



## ISHR submission on treaty bodies and the UPR, 1 December 2008

Madame Chair,

In a number of ways, the universal periodic review presents both challenges and opportunities for the work of the treaty bodies. The International Service for Human Rights, which closely monitors the UPR process, considers that the interplay between the work of the treaty bodies and the UPR warrants closer attention. Our suggestions in this regard are based on our own observations of the UPR, and also draw on some of the issues discussed on this topic at the most recent session of the Human Rights Committee.

Where possible, committee members (especially country rapporteurs, taskforce members, or rapporteurs on follow-up) would benefit from **attending** UPR sessions – whether these be sessions on States that committees are **due to review**, or **have been recently reviewed**. Should that not prove possible, committee members can view the entire review of the State on the Human Rights Council **webcast** archive. At a minimum we would support a suggestion raised in the recent Human Rights Committee session that committee members receive all relevant UPR materials appended to their country files, with references to specific treaty body recommendations highlighted for the attention of committee member.

On concluding observations and **recommendations**, committees might wish to discuss how best to ensure that their priority recommendations are taken up adequately in the OHCHR compilation of UN information, and consequently by States in the UPR dialogue. Given the 10 page limit of the OHCHR, there is a risk that important recommendations may be omitted. To avoid this, , committees could explore ways to identify ‘priority recommendations’ and ‘essential’ concerns – thus making it easier for the OHCHR to pick up the most important points in its summary. Also, we would urge the OHCHR, in compiling its 10-page summary for the UPR process, to consult with treaty body secretariats to ensure that its summary picks up those recommendations considered the most pressing and important on a given State.

On **scheduling**, committees could keep in mind UPR schedules in determining when to schedule their own reviews of States. It may be useful for committees to discuss further whether it is more useful to review a State prior to its UPR session in order to inform the review or whether it makes better sense to review a State after its UPR session (and thus to be able to follow up on UPR recommendations and commitments).

In more general terms, we would encourage all treaty bodies to coordinate on how best to approach their work, with a view to making best use of the UPR process.

Thank you Madam Chair.