

Code of Conduct for UNFCCC Events

Revision June 2023

Purpose

The UNFCCC secretariat is committed to enabling events at which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful, healthy and safe environment and be treated with fairness and dignity.

Applicability

The Code of Conduct applies to any UNFCCC event, which shall include meetings, conferences, receptions, scientific and technical events, expert meetings, workshops, exhibits, side events and any other forum organized, hosted or sponsored in whole or part by the UNFCCC, wherever it takes place, and any event or gathering that takes place on UNFCCC premises whether or not the UNFCCC is organizing, hosting or sponsoring.

The Code of Conduct applies to all participants at a UNFCCC event, that is, all persons attending (regardless whether in person or virtually) or involved in any capacity at a UNFCCC event, including in its set up or delivery. By attending or being involved in any capacity at a UNFCCC event, participants agree to abide by the UNFCCC Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct supplements, and does not affect, the application of other relevant policies¹, regulations, rules and laws, including laws regulating the premises in which the UNFCCC event takes place and any applicable host country agreements. The UNFCCC is committed to implementing the Code of Conduct fairly and without discrimination.

Guiding Principles

The UNFCCC is committed to upholding the fundamental human rights, dignity and worth of the human person, and equal human rights of all participants in a UNFCCC event.

UNFCCC events are guided by the highest ethical and professional standards, and all participants are expected to act with integrity and respect towards all participants.

Scope of the Code of Conduct

Participants must:

- Treat all other participants with respect and dignity. Any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, is prohibited (see section “Prohibition of harassment, including sexual harassment”).
- Follow all applicable rules and procedures of the event, including any relevant health protocols.
- Cooperate and comply with requests and instructions from United Nations officials and security staff issued in their official capacity regarding the use of facilities and access to and conduct within the venues of the UNFCCC event.

¹ Including, but not limited to, the following:

UN Administrative instruction on Authority of United Nations security officers:

<https://unfccc.int/documents/307228>

Use of cameras and audio/video recording devices by participants at sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other meetings and workshops: <https://unfccc.int/documents/38827>

UN Security guidelines related to media actions, distribution of publicity materials, and use of UN emblem at the UNFCCC conferences: <https://unfccc.int/documents/39680>

Guidelines for the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations at meetings of the bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: <https://unfccc.int/documents/63809>

- Treat flags, name plates, and any officially recognized symbols of the United Nations and of its member States with respect.
- Take still photographs and make audio or video recordings only in accordance with specific guidelines².
- Refrain from using the UNFCCC venues for unauthorized demonstrations.

Any non-compliant behaviour is prohibited.

Accountability

Parties, and observer organizations are responsible for the conduct of their representatives, contractors and other support staff. Any behaviour not consistent with this Code of Conduct may have an impact on the participation or contract of the concerned individual(s) and/or the relevant Party or observer organization at current or future UNFCCC events.

The Executive Secretary has the authority to take any action necessary to implement this Code of Conduct.

Examples of such action may include, but are not limited to:

- undertaking a fact-finding exercise
- requesting the concerned individual(s) to immediately stop the offending behavior
- suspending or terminating the concerned individuals(s) access to the UNFCCC event; in the case of Party representative(s), in consultation with their Head of Delegation where appropriate
- review of admission status of the observer organization
- conveying the complaint to any investigative or disciplinary authority with jurisdiction over the concerned individual(s)
- conveying a report to the employer or entity with jurisdiction over the concerned individual(s) for appropriate follow-up action

In addition, UNFCCC staff and staff members of other United Nations Organizations shall be subject to any applicable regulations, rules and procedures. The UNFCCC secretariat will take appropriate action in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules and policies.

² See footnote 1 for guidelines on use of camera and video/audio recording devices.
<https://unfccc.int/documents/39680>

Prohibition of harassment, including sexual harassment

Prohibited conduct

Harassment is any improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment in any form because of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical ability, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, national origin, political affiliation, age, religion or any other reason is prohibited at UNFCCC events.

Sexual harassment is a specific type of prohibited conduct. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation. Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications, and may occur between persons of the same or different genders.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Making derogatory or demeaning comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Name-calling or using slurs with a gender/sexual connotation
- Making sexual comments about appearance, clothing or body parts
- Rating a person's sexuality
- Repeatedly asking a person for dates or asking for sex
- Staring in a sexually suggestive manner
- Unwelcome touching, including pinching, patting, rubbing or purposefully brushing up against a person
- Making inappropriate sexual gestures, such as pelvic thrusts
- Sharing sexual or lewd anecdotes or jokes
- Sending sexually suggestive communications in any format
- Sharing or displaying sexually inappropriate images or videos in any format
- Attempted or actual sexual assault, including rape

Complaint process

Any participant who feels that they have been harassed at a UNFCCC event may report the matter. Any participant who witnesses such harassment should report it immediately. Reports can be made to the designated office(s) or email address that will be indicated by UNFCCC for each specific event. The complainant will be informed as regards the status of the report

The victim of alleged harassment may also seek help from other relevant authorities, such as the local police, bearing in mind the applicable legal framework.

A participant should never knowingly make a false or misleading claim about prohibited conduct.

Prohibition of retaliation

Threats, intimidation or any other form of retaliation against a participant who has made a complaint or provided information in support of a complaint are prohibited. The UNFCCC will take appropriate action needed to prevent and respond to retaliation, in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules and policies.