



Human Rights Go Local: What Works

“Accountability in Action: Human Rights Action Plans of Local Governments”

8 February 2024

12:00 – 14:30 CET (GMT+1)

hybrid with online participation via Zoom

Simultaneous interpretation in EN/DE/FR/ES

Programme

(Version: 7 February 2024)

The Conference commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by bringing together high-level representatives from international organisations and local governments to discuss how human rights action plans promote local government accountability. Therefore, as elaborated during the Academy “Accountability in Action”, the encouragements to local authorities take centre stage.

12:00	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Renate Kicker and Klaus Starl, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, Graz, Austria</p> <p>Gerhard Koch, Director of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF, Styrian Office</p> <p>Peter Riedler, Rector of the University of Graz, Austria</p>
12:10	<p>Official opening ceremony</p> <p>Elke Kahr, Mayor of Graz, Austria</p> <p>Barbara Eibinger-Miedl, Councillor of the Provincial Government of Styria, Austria</p> <p>Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Ambassador and Chief of the International Cultural Affairs Section of the Federal Minister for European and International Affairs, Austria</p>
12:25	<p>Keynote speeches: Lessons for Local Authorities from 75 Years of Human Rights Treaties</p> <p>Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO</p> <p>Marc Cools, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe</p>



13:00

Session on Human Rights Action Plans and local government accountability

What features make Human Rights Action Plans a vital instrument to foster local government accountability? Why is it important to provide capacity-building on Human Rights Action Plans for government employees, future leaders, and civil society? Why is it vital to network and share experiences and best practices at all levels with each other around the globe?

In a high-level discussion, representatives of cities, city networks, city coalitions, and international organisations provide their perspectives by sharing their tangible and practical insights and future visions.

As a way forward, we explore the possibility of establishing a Human Rights Cities Network. Representatives of cities will be showing accountability in action in the spirit of the Conference's title. It shall inspire other cities to join and follow this path.

Moderation by Helmut Tichy, Professor and Ambassador (ret.), Austria

Participants:

Elke Kahr, Mayor of Graz, Austria

Robert Lewis-Lettington, Senior Advisor on Land, Housing, and Human Rights, UN-Habitat

Pradeep Wagle, Chief of the Economic, Social & Cultural Rights Section, OHCHR

Najat Zarrouk, Director of the African Local Government Academy of UCLG-Africa

Evein Obulor, Director of the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism – ECCAR

Alexander Lesigang, Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, Vienna Office, European / International Affairs Division (UN Agenda 2023-SDGs)

Elliott King, Cabinet Member for Equalities, Human Rights and Culture of Swansea Council, Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom

Adele Dunstan, Strategic Equalities and Human Rights Coordinator, Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom

Aly Raposo, Coordinator of the Human Rights Committee of Council, City of Winnipeg, Canada

14:25

Closing remarks

