

1 - Conference of Non-Governmental (CONGO)

The basic mission of CONGO is “to ensure that NGOs in consultative status enjoy the fullest opportunities and all appropriate facilities for performing their consultative functions,” which stem directly from Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Conference of NGOs is in consultative relationship with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and:

- a. Assists the great variety of non-governmental organizations in consultative status to promote their common aim of supporting the United Nations Charter;
- b. Works on behalf of NGOs in consultative status to develop that status and improve their relationship and cooperation with the United Nations and its various organs;
- c. Provides a forum for NGOs with common interests to come together to study, plan, support, and act in relation to the principles and programs of the United Nations.

The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) does not take a position on substantive matters. However, the numerous “NGO Committees,” established under the auspices of CONGO, provide meetings for discussion of substantive matters by non-governmental organizations as well as for dialogue with representatives of Member States and members of the United Nations Secretariat. Such NGO Committees meet on a monthly basis to keep their Membership informed of developments in their respective fields and to encourage joint activities among organizations in support of United Nations Programs.

Presently there are NGO Committees on aging, disarmament, human rights, narcotics, shelter and community, South Africa, sustainable development, indigenous peoples, status of women, youth, population, crime prevention and freedom of religion and belief. The NGO Committees are open to all interested NGOs, whether in consultative status or in association with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI).

Full membership in the Conference is open to NGOs having consultative status with the United Nations through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Associate membership is open to NGOs that have a formal relationship with the UN – including NGOs affiliated with the Department of Public Information, NGOs accredited to UN Conferences and NGOs accredited to treaty bodies.

As a non-governmental organization in relationship with the United Nations, the NGO will:

- a. Participate in UN meetings and Regional NGO Consultations
- b. Share in the follow-up implementation of major international conferences
- c. Discuss international issues through issue-oriented committee membership
- d. Network with other NGOs
- e. Ensure that voices of all NGOs are heard and heeded

2 – JCI's participation at CONGO

JCI and its National Organizations have been actively participating at CONGO meetings and General Assemblies, and accordingly ensuring that NGO voices are really heard throughout the international arena.