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of the human rights treaty bodies  
Geneva, 19-21 June 2006

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE FOURTH INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING AND THE  
SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The present report contains information on the steps taken by the treaty bodies and the Secretariat to implement the recommendations adopted at the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting, which was held from 20 to 22 June 2005, and the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, held on 23 and 24 June 2005.

The report will be considered at the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting and eighteenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, which will take place in Geneva on 19 to 21 June 2006, and 22 to 23 June 2006, respectively.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1-5	3
II. FOLLOW-UP TO POINTS OF AGREEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING .....	6-15	4
A. Coordinated approach to reporting by States parties.....	6-8	4
B. Standardization of terminology.....	9	4
C. Modalities of NGO participation.....	10	5
D. Meeting with specialized agencies.....	11	5
E. National human rights institutions.....	12-13	5
F. Ratification of the core international human rights treaties.....	14-15	6
III. FOLLOW-UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES .....	16-23	7
A. Consultations on proposals for reform of the United Nations human rights framework.....	16-22	7
B. Technical cooperation and follow-up to concluding observations.....	23	8
IV. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS .....	24-32	9
Annex. Guidelines on criteria for Treaties and Council Branch (TCB) workshops.....		11

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report provides information on the follow-up actions taken by the treaty bodies, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) with regard to the substantive recommendations made by the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting and the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons, held from 20 to 22 June 2005 and 23 to 24 June 2005, respectively.
2. Part II of the report addresses implementation of the recommendations of the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting (A/60/278, annex). Part III examines the actions taken to follow up the recommendations made by the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies (A/60/278), while part IV provides information on other relevant developments. Guidelines on criteria for Treaties and Council Branch (TCB) workshops are contained in annex I.
3. The report is complemented by the report on the working methods of the seven human rights treaty bodies relating to the reporting process (HRI/MC/2006/4) which provides information on the implementation of the recommendations of the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons and the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting concerning cooperation with special procedures, the lists of issues, modalities of the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the work of the treaty bodies, liaison with United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, follow-up to concluding observations, and general comments (A/60/278, recommendation (f) and A/60/278, annex, recommendations V, VIII, IX, X, XVII, XIX). It is also complemented by an addendum updating the report on reservations to human rights treaties (HRI/MC/2005/5/Add.1) and by a report of the working group on reservations requested by the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting (A/60/278, annex, recommendation VI). A report on indicators for monitoring compliance with international human rights instruments as requested by the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons (A/60/278, recommendation (g)) is contained in document HRI/MC/2006/7.
4. Revised draft harmonized guidelines on a common core document and treaty specific targeted reports prepared by the Technical Working Group established by the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting and the seventeenth meeting of chairpersons are contained in document HRI/MC/2006/3. The Technical Working Group met at OHCHR from 8 to 9 December 2005 and 15 to 17 February 2006, respectively.
5. A table of treaty body recommendations relating to national human rights institutions (NHRIs) for the period January 2000 to March 2006 will be circulated at the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting in English only (A/60/278, annex, recommendation XVI). Draft guidelines prepared by the OHCHR National Human Rights Institutions Unit on the engagement of NHRIs in treaty body processes at the request of the fourth Inter-Committee Meeting (A/60/278, annex, recommendation XIV), will also be made available to the meeting. Insofar as the recommendation of the seventeenth meeting of the chairpersons relating to interaction with the Commission on Human Rights (A/60/278, recommendation (d)), the Human Rights Council was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, and will replace the Commission on Human Rights, which will be formally abolished on 16 June 2006.

## **II. FOLLOW-UP TO POINTS OF AGREEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **A. Coordinated approach to reporting by States parties**

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting recommended that all States parties consider adopting a coordinated approach to reporting under all of the treaties to which they are party, and consider the option of establishing appropriate and stable coordinating institutions or mechanisms in order to support coherent, timely, sustained and thorough reporting.*

6. The initial draft harmonized reporting guidelines (HRI/MC/2004/3) encouraged States to adopt a coordinated approach to all of their reporting obligations and to set up a permanent institutional framework to support systematic and sustained reporting. The third Inter-Committee meeting and sixteenth meeting of chairpersons agreed that “any States parties wishing to prepare reports using the draft guidelines should be entitled to do so and encouraged them to seek technical assistance from OHCHR and DAW, which were requested to provide technical assistance to States engaged in this process” (A/59/254, annex, recommendation VI). A number of States have shown an interest in preparing reports in accordance with the draft guidelines, and several are well advanced in the preparation of their common core document and treaty-specific reports, including Afghanistan, Angola, Guyana and Timor-Leste, all with technical assistance from OHCHR. Technical assistance has been sought also by Burkina Faso and Equatorial Guinea.

