

Mr. President

Our work in establishing the UPR should be guided by the following principles

- Application of same standards
- Avoidance of overlap with the work of the treaty bodies
- Possibility of a differentiated response
- Efficient and effective UPR on the basis of an interactive dialogue

The Universal Periodic Review is supposed to be the answer of the Human Rights Council to the criticism of selectivity and double-standards which plagued the Commission on Human Rights. If we want to ensure the credibility of the Universal Periodic Review, it will be essential to guarantee that all countries will be treated on the basis of the same standards. Universality of coverage means not only that all States must be submitted to the UPR, but also that the standards they will be reviewed against are the same for all. The universal nature of all human rights, as reaffirmed in the resolution of the General Assembly establishing the Human Rights Council, can leave no doubt that each and every Government will have to present the measures it has taken to ensure the protection and promotion of all human rights under its jurisdiction..

The differences that have to be taken into account are those which relate to the level of implementation of the universal human rights standards. Thus, it must be possible for the Human Rights Council to react in different ways to different degrees of implementation of human rights obligations and to different reasons for varying levels of implementation. It must also be possible to take into account different levels of cooperation with the UN treaty bodies. In fact, the GA resolution on the Human Rights Council makes it clear that the work of the treaty bodies will have to be a major reference point for the UPR. In the case of countries that have ratified only very few human rights treaties or/and fail to fulfil their reporting obligations, the Human Rights Council will have an important task to complement the work of the treaty bodies, as requested in OP 5 of the GA resolution. The UPR must be designed in a manner that makes it complementary to the work of treaty bodies, taking into account the ongoing discussions on treaty body reform

The GA resolution also requires the UPR to be a cooperative mechanism which is based on an interactive dialogue. We welcome this emphasis on the process rather than merely on the outcome of the UPR. It underlines the on-going nature of the constructive cooperation between the State concerned and the UN human rights organs which the interactive dialogue will try to achieve. Dialogue is in fact one of the key words of the GA resolution. Dialogue means that the State under examination has not only the right to present its views but must be engaged in a dialogue based on questions, answers and comments. Genuine dialogue also means that all stakeholders should be given an opportunity to participate in the review process in an appropriate way. Such stakeholders include NGOs, National Human Rights institutions and national parliaments.

Based on the history of resolution 60/251, it is our understanding that additional time will be allocated to the consideration under the UPR and that at least ten weeks of meeting time will continue to be available for the other issues on the HRC agenda. It is therefore crucial that we design a system which does not place an enormous burden on the resources of the HRC and avoid creating a separate bureaucracy for UPR.

I thank you.