

October 25, 2013

President of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly  
H.E. Mr. H.E. John W. Ashe  
VIA FAX

**Re: UNGA Treaty Body Strengthening Process**

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned non-governmental organisations, are writing to you concerning the ongoing treaty body strengthening process, in which we have been actively involved.

As you are aware, General Assembly resolution 68/2, which extended the intergovernmental process into the first half of February 2014, requests you to “appoint two co-facilitators to continue open, transparent and inclusive negotiations”. In addition, the Secretary-General is to provide a comprehensive and detailed cost assessment by 15 November 2013. In our view, the conclusion of the process in February 2014 is highly dependent on co-facilitators being in place at the very latest by the time the Secretary-General is to provide his cost assessment. This would ensure that informal consultations could take place in early December 2013 and again in January, before the formal conclusion of the process in mid-February 2014. The mid-February deadline is crucial in order to allow sufficient time for the necessary documents to be prepared for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the first resumed session of the Fifth Committee in March 2014.

We believe this matter merits your timely attention and urge you to undertake the task of appointing or reappointing the co-facilitators, as the case may be, without delay. For years, the treaty bodies have faced many challenges in fulfilling their mandates, including backlogs, insufficient meeting time, non-reporting and lack of implementation. These challenges continue, with the High Commissioner for Human Rights describing the system as having reached its limits. In the context of the current process, the General Assembly has debated how best to strengthen the treaty bodies for nearly two years.

We are counting on your leadership to steward this process to a positive and timely conclusion. In that regard, we urge you to do what you can to ensure the process is concluded without further delay so those initiatives that enjoy broad support can be implemented to the benefit of the treaty bodies and rights holders everywhere.

Yours sincerely,

- Alkarama Foundation
- Amnesty International
- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA).
- Asian Legal Resource Centre
- Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR)
- Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)
- Child Rights Connect (formerly the NGO Group for the CRC)
- Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)
- Fédération Internationale de l'Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture (FIACAT)
- Human Rights Foundation of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Human Rights Watch (HRW)
- International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
- International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
- International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
- International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW)
- Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI)
- The Advocates for Human Rights