



Guidelines on Granting Observer Status to Intergovernmental and Non-Governmental Organisations to The Bonn Agreement

Observer status can be granted to an organisation or an established network of organisations, which has members, branches or affiliated bodies in Europe. The organisation or network must have an organised administration. It must have a constitution and rules of procedure. The organisation must be able to contribute substantially to the aims and objectives of the Bonn Agreement. It must have technical, scientific, economic, social or other expertise relevant to the objectives of the Bonn Agreement in the North-east Atlantic.

Intergovernmental (IGO) and non-governmental (NGO) organisations, which do not operate in the North-east Atlantic area, can be accepted as observers if they are considered to be able to contribute substantially to the aims and objectives of the Agreement. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by recommendation from the Bonn Agreement's technical working group (OTSOPA) to the Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Bonn Agreement.

Granting of observer status

Observer status will only be granted to IGOs/NGOs which:

- a. have an organised administration;
- b. are international in character (an organisation shall be deemed to be an international organisation for the purposes of the Agreement only if it has members, component branches or affiliated bodies in a number of States covered by the area of the Agreement);
- c. are authorised under their constitution to speak for their members through accredited representatives;
- d. have a permanent structure;
- e. have the expertise and experience necessary for promoting the objectives of the Bonn Agreement.

Application and Selection Procedure

IGO and NGO organizations that wish to become observers to the Bonn Agreement are obliged to submit an application to the Bonn Agreement Secretariat three months before an OTSOPA meeting consisting of:

- a. a concise statement about the organisation, expertise and experience which it could provide to the Agreement,
- b. a description of the organisation's activities;
- c. information on the organisation's governance and the total number of members, the purpose of the organisation, including a copy of its annual report; and
- d. reasons why the IGO/NGO believes its contribution would assist the work of the Agreement;
- e. confirmation in writing that the IGO/NGO will respect the obligations imposed on it by these guidelines and any additional requirements imposed by the Bonn Agreement from time to time.



The Secretary of the Bonn Agreement shall immediately distribute the application for observer status to all Contracting Parties for comments.

OTSOPA will evaluate the applications and make recommendations to the Bonn Agreement Contracting Parties, to make the final decision on observership. Observer status shall be granted by a unanimous decision of the meeting of the Contracting Parties. Observer status will be subject to the acceptance of the guidelines on granting observer status for IGOs/NGOs and will take effect following the meeting at which it was granted.

Rights and obligations of observers to the Bonn Agreement

Organisations with observer status are regularly invited to the meetings of OTSOPA. The observers shall have the right to:

- a. One seat per delegation, allocated to general IGO/NGO observers
- b. have access to the Bonn Meeting Portal and to meeting documents of OTSOPA and other documentation on matters of special interest to the observer concerned;
- c. attend the meetings of OTSOPA;
- d. submit in accordance with the rules written statements or documents on items of the agenda of the meeting concerned;
- e. participate in discussion and give oral statements at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting concerned but not a right to vote.

Any IGO/NGO accepted as an observer to the Agreement may:

- a. submit prior to meetings held in the framework of the Agreement relevant documents to be distributed at the discretion of the Secretary and to be considered at the discretion of the meetings;
- b. participate in discussions at the discretion of the Chairman at a meeting at which it has been allocated a seat; and
- c. make proposals at such meetings, but no proposal by an IGO/NGO shall be discussed unless discussion of this proposal is supported by at least one Contracting Party. Any IGO/NGO admitted as an observer to the Agreement may ask to participate in an intersessional correspondence group, unless participation is limited.

The observer status of any IGO/NGO shall impose an obligation to:

- a. recognise the basic purposes of the Agreement and the principles governing the work of the Agreement and to follow the rules of the Agreement;
- b. deliver only such information as is relevant to the work of the Agreement;
- c. respect any specific requirements agreed to by the Contracting Parties relating to the participation of observers at OTSOPA;
- d. notify to the Secretary of the Bonn Agreement the names and status of the individuals authorised to represent it;



- e. handle in a confidential manner documents or information relating to the work of the Bonn Agreement, in other words not use this information or these documents for any purpose other than that of conducting its rights and commitments;

Continuation and discontinuation of observer status:

The Bonn Agreement has the right to cancel observer status of any IGO/NGO if:

- a. the organisation fails to follow the rules and instructions of the Agreement;
- b. the conduct of its representative(s) is inconsistent with the criteria for granting observer status.
- c. The observer is inactive, or fails to keep contact with OTSOPA for three consecutive years.

On its own initiative the observer organisation can discontinue its observer status any time.

All communication regarding application, continuation or discontinuation of observer status must be made in writing.