



7 January 2020

Circular No. 2

Subject: Use of the Premises of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) for Meetings, Conferences, Events and Exhibits

Section 1. Scope of application

1.1 This Information Circular sets out arrangements for the use of premises at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits. This Circular applies to all UNOG premises, including the Ariana Park, and to all users of the premises.

Section 2. Definitions

2.1 United Nations Entity: A department or office of the United Nations Secretariat; a special political or peacekeeping mission; a regional commission; a United Nations fund, programme or another subsidiary organ; a specialized agency or a related organization of the United Nations system; or any other unit tasked with programmed activities.

2.2 Organizer: The United Nations or non-United Nations entity, permanent mission or permanent observer mission to UNOG, non-governmental organization (NGO) in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) or organization/group that is convening the meeting, conference, event or exhibit taking place on the premises. When a United Nations entity or permanent or observer mission is the organizer or co-organizer, it shall also be the sponsor.

2.3 Co-organizer: When the meeting, conference, event or exhibit is organized by more than one organizer, each organizer will be referred to as a co-organizer.

2.4 Sponsor: The United Nations entity, permanent or observer mission to UNOG responsible for making necessary arrangements with the organizer/co-organizer and the managing entity, as defined below. For the purpose of this Circular, the Staff Coordinating Council has the same functional status as United Nations entity sponsors. NGOs cannot act as sponsors for other entities, regardless of their status.

2.5 Managing Entity: The UNOG entity that is responsible for managing booking requests and scheduling a specific space for meetings, conferences, events or exhibits.

2.6 Liaison: A representative of the sponsor and/or organizer responsible for coordinating with the managing entity.

Section 3. Managing Entities

3.1 Spaces used for meetings, conferences, events, cultural activities and exhibits, are managed by different UNOG entities, as set forth below:

- a) Conference facilities are managed by the Division of Conference Management, UNOG. Conference facilities include: Rooms I, II and IV; the Council Chamber; Room C6¹ in Building C; Rooms III, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XV, XVI and Concordia Rooms 1 to 5; the Assembly Hall in Building A; Rooms XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI and XXVII in Building E; Rooms S1 and S4 in Building S; Rooms A and B in Palais Wilson; and Ariana Rooms 1,2 and 3 in the Temporary Infrastructure for Conferences.
- b) Spaces designated for exhibits are managed by the UNOG Cultural Activities Committee. These spaces include the *Hall des Pas Perdus*, the Mezzanine on the second floor and the Exhibition Gallery on the third floor in Building E, and the bridge between Buildings A and E.
- c) The Cinema (also referred to as Room XIV), located in Building A, is managed by the UNOG Library.
- d) The *Salons* in Building C (French Room, Czech and Slovak Room and Russian Room) are managed by the Protocol and Liaison Service, Office of the Director-General, UNOG.
- e) All press facilities are managed by the Information Service, UNOG².
- f) All other spaces are managed by the Division of Administration, UNOG.

Section 4. General provisions

4.1 In using United Nations premises, the dignity of the Organization must be maintained at all times. Only meetings, conferences, events and exhibits that are fully consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and justified by their relevance to the work of the Organization may be held on United Nations premises. Rallies and demonstrations are not permitted on UNOG grounds unless authorized by the Director-General.

¹ Former Council Cinema to be renovated as part of the Strategic Heritage Plan

² Including the Press Briefing Room to be built in Building C as part of the Strategic Heritage Plan.

4.2 All activities must be strictly non-commercial in nature. It is forbidden for sponsors and/or organizers to levy any entrance or enrolment fee on participants. The managing entity reserves the right to reject booking requests or cancel authorized bookings should it determine that a meeting, conference, event or exhibit is not consistent with the foregoing. In cases of cancellations, the sponsor will be informed expeditiously.

4.3 Official United Nations activities take precedence over other meetings and events. Therefore, the availability of premises is without guarantee and UNOG may withdraw its agreement to the use of the premises at any time and without incurring any liability. In such cases, the sponsor will be duly informed.

4.4 Registration of participants for all approved meetings, conferences, events or exhibits is managed through the Indico on-line registration and accreditation system. Registration normally closes 48 hours before the start of the event. In some cases, the managing entity may request an earlier accreditation deadline. The number of accredited participants will be limited to the capacity of the booked venue.

4.5 Clubs under the umbrella of the UNOG Staff Coordination Council must ensure that meetings, conferences, events or exhibits which they sponsor are compliant with the purpose of staff recreation and the stated objectives of the member clubs.

Section 5. Meetings and conferences

5.1 Meeting and conference facilities and services at UNOG are intended primarily for meetings and conferences listed in the official United Nations Calendar of Conferences approved by the General Assembly and for informal meetings of regional or other established groups of Member States upon request of the Chairman of the group, in accordance with established procedures.

