

**Twenty-third Annual Meeting of special rapporteurs, representatives, independent experts and chairpersons of working groups of the Human Rights Council**

**Item IV – thematic issues and working methods**

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**Revised Terms of Reference for country visits by Special Procedures mandate holders of the United Nations Human Rights Council (based on Appendix V, E/CN.4/1998/45)**

During country visits, special procedures mandate holders of the United Nations Human Rights Council, as well as United Nations staff accompanying them, should be given the following guarantees and facilities by the Government that invited them to visit its country:

- (a) Freedom of movement in any part of the country, including facilitation of transport, particularly to restricted areas;
- (b) Freedom of inquiry, in particular as regards:
  - (i) Contacts with central and local authorities of all branches of government;
  - (ii) Private contacts with representatives of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, other private institutions and the media;
  - (iii) Confidential and unsupervised contact with witnesses and other private persons, including persons deprived of their liberty, considered necessary to fulfil the mandate of the mandate holder;
  - (iv) Access to all prisons, detention centres and places of interrogation as considered necessary by the mandate holder to fulfil his or her mandate; and
  - (v) Full access to all documentary materials relevant to the mandate;
- (c) Assurance by the Government that no person or group of persons, whether acting in their official or individual capacities, who cooperate, seek to cooperate, or have cooperated with the mandate holder in relation to the mandate, will for this reason suffer intimidation, threats, harassment or punishment, be subjected to judicial proceedings or to any other kind of reprisals by any means whatsoever; assurance that any measures that could deter such cooperation or be perceived as such, will be avoided. These assurances should apply before, during and after the conduct of country visits.
- (d) Appropriate security arrangements without, however, restricting the freedom of movement and inquiry referred to above;
- (e) Extension of the same guarantees and facilities mentioned above to the appropriate United Nations staff who will assist the special procedures mandate holder before, during and after the visit.