



Twenty first meeting of chairpersons  
of the human rights treaty bodies  
Geneva, 2 and 3 July 2009

Ninth inter-committee meeting  
of human rights treaty bodies  
Geneva, 29 June -1 July 2009

#### ANNOTATIONS TO THE BULLET POINTS OF ITEM 5 TO THE AGENDA OF THE INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING

#### CONCERNING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TREATY BODIES: A COORDINATED APPROACH TO THE WORK OF THE TREATY BODIES

- **Identity/role of the country rapporteur/country task force**
- **Cross-referencing the work of other treaty bodies**
  - It is important to cross reference to other treaty bodies's work but also to distinguish the comments made by bringing in the unique aspects of each committee's mandate
  - E.g., the case of recent events in Iran – they are not just civil and political rights but should engage the mandates of most of the other treaty bodies, in exploring the economic, social, cultural conditions, the detention conditions, the treatment of children and families of the detained persons, etc.
- **Standardization of terminology**
- **Participation of NHRIs, States parties and NGOs**
  - We encourage regularized, predictable, accessible participation by NGOs
  - NHRIs are valuable contributors, but treaty bodies should pay due attention to the independence and impartiality of the respective NHRI and should be questioned about their adherence to the Paris Principles
  - New, start up NHRIs deserve particular attention by the treaty bodies when these countries appear before them. For example, the Advocates for Human Rights is following closely the start up of the new NHRI in Liberia, with particular attention to the independence and robustness of the funding resources for this NHRI. Liberia is scheduled to appear before CEDAW later this summer.
- **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**
  - Linkage is important

- The treaty bodies should be formulating their concluding observations and jurisprudence with an eye toward how each can best be used in the UPR process
- **Follow-up**
  - NGOs, NHRIs and the media should be invited to followup more concretely
  - For example, treaty bodies could ask for follow up “report cards” from interested NGOs, NHRIs and media organizations, one year after the concluding observations are issued. These submissions should then be posted on the treaty body's website under the “follow up” column for that particular country
- **The role of the ICM/MC**
  - The ICM should become more active in evaluating and managing the backlog and scheduling difficulties that the treaty bodies are facing
  - The ICM's membership should be more continuous than is presently occurring. Succession management should be practiced so that the continuity from year to year is more progressive.
  - Better time management can be obtained in many aspects of the present treaty body system. Peer review, self-assessments, and other means should be explored in order to improve efficiencies and methodologies
- **Other topics not on the present agenda but which we would like to raise**
  - Better media relations is needed by all treaty bodies; the ICM could hold a consultation with NGOs and media organizations, asking for suggestions on how to make the treaty body system more visible and accessible
  - All treaty bodies should observe best practices on accessibility that are being learned through the experiences of the CRPD. Accessibility is not just a subject for the CRPD. Even though some accessibility features are resource intensive, others are not. An accessibility assessment should be done of all facilities, websites, meeting rooms and documentation, to better understand what can be done to improve accessibility to the treaty body system for disabled persons
  - More visibility and attention should be paid to the individual communications processes
  - The status of official documentation of the treaty body system is still lacking in many aspects. Annual reports filed with the General Assembly are often released months after the General Assembly has adjourned. This makes it very difficult for researchers and activists to be able to refer to the committees' official reports. a