7. Switzerland has been working on database technology to support coordinated reporting. Australia has also worked on a common core document in accordance with the draft guidelines. A number of other countries have informally expressed interest in taking this approach.

8. On 7 February 2006, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) submitted a report on Kosovo, consisting of an expanded core document prepared on the basis of the existing guidelines for core documents and a treaty-specific document on the implementation of the ICCPR (CCPR/C/UNK/1).

### **B. Standardization of terminology**

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting recommended that the question of standardization of terminology be considered by each committee during the course of the year and that the Secretariat prepare a paper, based on the comments received, containing revised proposals for consideration at the fifth inter-committee meeting.*

9. With the exception of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) which broadly agreed with the proposals<sup>1</sup>, the Committees have not discussed the question of standardization of

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<sup>1</sup> The Human Rights Committee has supported the following proposals:

. Concluding Observations/Observations finales/Observaciones finales;  
. General Comment/Commentaire general/Comentario general;

terminology. Some of the committees, i.e. the Committee against Torture (CAT) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), have included the issue of standardization in the agendas for their respective sessions in May and June 2006. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has identified one of its members to act as focal point on the issue.

### **C. Modalities of NGO participation**

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting recalled the recommendation of the sixteenth meeting of chairpersons regarding the modalities of NGO participation in the treaty bodies and recommended that this issue be placed on the agenda of the fifth inter-committee meeting.*

10. The report on the working methods of the seven treaty bodies (HRI/MC/2006/4) addresses current practices related to NGO participation in its paras. 95-103.

### **D. Meeting with specialized agencies**

*Recommendation: The inter-committee meeting recommended that the Secretariat explore the possibility of arranging a meeting with heads of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes.*

11. The Secretariat has discussed the possibility of arranging such a meeting during the latter part of 2006.

### **E. National human rights institutions**

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting recommended that engagement with national human rights institutions should continue and requested the Secretariat to arrange for such institutions to attend future inter-committee meetings when appropriate items are on the agenda.*

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting requested that OHCHR should consider holding a round table of national human rights institutions and treaty body experts to discuss cooperation on matters of common concern.*

12. A working group comprised of a national human rights institution (NHRI) from each of the geographic regions has been established by the International Coordination Committee of National Institutions for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (ICC). The members of the working group include the German Institute for Human Rights from Europe, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights from Africa, as well as a NHRI from the Asia Pacific

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. Recommendation/Recommandation/Recomendacion;

. Decision/Decision/Decision;

. Statement/Declaration/Declaracion.

region and Americas that will be decided at a later stage. The possibility of holding a roundtable of treaty body experts and NHRI representatives is tentatively planned for late September 2006.

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting further recommended that the fifth inter-committee meeting consider developing harmonized criteria for the participation of national human rights institutions in treaty body sessions in order to enhance the quality of information provided to the treaty bodies.*

13. The interaction of NHRIs and the treaty bodies is discussed in paras. 93 and 94 of the report of the seven human rights treaty bodies relating to the reporting process (HRI/MC/2006/4) which notes that three committees, i.e. CRC, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) have issued general comments emphasizing the important role of NHRIs in the protection of human rights, and that most treaty bodies give NHRIs an opportunity to provide information to treaty body members either in informal meetings or during the sessions.

#### **F. Ratification of the core international human rights treaties**

*Recommendation: The fourth inter-committee meeting recommended that all treaty bodies actively promote ratification of the other core international human rights treaties, in particular the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in their constructive dialogue with States parties and in their concluding observations.*

14. Encouragement to ratify the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families is systematically included in the lists of issues and concluding observations of CERD. The concluding comments of CEDAW currently include a standard paragraph on the seven core human rights instruments where it encourages States parties to ratify those conventions that the respective State party has not yet ratified.<sup>2</sup> CRC always includes recommendations relating to its two optional protocols, where appropriate, and the Committee has included the recommendation to ratify the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in two recent concluding

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<sup>2</sup> “The Committee notes that States’ adherence to the seven major international human rights instruments, namely, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, enhances the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Government of ... to consider ratifying the [treaty/treaties] to which it is not yet a party, i.e. ... .”

observations, i.e. on Saudi Arabia (CRC/C/SAU/CO/2, para. 70) and Thailand (CRC/C/THA/CO/2, para. 69).