5.2 Subject to availability, UNOG premises and services may nevertheless be made available for purposes other than those mentioned under paragraph 5. 1, as follows:

- a) Meetings officially called by, or sponsored by, a United Nations entity;
- b) Meetings or events sponsored by a permanent or observer mission to UNOG;
- c) Conferences and meetings of NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council³;

³ As provided for in ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 entitled “Consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations” and ST/SGB/209 entitled “Policies and procedures governing the relationship between non-governmental organizations and the United Nations Secretariat”.

- d) Press conferences and briefings organized by United Nations entities or permanent missions.
- e) Meetings of the United Nations Staff Coordinating Council and its subsidiary bodies, at the request of the Executive Secretary;
- f) Meetings of United Nations staff clubs, at the request of an officer of the club and endorsed by its president.

5.3 UNOG does not accept requests for meetings, conferences, or events that do not fall within any of the categories listed under this section, unless the Director-General has granted an exception. In such cases, the meeting, conference, or event is subject to the United Nations Financial Rules and Regulations in addition to pertinent rules and regulations governing the use of premises.

5.4 All applications for the reservation of premises and services for meetings or conferences other than those listed in the approved Calendar of Conferences must be submitted to the address below at least six weeks before the planned date of the meeting or event and contain sufficient details (purpose, date(s) and subject, number of participants, services required, programme, list of guests and speakers). Depending on the type of meeting or event, applications must be addressed to:

- a) The Meetings Management Section (mms@un.org), Central Planning and Coordination Service, Division of Conference Management in the case of applications for meetings listed under paragraph 5.2 a), b), d) and e) of this Circular.
- b) The NGO Liaison Unit, Office of the Director-General (unog.ngo@un.org) in the case of applications from NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.
- c) The United Nations Information Service (press_geneva@un.org) in case of applications for media-related events.

5.5 Specific instructions and procedures for requesting, organizing and conducting meetings or conferences in meeting and conference rooms at the Palais des Nations are issued and updated regularly by the Division of Conference Management and the NGO Liaison Unit. These instructions are made available on-line on the UNOG website and on its Intranet (i-Seek). For ease of reference, Annex 1 describes procedures to be used by NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. Lack of compliance by organizers with these instructions and procedures may be used as a criterion for future allocation of space or denial of authorization to use UNOG premises.

5.6 The consumption of food or drink (other than water) is strictly forbidden inside all meeting and conference rooms. Coffee breaks and receptions may be held in specially designated areas in conjunction with meetings, conferences, events and exhibits as detailed in UNOG Information Circular IC/Geneva/2007/10/Rev. 3 (“Organization of functions with catering services in the Palais des Nations”) or as superseded or amended.

Section 6. Cultural and special events and exhibits

6.1 All cultural events, such as official exhibits, on UNOG premises are subject to the approval of the Director-General based on the review and recommendation of the Chairman of the Cultural Activities Committee (CAC). The Committee only considers proposals submitted by Member States through their permanent and observer missions, by United Nations entities and other International Organizations (IOs) or by the United Nations Staff Coordinating Council.

6.2 All requests by permanent and observer missions and IOs wishing to contribute to the cultural activity programme must be submitted through the CAC Event Proposal Online Tool⁴ at least three months before the proposed date of the event. The tool allows proponents to access the CAC's guidelines and includes a step-by-step guide to organizing cultural activities.

6.3 The Committee decides what space is allocated for a cultural activity and for how long, subject to the availability of an appropriate venue and scheduling requirements. Arrangements for the organization of all cultural activities are coordinated by the CAC in consultation with the United Nations Information Service, the Division of Conference Management, the Division of Administration and the Security and Safety Service.

6.4 The United Nations Information Service takes the lead in organizing briefings for public groups and NGOs associated with it, in consultation with other concerned Divisions and Services.

6.5 Requests for events to be held in the designated dining facilities should be sent to UNOG's Catering Service at catering-services@un.org. Details on the procedure for the submission of requests, as well as the provisions for the organization of functions with catering services in the Palais des Nations can be found in Information Circular IC/Geneva/2007/10/Rev.3.

6.6 Any consumption of alcohol is subject to prior authorization from the Office of the Director of Administration.

6.7 Requests for the organization of all other special events and exhibits not listed in this section should be addressed to UNOG's Central Support Services, Division of Administration at centralssupportservices@un.org.

