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Agenda item 8

**Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration
and Programme of Action**

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27/... National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling all relevant Human Rights Council resolutions and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights concerning national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and recalling Human Rights Council resolution 24/16 of 27 September 2013,

Reaffirming the importance of establishing and strengthening independent, pluralistic national human rights institutions¹ in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles),

Reaffirming also the important role that such national human rights institutions play and will continue to play in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, in strengthening participation and the rule of law, and in developing and enhancing public awareness of those rights and fundamental freedoms,

Reaffirming further the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, which reaffirmed the important and constructive role played by national human rights institutions, in particular in their advisory capacity to the competent authorities and their role in preventing and remedying human rights violations, in the dissemination of human rights information, and education in human rights,

Welcoming the role of national human rights institutions, within their respective mandates, in contributing to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses,

Commending the important role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the development of independent and effective national human rights institutions, in accordance with the Paris Principles, and recognizing in this regard the potential for strengthened and complementary cooperation among the Office of the High Commissioner, the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, regional coordinating committees of national human rights institutions and national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights,

Noting with interest the twenty-seventh annual meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, held from 12 to 14 March 2014,

* Non-member State of the Human Rights Council.

¹ National human rights institutions are those national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights referred to in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

Welcoming the strengthening in all regions of regional and cross-regional cooperation among national human rights institutions, and between national human rights institutions and other regional human rights forums,

1. *Welcomes* the most recent reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Human Rights Council on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights² and on the activities of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles;³

2. *Encourages* Member States to establish effective, independent and pluralistic national human rights institutions or, where they already exist, to strengthen them to enable the effective fulfilment of their mandate to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, as outlined in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and to do so in accordance with the Paris Principles;

3. *Recognizes* that, consistent with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, it is the right of each State to choose the framework for national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights that is best suited to its particular needs at the national level in order to promote human rights in accordance with its international human rights obligations and commitments;

4. *Also recognizes* the role of independent national human rights institutions in working together with their Governments to ensure full respect for human rights at the national level, including by contributing to follow-up actions, as appropriate, to the recommendations resulting from international human rights mechanisms;

5. *Encourages* national human rights institutions to continue to play an active role in preventing and combating all violations and abuses of human rights as enumerated in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and relevant international instruments;

6. *Commends* the International Coordinating Committee for making the role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights the overarching theme of its twenty-seventh annual meeting;

7. *Encourages* national human rights institutions to assist, advise and engage with the State and other stakeholders in the prevention of violations and abuses of human rights, including by promoting the ratification of international treaties, promoting legal and procedural reforms, conducting practical and relevant human rights training and education, and raising public awareness and advocacy about the promotion and protection of human rights;

8. *Stresses* the importance of financial and administrative independence and the stability of national human rights institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and notes with satisfaction the efforts of those Member States that have provided their national human rights institutions with more autonomy and independence, including by giving them an investigative role or enhancing such a role, and encourages other Governments to consider taking similar steps;

9. *Recognizes* that national human rights institutions and their respective members and staff should not face any form of reprisal or intimidation, including political pressure, physical intimidation, harassment or unjustifiable budgetary limitations, as a result of activities undertaken in accordance with their respective mandates, including when taking up individual cases or when reporting on serious or systematic violations in their countries;

² " A/HRC/27/39.

³ " A/HRC/27/40.

10. *Recognizes* the role that national human rights institutions can play in preventing and addressing cases of reprisal as part of supporting the cooperation between their Governments and the United Nations in the promotion of human rights, including by contributing to follow-up actions, as appropriate, to recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms;

11. *Emphasizes* that any 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 should be promptly and thoroughly investigated, with the perpetrators brought to justice;

12. *Welcomes* the growing number of Member States establishing or considering the establishment of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles, and welcomes in particular the large number of States that have accepted recommendations to establish national human rights institutions through the universal periodic review and, where relevant, by treaty bodies and special procedures;

13. *Also welcomes* the continuing number of national institutions seeking accreditation status through the International Coordinating Committee, and encourages national institutions, including ombudsman institutions, to seek accreditation status;

14. *Further welcomes* the important role of the International Coordinating Committee, in close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in assessing conformity with the Paris Principles and in assisting States and national institutions, when requested, to strengthen national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles;

15. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to give high priority to requests from Member States for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles;

16. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the High Commissioner to strengthen United Nations system-wide coordination on national human rights institutions, and encourages all United Nations human rights mechanisms, as well as its agencies, funds and programmes, to work within their respective mandates with national human rights institutions;

17. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to continue to encourage national human rights institutions to interact with and advocate for independent participation in all relevant United Nations mechanisms, in accordance with their respective mandates;

18. *Welcomes* the important role played by national human rights institutions in the Human Rights Council, including its universal periodic review mechanism, in both preparation and follow-up, and the special procedures, as well as in the human rights treaty bodies, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 60/251 of 15 March 2006 and 65/281 of 17 June 2011, Council resolutions 5/1 and 5/2 of 18 June 2007 and decision 19/119 of 22 March 2012, and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005, and encourages national human rights institutions to continue to participate in and contribute to these mechanisms, including by continuing to engage with the treaty bodies by, inter alia, providing parallel reports and other information;

19. *Commends in particular* the increasing engagement of national human rights institutions ~~at all stages of with~~ the universal periodic review mechanism, ~~including through the submission of written reports prior to the review, submission of voluntary mid-term reports, and delivery of statements at the adoption of universal periodic review reports,~~ and encourages national human rights institutions to promote and support the implementation of accepted recommendations in their respective national context;

20. *Welcomes* the increased engagement between the special procedures and national human rights institutions, including during country and follow-up visits and on thematic reports, and encourages the deepening of such engagement, including through the participation of national human rights institutions following the presentation of country mission reports to the Human Rights Council;

21. *Also welcomes* the participation in and contribution of national human rights institutions to the process of strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, as noted by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/268 of 9 April 2014;

22. *Further welcomes* the endorsement by the General Assembly of the strengthening of opportunities for national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council in its resolutions 65/281, 66/169 of 19 December 2011 and 68/171 of 18 December 2013, and urges the Assembly to explore the feasibility of enabling national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles to participate in the Assembly based on the practices and arrangements agreed upon in Assembly resolution 60/251, Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 5/2, and 16/21 of 25 March 2011, and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/74, while ensuring their most effective contribution;

23. *Commends* the work of the Office of the High Commissioner with national human rights institutions, including through technical cooperation, capacity-building activities and advice, and encourages the High Commissioner, in view of the expanded activities relating to national human rights institutions, to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made and budgetary resources provided to continue and further extend activities in support of national human rights institutions, including by supporting the work of the International Coordinating Committee and its regional coordinating committees, and invites Governments to contribute additional voluntary funds to that end;

24. *Welcomes* the strengthening of international cooperation among national human rights institutions, including through the International Coordinating Committee, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to provide the assistance necessary for holding international, regional and cross-regional meetings and conferences of national human rights institutions, including meetings of the International Coordinating Committee, in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner;

25. *Also welcomes* the important role of national human rights institutions in supporting cooperation between their Governments and the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights;

26. *Further welcomes* the strengthening in all regions of regional cooperation among national human rights institutions, and notes with appreciation the continuing work of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions, the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions;

27. *Encourages* all States and national human rights institutions to continue to take appropriate steps to promote cooperation, the exchange of information, the sharing of experience and the dissemination of best practices concerning the establishment and effective operation of national human rights institutions;

28. *Invites* national human rights institutions to include in their cooperation the exchange of best practices on strengthening their liaison role between civil society and their Governments;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its thirty-third session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and a report on the activities of the International Coordinating Committee in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles.
