

[States must protect and safeguard independence of national human rights institutions](#)

25.09.2014

States should safeguard the independence of national human rights institutions, ensure that they are not subjected to unreasonable budgetary limitations, and are protected from all forms of pressure or reprisal in connection with their work to promote and protect human rights, the UN Human Rights Council pronounced today.



(Geneva) - States should safeguard the independence of national human rights institutions, ensure that they are not subjected to unreasonable budgetary limitations, and are protected from all forms of pressure or reprisal in connection with their work to promote and protect human rights, the UN Human Rights Council pronounced today.

Adopting an [Australian-led resolution by consensus](#), the Council also called on States to 'promptly and thoroughly investigate' all 'cases of alleged reprisal or intimidation against national human rights institutions and their respective members and staff or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with national human rights institutions', ensuring that 'perpetrators are brought to justice'.

'This resolution is important and timely, coming at a time when members of the Maldives Human Rights Commission have been subject to spurious criminal charges for submitting a report to the UN,' said ISHR Director Phil Lynch. Members of the Commission were [charged earlier this week in connection with a report they submitted to the Universal Periodic Review](#) which was critical of the undermining of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary in the country.

'This is the first time that the Human Rights Council has adopted a resolution which recognises the role of NHRIs in preventing and addressing cases of reprisals, and which condemns and calls for prompt and thorough investigation and accountability for any cases of reprisals against NHRIs or those who cooperate with them,' Mr Lynch said.

'We congratulate Australia for its leadership on this resolution and acknowledge the vital role played by States including Norway, Ireland, Germany and Hungary in supporting the language on reprisals, despite significant pressure from Russia and South Africa to delete or dilute it.'

In addition to focusing on the role of NHRIs in combatting reprisals, the resolution also calls on States to ensure that NHRIs are fully independent, with Commissioners appointed in accordance with the Paris Principles, and are adequately resourced and financed. It also encourages NHRIs to strengthen engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms, recognising the crucial role they can play in promoting and monitoring the implementation of international human rights obligations at the national level.

Contact: Phil Lynch, Director, International Service for Human Rights, on p.lynch@ishr.ch or +41 76 708 4738.

Photo: UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferre

ISHR