

Veronika Haász

National Human Rights Institutions in the UN human rights framework

Handbook

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**National Human Rights Institutions
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Handbook*

Veronika Haász

2013

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List of Abbreviations

APF	–	Asia Pacific Forum
CAT	–	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CEDAW	–	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERD	–	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CHR	–	Commission on Human Rights
CRC	–	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	–	Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSW	–	Commission on the Status of Women
ECOSOC	–	Economic and Social Council
HRC	–	Human Rights Council
ICC	–	International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
ICCPR	–	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	–	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICMW	–	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
ICPED	–	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
NGOs	–	non-governmental organizations
NHRIs	–	National Human Rights Institutions
NPMs	–	National Preventive Mechanisms
OHCHR	–	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPCAT	–	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
SCA	–	Sub-Committee on Accreditation

UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UN GA	–	General Assembly of the United Nations
UNHCR	–	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children’s Fund
UN SG	–	United Nations Secretary-General
UPR	–	Universal Periodic Review

Abstract

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are cornerstones of strong domestic human rights protection systems. They play a crucial role in the promotion and protection of human rights at the national level. Within their broad mandate, they advise governments on various human rights issues, monitor the implementation of international human rights instruments, promote the harmonisation of national law and practice with the international human rights standards, disseminate human rights information, cooperate with regional and international human rights bodies, and remedy human rights violations. However, National Human Rights Institutions are primarily domestic instruments, they increasingly engage with the international human rights mechanisms. In the last 20 years, they became the practical link between international human rights standards and their concrete application at the national level. The institutions' interaction with the UN Charter-based and Treaty-based Bodies is a relatively new phenomenon and as such, has its obstacles. In order to clarify the nature and ways of co-operation between NHRIs and the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms, the Master's thesis sets out the characteristics and role of National Human Rights Institutions in the UN human rights framework. Meanwhile, it is aiming to answer two main questions: what added value does the participation of NHRIs at the international level bring and how should the cooperation between NHRIs and the UN be strengthened in the future.