⁴ <https://library-gva.un.org/cap/>

Section 7. Roles and responsibilities of organizers and sponsors

7.1 The role of the main sponsor and/or organizer of the meeting, conference, event or exhibit should be clear in all communication and information materials referring to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit. The main sponsor and/or organizer must take sole responsibility for liaising with UNOG services. The roles and responsibilities of a sponsor and/or organizer include the following:

- a) The sponsor and/or organizer must clearly designate an official to act as liaison on all issues related to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit. The sponsor and/or organizer liaises with the relevant managing entity and other relevant service providers for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements.
- b) An official of the sponsor and/or organizer must attend and preside over the meeting, conference, event or exhibit in its entirety.
- c) The sponsor and/or organizer is fully responsible for ensuring that the programme content is consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. Any question or concern pertaining to the programme content should be referred to the sponsor and/or organizer.
- d) The sponsor and/or organizer is fully responsible for vetting the list of participants and all information disseminated, publicly or otherwise, relating to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit; for liaising with the participants on any issues relating to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit; and for any and all costs associated with servicing the meeting, conference, event or exhibit.
- e) It is the sponsor and/or organizer's responsibility to ensure that the use of the facilities end as scheduled and that they are returned to their original condition immediately after use.
- f) The sponsor and/or organizer should be aware that any significant unannounced deviation from the purpose, agenda, and content of the programme as previously approved will negate such approval, pending review.
- g) Sponsors may not reserve the meeting rooms, conference facilities and services at UNOG on behalf of another entity that is not eligible to use these premises. Should it be determined that a sponsor is only acting in title in order to facilitate an outside organization's use of the premises, approval for the meeting, conference, event or exhibit will be withdrawn.

Section 8. Costs of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits

8.1 Meetings, conferences, events or exhibits that are not provided for in the regular budget of the Organization entail costs for sponsors and/or organizers. These include costs of all conference and non-conference resources required, including any additional costs such as overtime payment of staff, costs for the provision of technical or special equipment, security and cleaning services.

8.2 An online “XB Cost Calculator” platform enables sponsors and/or organizers of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits whose costs are not covered under the regular budget of the Organization to generate immediate cost estimates on a “self-service” basis. Organizers can run multiple scenarios by selecting which services to include or exclude and be informed immediately of the associated cost implications.

8.3 An official cost estimate is prepared for approved events by the Financial Resources Management Service (FRMS), Division of Administration once the managing entity has provided all relevant information to FRMS. Once prepared, the cost estimate is sent to the sponsor and/or organizer.

8.4 The sponsor and/or organizer must deposit at least eighty per cent of the overall estimated cost to UNOG’s bank account at least one week or otherwise stipulated, before the date of the meetings, conferences, events or exhibit. Failure to meet this condition will entail cancellation of the permission to use the premises. The remainder must be paid at the end of the meeting, conference or event, upon receipt of the final invoice.

8.5 Should a sponsor or organizer fail to meet the final costs of a meeting, conference, event or exhibit, future requests will be refused until the amount is paid in full.

Section 9. Liability for damage and insurance

9.1 Sponsors and/or organizers of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits have the obligation to report any damage or incident to the Security and Safety Service. They are responsible for all costs necessary for the repair of any damage they -or their personnel or invited guests- have caused to UNOG property during the meeting, conference, event or exhibit they have organized.

9.2 Participants and organizers of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits have the obligation to secure any items they bring to the Palais.

9.3 Depending on the nature of the event, the Division of Conference Management or the Cultural Activities Committee, will inform the sponsor of the meeting or event if a certificate of insurance is required. Such a certificate must be provided to FRMS two weeks prior to the scheduled event for clearance. The certificate should demonstrate adequate insurance coverage,

including liquor liability coverage as appropriate, specifically covering the United Nations against third-party liability claims.

Section 10. Final provisions

10.1 The present circular cancels and supersedes circular IC/Geneva/2005/14 dated 1 March 2005 entitled “Conditions for the use of meeting and other rooms and other premises of the United Nations Office at Geneva”.

Tatiana Valovaya
Director-General
United Nations Office at Geneva

Annex 1

Procedures to be used by NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

In accordance with ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, which governs the consultative arrangements between the United Nations and NGOs, accommodation may be provided for conferences or smaller meetings of NGOs with consultative status.

Premises may only be granted for activities that are in keeping with the United Nations purposes and objectives, as defined in the Charter, and are strictly non-commercial.

Rooms may be made available for the following purposes:

➤ For consultations with the Secretariat and/or Governments and/or other Non-Governmental Organizations on matters related to the concerns of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC);

➤ For meetings, seminars and conferences related to the concerns of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and involving the participation of one or more sections of the Secretariat;

➤ For meetings, seminars, conferences and consultations related to the procedures of consultative status.

Rooms cannot be made available for NGOs to:

➤ Conduct their own organizational business

➤ Advance its own purpose

Meeting rooms may be requested by non-governmental organizations through UNOG's NGO Liaison Unit, Office of the Director-General by completing and submitting the following documents at least 6 weeks prior to the planned date of the meeting:

- The form and the related terms and conditions available at www.unog.ch/ngo ;
- The agenda and /or concept note of the meeting.