15. CAT promotes ratification of the other international human rights treaties in its constructive dialogue with States parties but in its conclusions and recommendations, the Committee usually makes reference to the OPCAT. HRC and CESCR do not have a systematic practice in this regard, but in its concluding observations, CESCR encourages States where migrant workers are faced with problems with regard to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights to ratify the Convention, like for example in the concluding observations on Austria (E/C.12/AUT/CO/3, para. 33) and Uzbekistan (E/C.12/UZB/CO/1, para. 40).

### **III. FOLLOW-UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES**

#### **A. Consultations on proposals for reform of the United Nations human rights framework**

*Recommendation: The chairpersons suggested that United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and non-governmental organizations be invited to submit their views on the proposals for reform of the treaty body system to the Secretariat, which would compile them in a report for discussion under the appropriate agenda items of the fifth inter-committee meeting.*

16. In her Plan of Action for reform of the treaty body system, the High Commissioner for Human Rights indicated that she will develop proposals for a unified standing treaty body and invite States parties to the seven human rights treaties to an intergovernmental meeting in 2006 to consider options. Inputs have been sought from a wide range of experts and interested parties in various ways. OHCHR launched a five-week online-dialogue which took place from 1 November to 6 December 2005. Among the 442 participants of the online forum were treaty body experts, representatives of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, NGOs and other stakeholders. Topics discussed included, inter alia, strengths and weaknesses of the current treaty body system, the form, composition and functions of a unified standing treaty body, the effective protection of specific rights, enhancement of implementation at the national level, and legal issues.

17. Written submissions have also been received from a number of stakeholders, including NGOs, academic commentators and others. In addition, the reform proposals of the High Commissioner were amongst the topics discussed at a conference entitled "How to advance the Human Rights Agenda" from 20 to 22 January 2006 at Wilton Park, United Kingdom. The proposals were also the specific focus of an expert workshop held on 11 and 12 February 2006 at the Nottingham Human Rights Law Centre. The reports from the conference at Wilton Park and the expert workshop in Nottingham will be made available to the participants of the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting and eighteenth meeting of chairpersons.

*Recommendation: The seventeenth meeting of chairpersons took note of the Secretary-General's proposals for reform of the United Nations human rights system contained in his report, "In larger freedom", and proposals contained in the Plan of Action of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for reform of the treaty body system. The meeting requested the Secretariat to organize, in an appropriate forum, consultations between the treaty bodies, States*

*parties, OHCHR, United Nations entities and other stakeholders to discuss the proposals, including those relating to a unified standing treaty body.*

18. All committees have discussed the proposals for reform of the treaty body system, including those relating to a unified standing treaty body. CEDAW had a preliminary discussion at its thirty-third session in July 2005, and HRC discussed treaty body reform at its eighty-fourth session in July 2005. CERD discussed the reform proposals at its sixty-seventh session in August 2005, and CRC had preliminary discussions at its fortieth session in September 2005.

19. In a letter of 31 October 2005, the High Commissioner encouraged the treaty bodies and their members to contribute to the ongoing process of developing proposals for a unified standing treaty body, and she met with most committees to discuss her ideas. The issue of treaty body reform was discussed by both CESCR and CAT at their thirty-fifth sessions in November 2005. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW) discussed treaty body reform at its third session in December 2005. At its forty-first session in January 2006, CRC continued its discussions, and the issue of treaty body reform was included in the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of CEDAW in January 2006. A number of committees have subsequently prepared written submissions on their views which will be made available to the meeting.

20. The concept paper on the High Commissioner's proposal for a unified standing treaty body (HRI/MC/2006/2) was circulated to all stakeholders on 20 March 2006. OHCHR organized a briefing for States parties on the concept paper on 5 April 2006 and on 6 April 2006 for NGOs and specialized agencies. The seventeenth session of the ICC, held in Geneva on 10 and 11 April 2006, was also briefed on the paper.

21. At its thirty-sixth session in May 2006, CESCR proceeded to exchange views about the concept paper on a unified standing treaty body. CEDAW discussed the concept paper at an informal meeting in the beginning of May 2006 and adopted some recommendations on the issue at its thirty-fifth session in May 2006. Some treaty body members have also contributed individually to the ongoing discussions.

