

## **Consultation forum on access to remedies**

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Following the recent extension of my mandate, I reiterated my commitment to take forward the new tasks defined by the Human Rights Council through a continued process of extensive and inclusive consultations. As part of this commitment, I want to test out new ways of drawing in as many voices and ideas as possible to our work. So we are going to try out a new kind of discussion forum, linked to this website, in order to see how it works. I very much hope everyone with interest will take advantage and send us their views. If it's successful, I look forward to further using and developing this method in other areas of the mandate's work ahead.

This first discussion forum will contribute to a consultation in November 2008 on the subject of non-judicial grievance mechanisms as a means of access to remedy in the context of business and human rights. (We will be doing separate work on judicial mechanisms and legal remedy). I am delighted that Oxfam America is working with the mandate to organize this consultation.

The purpose of the consultation is to look at the 'gaps' in non-judicial grievance mechanisms as they currently exist. It will look at two kinds of gaps: performance gaps and institutional gaps. By 'performance gaps' we mean gaps in how well existing mechanisms perform and which prevent them from providing the quality or scale of access to remedy that they could. By 'institutional gaps', we mean gaps between existing mechanisms that would require new institutional or procedural arrangements to provide types of remedy or access to remedy that are currently not provided.

Before we decide what ideas to discuss at the November consultation, we first need to identify which ideas appear capable of adding the greatest value in this area and therefore most merit examination. A number of initial suggestions have been made by different stakeholders and experts, which we welcome and are using as a starting point for debate. You will find them listed in the forum, accessible here: <http://srsq-consultation.pbwiki.com>. Together with Oxfam America I now invite everyone with ideas and views on this subject to join the discussion by clicking on the link above and following the simple instructions.

If anyone has any difficulties in contributing to the discussion forum, just send an email to [srsqconsultation@gmail.com](mailto:srsqconsultation@gmail.com) and we'll help out. We look forward to hearing from you and very much hope this experiment proves fruitful!