

Guidelines for submission to the Special Rapporteur of allegations of violations of the Declaration on human rights defenders

Selecting the right information - Presenting it clearly

- Before sending a complaint, ensure that all the details listed in points 1 to 7 of column A (Essential information) are included in your submission. In cases of extreme urgency, it may be possible to submit a case without some of these details, but their absence makes examining the matter more difficult.
- If you have additional information, it could be helpful. Examples of useful additional information are provided in column B (Useful information). These details are not essential but can be important in some cases.
- Information may be sent in list form (as in column A), or it may be provided in a letter. Column C provides an example of case information and how it can be included in a letter. Providing the correct kind of details and expressing them clearly make a quick response easier.

Confidentiality

- The identity of a victim will always be included in any contact between the Special Rapporteur and State authorities. The Special Rapporteur cannot intervene without revealing the victim's identity. If the victim is a minor (below 18 years of age) the Special Rapporteur will include his or her name in contact with the State but will not include the name in any subsequent public report. The source of the information provided or the victim may also request that the victim's name not be included in public reports.
- The identity of the source of information on the alleged violation is always kept confidential, unless the source agrees that it may be revealed. When submitting information you may indicate whether there are any other details which you would like to remain confidential.

Contact details for sending submissions and for further correspondence

- The Special Rapporteur's staff will acknowledge the receipt of a submission if this is requested. They can be contacted at any time for further discussion.
- E-mail contact details: urgent-action@ohchr.org The text of the e-mail should refer to the human rights defenders mandate.
- Fax: +41 22 917 9006 (Geneva, Switzerland)
- Telephone: +41 22 917 1234. This is the number for the United Nations telephone operator in Geneva, Switzerland . Callers should ask to speak with staff at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights dealing with the special procedures of the Human Rights, and specifically with staff supporting the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders.

Guidelines for submitting allegations of violations against human rights defenders

A. Essential information	B. Useful information	C. Sample letter to the Special Rapporteur
<p>1. Name of alleged victim/s</p> <p>Take care to give first and family names and to spell names correctly. Victims can be individuals, groups or organizations.</p>	<p>If the victim is an individual, please provide information on gender, age, nationality and profession. If the victim is an individual or an organization, please provide contact details. Contact details are treated as confidential.</p>	<p>Ms. Aabb Ddee, a lawyer, lives in [name of city/town and country].</p>
<p>2. Status of the victim as a human rights defender</p> <p>In what human rights activity is the victim (person/s, organization) engaged?</p>	<p>Where relevant, please also indicate the city and country in which the victim (person/s, organization) conducts this human rights work.</p>	<p>Aabb Ddee takes up legal cases supporting the right to adequate housing on behalf of ethnic minorities. She is also a member of the National Commission for Human Rights.</p>
<p>3. Alleged violation/s committed against the victim</p> <p>What happened? Where? When? What is the current situation?</p>	<p>If an initial violation leads to other events, please describe them chronologically. E.g. if the initial concern is that a human rights defender has been arrested, details should be provided. But if he or she is later detained, other useful information would include: the place of detention; the person's access to a lawyer; conditions of detention; the charges; etc.</p>	<p>Aabb Ddee received an anonymous threat to her safety. On [day/month/year] Ms. Ddee received a letter at her office in [name of town]. The letter was addressed to her and contained only the words "Be careful". In addition, the following day Ms. Ddee was followed closely while driving from her office by two men in a white car.</p>
<p>4. Perpetrators</p> <p>Give available information on who allegedly</p>	<p>Witnesses</p> <p>Were there any witnesses to the alleged violation? Were there</p>	<p>Aabb Ddee was unable to identify the two men following her or their vehicle. A friend accompanying</p>

<p>committed the violation: e.g. two men (in uniform?); rank, unit or other identification or title.</p>	<p>any other victims?</p>	<p>Ms. Ddee in her car also saw the vehicle following them.</p>
<p>5. Action by authorities</p> <p>Has the matter been reported to the relevant authorities? What action has been taken?</p>	<p>Action taken by the victim or by human rights organizations</p> <p>Has the alleged violation been made public? Has this information been sent to others?</p>	<p>Aabb Ddee reported both incidents to the police [name/address of police office] the same days they occurred. The police have opened an investigation. She also reported the incidents to a local newspaper [name].</p>
<p>6. Link between the violation and human rights work</p> <p>Why do you think the alleged violation is a response to the human rights work of the victim?</p>	<p>Previous incidents</p> <p>If there have been previous incidents which are relevant, please give details.</p>	<p>A year ago [date], another lawyer representing the same ethnic group as Aabb Ddee received a threatening letter similar to Ms. Ddee's and was later [date] killed by unknown persons.</p>
<p>7. Who is submitting this information? (Confidential)</p> <p>Give name, contact details and professional role (if relevant).</p>	<p>Submissions may be made by organizations or individuals.</p>	<p>This letter is submitted by the National Commission for Human Rights, with which Aabb Ddee works.</p>
<p>Updates</p> <p>Please send any updated information you have as soon as possible. It is especially important to know if there has been any change in the situation of the victim. Updates might be given where: 1) additional information becomes known (e.g. the identity of the perpetrator of the violation); or 2) new events occur (e.g. the victim's release from detention).</p>		<p>[two months later] We learned today [date] that the police investigation was closed yesterday. Two men have been arrested and detained on charges of sending a threatening letter to Aabb Ddee on</p>

[date] and of following her in their car when she left work the next day. The men are due to appear in court in two weeks. While pleased with the arrests, Ms. Ddee believes that the person who ordered these acts to be committed remains at liberty. She has asked that the police investigation be continued.