Brazil received **246 recommendations**, with focus on: (i) indigenous peoples, environment and gender, (ii) police abuse, prison system, rule of law, and (iii) social rights and economic policies, with special focus on education and the fight against poverty.



## 4 recommendations were rejected in the 3rd cycle:

20

*Select national candidates for the United Nations Treaty Body elections through an open, merit-based process (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)*

99

*Continue protecting the natural family and marriage, formed by a husband and a wife, as the fundamental unit of society, as well as the unborn (Holy See)*

110

*Restore democracy and the rule of law indispensable for the full enjoyment of human rights, harmed by the parliamentary coup d'état against President Dilma Rousseff (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);*

142

*Stop plans to freeze social spending during the next twenty years, that are inconsistent with the international obligations of the country with more than 16 million of persons in extreme poverty (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)*

**Fonte:** Thirty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council.

With the passing of cycles, the recommendations have become more numerous and also more specific, which is essential for the 4th stage of implementation and monitoring. **The more objective the recommendation, the easier it is to point out its non-compliance.**

THE PARTICIPATION  
OF THE **CIVIL SOCIETY**

For the UPR mechanism to be effective, the state needs to be accountable and present transparent information on the implementation of the recommendations to society.

**Equally important is the participation of civil society in this mechanism,** which can occur in a variety of ways and in all stages:



1

**1st STAGE**

At the outset, the society may send written submissions, providing the UN with information from a different point of view than the official one or with information on issues that have not yet been addressed in the UPR, assisting in the structuring of Summary of Stakeholder's information.

2

**2nd STAGE**

At this moment, it is possible to follow the sessions of the working group through the Internet and disseminate the recommendations.

3

**3rd STAGE**

This is the time when society can position itself on the content of recommendations, influencing the state in making the decision of accepting or rejecting them, so that the decisions may better reflect the needs of the population.

4

**4th STAGE**

In the last stage, civil society participates by monitoring the implementation process of the recommendations, giving suggestions and charging the state with actions aimed at guaranteeing human rights for all.

## The participation in the 4th stage is extremely important

Join the Brazilian recommendations monitoring group which aims at developing a platform for civil society organizations to share and include their evaluations on the fulfillment of the recommendations.

Civil society organizations play a key role **in questioning the commitment of the Brazilian government** to the United Nations and its citizens, especially in the current political and institutional crisis.



For more information about how to assist in the monitoring, contact IDDH: [iddh.org.br](http://iddh.org.br)





# **INTERESTING** LINKS AND REFERENCES

## 1st UPR CYCLE

- 📄 National Report BR ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Compilation of UN informations ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Recommendation ([Table in PT](#))



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## 2nd UPR CYCLE (2012)

- 📄 National Report BR ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Compilation of UN informations ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Recommendation ([Table in PT](#))
- 📄 Addendum ([EN/ES](#))

**Brazilian Committee on Human  
Rights and Foreign Policy**  
[dhpoliticaexterna.org.br](http://dhpoliticaexterna.org.br)

**IDDH**  
[iddh.org.br](http://iddh.org.br)

## 3rd UPR CYCLE (2017)

- 📄 National Report BR ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Annex of the National Report BR ([EN](#))
- 📄 Compilation of UN informations ([EN/ES](#))
- 📄 Recommendation ([EN/ES/PT](#))
- 📄 Addendum ([EN](#))

**UPR Info**  
[www.upr-info.org/en](http://www.upr-info.org/en)

**Q & A on the modalities of the UPR  
process**  
[https://www.upr-info.org/en/  
upr-process/what-is-it/qa-on-the-  
modalities-of-the-upr-process](https://www.upr-info.org/en/upr-process/what-is-it/qa-on-the-modalities-of-the-upr-process)



WHAT IS  
**CBDHPE?**

**The Brazilian Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy (CBDHPE) is a permanent group to monitor Brazilian foreign policy.**

It was created in 2006, after the public hearing “Foreign Policy and Human Rights”, held in the Chamber of Deputies, by the initiative of the CHRM - Commission on Human Rights and Minorities.

The group emerged after perceiving that, unlike other public policies, civil society had little participation in Brazilian foreign policy. This represented a menace to the constitutional principle of human rights prevalence in international relations.

As expressed in art. 4, item II, of the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil of 1988: “The international relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil are governed by the following principles: [...] II - prevalence of human rights.”

Composed of 19 non-governmental organizations and state organs, its affiliation is institutional rather than personal. The constituent entities must have a role in human rights and / or international politics - in the case of NGOs, expressed in their statute or proven in practical activities.



**The mission of CBDHPE is to:**

Promote the prevalence of human rights in Brazil's foreign policy and strengthen the citizen participation and social control over this policy. This shall be achieved by mechanisms of dialogue between the powers of the Brazilian state and the civil society.

# ITS 3 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES:

## 1 Republic:

All spheres of power must be transparent and subject to monitoring by civil society;

## 2 Democracy:

All spheres of realization of power must be subject to the participation of civil society;

## 3 Rule of law:

There is no manifestation of power that is not legally regulated, even if regulated by principles of constitutional or international nature.



## What CBDHPE does :

1



### Participation

All spheres of power must be transparent and subject to monitoring by civil society;

2



### Articulation

Create, expand and strengthen spaces so that civil society can contribute to the elaboration, execution and monitoring of Brazilian foreign policy;

3



### Education

Promote training activities in foreign policy and human rights, contributing to the qualification of the relevant stakeholders;

4



### Knowledge

Produce and disseminate information that guides and substantiates Brazilian foreign policy.



For more information on CBDHPE visit:  
[dhpoliticaexterna.org.br](http://dhpoliticaexterna.org.br)



WHAT IS **IDDH**?

A member of the CBDHPE, the Institute for Development and Human Rights – IDDH (Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos - IDDH) is a non-governmental organization founded in 2004 in the city of Joinville/Santa Catarina, Brazil.

## WHAT WE DO DIVIDED IN 2 LINES OF ACTION:



### Advocacy for Public Policies: Dialogue between Civil Society and Government

Monitor human rights public policies at national and international levels to strengthen and promote actions that promote greater dialogue between civil society and government;



### Human rights in education

Develop innovative methodologies and organize trainings and workshops on citizenship and human rights in formal and non-formal education.

IDDH has consultative status with the United Nations (UN), acting on the mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) since its first cycle, in order to broaden the participation of civil society in this process.

In that sense, it was one of the civil society organizations that sent out a Summary of Stakeholder's information and was chosen to speak at the UPR pre-session in April 2017 at the UN headquarters in Geneva.

Together with other organizations, IDDH has also initiated the process of mobilizing civil society to actively participate in the UPR, as well as to monitor implementation of the recommendations.



For more information about IDDH, visit: [iddh.org.br](http://iddh.org.br)



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