



**Human Rights Council
Third Session
Geneva, November 29 - December 8 2006**

**Item: Progress reports and further discussion or decisions of the Working Group on the
Implementation of op.6 of GA resolution 60/251 (Special Procedures)**

Mr. President, Members of the Human Rights Council,

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the review of mandates.

Discussions within the first session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the review of mandates (13-24 November 2006) have taken a worrisome direction, culminating with the adoption of Human Rights Council Resolution mandating the Working Group to draft a code of conduct regulating the work of the special procedures.

Some States have argued that a code of conduct will be a great encouragement to States to further enhance cooperation and put forward standing invitations to special procedures. We would like to recall that among the 30 States who have voted in favour of the resolution, **only 3 have issued standing invitations.**

Mr. President, Members of the Human Rights Council,

On the issue of selection and appointment of mandate-holders, we support the general consensus to preserve the **independence, professionalism and expertise of mandate-holders.** However, this should be ensured through **a transparent appointment process.** The current pool of selection should be improved to guarantee **a wide and open range of highly qualified candidates, meeting pre-set criteria and ensuring gender representation and geographical distribution.** An objective, transparent and independent **pre-screening process** of candidates from the pool should enable the selection process to determine best suitable candidates for the relevant open mandate.

Mr. President, Members of the Human Rights Council,

The setting up of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and Human Rights Council special sessions cannot replace special procedures. UPR was designed to review the fulfilment by each State of its human rights obligations and commitments. **It is essential that thematic and country mandates are preserved and further strengthened to enable human rights prevention and protection in a systematic, continuous and timely manner.**

Finally, urgent appeals/communications are a core element of the special procedures and must remain an important and effective tool to protect individuals from human rights violations. In this regard, civil society plays an important role and should continue to be fully integrated in the work of the special procedures.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Geneva, 5 December 2006