22. The Government of Liechtenstein will host a brainstorming meeting on the High Commissioner's ideas from 14 to 16 July 2006. It is envisaged that up to six representatives of regional groups, two representatives of each treaty body, and representatives of the United Nations system, NGOs and NHRIs will attend this meeting.

#### **B. Technical cooperation and follow-up to concluding observations**

*Recommendation: The seventeenth meeting of chairpersons requested the Secretariat to organize a seminar for treaty body members, members of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for technical cooperation, United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and, if possible, representatives of United Nations field presences to discuss the format and substance of concluding observations and their implementation at the national level.*

23. This seminar is being discussed and is tentatively scheduled for autumn of 2006.

#### IV. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

##### Technical cooperation

24. From 28 to 30 November 2005, OHCHR, with the support of UNICEF, organized a sub-regional seminar on the implementation of concluding observations of the CRC, hosted by the Government of Argentina. The seminar was held in Buenos Aires and was attended by more than 150 participants from 10 South American countries, including Government representatives, members of parliaments, NHRIs, international and grass-root NGOs, journalists, United Nations agencies and experts. Topics included child and adolescent health, education, economic and sexual exploitation, juvenile justice, and violence. Another sub-regional workshop on follow-up to concluding observations of the CRC was held in Doha, Qatar from 14 to 16 June 2005, with participants from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

25. On 21 and 22 February 2006, OHCHR, the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation (Government of Fiji) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) co-organized a national workshop on the implementation of the concluding observations of CRC in Suva, Fiji. The workshop was hosted by the Government of the Republic of the Fiji Islands and attended by officials from various ministries, representatives from the judiciary, and participants from the civil society, including national experts, parliamentarians, youths, academics, faith-based and professional groups, as well as representatives of the Fiji Commission for Human Rights and trade unions. The workshop consisted of four working groups on the following themes: juvenile justice; the right to education; corporal punishment, domestic violence and sexual abuse; and independent monitoring mechanisms.

26. A sub-regional workshop on the implementation of the concluding comments/observations of CEDAW and CERD hosted by the Government of Egypt and organized by the OHCHR and the DAW/Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in cooperation with the National Council for Women of Egypt took place in Cairo, Egypt from 19 to 22 December 2005. Over 50 participants from six North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia), took part in the event, including Government officials, members of the judiciary, representatives of NHRIs, national NGOs, the League of Arab States and United Nations entities as well as treaty body experts. The main objective of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of States to implement the concluding comments/observations of CEDAW and CERD and to strengthen cooperation with other relevant stakeholders for this purpose.

27. Themes discussed included: (i) constitutional and legislative framework and obstacles to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; (ii) independent monitoring structures/national machineries; (iii) discrimination-based violence and access to justice/remedies; (iv) multiple forms of discrimination; (v) equal enjoyment of the right to education, health and employment and (vi) harmful cultural practices and stereotypes. Participants adopted a series of recommendations supporting the implementation of recommendations of CERD and CEDAW in countries of the sub-region.

28. Since September 2003 the OHCHR has, within the framework of a project entitled "Strengthening the implementation of human rights treaty recommendations through the enhancement of national protection mechanisms", undertaken several training activities for representatives of governments, NHRIs, NGOs, and the media in 20 countries. The overall objectives of these activities are to increase the participation of civil society in the work of the treaty bodies and to enhance the follow-up and implementation of treaty body recommendations at the national level.

29. From 22 to 24 February 2006, OHCHR organized in Nairobi, Kenya, the first regional workshop for five African countries that have participated in the project, i.e. Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia. The aim of the workshop was to discuss opportunities and challenges around treaty reporting and implementation processes and to ultimately exchange practices and knowledge about activities that can enhance the implementation of the treaty body recommendations. The workshop was followed by a three-day judicial colloquium for judges and magistrates from the same five countries, and in addition South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. The aim of the judicial colloquium was to exchange practices on how international jurisprudence is or can be used by national courts. Three similar workshops in other regions together with judicial colloquia are being organized during 2006 and 2007.

30. The fifth basic training workshop in the framework of this project is taking place in Geneva from 10 to 14 July 2006 with participants from Egypt, Guyana, Mexico, Morocco, and Timor-Leste. Five follow-up workshops will take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mauritius, Uganda, Thailand and Zambia from August to October 2006 to take stock and analyse the level of implementation of all treaty body recommendations issued for these countries and to develop specific plans of action to further enhance the implementation of the outstanding recommendations.

