



**32st session of the
Human Rights Council
Item 1**

**High-Level Panel on the 10th Anniversary of the Human Rights Council
13 June 2016
Delivered by Renate Bloem**

Thank you Mr. President,

CIVICUS welcomes this extraordinary panel on the 10th anniversary of the Council and salutes all its Presidents.

Since its establishment, the Council has emerged as a principled leader in supporting and expanding space for civil society both within its corridors and at the national level. In the last year alone it has adopted several landmark resolutions and reports articulating specific protections for human rights defenders, freedom of assembly and civil society space, while vigilantly protecting NGOs' right to contribute to each of these initiatives.

However, while recognizing the laudable measures the Council has taken to advance civic space, the proliferation of restrictive laws and the unabated persecution of human rights defenders, requires even greater commitment among the Council to act as a bulwark against attempts to limit and enfeeble civil society across the globe.

As this body celebrates its 10th anniversary, CIVICUS urges the Council to take practical measures to ensure the effective implementation of its resolutions and recommendations and enhance the safe and robust participation of civil society and HRDs within the Council.

Specifically, we urge the Council to marshal all necessary resources to:

- Develop and consistently implement a comprehensive policy on intimidation and reprisals of HRDs and civil society.
- Intersperse NGO interventions with those of States
- Facilitate the remote participation for NGOs not based in Geneva through a coordinated approach between OHCHR's regional offices and UN country teams
- Increase the number of rooms available for NGOs to hold side events with sufficient advanced notice to allow travel arrangements for NGOs not based in Geneva and;
- Begin a practice of presenting an implementation report one year after the adoption of resolutions, and before a follow-up resolution is adopted.

CIVICUS asks the panelists to share their views on how the Council can further enhance the participation of civil society in its work and on proactive steps to implement Resolution 60/251 on the 'most effective contribution' of CSOs within the Council?

Thank you, Mr. President

This statement is endorsed by the following civil society organizations:

1. Article 19
2. Asian Legal Resource Centre
3. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)
4. Bahá'í International Community
5. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
6. Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
7. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
8. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)