

Statement at 32nd session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 6: General Debate

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TOWARDS A UPR WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE, STRONG, EFFECTIVE AND PROTECTIVE

From a civil society perspective, the UPR is an important mechanism to build coalitions, foster dialogue, and assert pressure from different actors and angles for human rights change. However, lack of follow-up mechanisms, procedural weaknesses, patchy implementation and obstacles to NGO participation limit the UPR's effectiveness.

The end of the second cycle is an opportunity to take stock and strengthen the UPR during its third cycle. This statement outlines elements of ISHR's vision and strategy in this regard, which will be published online today.

Firstly, establish an institutionalised reprisals mechanism.

The Secretary General's annual report on reprisals shows an increase in intimidation and attacks against defenders engaging with the UPR, whilst a cross-regional [statement](#) by 65 States reaffirmed the Council President and Bureau's duty to tackle reprisals.

We call on the President, Bureau and Secretariat to elaborate a comprehensive policy to prevent, investigate, remedy and promote accountability for reprisals associated with the UPR, and to include alleged cases in the Working Group report, together with the concerned State's response.

Secondly, ensure civil society space at the Working Group stage.

Given the emphasis on cooperation, dialogue and NGO participation expressed in the resolutions creating the Council and UPR, we regret civil society's inability to formally participate at the working group stage. NGO interventions at that stage would provide States with up-to-date information from the ground, and increase civil society buy-in to the outcomes of the review, which is essential for national level follow up.

Thirdly, ensure greater follow-up to, and implementation of, recommendations.

The OHCHR should publish, prior to Working Group sessions, an evaluation of recommendation implementation since the previous cycle, to monitor compliance between cycles and enhance the probability of effective implementation.

Finally, use this General Debate to monitor and report on implementation.

States should use the Item 6 General Debate to update the Council on implementation of recommendations previously received and seek information regarding implementation on recommendations previously made.

Thank you