### **Other developments**

31. At its third session in December 2005, CMW held a day of general discussion on "Protecting the rights of all migrant workers as a tool to enhance development". CRC held a general discussion day on children without parental care at its fortieth session in September 2005.

32. At its thirty-fifth session in November 2005, CESCR adopted general comment No. 17 (2005) on the right of everyone to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he or she is the author (article 15, para. 1 (c), of the Covenant), and general comment No. 18 (2005) on article 6 of the Covenant (the right to work). CERD adopted its general recommendation No. 31 on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system at its sixty-seventh session in August 2005. Finally, CRC adopted general comment No. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin at its thirty-ninth session in May and June 2005 and general comment No. 7 (2005) on implementing child rights in early childhood at its forty-first session in January 2006.

**Annex I:****GUIDELINES ON CRITERIA FOR TCB WORKSHOPS<sup>3</sup>****Introduction**

1. In line with the report of the United Nations Secretary-General, “Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change”, one of the main activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is capacity-building at the national level for the implementation of human rights obligations established in the seven core human rights treaties.

2. In the past few years, the Treaties and Commission Branch (TCB) has participated in a series of training activities for which it has had different levels of responsibility. Although organized with the support of, and in consultation with CBB, TCB has had main responsibility for two main categories of workshop: (a) training workshops in the context of a project funded by the European Commission (EU project) (see para. 6 below); and (b) treaty-specific regional or sub-regional workshops to follow-up on the treaty bodies’ concluding observations. TCB has had shared responsibility for the organization of a third category of workshop: (c) reporting workshops.

3. Taking into account the limited human and financial resources available to the Branch, these guidelines establish criteria for the selection of countries/regions for all workshops in which TCB, in conjunction with CBB, is involved.

4. To the extent possible, and in line with one of the commitments outlined in the High Commissioner’s Plan of Action, evaluations of workshops should be carried out, with the assistance of the newly established Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PME). Such evaluations should assess the impact and sustainability of these activities at the national/regional level and assess the use of human and financial resources to ensure that they have been used effectively and efficiently. The outcome of the evaluation will also benefit other parts of OHCHR, especially SPB, where similar activities are being envisaged.

**TCB has adopted the following guidelines on criteria to be considered in the organization of workshops:**

5. The overarching criteria should be:
- Workshops should, to the extent possible, be organized in the context of the ongoing reform agenda of the Secretary-General with regard to treaty bodies;
  - To the extent possible, workshops undertaken by TCB should be carried out in conjunction with CBB, in conformity with OHCHR’s engagement at the country and/or

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that these guidelines do not inhibit TCB resource persons from taking part in activities organised by other Branches of the OHCHR. In addition, these guidelines do not set out the methodology behind the organisation of such workshops.

regional level and in line with the High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan, including security considerations.<sup>4</sup>

## **A. EU training workshops**

### **Background and objectives**

6. The EU project aims to increase the enjoyment of human rights in those countries which are parties to international human rights instruments by improving the implementation of conclusions and recommendations of human rights treaty bodies through the strengthening of the national capacity of mainly three target groups: national human rights institutions (NHRIs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media. Governments are also involved in all stages of the project, either as observers or as full participants. The activities under the project, which are at national, regional and global level, are designed to enhance participation of the three target groups in the overall reporting and implementation process, as well as to encourage the use of the international instruments and treaty body recommendations in their respective areas of work as a tool to further the promotion and protection of human rights.

7. So far, EU workshops have taken place in the following regions: the LAC (Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama); Africa (Mauritius, Kenya, Togo, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia); Asia (Sri Lanka, and Thailand); and Europe (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Russian Federation). In 2006, workshops will be held in the following countries: Mexico, Guyana, Timor-Leste, Egypt and Morocco.

8. Criteria for the selection of countries:

- The State party/s should have recently reported or be actively involved in the reporting process (a report has been submitted for consideration or is in the process of being prepared) ideally in the year that follows the country's participation in the programme or the country is well advanced in the preparation of a common core document and treaty-specific reports;
- The State party/s should have a national human rights institution (NHRI) that is considered to be broadly in compliance with the Paris Principles;
- The State party/s should have an active civil society with the necessary political and legal "space" for independent action.

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<sup>4</sup> The decision of where to hold workshops should, where necessary, be taken in consultation with the security unit at OHCHR and in light of the security situation.

