

United Nations Human Rights Council: 23<sup>rd</sup> Session  
Joint Oral statement Item 6 – General Debate  
10 June 2013, UPR Info

Thank you.

The following statement is made on behalf of 77 NGOs.

Mr. President,

Civil society is deeply concerned by the current attacks on the format of the Working Group report. In this regard, we note with satisfaction the comments made by States earlier this morning on this issue. This document, the Working Group report, bears great importance as it represents the official record of the review process in Geneva on which implementation of recommendations will be based. We therefore deeply regret that during the UPR 16<sup>th</sup> session two recommendations were taken out of the body of a draft report and added as footnotes because they were considered as "not relevant" by the State under review. This was an action never seen before in the UPR and runs the risk of setting a dangerous precedent.

The format of the Report of the Working Group should be the same for all countries in order to guarantee equal treatment. According to Resolution 5/1, the Report is a "summary of the proceedings" and should be drafted in an objective manner. Its content should reflect the discussion held in the room and should not be subjected to negotiations by countries, as stated in Presidential statement A/HRC/PRST/8/1 from 9 April 2008.

Both accepted and noted recommendations should be included in the report, irrespective of the country making them and the issue raised. All States have the right to suggest any recommendation. Similarly, any State under Review is entitled not to accept recommendations. However, under no circumstances should States have the possibility to remove recommendations from the list, not even on the grounds that recommendations are considered as being "not relevant".

Comments from States under Review on the reasons why they do not accept recommendations should be incorporated in the addendum. The chapeau or headers of the categories of recommendations in Section two of the Working Group report should be streamlined and clearly defined as: recommendations which enjoy the support, recommendations which are noted and recommendations pending until the HRC adoption.

We therefore call on you, Mr. President, to issue a Presidential statement to immediately end any attempts to tamper with the Working Group Report and clarify its format as soon as possible.

Thank you.

List of signatories:

Accion Solidaria on HIV/Aids  
AFD International  
All India Christian Council  
Anti-Slavery International  
Ariel Foundation International  
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)  
Association pour l'Intégration et le Développement Durable au Burundi-AIDB  
Bahá'í International Community  
Bahrain Centre for Human Rights  
Belarus Helsinki Committee  
Canadian HIV /AIDS Legal Network  
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies  
Centre for Civil Liberties, Ukraine  
Child Rights Connect (formerly the NGO Group for the CRC)  
Child Rights International Network (CRIN)  
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation  
CIVILIS Human Rights  
COC Netherlands  
CODAP  
Colombian Commission of Jurists  
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative  
Conectas Direitos Humanos  
Defence for Children International  
DIVERLEX Diversidad e Igualdad a Través de la Ley (Acting World Trans Secretary of ILGA)  
EACH European Association for Children in Hospital  
East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project  
Edmund Rice International  
Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights  
FIACAT  
FIDH - Fédération internationale pour les droits de l'homme  
Fondation Alkarama  
Franciscans International  
Geneva for Human Rights  
Georgian Young Lawyers Association  
German Forum Human Rights  
Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children  
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly – Vanadzor, Armenia  
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Human Rights House Foundation  
Human Rights House Sarajevo  
Human Rights Network Uganda (HURINET-U)  
IFOR

IIMA (Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice)  
International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA)  
Institute for Reporter's Freedom and Safety  
Institute for Social Justice - Pakistan  
International Commission of Jurists  
International Council of Women  
International Partnership for Human Rights  
International Platform against Impunity  
International Service for Human Rights  
Irish Council for Civil Liberties  
Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights  
KISA – Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism  
Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)  
Norwegian Helsinki Committee  
Open Society Justice Initiative, part of the Open Society Institute  
PEN International  
Promo LEX Association, Moldova  
Reporters Without Borders  
Save the Children  
Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights  
Sexual Rights Initiative  
Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre Pakistan  
Sinergia, Venezuelan Association of Civil Society Organizations  
Stefanus Alliance  
Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)  
UNITED for Intercultural Action, Netherlands  
UPR Info  
VIDES International  
West Africa Human Rights Defenders Network  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom  
World Association for the School as an Instrument of peace  
World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)  
World Organisation Against Torture  
World Vision International  
World YWCA