



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Human Rights Committee

Guidelines on making oral comments concerning communications*

1. Pursuant to rule 97, paragraph 6, of the Committee's rules of procedure, each party to a communication may be afforded an opportunity to comment on submissions made by the other party.
2. At its 118th session, the Committee decided that it would consider, in appropriate cases raising complex issues of fact or domestic law or important questions of interpretation of the Covenant, inviting the parties to provide their comments orally before the Committee.
3. The Committee adopts the following guidelines on making oral comments during meetings convened for that purpose:
 - (a) The Committee may decide, if it deems it necessary, to invite the parties to provide additional information orally and to answer questions on the admissibility or merits of the communication. The invitation will specify a proposed time for the meeting, to be held during an upcoming session of the Committee;
 - (b) As a rule, the meeting will take place only if both parties accept the invitation and agree to make the arrangements necessary to participate in the meeting;
 - (c) The parties may participate in the meeting in person or through reliable means of telecommunication. The author may have legal or other representation during the meeting;
 - (d) The Committee may decide, before the meeting, to request the parties to address specific aspects of the communication in their oral comments. In that case, it will communicate to the parties a written list of questions formulated by the Committee at least 30 days prior to the date on which the meeting is scheduled to be held;
 - (e) The meeting at which the oral comments are to be presented will be closed. The Secretariat will keep a record of the meeting and that record will remain confidential. Participants must undertake to respect the confidentiality of the meeting and to refrain from recording it and from allowing any person other than the parties and their representatives access to it;
 - (f) The Chair of the Committee will lead the meeting and, if necessary, may extend the period of time allocated to the parties for their oral comments;
 - (g) Each party will be allocated 20 minutes in which to provide comments on the submissions of the other party and to respond to the written list of questions formulated by the Committee, where such a list exists;
 - (h) Members of the Committee may present follow-up questions and requests for further clarification to either party. Each party will have 15 minutes to respond to all of

* Adopted by the Committee at its 120th session (3–28 July 2017).



those questions and requests. The Chair of the Committee may allow members of the Committee to present another set of questions and requests and will allocate 10 minutes for each party to respond;

(i) The parties will be invited to make closing statements, for which they will each be allocated five minutes.
