



International Service for Human Rights  
(ISHR)

## **International Service for Human Rights**

### **Human Rights Council's 11<sup>th</sup> session**

#### **Oral Statement under Item 5**

Mr President,

This Council was established to enhance constructive international dialogue and cooperation. These are important principles for the Council's work. The International Service for Human Rights is therefore particularly concerned about the lack of cooperation and constructive engagement by many States with the Council's own system of special procedures.

We did not see the need for a Code of Conduct for the special procedures when it was proposed during the institution-building. Nevertheless, we were hopeful that its adoption would lead to enhanced cooperation between States and the special procedures, as its proponents claimed it would. Regrettably, this hope has yet to be realised. Instead, we increasingly hear States in this Council make serious allegations against the special procedures. We have heard them accused of having exceeded their mandates, violated the Code of Conduct and of being biased or politically motivated in their actions.

We believe that such statements do not live up to the standards set for the Council's work established by the General Assembly and accepted by all members of the Council. While States may disagree with the analysis, findings or recommendations of the special procedures such disagreement should be discussed in a respectful manner. We look to you, Mr President, to uphold a respectful dialogue among all stakeholders within the Council.

Mr President,

We welcome the cooperation extended by many countries to the special procedures. We acknowledge that engaging with the special procedures may raise sensitive and difficult issues for the countries concerned. It may seem unfair that those countries that cooperate expose themselves to potential criticism from the special procedures while those countries that fail to engage at all often succeed in shielding themselves. The International Service for Human Rights

strongly believes that the system of special procedures can make positive contributions to the human rights situation in all countries.

The Council has reaffirmed the important role of the special procedures through its review of the system which has led to the strengthening of the special procedures. However, the Council can and should do more to ensure the effectiveness of its mechanisms. State cooperation with the special procedures is key to this challenge.

The Council should therefore pay greater attention to State cooperation with the system of special procedures. Mandate holders have repeatedly reported on the low level of responses to their communications and requests for visits. The Council must find ways to encourage all States, and in particular all of its members, to fully cooperate with the special procedures. It must also identify ways to engage those countries that refuse to cooperate in a meaningful way with the special procedures.

The Council may consider a panel discussion on how to enhance State cooperation with the special procedures with a view to establishing standards for such cooperation.

Thank you