## **B) Follow-up Workshops**

### **Background and objectives**

9. The workshops are intended to act as a forum for the exchange of best practices of States parties in the implementation of concluding observations and to assess how States parties can enhance implementation of recommendations by the treaty bodies, and or independent mechanisms such as special procedures mandate holders, at the national level, including by technical assistance. The workshops should enhance the participation of Government representatives, NGOs, NHRIs, parliamentarians, United Nations agencies and the media, in the implementation of concluding observations.

10. Regional or sub-regional workshops have been organized, with the support of treaty body members and thematic mechanisms, on the implementation of the concluding observations of the CRC, in 2004 in Bangkok; in 2005 in Doha and in 2006 in Buenos Aires. In 2002, a pilot follow-up workshop was organized in Quito on the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee. In December 2005, a sub-regional workshop was organised in Cairo on follow-up to the concluding observations of CEDAW and CERD.

11. Consideration should be given to an equitable geographic distribution of follow-up workshops and equitable distribution of workshops by Committee.

12. Criteria for the selection of countries should include:

- In considering whether workshops should be organized per country, per region, or per sub-region, and whether they should focus on one or more treaty, TCB, in close partnership with CBB and in consultation with SPB, will consider: the challenges involved in organizing large multi-treaty/multi-country workshops; the particularities of the region in question; the objectives and anticipated impact of the workshop; and the importance of focusing on each treaty, rather than one in particular. At some point in the future, TCB envisages organizing a workshop along cross-cutting themes of different treaty bodies;
- The State party/s should have recently reported to a Committee/s, have had their report/s considered by the Committee/s, and have had at least one set of concluding observations upon which the workshop may be based;
- Workshops should be held in different geographic regions and in the different United Nations languages;
- Consideration should be given to a sufficient degree of political stability and commitment in the State party, to ensure that the activity is sustainable;
- There should preferably be a field office/presence in the country or region, working in collaboration with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT);<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Commitment of the UNCTs should be ensured through the regular training of new staff.

- The State party/s should ideally have a national human rights institution (NHRI) that is considered to be broadly in compliance with the Paris Principles;
- Support should be sought from outside funds where possible, to the extent it is compatible with the country engagement as defined by the Office.

### **C. Workshops on reporting and the elaboration of the Common Core Document**

#### **Background and objectives**

13. Within the framework of OHCHR's technical cooperation programme, TCB, in conjunction with CBB, has regularly carried out training activities for Government officials responsible for the reports due under international human rights treaties to which their State is a party. Usually, these training activities have been conducted at national or regional level and focus on reporting to one or more treaty. In line with the Secretary-General's call for the implementation of harmonized guidelines on reporting to all treaty bodies<sup>6</sup> and the High Commissioner's proposal for a unified standing treaty body<sup>7</sup>, reporting workshops should ideally move towards the preparation of the common core document to address the growing need to streamline and strengthen the treaty body system.<sup>8</sup> This should not prevent the Branch - in exceptional circumstances - from conducting reporting workshops focused on a single treaty.

14. Criteria for the selection of countries should include:

- The State party should be a non-reporting country and/or a country to which one or more Committees have indicated their intention to consider without a report, and which has taken visible steps towards the preparation of a report, e.g. has established a drafting committee. Preference should be given to countries which have outstanding reports to more than one treaty. Ideally, reporting workshops could also be conducted at the

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<sup>6</sup> SG report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005).

<sup>7</sup> A/59/2005/Add.3.

<sup>8</sup> The fourth inter-committee meeting and seventeenth meeting of chairpersons decided to establish a technical working group, consisting of a member from each of the treaty bodies, to finalize draft guidelines on reporting to the international human rights treaty monitoring bodies. Reports presented in accordance with those guidelines would enable each treaty body and the State party to obtain a complete picture of the implementation of the relevant treaties, set within the wider context of the State's international human rights obligations, and provide a uniform framework within which each Committee, in collaboration with the other treaty bodies, could work. A report under the revised reporting system will consist of two parts: the common core document and the treaty-specific document. The inter-committee technical working group met in December 2005 and February 2006; its new revised draft guidelines will be before the fifth inter-committee meeting and eighteenth meeting of chairpersons which will meet from 19 to 23 June 2006.

regional and/or sub-regional level grouping a number of countries (maximum five) with the same reporting difficulties/problems;

- Consideration should be given to a sufficient degree of political stability and commitment in the State party to ensure that the activity is sustainable.

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