



II. THE ORGANIZING PROCESS

Popular tribunal/hearings can take many forms and serve a variety of purposes; there is no single way to organize a tribunal/hearing. It is important, however, to begin the planning process months in advance to allow sufficient time to create an effective and manageable structure that is consistent with your objectives and desired outcomes. Below are suggested steps to help guide you in the initial development of your tribunal/hearing.

Select and invite relevant organizations, groups, and/or individuals to assist with various aspects of the tribunal/hearing organizing process.

CO-SPONSORS

Members of this core planning committee can be asked to advise and collaborate in the overall planning and organization of the tribunal/hearing. The parties invited to participate should constitute a diverse range of groups and individuals that bring different skills and perspectives to the organizing process. At the outset it is important to take into consideration the need for "regional balance" (within a local, national, or international context) and, in particular, to seek to include the voices and perspectives of activists from marginalized or discriminated-against groups.

TRIBUNAL/HEARING COMMITTEE

An effective tribunal/hearing committee is vital to the success of a tribunal/hearing. The tribunal/hearing committee primarily should consist of individuals who are in a position to identify possible testifiers in the areas being addressed by the tribunal/hearing. In the weeks leading up to the tribunal/hearing, a member of the committee should work closely with individual testifiers to help in preparing and revising the testimony in accordance with time and format constraints as well as overall objectives (see Section IV). Ask tribunal/hearing committee members to suggest appropriate people to carry out moderator and other roles in the tribunal/hearing program.

The tribunal/hearing committee should consist of individuals who have substantial knowledge of, and experience working on, the issues and themes identified. It is also very helpful if the committee includes people with other relevant skills, for example, media and communications expertise, proficiency with audiovisual/

multimedia technologies, and multiple language abilities.

ISSUES/THEMES THAT COULD BE ADDRESSED AT A TRIBUNAL/HEARING ON WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

- Violence against women
- Trafficking in women and girls
- Women in conflict situations
- Socioeconomic rights
- Development and women's human rights
- Refugee and migrant women's human rights sexual rights
- Culture, religion and/or fundamentalism
- Indigenous women's rights
- Health and/or reproductive rights

DECIDING ON THE SPECIFIC ISSUES AND THEMES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE TRIBUNAL/HEARING

While single-issue tribunal/hearings can be effective in allowing for in-depth examination of one topic, connecting a number of issues throughout the tribunal/hearing can attract a wider audience and generate more momentum. The tribunal/hearing should also be used as a vehicle to highlight cases or issues that are currently being pursued legally and/or politically.

IDENTIFYING OBJECTIVES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

Use the Overview Section as a guide in identifying tribunal/hearing objectives and desired outcomes. Once decided, the objectives should inform all subsequent decisions about the content and format of the tribunal/hearing.

SELECTING A TIME AND VENUE

If possible, the tribunal/hearing should coincide with a larger upcoming event or conference. In addition, it should also be scheduled for a significant date or during a period of time that will attract more attention from both the public and the media, for example, International Women's Day (March 8) or the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (November 25- December 10). Such strategic timing of the event will maximize the potential audience and media attention while providing the tribunal/hearing with added momentum.

Try to choose a central location that is easy to reach by public transportation while also keeping in mind disability access. Other things to take into considera-

tion when choosing a venue are the availability of simultaneous translation and if possible signing for the hearing impaired. In addition, consider the scope for using audio/visual equipment to heighten the effectiveness of the testimonies.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

The annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign from November 25 to December 10 has been used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. Growing out of the Global Center's first Women's Global Leadership Institute, the Campaign links violence against women and human rights, emphasizing that all forms of violence, whether perpetrated in the public or private sphere, are a violation of human rights. The dates that participants chose for the Campaign symbolically make this link: November 25 marks the International Day Against Violence Against Women and December 10 is International Human Rights Day. The 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including December 1, which is World AIDS Day, and December 6 which marks the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre.

FORMING AN ADVISORY GROUP OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND POLICY EXPERTS

Identify key individuals to assist with selecting "judges" or "respondents" and advising them with respect to their role and input in the tribunal/hearing (see Section V). The Advisory Group is particularly important if,

1. The tribunal/hearing aims to be a source of documentation that might be used subsequently in a more formal context; or
2. One of the tribunal/hearing objectives is to provide the basis for very specific policy or legislative changes.

The role of Advisory Group members also includes assisting with the development of testimonies and judges' or respondents' statements with a view to highlighting relevant human rights standards and shaping targeted recommendations. These individuals should have familiarity with relevant international human rights mechanisms and/or the national legislative frameworks.

ASSIGNING A TRIBUNAL/HEARING COORDINATOR

A tribunal/hearing coordinator should be assigned who has overall responsibility, in collaboration with members of the tribunal/hearing committee and/or the Advisory Group, for tracking and shaping developments during the organizing process. The tribunal/hearing coordinator is responsible for delegating tasks as appropriate and for communicating all necessary information and briefings to



those involved. The various aspects of the organizing process include:

- Testimony development in line with chosen themes and objectives (Section IV)
- Coordination of participation of moderators, respondents, and/or judges (Section V)
- Deciding the overall format and structure of the Tribunal/Hearing program (Section VII)
- Development and implementation of a media strategy (Section VIII)
- Coordination of event documentation procedures (Section IX)
- Managing venue logistics (Section X)
- Planning an effective follow-up strategy (Section XI)